

PALESTINE MONOGRAPHS

56

A SURVEY OF AMERICAN-ISRAELI
RELATIONS

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P R E F A C E

This book is an attempt to survey American-Israeli (Zionist) relations from 1917 to 1967. I do not claim any more credit in preparing this survey than is due the effort of simply organizing, editing, analyzing and presenting material which has been collected from books, newspapers, unpublished papers and official documents. My gratitude goes to friends and associates for their valuable advice, help and encouragement, and for many useful things I have learnt from them.

L. S. K.

I N T R O D U C T I O N

There are two very widespread ideas among the Arabs concerning Israeli-Zionist American relations. The first considers Israel as a sheer tool in the hands of the United States of America, i.e., as simply an instrument of American foreign policy which has no real independence or will of its own, and which simply executes the wishes of Washington. The second considers the United States of America as falling under the direct influence and authority of the world Zionist movement on account of the supposed Jewish domination of the major economic activities of American society. Accordingly the United States becomes an instrument for the execution of the overall strategies and policies of Zionism both as a world-wide movement and as embodied in the state of Israel. This is supposedly manifested in a variety of ways. The most widespread idea among the Arabs about these ways, is the Jewish domination of American politics and foreign policies.

If this review and discussion of American-Israeli political and foreign relations achieves nothing except showing the falsity and simple mindedness of this prevalent idea among the Arabs, it would have served a useful purpose and thus justified itself.

My study and review of American Zionist (and then Israeli) relations have convinced me that any such simplistic

interpretation of the American-Israeli ties is, in addition to being mistaken, most harmful to the Arab cause for it leads to dangerous over-simplifications and misunderstandings of Israel's relationship to the United States. 'The claim that the Zionist movement controls the United States' policies through Jewish control of the American economy has been carefully discussed and refuted by Dr. Sadik J Al-Azm in his Arabic book *Self-Criticism After the Defeat* (see Appendix 2).

The Zionist and Jewish influence in the United States (particularly in government circles) is very real, strong and important, but not to the extent that it cancels out the determination of American policies in the Middle East on the basis of vital interests which are independent from the ambitions and vital interests of Israel itself. Similarly Israel has its own strategies and aims in the area that are independent from American objectives but not necessarily incompatible with them. This does not mean that the Israeli conception of the interests particular to Israel are always compatible in all significant details with American objectives both declared and implicit. The following review of American-Israeli relations will show that the world Zionist movement and Israel have maintained a considerable degree of freedom of movement from the United States and other Western allies. Free movement in terms of executing their own particular strategies and achieving their own objectives independently from those American strategies and objectives that are not of immediate concern to the vital interests of Israel. This characteristic was typical of the world Zionist movement before the establishment of the state of Israel. Although the movement operated within the general framework of and in harmony with European national politics,

strategies, foreign policies and imperialistic ambitions, still it maintained a high degree of freedom of movement to achieve its own specific aims and ambitions. Hence the ability of Zionism to approach and switch alliances and sides with the great powers of the day (the Ottoman Empire, Germany, England and the United States of America) depending on the requirements of its long and short-term objectives, and on prevailing circumstances. It is well known that after World War II, the Zionist movement transferred its main center of activity to the United States, the new major power in the world which was rapidly extending its enterprises and influence into the Middle East.

On the level of grand strategy, the American-Israeli policies harmonize very well. In fact they are organically connected—and coincide with each other in terms of the general and broad objectives of American policy, such as: maintaining the *status quo* in the Middle East (favorable to United States' vital interests), preventing any major revisions of political boundaries in the area, maintaining certain types of reactionary regimes, and protecting the strategic, economic and cultural interests of the United States. Israel stands to benefit to the extreme the more thoroughly the Americans succeed in achieving these objectives and the more the area comes to look like the image that America most prefers. In this sense Israel will always be protected and supported by the United States.

However, (and contrary to current Arab ideas) this does not mean that on the level of middle and lower range strategies conflicts and contradictions between Israeli and American interests (as estimated by either party) do not arise and

temporarily strain their relations. Such contradictions often arise in terms of immediate policies, estimates of proximate objectives and goals, and short range plans and policies. But they remain subsidiary and partial especially with regard to the complete harmony found on the level of the grand strategies of the two countries concerned. After all the United States, as the major world power, has a very wide network of relations including many countries and under a diversity of circumstances; whereas Israel is a small state and is primarily concerned about its survival. It is inevitable that the United States and Israel will not always see eye to eye on all issues pertaining to their immediate interests. Thus, inevitably partial conflicts and contradictions are bound to arise between the policies of the two countries on specific matters and on the level of tactics and execution. But the history of American-Israeli relations shows that when these partial conflicts arise they are quickly resolved by subordinating them to the agreement on major interests. Such partial conflicts are also overcome either by the quickly shifting events which transcend the conflict thus making it irrelevant, or by reaching a compromise, or by having one party give in to the other at the right moment in order not to threaten the more important alliance in terms of major interests and objectives on the level of grand strategy. For example, in 1954 the United States awarded Iraq military and economic assistance in order to make matters easier for the Iraqi Government to bring the country into the "Northern Tier" alliance (known later as the Baghdad Pact). Israel reacted strongly to this American move of "arming the Arabs" on the grounds that it endangered its own security. The fact that the United States would not formally join the Baghdad Pact was an additional source of conflict between

Israel and the American line of policy in the Middle East at that time. This led the Israeli Government to request the United States to enter into a bilateral mutual defense treaty with Israel. The request was turned down by the United States. The conflict simmered between the two countries until it was naturally resolved by the course of events. The Suez war made the conflict insignificant and the 1958 *coup d'état* in Iraq rendered the Baghdad Pact null and void.

It is well known that in 1956 complete coordination between Israel and the United States was lacking in connection with the Suez war. Israel did not want to withdraw from Sinai and the Ghaza Strip and American pressure was an important factor in making Israel do so. This potentially dangerous conflict between the two states was quickly resolved and not permitted to threaten their important alliance on the level of grand strategy by the complete submission of one party to the wishes of the other.

Another instance of such a partial conflict goes back to 1949. On 29 May Truman sent a note to Ben Gurion expressing deep disappointment at the failure of the Israeli representative at Lausanne to make any of the desired concessions on refugees and boundaries. The note interpreted Israel's attitude as dangerous to peace and contained an implied threat that the United States would reconsider its attitude towards Israel. On account of Israel's insistence to maintain its attitude unmodified on this matter, the conflict could have threatened American-Israeli relations on major matters of concern to both parties. But the United States Government prevented such a dangerous situation from arising by quickly reversing its initial position.

Again we may note that this same flexible relationship existed between Great Britain and the Zionist movement. Great Britain, which permitted Jewish immigration to Palestine and opened wide doors before it during the mandate period, was forced to issue the famous White Paper of 1939 limiting Jewish immigration to Palestine and undoing the Bell report. The White Paper created an obvious conflict between Britain and the world Zionist movement. Britain had estimated that at this stage such unlimited support for the Zionist movement will be detrimental to its wide and overall interests in the Middle East; while the Zionist movement formulated its strategies in terms of its narrower interests and objectives and worked against the White Paper.

"I am persuaded that all Allied Nations with the full concurrence of our Government and our people, are agreed that in Palestine shall be laid the foundations of a Jewish Comonwealth."¹

President Woodrow Wilson

Chaim Weizmann always concentrated his efforts on the ultimate goal of the Zionist movement, namely, the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine. His technique was to appeal to a widening number of governments and groups, skillfully emphasizing to each the area of mutual interests which exist between these countries and international Zionism. In his contacts, he made effective use of his wide international circle of acquaintances among whom was Justice Louis Brandeis, who, in turn, undertook to seek the support of his close friend, President Woodrow Wilson, for the concept of a Jewish state.² Weizmann explained the need for American support in a letter sent to Mr. Brandeis on 23 April 1917: "Both Russia and America are at present proclaiming anti-annexationist principles . . . I need not dwell on the fact that Jewish National Democracy and the Zionist Organization which essentially represents this Democracy trust implicitly to British rule, and they see in a British protectorate the only possibility for a normal development of a Jewish

(1) Chaim Weizmann, *Trial and Error*. London, Hamish Hamilton, 1950, p. 265.

(2) *Ibid.*, pp. 260-262.

commonwealth in Palestine. Whereas, in my opinion, Great Britain would not agree to a simple annexation of Palestine, and it does not desire any territorial expansion, it would certainly support and protect a Jewish Palestine. This is why American support for this scheme is so valuable at the present stage.”³

President Wilson, who, according to Weizmann, was wholeheartedly with the Zionists, regarded the publication of a declaration supporting the establishment of a Jewish home in Palestine premature, in view of the fact that no state of war existed between America and Turkey. In addition some American business interests—notably Standard Oil—which had acquired a concession from the Turks in the Negev opposed the declaration as well. Brandeis’s intention was to obtain from President Wilson a public expression of sympathy and in this he succeeded. On 16 October 1917, Colonel House, acting for President Wilson, cabled the British Government America’s support of the substance of the projected Balfour Declaration. This was one of the most important individual factors in breaking the deadlock created for the British Government by the British anti-Zionist Jews, and in bringing around the British Government to issue its well-known declaration.⁴

On 2 November 1917, the British Government issued the Balfour Declaration in the form of a letter by Arthur James Balfour, then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and addressed to Lord Rothschild. The most important part of the letter is the following:

(3) *Ibid.*, pp. 244-245.

(4) *Ibid.*, p. 262.

"His Majesty's Government view with favor the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavors to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of the existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country."⁵

Yet at the Paris Peace Conference, January 1919, President Wilson proposed that an international commission should go out to Palestine to ascertain the wishes of the people. The other Allies were unwilling to join in, and Wilson accordingly sent a private and purely American commission, consisting of Mr. H.C. King and Mr. C.R. Crane, who received petitions and interviewed delegations all over Palestine in the summer of 1919. They reported serious opposition to Zionist proposals, and a strong desire for the complete independence of a united Syria (including Palestine), but if supervision or assistance were necessary, the United States was preferred to Great Britain.⁶

With the failure of Wilson's internationalism and the return of the United States to its isolationism, the political fate of the Middle East and Palestine ceased to be among the immediate focal issues for the United States Government. Its concern with the area reverted once more to watching over the private interests of American citizens and concerns there.

(5) *Ibid.*, p. 262.

(6) H. Howard, *The King-Crane Commission*, Beirut, Khayats, 1963, Chapters IV and V.

By then, these interests were no longer confined to the sphere of religion and supposed philanthropy, but had come to include economic and political interests of increasing importance.

In spite of the policy of isolationism, in 1940 the world Zionist movement continued to exert pressure on American leaders to support the Zionist position. This position had been set forth in the Biltmore Program drawn up by David Ben Gurion, who at that time, was head of the Jewish Agency's executive committee in Palestine. On 11 May 1942, the Biltmore Program was adopted by the American Zionist Organization in New York city. The program called for the creation of a Jewish state including all of Palestine, the formation of a Jewish army, the scrapping of the British White Paper of 1939 (which had sharply curtailed Jewish immigration to Palestine), and urging unlimited Jewish immigration to Palestine under the supervision of the Jewish Agency rather than of Britain.

In November 1942 the Biltmore Program became the official policy of the World Zionist Organization. In this program the Zionists openly proclaimed their political intentions before the American public. Implicit in the program was the decision of the Zionist movement to look towards the US, rather than towards Britain, for effective external support of its aims. Following the enunciation of its program the Zionist Organization proceeded to organize American Jewry behind the Biltmore Program. After some initial difficulty, the Zionists could claim that they spoke for the majority of American Jews on the question of Palestine, thus demanding appropriate action by their government. Taking advantage of the oppor-

tunities offered by the realities of American politics and capitalizing on a multitude of "fortunate circumstances," the Zionists were able to organize a large segment of public opinion in support of their program. To this end the passage of pro-Zionist resolutions was secured from a number of state legislatures in the US, as well as a statement from President Roosevelt favoring Zionist aspirations.⁷

On 27 January 1944, two identical measures were introduced in the Congress which read as follows:

"Whereas the Sixty-seventh Congress of the US on June 30, 1922, unanimously resolved 'that the United States of America favors the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of Christians and all other non-Jewish communities in Palestine, and that the holy places and religious buildings and sites in Palestine shall be adequately protected'; and

"Whereas the ruthless persecution of the Jewish people in Europe has clearly demonstrated the need for a Jewish homeland as a haven for the large numbers who have become homeless as a result of this persecution:

"Therefore be it:

"Resolved, that the United States shall use its good offices and take appropriate measures to the end that the

(7) Harry B. Ellis, *Challenge in the Middle East*, New York, The Ronald Press Company, 1960, p. 88.

doors of Palestine shall be opened for free entry of Jews into that country, and that there shall be full opportunity for colonization, so that the Jewish people may ultimately reconstitute Palestine as a free and democratic Jewish commonwealth.”⁸

The resolution as presented was almost identical with the Biltmore Program which called for the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. The only alteration to be found in the Congressional resolution was the substitution of the word “reconstitute” in place of “be established”; the obvious intention being to create the impression that a Jewish commonwealth had once existed and that its restoration was only proper.

In addition President Roosevelt authorized the publication of a statement in his name supporting Jewish immigration to Palestine. It pointed out that the American Government had never given its approval to the White Paper of 1939. The President was happy that the doors of Palestine were opened to Jewish refugees, and that when future decisions were to be reached, full justice would be done to those who seek a Jewish National Home, for which the United States Government and the American people have always had the deepest sympathy and today more than ever, in view of the tragic plight of hundreds of the thousands of homeless Jewish refugees.⁹

(8) United States Congress, House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Hearings Before the Washington, Government Printing Office, 1944, p. 1.

(9) Jewish Agency, *Book of Documents*, p. 224.

The President's statement was singled out by the Zionist Organization of America as "the first clear-cut expression of sympathy with the Zionist aims to come from a leader of any of the Great Powers since the war (World War II) began."¹⁰

Here one should examine the attitude of President Roosevelt and his government *vis-à-vis* Jewish immigration into the United States. The President and his government were calling for opening the doors of Jewish immigration into Palestine but at the same time forbidding such immigration into the United States which could have provided a safe home for the Jews. Arthur Morse in his book *While Six Million Died: A Chronicle of American Apathy*, accuses the United States Government of indifference to Germany's destruction of the Jews in the Second World War. Morse claims that virtual proof concerning Hitler's order to massacre all Jews in Europe was put before the United States Government in the autumn of 1942. Yet for 17 months, according to the book, and in spite of detailed rescue plans put forward by Jewish welfare agencies, President Roosevelt's administration did practically nothing.

Morse's account begins on 8 August 1942, when the following cable reached the State Department in Washington:

"Received alarming report that in Fuhrer's headquarters plan discussed and under consideration according to which Jews in countries occupied or controlled by Germany, numbering 3½ four million should after deportation and

(10) Zionist Organization of America, *47th Annual Report*, p. 62.

concentration in East be exterminated at once blow to resolve once for all the Jewish question in Europe stop Action reported planned for Autumn methods under discussion including prussic acid stop.”¹¹

This message was transmitted by Gernart Riegner, the representative in Switzerland of the World Jewish Congress, via the State Department in Washington, to Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, head of the American Jewish Congress. It was the first intimation to the governments of the Allies that there existed a specific German order for the extermination of the Jews. The reaction in the State Department was one of universal disbelief.

On 28 September, Riegner was able to hand over to the American authorities two sets of documents. The first was a report prepared by an anti-Nazi officer attached to the German High Command, which had reached Riegner through a Swiss university professor. According to this report, there were at least two factories processing Jewish corpses for the manufacture of soap, glue and lubricants.

The second document consisted of two registered letters sent from a Jew in Warsaw to a friend in Switzerland. The first letter pointed out that all Jews of the Warsaw ghetto, with the exception of those working in the German war industry, were being deported to their death in the countryside. A second letter, dated 12 September, revealed whole sale extermination.

(11) Arthur Morse, *While Six Million Died*, New York Random House, 1965, p. 8.

Two months later the State Department received yet another document from a Vatican source. "The mass execution of Jews continues," citing the locales of murder in Poland. "The number of Jews killed is numbered by tens of thousands in the case of each of the towns in question."¹²

These and many other documents added up to a powerful collection of evidence which enabled Rabbi Wise to present to President Roosevelt, on 8 December 1942, a 20-page document entitled "Blue-Print for Extermination." It was a country-by-country analysis of annihilation. The President assured Wise that the United States and its Allies would take every step to end the crimes "and save, those who may yet be saved."

On 21 January 1943, Riegner provided Leland Harrison, Minister of the United States Legation in Bern, with a detailed report on the German extermination of 6,000 Polish Jews a day, and on the plight of Rumanian Jews. Harrison sent the information to the State Department by cable No. 482. Three weeks later he received a reply bearing the cable No. 354, which astounded him. It read:

"Your 482 21 January Stop It is suggested that in the future reports submitted to you for transmission to private persons in the United States should not be accepted unless extraordinary circumstances make such action advisable stop."¹³

Thus, the United States instructed its representative to

(12) *Ibid.*, p. 22.

(13) *Ibid.*, pp. 45-46.

reject one of his most fertile sources of news from occupied Europe.

The line of reasoning which led to the abandonment of the Jews had at its core the belief that rescue was incompatible with the Allies' principal war aims. But an unpublished State Department paper of 1943 revealed that many Jews *could* have been saved *without* diverting men, money or materials from the Allied effort. And far from lessening the Allies' effort, the results might have strengthened their cause.

One of the most important requirements for a rescue effort was some suspension of American immigration quotas. Low as the quotas were, official statistics reveal that between 1933 and 1943 there were more than 400,000 unfilled places within the United States immigration quotas of countries under Nazi domination.¹⁴

American opposition to Jewish immigration was also manifested in the Bermuda conference which was held in April 1943 to discuss refugee problems. The American representatives were instructed by the State Department not to limit the discussion to Jewish refugees; not to delay the wartime shipping program by suggesting that homeward-bound empty transports pick up refugees across the ocean if any space for their settlement was available in Europe; not to pledge funds, since this was the prerogative of Congress and the President; not to expect any changes in United States immigration laws; and not to establish new agencies for the relief of refugees.

(14) *Ibid.*, pp. 61-62.

From this one concludes that the United States Government was determined to hamper the adoption of any steps which would ensure or allow Jews to immigrate to the United States. How could one accept the explanation that American support for Jewish immigration into Palestine was based on humanitarian principles whereas the American Government had refused these immigrants entry into the United States. The only explanation that could be accepted under such circumstances is that the United States has followed and is still following a policy of racial discrimination not only against the Jews but also against those groups of people who do not fit into the category of the White Protestants.

Interestingly enough the hostile American attitude towards the immigration of Jews to the United States acted in favor of the long-term objectives of the Zionist movement. Had Jews been permitted to immigrate to America then it is virtually certain that the number of Jews willing to go to Palestine would have never been sufficient to establish a state there. Had America acted differently on the immigration issue, it would have made the realization of the ultimate Zionist aim simply impossible and impracticable.

With the death of President Roosevelt (12 April, 1945), and more accurately eight days later, the Zionists were seeking assurances, from his successor, President H. Truman, that there would be no departure from the promises made by the Democratic Party and the late President. However, Truman was faced more squarely than his predecessor with the economic, political and strategic implications of the post-war Middle East situation on account of the emergence of the United

States as the leading world power with vital economic and political interests in most parts of the world and particularly the Middle East.

On 16 August 1945, the President was questioned about the position taken by the American Government on Palestine. "The American view," he said, "is that we want to let as many of the Jews into Palestine as it is possible to let into that country. Then the matter will have to be worked out diplomatically with the British and the Arabs, so that, if a state can be set up there they may be able to set it up on a peaceful basis. I have no desire to send 500,000 American soldiers there to make peace in Palestine."¹⁵

On 31 August 1945, President Truman appealed to the British Prime Minister, Clement Attlee for the immediate admission of one hundred thousand refugees to Palestine. Britain suggested instead a joint Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry to study the problem. The pro-Zionist report of this committee was followed by the formation of a higher level Anglo-American Commission to study implementation of the committee's findings. When the higher commission turned in its report President Truman renewed his direct appeal to Mr. Attlee for the admission of one hundred thousand Jews to Palestine.

This appeal came in the midst of an election campaign in which two Democrats, James M. Mead and Herbert Lehman, were facing an uphill battle for election respectively as Gover-

(15) *Harry S. Truman, Memoirs: Years of Trial and Hope, 1946-1952*, New York, The New American Library, 1965, Vol. II, p. 136.

nor and Senator of New York State. Both men informed the White House that a pro-Zionist statement must be made immediately, since Thomas Dewey, Mr. Mead's opponent for Governor, was on the point of making one. All this was based on the assumption that the Zionists of New York would vote as a block for the candidate most favorable to their aims.¹⁶

The State Department was asked by the White House to draft a suitable statement. Meanwhile, New York called Washington again. President Truman must issue the statement or Messrs. Mead and Lehman would issue it on their own, calling on the President to endorse it. This brought forth Truman's second appeal to Mr. Attlee for the admission of one hundred thousand Jews to Palestine. The date of this statement was 4 October 1946. Two days later Mr. Dewey, Republican candidate for Governor, declared that "not 100,000 but several hundreds of thousands" of Jews should be admitted to Palestine. Republicans as well as Democrats were responsive to Zionist votes.¹⁷

Early in November Forrestal suggested to Secretary Marshal that a "serious attempt be made to lift the Palestine question out of American partisan politics. I (Forrestal) said that there had been general acceptance of the fact that domestic politics ceased at the Atlantic Ocean and that no question was more charged with danger to our security than this particular one."¹⁸

(16) Kermit Roosevelt, "The Partition of Palestine: A Lesson in Pressure Politics," *M.E. Journal*, January, 1948.

(17) *The New York Times*, 7 October 1946.

(18) Walter Millis and E.S. Duffield ed., *The Forrestal Diaries*, New York, Viking Press, 1951, p. 341.

The Partition of Palestine

The Palestine dispute was referred to the United Nations when Britain called for a special session of the General Assembly to study it. An eleven-nation United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) was formed. The committee visited Palestine and on 31 August 1947 submitted a report to the General Assembly. The majority of UNSCOP favored the partition of Palestine into separate Arab and Jewish states with an internationalized Jerusalem.¹⁹

The stage was set for the acrimonious partition debate in the United Nations, with the United States strongly backing partition. Commenting on Zionist pressures brought to bear upon the White House Truman said: "I do not think I ever had as much pressure and propaganda aimed at the White House as I had in this instance (concerning the 29 November Partition Plan). The persistence of a few of the extreme Zionist leaders—actuated by political motives and engaging in political threats—disturbed and annoyed me."²⁰ Under Secretary Robert Lovett also reported that "he had never in his life been subject to as much pressure as he had been in the three days beginning Thursday morning and ending Saturday night."²¹

Sumner Welles claimed that the White House was directly involved in this matter: "In the light of later events it is important that there be no misunderstanding of the positions

(19) *U.N. Year Book, 1947-1948*, p. 230.

(20) H.S. Truman, *Memoirs, op. cit.*, p. 158.

(21) *The Forrestal Diaries, op. cit.*, p. 346.

that the United States assumed at that juncture. By direct order of the White House every form of pressure, direct and indirect, was brought to bear by American officials upon those countries outside of the Moslem World that were known to be either uncertain or opposed to partition. Representatives or intermediaries were employed by the White House to make sure that the necessary majority would at length be secured."²² Some of the countries which were chosen as targets were the six nations which had opposed partition, namely, Haiti, the Philippines, Liberia, Nationalist China, Greece and Ethiopia. The Firestone Tire and Rubber Company, which has a concession in Liberia, reported that it had been telephoned and asked to transmit a message to their representative in Liberia directing him to bring pressure on the Liberian Government to vote in favor of partition.²³

An ex-Governor, a prominent Democrat with White House connections, personally telephoned Haiti urging that its delegation be instructed to change its vote.²⁴

Both Haiti and Liberia reversed their stand and voted for partition. So did the Philippines and Ethiopia, while China abstained from voting. Of those six chosen "targets," only Greece held fast to its earlier convictions. The final result was the approval of partition by the United Nations on 29 November 1947.

(22) Sumner Welles, *We Need Not Fail*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1948, p. 63.

(23) *The Forrestal Diaries*, *op. cit.*, p. 346.

(24) Kermit Roosevelt, "The Partition of Palestine: A Lesson in Pressure Politics," *M.E. Journal*, *op. cit.*, 1948, p. 15.

Further evidence of the political nature of the United States Government's stand on Palestine was furnished by Colonel William A. Eddy, after his retirement from service. Colonel Eddy described the recall to Washington of four American diplomats stationed in the Middle East. The United States' Ambassadors in Egypt, Lebanon and Syria (a joint post), Saudi Arabia, and the Consul General to mandated Palestine. The purpose was to give President Truman the diplomats' views on the effects of American policy in Palestine. Spokesman of the group was George Wadsworth, who spoke for about twenty minutes stressing the harm that would be inflicted on American economic interests if the United States Government persisted in its anti-Arab policy in Palestine. When he had finished, Colonel Eddy wrote: "Mr. Truman summed up his position with the utmost candor: I am sorry, gentlemen but I have to answer to hundreds of thousands who are anxious for the success of Zionism; I do not have hundreds of thousands of Arabs among my constituents."²⁵

According to President Truman, the Jewish pressure on the White House did not diminish in the days following the adoption of the partition resolution. Individuals and groups asked him, "usually in rather quarrelsome and emotional way, to stop the Arabs, to keep the British from supporting the Arabs, to furnish American soldiers . . ."²⁶ The confusion and bloodshed in Palestine which followed upon the United Nations vote made it clear that partition could be effected only

(25) William A. Eddy, *F.D.R. Meets Ibn Saud*, New York, American Friends of the M.E. Inc., 1954, pp. 36-37.

(26) H.S. Truman, *Memoirs, op. cit.*, p. 160.

through the use of force, a stand taken by F.D. Roosevelt Jr., Sumner Welles, Herbert Lehman and other Zionist supporters.

The military, however, foresaw that the presence of American troops in the area could only assist the Soviets. The appearance of American troops, it was felt, would put the United States in the position of supporting an anti-Arab program. This would then allow the Soviet Union to appear as the only real friend of Arab nationalism should that country then elect to desert the Zionist.²⁷ For these and other strategic reasons Secretary of Defense Forrestal became increasingly active in seeking to prevent that situation from materializing. On 13 December, Forrestal spoke to Governor Dewey about removing Palestine from the realm of partisan politics. Governor Dewey said that while agreeing in principle with Forrestal, he was skeptical that the Democrats would really abide by any such decision.²⁸ The Secretary's concern was heightened after hearing from Mr. Jennings of Socony Vacuum, on 6 January 1948, that various oil companies had decided to suspend work on their Arabian pipelines because of disturbed conditions in Palestine.²⁹ Forrestal's efforts met little success with the Republicans as well as with members of his own party. At the same time, Forrestal came to believe that the gravity of the situation demanded that the Secretary of State should attempt to secure bipartisan agreement on this matter. A paper to this effect was drawn up and presented to Under Secretary Robert Lovett on 21 January who agreed in general with Forrestal's

(27) C.F. Halford Hoskins, *The M.E.: Problem Area in World Politics*, New York, Macmillan Co., 1957, pp. 18-38, 232-254.

(28) *The Forrestal Diaries*, *op. cit.*, p. 348.

(29) *Ibid.*, p. 356 f.

conclusions.³⁰ A visit from Franklin D. Roosevelt to Forrestal, on 3 February 1948, was obviously aimed at toning down the latter's activities. But to Roosevelt's warning that failure to implement partition could only harm Democratic chances in certain key states, the Secretary characteristically remarked that he "thought it was about time that somebody should pay some consideration to whether we might not lose the United States." Forrestal also informed Roosevelt that the tactics by which the partition resolution had been secured bordered on scandal but on this the young Congressman professed ignorance.³¹

While testifying before a subcommittee of the House Armed Forces Committee in January, Forrestal pointed out the possibility of Russian meddling in the Near East and indirectly admitted that the United Nations partition resolution was inimical to American interests.³² The Secretary also revealed that there were only about 53,000 deployable troops in the United States while General Gruntler informed the President that from 80,000 to 160,000 men would be needed to implement partition.³³ As early as 1 December 1947, the Associated Press had been permitted to reveal that the United States military observers were opposed to partition on the grounds that it might put Russian troops on the Mediterranean within flying minutes of the Suez Canal and of American oil concessions.³⁴ And on several occasions, the Joint Chiefs of Staff

(30) *Ibid.*, p. 359 f.

(31) *Ibid.*, p. 362 f.

(32) *The New York Times*, 20 January, 1948.

(33) *The Forrestal Diaries*, *op. cit.* p. 376 f.

(34) L. Farago, "An Inside Report on the Palestine Fiasco," *U.N. World*, May 1948, p. 14.

submitted memoranda to show that the United States could not afford to send more than a token force to the area.³⁵

In addition, the State Department, or at least the Near East Division, had not been convinced of the wisdom on partition. According to one report, L. Henderson drew up a program against partition in early December. This plan supposedly called for the recommitting of the entire Palestine question to a special session of the General Assembly, the placing of Palestine under the United Nations trusteeship pending a different solution.³⁶

Military and diplomatic arguments for a new approach to the Palestine problem were reinforced by the lobbying activities of the oil interests. Their representatives pointed out that if the United States continued to press for partition, the oil of the Near East would not be available for military purposes and, more immediately, containing communism.³⁷

Perhaps the first indication of a new American attitude came on 5 December 1947 when it was announced that, "for the present," no licenses for arms shipments to "troubled areas" in the Middle East would be granted. This policy brought strong Zionist agitation for repeal of the embargo³⁸ which did not, in fact, prevent illegal shipments from American ports to Palestine. Barnett Litvinoff notes that an engineer

(35) H.S. Truman, *Memoirs, op. cit.*, p. 162.

(36) L. Farago, "An Inside Report on the Palestine Fiasco," *op. cit.*, p. 14.

(37) S. Welles, *We Need Not Fail, op. cit.*, pp. 81-82.

(38) *The Forrestal Diaries, op. cit.*, p. 376.

named Slavin purchased "many millions" worth of war equipment for \$800,000.³⁹

As a result of fierce Arab opposition and the inability of the Jews to establish their state after the withdrawal of the British, the United States Government began to insist that reconciliation between Jews and Arabs should be attempted. This new trend away from partition to reconciliation was evident in the American attitude displayed at a series of meetings of the Security Council beginning on 8 March 1948 and attended by all the permanent members except Britain. The United States Ambassador to the United Nations, Austin, expressed the hope that agreement would be reached by the Arabs, Jews and British without outside interference. The Jews and Arabs were formally asked by the United States, China and France on 15 March to agree to a truce in Palestine; a step which, strictly speaking, had not been authorized by the Security Council. However, the opinions expressed by both parties indicated that agreement was as far away as ever. It, therefore, seemed that force alone would effect partition. Having been brought to the crucial issue, the United States thereupon refused to recommend to the Security Council that a threat to peace and security existed in Palestine.

With the trend of American policy away from the enforcement of partition, the Jewish Agency sought to reach the President of the United States directly. Weizmann requested an interview with President Truman but his request was not

(39) Barnet Litvinoff, *Ben Gurion of Israel*, London, Widenfeld and Nicolson, 1954, p. 159.

immediately granted. In what was clearly a Zionist stratagem to overcome this bloc, Eddie Jacobson, a member of B'nai B'rith, and a friend of Truman and Weizmann, was received by the President on 14 March in spite of the latter's decision forbidding further approaches from the Zionists. Jacobson was able to convince Truman to receive Weizmann and so he did on 18 March, but at the President's order the Zionist leader was brought in through the East Gate and the interview was "off the record." After a conversation lasting almost three quarters of an hour, Truman seemed convinced that the Zionist leader "had reached a full understanding" of his policy.⁴⁰

The day after the President's interview with Weizmann, events at the United Nations reached a new stage. On 19 March Austin asserted before the Security Council that the partition plan did not constitute an obligation for the United Nations or any of its members. The plan itself, said Austin, had been agreed to only on the presumption that all its parts would be carried out together. Since this was now manifestly impossible, the job of the United Nations was to see to it that peace and order were restored. It was therefore proposed that a temporary trusteeship under the Trusteeship Council be established. Such a procedure, said Austin, would remove the threat of violence and would make it possible for Jews and Arabs to reach an agreement on the future government of the country. Trusteeship, it was said, would not prejudice the character of the eventual political settlement. The American delegate accordingly asked the Security Council to recommend

(40) H.S. Truman, *Memoirs, op. cit.*, pp. 160-161.

the creation of such a trusteeship to the General Assembly and to Britain, the Mandatory. Pending a special session of the General Assembly, it was suggested that the Palestine Committee suspend its efforts to implement partition.⁴¹

Following Austin's statements, supporters of the partition plan in the United States, accused the government of abandoning the plan. In order to clarify the United States' stand, Truman announced on 25 March that trusteeship was not proposed as a substitute for partition, but was only an effort to fill the vacuum created by the termination of the mandate. He said "unfortunately, it has become clear that the partition plan cannot be carried out at this time by peaceful means. We could not undertake to impose this solution on the people of Palestine by the use of American troops, both on Charter grounds and as a matter of national policy. The United Kingdom has announced its firm intention to abandon the mandate in Palestine on May 15. Unless emergency action is taken, there will be no public authority in Palestine on that date capable of preserving law and order. Violence and bloodshed will descend on the Holy Land. Large-scale fighting among the people of that country will be the inevitable result. Such fighting would infect the entire Middle East and could lead to consequences of the gravest sort involving the peace of the world."⁴²

Accordingly the United States introduced into the Security

(41) U.N. Security Council, *Verbatim Record of the Two Hundred and Seventy-First Meeting*, March 19, 1948, Doc. S/PV. 271.

(42) R.P. Stevens, *American Zionism and U.S. Foreign Policy 1942-1947*, New York, Pageant Press, 1962, pp. 202-203.

Council, on 30 March, two resolutions: one calling on Arabs and Jews to meet with the Security Council to arrange a truce, and the other requesting the Security Council to convene a special session of the General Assembly. Both resolutions were adopted by the Security Council within two days.⁴³ Subsequent attempts by the United States to draw up a trusteeship formula—while ruling out the intervention of American troops unless both Arabs and Jews should agree to a truce—failed to find support in the Assembly. Arabs and Jews drifted into full-scale war and the attempt of the Security Council to secure a truce proved ineffectual.

Recognition of the State of Israel

As 15 May, the date set by Britain for the termination of the mandate, approached, the Zionist leadership continued to plan for the proclamation of an independent state. Refusing to acquiesce in the proposed trusteeship, the Jewish Agency decided to confront the world with "facts." Weizmann informed President Truman on 9 April that the choice for the Jews was simply "between statehood and extermination."

On 13 May, President Truman received a letter from Weizmann advising him that at midnight, 15 May, the Provisional Government of the Jewish state would come into existence. It was therefore suggested that the United States take the lead in recognizing the world's "newest democracy."⁴⁴ The United States, however, was still officially committed to

(43) *Ibid.*, p. 203.

(44) R.P. Stevens, *American Zionism and U.S. Foreign Policy*, *op. cit.*, p. 204.

truce and temporary trusteeship. But if the President had any scruple on this score, it was overcome by Clark Clifford and David Niles. Clifford had been in constant contact with Democratic leadership and that group seemed convinced that trusteeship would defeat Truman in the coming elections.⁴⁵ On the morning of 14 May the President received Frank Goldman, President of B'nai B'rith. At eleven-thirty the same morning Elihu Epstein, the representative of the Jewish Agency in Washington, was received at the White House. Epstein presented a formal notification that Israel would be born the same day at 6:01 p.m. Washington time and expressed the hope that recognition would be granted.⁴⁶ At 6:11 p.m. the following statement by the President was released to the press:

"This government has been informed that a Jewish state has been proclaimed in Palestine, and recognition has been requested by the provisional government thereof.

"The United States recognized the provisional government as the *de facto* authority of the new state of Israel."⁴⁷

This message was then communicated to the startled American delegation at the United Nations, but not before reports had already brought the news.

It seems that President Truman had reached his decision to recognize Israel without the knowledge of the State Depart-

(45) *Ibid.*, p. 204.

(46) *Department of State Bulletin*, XVIII, 464, May 23, 1948, p. 673.

(47) *Ibid.*

ment. At the White House meeting, 14 May, with Marshall, Lovett, Niles, Clifford and other presidential advisers, the President reportedly stated that recognition would be granted.⁴⁸ Marshall expressed the belief that the question should not be decided on the basis of politics and possibly left the meeting with the wrong impression that President Truman agreed with him. Marshall was only informed between three and four o'clock the same day that Israel would be recognized. The Secretary was instructed to keep this information secret from all others in the State Department, since, as Truman understood, various officials there "would want to block recognition of a Jewish state."⁴⁹ The fact that recognition was granted before it had even been requested by the provisional government of Israel was not explained by the President, but this unprecedented step did provoke severe criticism because it was regarded as being inconsistent with accepted principles of diplomacy. American recognition of the state of Israel signified the successful accomplishment by the Zionist Organization of the essential object of the Biltmore Program. Indeed, it can be said that during the course of the six years which followed the enunciation of the Biltmore Program, that document had been effectively translated through a variety of means and stratagems into the United States foreign policy. In addition, most Americans did not know—and perhaps still do not realize—that President Truman's decision to support the creation of Israel ran directly counter to the advice of American diplomats in the area. It was a case of White House fiat, based at least in part on internal American political consider-

(48) *The Forrestal Diaries*, *op. cit.*, p. 440.

(49) H.S. Truman, *Memoirs*, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

ations, versus the judgment of professional diplomats assigned to watch American interests overseas.

Truman's role in the creation of the state of Israel did not come to an end with his recognition of the state. His continued distrust of the State Department, or fear of outside pressure which might result in lessening United States' support of Israel, was exemplified by the appointment of James G. MacDonald to head the American diplomatic mission in Israel on 22 June 1948. When the question of sending a diplomatic mission to Israel was raised, the State Department was of the opinion that the mission ought to be small and headed by a career foreign service officer. However, it was proved to be impossible to get the approval of the President. On the morning of 22 June, the President met with a small group of advisers. All of the names suggested by the State Department were rejected, chiefly on the ground that the President ought to have "his own man" in Tel Aviv.⁵⁰ This man was James G. MacDonald whose appointment was made in a message sent to him stating: "the President wants you to go to Israel as the government's first representative."⁵¹ When the appointment was questioned on the grounds of his identification with Zionism as well as for other reasons, the answer given was: "that the President did not want any discussion of the matter but to have action followed at once in the form of an announcement that afternoon by the State Department."⁵²

(50) J.G. MacDonald, *My Mission in Israel*, London, Victor Gollancz, 1951, p. 6.

(51) *Ibid.*, p. 4.

(52) *The Forrestal Diaries, op. cit.*, p. 441.

The platform of the Democratic Party for the 1948 campaign contained a statement on Israel that expressed what Truman had in mind. It read as follows:

"We approved the claims of the State of Israel to the boundaries set forth in the United Nations resolution of November 29 and consider that changes thereof should be made only if fully acceptable to the State of Israel . . . We continue to support, within the framework of the United Nations, the internationalization of Jerusalem and the protection of the holy places in Palestine."⁵³

Truman added

"It represented my deep conviction that not only the general promise of the Balfour Declaration should be kept but also the specific promises of the United Nations resolution. I had assured Dr. Weizmann that these promises would be kept."⁵⁴

Differences between the President and the State Department also arose with regard to the question of replacing the *de facto* recognition of Israel by a *de jure* one. The President wanted to give *de jure* recognition as soon as possible, and Lovett, along with the State Department, wanted to delay it. Lovett had doubts as to the stability and representativeness of the Israeli Provisional Government. Furthermore, the State Department itself was not quite sure what the United States policy towards Israel was, or what was it to be.

(53) H.S. Truman, *Memoirs, op. cit.*, p. 166.

(54) *Ibid.*

Once again the President and the State Department had different opinions with regard to the Bernadotte Plan.

The fighting and the truce arrangement of 1948 produced a division of Palestine quite different from that of the United Nations partition resolution plan. They led also to a new partition proposal which was submitted by the United Nations mediator, Count Bernadotte, in September. The plan was called the "Bernadotte plan." It envisaged giving West Galilee in the north to Israel and the Negev in the south to the Arabs. President Truman wrote in his *Memoirs*: "I did not like this change. It looked to me like a fast reshuffle that gave to the Arabs the Negev Area, which still remained to be fully settled. If, however, one looked only at the map and how the two partition proposals appeared there, the Bernadotte plan may have seemed an improvement; it seemed to reduce the number of friction points along a long frontier between the Jews and the Arabs."⁵⁵ Whereas the Secretary of State, Marshall, informed the United Nations that it seemed to him it was a fair and sound proposal, the President repudiated it publicly in order to avert the Republican accusation that the United States has reversed its policy and the Zionist accusation that "the Bernadotte plan had been drawn up originally in our (US) State Department."⁵⁶

Following this the British and the Chinese delegations introduced a joint-resolution in the United Nations calling for a ceasefire in Palestine, placing the blame on the Jews

(55) *Ibid.*

(56) *Ibid.*

and demanding withdrawal from the Negev. The discussion of this proposal coincided with the absence of Secretary Marshall as the head of the United States delegation to the United Nations who was visiting Turkey and Greece. In order to avert any favorable statement on the resolution, President Truman sent a message to Marshall requesting him "that no statement be made or no action be taken on the subject of Palestine by any member of our delegation in Paris without specific authority from me and clearing the text of any statement."⁵⁷

On 28 October 1948, in a speech in Madison Square in New York President Truman declared "it is my desire to help build in Palestine (Israel) a strong, prosperous, free and independent democratic state. It must be large enough, free enough, and strong enough to make its people self-supporting and secure."⁵⁸

In this important statement we can see to what extent the establishment of Israel was a vital matter in President Truman's estimates concerning the protection and advancement of the United States presence, influence and basic interests in the Middle East. This fact acquires additional significance if we remember the serious contemplation on the part of the United States Government to intervene directly and militarily in Palestine to help set up the new state. Similarly this announcement on the part of President Truman provides us with some grounds for explaining the partial differences

(57) *Ibid.*, p. 167.

(58) *Ibid.*, p. 168.

described earlier between the State Department and the White House concerning the intensity of the American support for Israel. It seems that these differences are the result of varying estimates on the part of the State Department and the President, concerning what is in the best interests of the economic, political and cultural American (western) presence in the Middle East. President Truman seems to have thought that in the long run the American presence in the area would be best served by creating a "symbiotic" state which, as his statement says, is "large enough," "strong enough" and "free enough" to overcome the forces which pose a threat (actual and potential) to this American presence and all that it implies. On the other hand the State Department seems to have been more responsive to the immediate damage that such a fully pro-Zionist American policy would bring about to American prestige and influence *vis-à-vis* the governments and regimes of the Arab world.

Following his re-election and on 29 November 1948 President Truman, in a confidential letter to Weizmann, reiterated emphatically his opposition to any plan which would envisage the taking away of the Negev from Israel. President Truman wrote: "I had thought that my position would have been clear to all the world, particularly in the light of the specific wording of the Democratic Party platform. But there were those who did not take this seriously, regarding it as 'just another campaign promise' to be forgotten after the election. I believe they have recently realized this error. I have interpreted my re-election as a mandate from the American people to carry out the Democratic platform—including, of course, the plank on Israel. I intend to do so. . . . We have

announced in the General Assembly our firm intention to oppose any territorial changes which are not acceptable to the State of Israel. I am confident that the General Assembly will support us in this basic position.

"We have already expressed our willingness to help develop the new state through financial and economic measures. As you know, the Export-Import Bank is actively considering a substantial long-term loan to Israel on a project basis. I understand that your Government is now in process of preparing the details of such project for submission to the Bank."⁵⁹

In December 1948, fighting flared in the Negev and the United States Military Attaché in Israel kept Washington constantly informed of the progress of the fighting. Dr. Weizmann wrote to Mr. Truman accusing Britain of interfering between Israel and Egypt and urging the United States offices to prevent "such further British intrigue with Arabs as might deter a peaceful settlement between Israel and Egypt."⁶⁰ In response, President Truman conferred with Sir Oliver Franks, British Ambassador to the United States, and told him that "the reconnaissance flight by British planes and the landing of British troops in Aqaba, in Jordan, were unwarranted and badly conceived. . . . Anglo-American cooperation was essential, but American advice should be asked and taken or at least seriously considered."⁶¹

(59) *Ibid.*, p. 169.

(60) J.G. MacDonald, *My Mission in Israel*, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

(61) *Ibid.*, pp. 115-116.

On 31 January 1949, the United States Government extended *de jure* recognition to Israel⁶² and approved a \$100,000,000 loan which Israel had requested of the Export-Import Bank and the diplomatic mission was raised to the level of an embassy.⁶³

Thus, the United States endorsed Israel's continued expansion beyond the 29 November 1947 partition resolution despite President Truman's announcements and declarations to the effect that Israel was seriously seeking peace. President Truman defended Israel's occupation of the Negev although it was in violation of the truce agreement agreed to between the two warring parties.

With the failure of the Palestine Conciliation Commission to reach agreement between the Arabs and the Israelis and the frustrations resulting from this, President Truman on 29 May 1949, sent a note to Ben Gurion expressing deep disappointment at the failure of the Israeli representative at Lausanne to make any of the desired concessions on refugees or boundaries. It interpreted Israel's attitude as dangerous to peace and an indicating disregard of the United Nations General Assembly resolutions of 29 November 1947 (partition and frontiers), and 11 December 1948 (refugees and internationalization of Jerusalem). It reaffirmed insistence that territorial compensation should be made for territory taken in excess of the partition resolution and that tangible refugee concessions should be made as an essential preliminary step to any prospect

(62) H.S. Truman, *Memoirs, op. cit.*, p. 165.

(63) J.G. MacDonald, *My Mission in Israel, op. cit.*, p. 125.

for general settlement. The "operative" part of the note was the implied threat that the United States would reconsider its attitude towards Israel.⁶⁴

Before the Israeli Government sent its reply to the above-mentioned note, the United States Ambassador to Israel, James G. MacDonald cabled a report to President Truman and Acting Secretary of State on this matter. This report misrepresented the facts since MacDonald interpreted the territorial compensation to mean only the southern Negev and intimate that the interested party in this area, besides Israel, was Great Britain (and not the Arabs). Thus, in his opinion, such a compensation would serve only British aspirations in the area, which were contrary to United States interests. MacDonald agreed that "the Israel Government would not yield any portion of the southern Negev unless it were forced either by military pressure or by such a degree of economic pressure as would be tantamount to war. And in its resistance to giving up the Negev tip, it would have at least the full moral support of the Soviet Union."⁶⁵

Following the receipt of the Israeli reply, in which they restated their case in a "brilliant argument" and reasserted their regard of the friendship of the United States Government and people as an asset of Israel's foreign relations, the State Department reversed its stand on the issue. Its counter-reply abandoned completely the stern tone of its predecessor. It decided that Israel's mass immigration was a reason for

(64) *Ibid.*, p. 165.

(65) *Ibid.*, p. 167.

holding up the return of the refugees,⁶⁶ thus rationalizing the whole issue in a manner that would serve the interests of Israel.

The United States reversed its attitude in spite of its awareness that Israel was the cause of frustrating the Palestine Conciliation Commission's efforts to reach a settlement that would be acceptable to both sides. Here the contrast is quite clear between the United States declared policy, namely, the call for peace, and its actual policy of supporting Israeli military expansionism. Thus, with the failure of the United Nations to patch up the situation in Palestine, what emerged was an Israel much larger than that of the original United Nations partition resolution. Military fighting determined the area of the state of Israel. The United States kept silent with regard to the territorial gains of Israel.

The explanation that could be given for such an attitude on the part of the United States, in addition to Zionist pressure and President Truman's personal convictions, is the fact that the new state could serve well the interests of the United States in the Middle East which were beginning to be formulated in clear-cut terms. Louis Johnson, Secretary of Defence, declared "Israel is important strategically and we must support her."⁶⁷ And in November 1949, George McGhee, Assistant Secretary, declared that the purpose of the United States policy in the Middle East is two-fold: (1) to avert the threat of communism from the inside of the Middle Eastern

(66) *Ibid.*, pp. 167-168.

(67) *Ibid.*, p. 172.

countries, and (2) to keep armed the defensible border states (Greece and Turkey) as a defence against any outside Soviet aggression. Great Britain, McGhee continued, was hardpressed by other problems and cannot carry on the burden of defending the area against communism. The only alternative left to the United States is to step in and shoulder such a defence.⁶⁸ Thus the state of Israel could play a major role in fulfilling these two purposes. As far as the first purpose is concerned, namely, averting any communist take-over from the inside which could only happen through internal revolutions in the Middle Eastern countries, Israel could be used as a base for quelling down such revolutions. As for the second purpose, namely communist aggression, Israel could be used as a military base for affronting such an aggression.

McGhee also declared that the United States was not interested in a Middle Eastern pact, and was not promoting any regional pact which it could not actively support. There was no immediate prospect of Congressional approval for any large-scale expenditures of this kind in the Middle East. Unless and until such approval was forthcoming, a pact would be only harmful to the signatories and the United States.

Militarily, McGhee pointed out, the United States wanted to keep a balance between Israel and its neighbors.

Tripartite (Britain, France and the United States) Declaration on Security in the Arab-Israel Zone, 25 May 1950

A year after the conclusion of the armistice agreements, which were signed in May 1949, it was evident that no peace

(68) *Ibid.*, p. 181.

settlement was in sight. The United States then took the initiative to put a Western guarantee behind the armistice settlement to ensure the safety of Israel. Early in 1950 the Israeli Government requested the United States Government to sell it arms in order to counter the shipments that were being made by Britain to some of the Arab states by virtue of outstanding treaties. The United States Government was sympathetic to Israel's needs but feared the development of an arms race in the Middle East which might upset the *status quo* and lead to a renewed war. Consequently, it consulted with British and French representatives, the traditional arms suppliers of the area, and as a result a Tripartite Declaration was issued. The declaration's main pledge was that the three powers would not permit any armed aggression across the existing armistice lines in Palestine, and if such an aggression took place they would take appropriate action against the aggressor, "both within and outside the United Nations." The second pledge was that the three powers would strive to maintain a balance in the supply of arms to Israel and the Arab states and to prevent the creation of any "imbalance" that would endanger peace in the area. They also promised to supply Israel and the Arab states with enough weapons to meet their legitimate needs for self-defense, and "to permit them to play their part in the defense of the area as a whole."⁶⁹ The Israeli Government promptly welcomed the declaration because it guaranteed its frontiers and promised to supply it with arms. With the Tripartite Declaration, the three powers involved promised to act as guardians of the state of Israel, and to do their best to ensure the maintenance of the *status quo* in the area.

(69) J.C. Hurewitz, *Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East*, Princeton, Van Nostrand, 1956, Vol. II, p. 308.

In addition to the abovementioned, the Tripartite Declaration was a preparatory step to another measure, forecast in the declaration itself, aimed at strengthening the defense of the area by bringing all the parties together into a regional defense organization. The submission of specific proposals for this measure was delayed by the outbreak of the Korean war a few weeks later which preempted the attention of Washington and the world; but once that war reached the point of stalemate, the need to provide for the protection of Western control of the Middle East became more urgent than ever.

Allied Middle East Command, 13 October 1951

On 13 October 1951, the United States, Britain, France and Turkey put forward an Allied Middle East Command as a kind of reply to two radical developments in the area. The Egyptian Government had broken off negotiations with Britain in preparation for liberating itself completely from the 1936 Treaty, and Iran had nationalized the Iranian Oil Company.

Generally speaking, the idea was to create something like the British Middle East Command of World War II, with the local governments "voluntarily" providing the necessary minimum cooperation and facilities in their function as partners. An "allied" organization, presumably, would be open to less objection from Middle Eastern public opinion than would the network of purely British bases and bilateral arrangements that had come under such strong attack.

The three powers decided to submit the proposal to Egypt first because: (1) the crisis was nearing its climax there;

(2) the Western military plans for the area rested on the Suez Canal base; and (3) Egypt's acceptance was thought essential to pave the way for acceptance by the other Arab countries. Israel was also informed and reassured that the scheme would in no way injure its interests.

The declared purpose of the plan was to defend Egypt and other Middle Eastern countries against aggression from outside (presumably communist aggression). If Egypt was prepared to participate "as a founder member . . . on a basis of equality and partnership," its security would be enhanced, its officers would hold posts of high responsibility in the command, and its forces would receive necessary training, and equipment from other member countries. As part of the bargain, however, Egypt would agree to furnish the command "such strategic defence and other facilities on her soil as are indispensable for the organization in peacetime of the defence of the Middle East." It would also grant "all necessary facilities and assistance in the event of war, imminent menace of war, or apprehended international emergency . . ." The British base at Suez would be formally handed over to Egypt "on the understanding that it would simultaneously become an Allied Base within the Allied Middle East Command with full Egyptian participation in the running of this base in peace and war." Britain, in return, would give up the Anglo-Egyptian treaty of 1936 and withdraw such British forces as were not allocated to the Command by agreement of its founder members.⁷⁰

(70) *Department of State Bulletin*, V. 25, October 22, 1951, pp. 647-648.

The proposal was put to the Egyptian Government without even attempting to sound it in advance. It was made at a time when the Egyptian Government had already proposed to its legislature the unilateral denunciation of the treaties with Britain on Suez. The sponsoring powers made their proposal in the hope that, by presenting the alternative of an "international" base at Suez, they could head off the storm and lay a sounder political ground work for maintaining the Suez base as the focal point for the defense of their presence in the entire Middle East. Western military opinion saw no good alternative to the Suez base. Its geographical location, communications, and facilities for training, storage and repair made it unique.

On 15 October 1951, the Egyptian Government rejected the proposal. Two days later United States Secretary of State, Dean Acheson publicly declared full American support of Britain's position and condemned Egypt's attitude. In the ensuing few weeks it became known that proposals to join in a Middle Eastern defense pact were addressed to other Arab states as well as to Israel. It became known also that the Western powers intended to go ahead with their plans even if the Arab states failed to respond favorably to these proposals.⁷¹

Israel, meanwhile, was convinced of its own value to Western interests as an ally of the United States. In order to ensure its position in the Middle East it attempted to sign a defense treaty with the United States. The United States preferred not to go through with such a formal treaty because

(71) G. Lenczowski, *The Middle East in World Affairs*, Ithica, Cornell University Press, 1962, p. 499.

the negative repercussions it will create in the Arab world (such as the embarrassment of Arab regimes friendly to the United States) will outweigh the positive gains that such a step might yield to the United States and Israel. In this connection it would be interesting to mention that some critics of American policy have urged that an alliance with Israel, the only friendly and dependable nation in the area after Turkey, is the only course of action that would really secure American (and Western) Middle Eastern interests in the long run.

The victory of the Republican Party at the polls in the fall of 1952 introduced a superficial modification in the attitude of the United States towards Israel. In contrast to the Democratic administration, which seemed to have leaned definitely towards Israel, President Eisenhower's administration endeavored to introduce what was officially termed "a policy of impartial friendship in the Middle East."¹

II

The reason behind the introduction of this new tactic on the part of the United States was the change of Soviet policy *vis-à-vis* the Palestine problem. Soviet-Israeli relations began to deteriorate in the winter of 1952-1953 when a group of Jewish doctors in Russia were arrested and sentenced for plotting against the security of the state. These trials provoked lively comment in Israel, which reached its culmination when a bomb exploded in the Soviet Legation in Tel-Aviv on 9 February 1953. Three days later the Soviet Union broke off diplomatic relations with Israel and did not resume them until 15 July 1953. Following this episode Russia began to give increasing evidence of courting Arab favor, first by supporting the Arabs in Security Council debates dealing with Israel's raids on Arab territories and later by offering certain Arab states arms and technical assistance. The new Soviet attitude found full expression in a speech delivered on 29 December 1955 by the former Communist Party Secretary, Nikita S. Khrushchev, who stated that "from the first day of

(1) Harry N. Howard, *United States Policy in the Near East, South Asia, and Africa — 1954*, Department of State Publication 5801, 1955.

its existence, the state of Israel has been taking a hostile, threatening position toward its neighbors. Imperialists are behind Israel, trying to exploit it against the Arabs for their own benefit."²

Visit of Dulles to the Middle East

As a result of the Soviet Union's new approach to the Arab-Israeli problem, and in an attempt to woo the Arabs, the United States was forced to re-evaluate its policies in the area and the position it has taken *vis-à-vis* the state of Israel. The United States' new approach was far from hostile to Israel which continued to enjoy many benefits and priorities. In May 1953, the former Secretary of State John Foster Dulles paid a three-week visit to the Arab capitals and Israel. In as much as it was the first visit paid by an American secretary of state to the area, it underlined the latter's importance. The explicit aim of the visit was to seek the answer to four major problems which the area presented: (1) What could be done to protect the security of the Middle East? (2) How could the United States help the former colonial states, whose protectors had been Britain and France, to preserve the independence they had acquired since the war? (3) What could be done to promote their economic development? (4) Was settlement possible in the dispute between the Arabs and Israel, which had smoldered menacingly ever since the United Nations arranged the truce of 1949?³

On 1 June 1953, Secretary Dulles presented a report on

(2) *The New York Times*, 31 December 1955.

(3) J.R. Beal, *John Foster Dulles*, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1957, p. 248.

his three-week visit to the Middle East in which he recommended that the United States should seek to allay the deep resentment against what has resulted from the creation of Israel and recognized the existence of Arab fears "that the United States will back the new State of Israel in aggressive expansion." He also recognized that the Arabs were "more fearful of Zionism than of communism."

Dulles, in his report, pointed out that "Israel should become part of the Near East community and cease to look upon itself, or be looked upon by others, as alien to this community." Dulles also stressed the need for a Middle East defense organization. In conclusion, he said that the United States should seek to follow a policy of impartiality between the Arabs and the Israelis.⁴

Israeli raids on Jordanian, Egyptian and Syrian territories gave Washington an ample opportunity to play the role of impartiality in the Arab-Israel dispute and woo the Arab governments. These raids evoked strong condemnation by official Washington. On 18 October 1953, following the Israeli raid on Qibya, Jordan, the State Department issued a statement in which it declared "the loss of lives and property involved in this incident convince us that those who are responsible should be brought to account and that effective measures should be taken to prevent such incidents in the future."⁵ In addition, the United States Government turned down an Israeli request for a \$75 million loan.

(4) *Department of State Bulletin*, 15 June 1953, pp. 831-835.

(5) *Department of State Bulletin*, 26 October 1953, p. 552.

On 20 October, Dulles suspended a grant of military aid to Israel amounting to \$26 million in respect of the first six months of the 1953 fiscal year. This amount was earmarked for allocation to Israel under the Mutual Security Act of 1953. The aid was suspended because Israel refused to comply with an injunction of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization to halt work on a project designed to drain the Huleh swamps and construct a hydro-electric plant in the demilitarized zone between Israel and Syria pending consideration of the issue by the Security Council. Dulles was of the opinion that "if the United States granted economic aid under these circumstances, it would tend to undermine the authority of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization. That authority is indispensable to the prevention of general hostilities and chaos in the area."⁶

On 27 October, the spokesman for the Government of Israel in the United Nations agreed to suspend work in the demilitarized zone. On 28 October Dulles announced that the grant to Israel would be made.

In addition, when Israel, in defiance of United Nations resolutions, moved her Foreign Ministry to Jerusalem in July 1953, thus completing the process of making the latter capital of the state, the United States refused to move its embassy from Tel-Aviv, expressing its disapproval of Israeli action. Also for the first time since the creation of Israel, the United States Government voiced its doubts as to the nature of Israel as the nucleus of the Jewish worldwide community and tendered some advice to Israeli leaders. This happened on two

(6) *Department of State Bulletin*, 16 November 1953, pp. 674-675.

occasions, when Assistant Secretary of State, Henry A. Byroade, made public statements on Arab-Israeli relations. Speaking on 9 April 1954, in Dayton, Ohio, Byroade declared:

"To the Israelis I say that you should come to truly look upon yourselves as a Middle Eastern state and see your own future in that context rather than as headquarters, or nucleus so to speak, of worldwide groupings of peoples of a particular religious faith who must have special rights within and obligations to the Israeli state. You should drop the attitude of the conqueror and the conviction that force and a policy of retaliatory killings is the only policy that your neighbors will understand. You should make your deeds correspond to your frequent utterances of the desire for peace."⁷

In another speech delivered to the American Council for Judaism on 1 May 1954, in Philadelphia, Byroade urged Israel to adopt a policy of restricted immigration inasmuch as the Arabs, fearful of Israel's possible expansion, were entitled to know "the magnitude of this new state."⁸

These statements caused considerable resentment both in Israel and among American Zionists, and the Israeli Government lodged a formal protest against Byroade's second speech as an unwarranted interference with Israel's sovereign right to formulate her immigration policies.⁹ Furthermore, Premier Sharett (in the Knesset) declared that Mr. Byroade's speech of 1 May reflects "the recent tendency of the United States

(7) *Ibid.*, p. 426.

(8) *Ibid.*

(9) *Ibid.*, p. 427.

to show greater lenience to the Arab states while turning a skin face towards Israel." Soon afterward the *Jerusalem Post* called for removal from the chairmanship of the Israeli-Jordanian Mixed Armistice Commission of Commander Elmo H. Hutchison, U.S.N., who was accused by the Israelis to be partial to the Arab cause.

To deal with the Arab-Israeli dispute, Dulles picked a foreign service officer, Francis H. Russel, to act as his special assistant. From the time of Russel's appointment in October 1954, to August 1955, the Arab-Israeli problem got the most exhaustive examination from all agencies of the United States Government involved in foreign policy, including the National Security Council, that it was possible to give. Dulles was convinced that by bringing the Arab states into the Western fold, they could be prevented from taking any warlike action against Israel. In addition, such a regional defense organization linked to the West would reconfirm the aim of the Truman Administration of trying to reinforce the area against communist pressure and possible aggression. However, Dulles was of the opinion that instead of trying to build a defense organization encompassing all the area at once, the job should be done piecemeal, starting with the countries of the "northern tier," and then gradually drawing in the others. The Secretary's conclusions, similar to those reached by others who had been working closely with the problem, may be summarized as follows: (1) that any sound regional defense organization must spring from the desires of the peoples and governments of the area in question; (2) that most of the Middle Eastern peoples and governments, as of that time, were unwilling to be associated with the West in such a

defense organization; (3) that the states of the "northern tier" of the Middle East were the most aware of the Soviet threat, the most likely to do something about it, and the best situated to provide protection to the area as a whole.¹⁰

This approach seemed to the Secretary of State to offer the advantage of allowing a start to be made toward the creation of the desired alliance among those countries that had shown some awareness of the communist danger without having to wait for a solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict. It was probably the hope of the Secretary of State that once the organization got going in the north, it would constitute a pressure on the Arab countries of the south to join it. Thus it became clear that the change in United States tactics was due to a desire to organize the Arab states in pacts to preserve its economic and strategic interests under the pretext of an illusory communist aggression.

Baghdad Pact

The first step toward the realization of the "northern tier" alliance was taken on 2 April 1954, when Turkey and Pakistan signed a mutual defense agreement which received the blessings of the United States and a promise of military and economic aid. This was of no particular concern to Israel. Two months later, however, the United States awarded military and economic assistance to Iraq with a view of facilitating the effort of its government to bring that country into the alliance. Israel and her sympathizers launched a vigorous cam-

(10) "Report on the Near East," Address by Secretary Dulles, *Department of State Bulletin*, V 28, June 15, 1953, pp.831-835.

paign to counter the policy of "arming the Arabs." Israel had little sympathy with United States' attempts to erect a barrier against Soviet penetration in the Middle East.¹¹ Israel claimed that arms to Iraq endangered her security since that country, which had participated in the war of 1948, had not even signed an armistice agreement with it. But Israel was given verbal reassurances that the military aid given to Arabs would not lead to an arms imbalance or to aggression. This became the basis for a regional alliance, to be known as the Baghdad Pact. In the course of the year Britain, Pakistan and Iran formally adhered to the *Pact*, thereby establishing the Middle East Treaty Organization (METO), with a permanent secretariat in Baghdad.¹² The United States, which originated the idea, stayed out of the Pact and contended herself for the time being with supporting it economically and militarily. Israel refused to accept such a consolidation since, according to Israeli explanation, the United States Government's refusal to join the Pact was due to its desire to continue wooing Egypt, whose government was opposed to the Pact. In addition the United States Government wanted to avoid any premature embarrassment that might result from Congress choosing to delve into the implications of the Pact for Israel. Therefore, as soon as Iraq signed the Pact, Israel's Government applied to the United States, Britain and France to include Israel in the Western defense system through NATO or in some other way.¹³ When this initiative failed, the Israeli Government

(11) G. Lenczowski, *The Middle East in World Affairs*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1962, pp. 423-424.

(12) *Ibid.*, p. 159.

(13) N. Safran, *The United States and Israel*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1963, p. 234.

urged the United States formally and openly to conclude a bilateral mutual defense treaty. The American Government could not meet this request since it would have doomed its efforts to draw the Arab states into a regional alliance. In an attempt to break this deadlock, Secretary Dulles came forward, on 26 August 1955, with a new plan to settle the Palestinian dispute. The plan, which was outlined in a speech at the Council on Foreign Relations, proposed: (1) "resettlement and, to such an extent as may be feasible, repatriation" of the 900,000 Arab refugees whose "sufferings are drawn out almost beyond the point of endurance"; (2) "an international loan to enable Israel to pay the compensation due from Israel to the refugees," with "substantial participation by the United States in such a loan"; (3) "adjustments needed to convert armistice lines of danger into boundary lines of safety" inasmuch as "the existing lines separating Israel and the Arab states . . . were not designed to be permanent frontiers"; (4) "formal treaty arrangements," in which the United States would join as soon as the adjustments had been made, "to prevent or thwart any effort by either side to alter by force the boundaries."¹⁴

On 11 September 1955, Premier Sharett referring to the abovementioned proposals declared that Israel will not make unilateral territorial concessions, especially in the Negev.

Israel's anxiety about her security prospects in the face of these developments was sharpened by the simultaneous

(14) *Department of State Bulletin*, V. 33, September 5, 1955, pp. 378-380.

deterioration of her position through another chain of events connected with Egypt. In 1952, a new regime came into power. Fearful of British intervention on behalf of the deposed king, the new rulers sought to secure the good will and restraining hand of Washington from the outset. The United States' reaction was positive. Relations between the United States and Egypt further improved when the new administration in Washington began to turn a sterner countenance towards Israel.

Toward the end of 1954, the Egyptian authorities announced that they had uncovered an Israel-led ring of spies and saboteurs who were responsible for bombing the American installations in Cairo with the aim of poisoning relations between Egypt and the United States. The story was generally thought at the time to be a fabrication; Israel declared so explicitly. When the Egyptians hanged two of the thirteen persons involved, Israel retaliated with a raid on Ghaza on 28 February 1955, in which nearly forty Egyptian soldiers were killed. Almost six years later it became known unofficially in the course of the Lavon Affair that the spying-sabotage adventure had in fact been mounted by Israeli intelligence.

Following the strong and successful Israeli attack on Egyptian position at Ghaza, Egypt began paying closer attention at her military preparedness. President Jamal 'Abdul-Nasser endeavored to purchase arms from Britain and the United States in the summer of 1955. Meeting with a virtual refusal, he turned toward the Soviet bloc and on 27 September 1955 concluded a barter deal with Czechoslovakia whereby Egyptian cotton was to be exchanged for an undisclosed quan-

tity of heavy military equipment and munitions.¹⁵

Israel's reaction to this deal was to apply, on 16 November 1955, to the United States for arms to counterbalance the Soviet shipments to Egypt. And on 21 November 1955, the Israeli Foreign Minister, who was conducting discussions in Washington with Secretary of State Dulles, renewed his appeal for United States' arms accounting to \$65 million. In order to attain its demand Israel's strategy aimed at putting domestic pressure on the United States Government. And on 3 February 1956, a group of 40 members of the House of Representatives submitted a letter to Mr. Dulles urging him to allow Israel "to obtain in the open market such weapons as would assure her protection against aggression."¹⁶

On 6 February 1956, Dulles, in his reply to the above-mentioned letter, declared that the United States is aware that "current developments could create a disparity in armed forces between Israel and its Arab neighbors," but that the United States is "not convinced" that further purchases of arms by Israel would remedy the situation. Dulles said, however, that "the United States may subsequently decide to sell arms to Israel," and that "the United States foreign policy includes the preservation of the State of Israel."¹⁷ And on 24 February 1956, Dulles told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that "Israel, due to its much smaller size and population, could not win an arms race against Arabs having access to Soviet block stocks," and that shipment of United States' arms to

(15) G. Lenczowski, *The Middle East in World Affairs*, *op. cit.*, p. 511.

(16) *Department of State Bulletin*, 20 February 1956, pp. 286-288.

(17) *Ibid.*, pp. 285-286.

Israel would not lead to "a permanent peace between Israel and the Arab states." Israel's security could be better assured by relying on the United Nations and the 1950 Tripartite Declaration. "More recently," Dulles pointed out, "President Eisenhower and Prime Minister Eden referred to this declaration (when they met in Washington between 30 January and 3 February 1956) and stated that they had made arrangements, in which the French have joined, for joint discussions as to the nature of measures to be taken in light of that declaration. All of these possible measures add up to a more effective deterrent than additional quantities of arms."¹⁸

On 9 April 1956, Mr. Hugerty, Press Secretary to President Eisenhower, declared that after discussing the repeated incidents of hostility in the Middle East, President Eisenhower and Dulles decided that "the United States is determined to support and assist any nation which might be subjected to such aggression."¹⁹ The State Department reasoned that it would be fatal to American interests to be jockeyed out of its "declared" policy of neutrality in the Arab-Israeli dispute and forced to take one side—Israel's—against the other.

However, American reaction in general was of two types. One was the impulse to outbid Russia. The other, expressed in Congress, was to cut off all aid to countries which tried to deal with both sides (East and West). Dulles rejected both approaches. Trying to outbid Russia, he said, would permit the Russians, simply by making offers around the world, to achieve cheap propaganda victory and drain the United States

(18) *Department of State Bulletin*, 5 March 1956, pp. 368-369.

(19) *Department of State Bulletin*, 23 April 1956, p. 668.

of its resources. Cutting off aid likewise was shortsighted because it might force needy countries to rely on Russia and implied for the United States that granting aid was to "buy" friendship.²⁰

The logical conclusion to be reached from the arguments presented by Dulles for refusing to supply Israel with arms is that the United States will adhere to its decision. However, the United States did not do so and decided to supply Israel, indirectly, with arms. On 3 April 1956, Dulles declared that the United States will not sell arms to Israel at present. In addition, he indicated that the United States will not object to Israel receiving arms from "other countries." "This was widely interpreted as giving Britain and France . . . encouragement to fill Israel's arms needs."²¹ "Britain, only six months ago the least sympathetic of the Western big three to Israel's pleas for help, had swung around sharply . . . France has begun delivery of twelve Mystère jet interceptor planes to Israel with tacit United States consent."²² These planes were originally ordered for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and the State Department let it be known that the United States agreed to relinquish NATO priority over these planes to permit their diversion to Israel. The political results were almost the same as if the United States had sold arms to Israel directly, except that they took a little longer to materialize.

Johnston Plan for the Utilization of the Jordan River Waters

In an attempt to solve Israel's water problems, President

(20) J.R. Beal, *John Foster Dulles, op. cit.*, p. 256.

(21) *The New York Times*, 4 April 1956.

(22) *The New York Times*, 31 March 1956.

Eisenhower sent Mr. Eric Johnston to the Middle East as his personal representative with the rank of Ambassador to explore with the governments of the countries of the region certain steps which might contribute to an improvement of the general situation in the region. In so doing, President Eisenhower assured Mr. Johnston that he had his full support and enjoyed the widest possible latitude in dealing with all questions relevant to his mission.

The purpose of Mr. Johnston's mission was to undertake discussions with certain of the "Arab states and Israel, looking to the mutual development of the water resources of the Jordan River Valley on a regional basis for the benefit of all the people of the area."²³

Mr. Johnston presented a proposal associated with his name to the Arab states and Israel. It was based on an engineering survey conducted under joint American and UNRWA auspices by the American firm of Chas T. Main Inc. under the supervision of the Tennessee Valley Authority.

The Johnston proposal allocated 67 percent of the Jordan River Waters to the Arab states and the remainder, 33 percent, to Israel. The proposal envisaged the irrigation of 334,000 acres, distributed as follows:

122,500 acres in Jordan
204,000 acres in Israel
7,500 acres in Syria.²⁴

(23) *Department of State Bulletin*, 26 October 1953, p. 553.

(24) For details of the proposal see Omar Z. Ghobashy, *The Development of the Jordan River*, Arab Information Center, New York, 1961, pp. 22-23.

The proposal was submitted to the Arab states and Israel during the first visit paid by Mr. Johnston to the area in October 1953. It was received with hostility by the Arab states and Israel. Israel was reluctant to consider the proposal, since it conflicted with its plans for using Litani waters and for channelling Jordan water across the coastal region and down to the Negev, as will become clear below. In addition, Israel had already claimed the waters of the mouth of the Yarmuk and claimed physical control of all waters flowing into Lake Tiberias from the north. Israel also objected to the proposal on the grounds that it allocated too big a share of the waters to the Arab states. The Arab states objected to the proposal on technical as well as political grounds.

At the end of his first visit Johnston invited the Arab states and Israel to prepare alternative proposals for the development of the Jordan Valley water resources. These counter-proposals—the "Arab Plan" and the Israeli "Cotton Plan"²⁵—were ready when he returned to the Middle East in June 1954

(25) The Cotton Plan disregarded armistice and political boundaries in its proposals for a regional development of water resources, and demanded that "hydrographic boundaries" be set aside, i.e., that waters outside the Jordan watershed be included in the plan. Describing the plan as "comprehensive," an official summary issued in June 1954 by the Israel Office of Information in New York said: "The plan is not limited to the resources of the hydrographic basin—since hydrographic boundaries have no real engineering meaning—but includes all resources which can be beneficially integrated into a regional plan." The Cotton Plan envisaged the diversion of all Upper Jordan River waters and 100 MCM of Yarmuk waters for use in Israel, the diversion also of 400 MCM of Litani River waters by tunnel to the Hasbani River which in turn, would be diverted to the Negev leaving only 301 MCM of Litani water for use for Lebanon. (For details of the cotton and Arab Plans see Edward Rizk, *The River Jordan*, New York, The Arab Information Center, 1964, pp. 21-26).

for a second visit. In attempting to find a compromise between the irreconcilable Arab and Cotton Plans, and his own proposal, Mr. Johnston ruled out the most expansive phases of the Cotton Plan, regarding the Litani, which was considered a wholly Lebanese river, and also the coastal diversion to the Negev. At the same time Arab objection to storage in Lake Tiberias was taken into consideration. However, as the negotiations proceeded it became clear that the points of difference concentrated on the amount of water each state would receive, and the degree of international supervision over any joint Arab-Israeli project, particularly over water stored under Israeli control.

A joint communiqué was issued by Mr. Johnston and the Arab negotiators at the end of June 1954, which indicated a degree of progress on many issues. It outlined the main points of understanding as to matters on which subsequent agreement would be sought, which were:

1. The need for a master plan for the valley;
2. The need to raise the living conditions of the countries concerned and of the Arab refugees, without prejudicing their rights;
3. Allocation of water between the countries based on potential beneficial use within the Jordan basin;
4. Storage on the Yarmuk River as well as at Lake Tiberias;
5. International control over water withdrawals.

It was during the summer of 1954 that Israel became openly critical of the Johnston proposal, contending that it was not justified from a technical point of view. Furthermore, Israel was hostile to the suggestion of United Nations supervision, because Israel's relationship with the United Nations was strained after the Security Council had condemned it for the massacre at Qibya (Jordan), and halted its work on the canal diversion scheme.

Although the question of international supervision remained without agreement during the second visit, some gains were made regarding allocations of water, particularly when the Baker-Harza Plan was published. It revealed that there was more irrigable land in Jordan than had been estimated previously, and calculated that it would require less water per acre for cultivation of these lands than had been assumed. This survey, which was prepared for the Jordanian Government, indicated that less water could be allocated for Jordanian use, thus facilitating Mr. Johnston's negotiations on his third trip to the Middle East in 1955.

Mr. Johnston's third visit to the Middle East in February 1955 saw substantial gains made towards an agreement, since the Arab states made a major concession by agreeing to accept Lake Tiberias for main storage of Yarmuk waters providing that international supervision of withdrawals was arranged.

Israel, however, continued to oppose United Nations or international supervision, and the Arabs could obviously settle for nothing less, for they were not prepared to entrust Israel

with water storage. The settlement of the amounts of water to be allocated remained an obstacle.

In September 1955, Mr. Johnston returned to the Middle East with a much revised Jordan Valley proposal. As a result of leakage discovered in al-Battauf reservoir, Israel needed Lake Tiberias for storage of Upper Jordan water, so it was finally agreed in this version of the plan that Yarmuk waters should be stored at Maqarin. Nevertheless, despite all the progress made, the main obstacles still remained, namely, the question of international supervision and the allocation of water.

Israel continued to object to United Nations supervision, and to regard a permanent United Nations agency on the scene as an unwarranted intrusion and encroachment on her sovereignty. The Arabs could only assume that Israel must have some reason for this attitude, and the reason was indeed made evident in 1959 when Israel's secret plan of unilateral diversion was revealed. During the negotiations in 1955 Israeli representatives also continued to oppose the proposal with regard to water allocations, demanding 550 MCM of water, 400 of which would go to the Negev. This was 150 MCM more than the 400 MCM allocated by the revised plan, for use by Israel, already a radical concession by the Arabs.

As a result of the intransigent position of Israel, the fourth Johnston mission was doomed to failure, despite the progress that had been made in solving technical differences. The Israeli attacks upon the Ghaza Strip immediately preceding Mr. Johnston's fourth visit contributed in stiffening the Arab

attitude. Positions were hardened on both sides, and in the light of Israel's actions at Ghaza in 1955 the Arabs could place little trust in the possibility of Israel carrying out a water agreement in good faith. Israeli objections to United Nations supervision confirmed Arab suspicions.

The Johnston proposal was, in effect, one of the many attempts by the United States to solve the Palestine question through economic measures. The United States Government has acted throughout on the basis that the bone of contention between the Arabs and Israel was the economic plight of the million refugees which had to be solved through economic projects. Mr. Eric Johnston spelled out the political objectives of the proposal in an address at Cornell University on 6 May 1954, in which he said that "a comprehensive program for developing the Jordan river basin would," among other things, "mark at least the beginning of a constructive, practical and long overdue solution of the refugee problem, and thus help to clear the atmosphere of bitterness and resentment."²⁶ This was emphasized once more by John Foster Dulles, Secretary of State, in a speech before the Council on Foreign Relations in New York, on 26 August 1955, when he declared that "President Eisenhower would recommend that the United States contribute to the realization of water development and irrigation which would, directly or indirectly, facilitate the resettlement of the refugees."²⁷

This United States policy, it must be pointed out, did not only disregard Arab rights and interests in Palestine but

(26) Edward Rizk, *The River Jordan*, The Arab Information Center, New York, 1964, p. 19.

(27) *Ibid.*, p. 20.

was also a flagrant departure from recommendations made in 1949 by the United Nations Economic Survey Mission to the Middle East. The mission was despatched to the area with the aim of examining the possibility of an economic approach to the Palestine problem. Though skirting the political and psychological aspects of repatriation and resettlement of the Arab refugees, the mission had this to say about the development of the Jordan Valley in its report:

"In the absence of a peace settlement between Israel and adjoining countries on outstanding issues involving repatriation and compensation of Arab refugees and territorial boundaries, it is unrealistic to suppose that agreement on the complex question of international water rights could be negotiated among the parties . . . Whatever promises the full development of the Jordan river system may hold for better living and economic productivity in the Middle East, this must await a mutual desire to create and share benefits from a better use of waters now denied to all parties. Engineering, technical and financial assistance in the problem must assume peace and cooperation before men and money can be applied to the development of the Jordan river system as a whole."²⁸

Furthermore, the Johnston proposal was prejudicial to the Arabs' national and hydro-electric schemes aiming at the development of their own countries. If anything, the proposal was conceived to solve Israel's water problems and made possible the immigration and integration of several million addi-

(28) *Ibid.*, p. 20.

tional settlers in Israel, thus consolidating Israel's economic and military power and enabling it to embark upon further expansionist adventures into neighboring Arab territory.

Suez Canal Crisis 1956

The principal cause of the 1956 outburst in the Middle East was President Nasser's efforts to finance Egypt's plan to construct the huge Aswan Dam with American and British funds. President Eisenhower and Dulles regarded such a grant-loan arrangement with Egypt as a "sound mutual security project that would gain Arab favor for the Western powers and keep oil moving through placid water in Suez, the Persian Gulf and the eastern Mediterranean."²⁹ But only attempt to give aid to the Arabs always met with opposition behind the scenes in Washington, where the members of Congress were acutely aware of the strong popular sentiment in the United States for Israel. Cabot Lodge, the American Ambassador to the United Nations, told Anthony Nutting, British Minister of State of the Foreign Office, in July 1956, that he felt he should warn him that "Dulles in all probability shortly renege on the Aswan Dam loan. This was due largely to internal political problems. The Administration's foreign aid program had recently run into serious trouble in Congress, where drastic cuts had been made. In this climate it would be courting a further rebuff to ask for an appropriation for the Aswan loan. Although the government had tried hard to get back on terms with the Arab world after the damage done by President Truman's pro-Israeli policies, there were powerful anti-Arab,

(29) S. Adams, *First Hand Report*, *op. cit.*, p. 247.

and more particularly anti-Egyptian, voices in Congress. Zionist influences were very strong and were continually at work belaboring the government for letting Nasser get away with his blockade of the Suez Canal against Israeli shipping. And only a month before Egypt had upset the apple-cart still further by recognizing Communist China. Now the Zionist lobby would be joined by the China lobby in opposing aid to Egypt, and with the presidential election coming along in less than four months, it just was not practical politics for the administration to go ahead and ask Congress to approve so large a loan to Egypt."³⁰

When Dulles first discussed the proposed financing of the Aswan Dam at a meeting with the leaders of the Republican and Democratic Parties in Congress, Lyndon Johnson, then Democratic leader of the Senate, questioned the need for large amounts of economic aid for Egypt. Dulles told Johnson that the grant-loan arrangement under consideration would make it unlikely that Egypt would change her affiliation with the United States for the next ten years.

Dulles went on to insist that, despite the arms deal with Czechoslovakia and other expressions of friendship between Nasser and the Russians, Egypt was far from becoming a tool of the Soviets but it could drift that way if the United States did nothing to prevent it. The Secretary of State was afraid that Israel, which had a superiority over the Egyptians in armed strength, might commit a provocative act that would

(30) Anthony Nutting, *No End of a Lesson, The Story of Suez*, London, C. Tinling and Co. Ltd., 1967, p. 44.

drive President Nasser farther into the sphere of Soviet influence.³¹

Sensing this growing antipathy, the Egyptian Ambassador to the United States, Ahmad Hussein, warned President Nasser in June that he must quickly reach full accord with the World Bank on the Western loans and conclude the agreement. Accordingly, on 14 July, Egypt's new budget was published, listing the sum allocated to initial work on the Aswan Dam. On 9 July, World Bank President Black reaffirmed the loan offers in a letter to the Egyptian Finance Minister.

But on 10 July, Mr. Dulles told a press conference that it had become "improbable" that Egypt would be granted the loans. On 16 July, the United States Appropriations Committee attached a rider to the 1956 Foreign Aid Bill forbidding use of aid funds for the Dam without further Congressional authority. Mr. Dulles at once wrote a letter to the Committee Chairman, stating his and President Eisenhower's refusal to be bound by this rider, and alluding to "maneuvers" and "delicate negotiations."

Whatever this meant, the fact is that Mr. Dulles did not communicate any change of policy on the loans to the United States Embassy in Cairo, or otherwise to the Egyptian Government. Ahmad Hussein announced on 17 July that Egypt had accepted the Western loan offers and was anxious to conclude the agreement so that work on the Dam might begin.

On 19 July, at midday, a Foreign Office spokesman in

(31) S. Adams, *First Hand Report*, *op. cit.*, p. 248.

London reaffirmed Britain's readiness to fulfill the loan offer. But a few hours later, after briefly receiving Ahmad Hussein, Dulles issued a statement to the press withdrawing the United States offer. "Developments," the statement said, "have not been favorable to the success of the project . . . and the ability of Egypt to devote adequate resources to assure the project's success has become more uncertain than at the time the offer was made."³²

"Mr. Dulles has spent most of his life in high diplomacy. He had been known to make ill-considered verbal, impromptu statements; but never ill-considered written communiqués. He knew, as the most junior diplomat would know, that the withdrawal of a previously, publicly offered gigantic development loan to any government for anything is a delicate matter."³³ If, as his earlier statements asserted, the United States Government wished to maintain "friendly relations" with the Egyptian Government and people, then prior secret discussions of withdrawal with Cairo was obviously essential.

Instead, Mr. Dulles:

- "1. First allowed Egypt publicly to announce that she accepted the loan offers and their conditions;
- "2. Then, and only then, announced to the world that the offers were being withdrawn—and announced this without, even then, first advising Cairo or allowing the Egyptian envoy time to advise Cairo;

(32) *Department of State Bulletin*, 30 July 1956, p. 188.

(33) E.B. Childers, *The Road to Suez*, London, MacGibbon, L. Kee, 1962, p. 157.

- "3. Deliberately worded the withdrawal statement to make it one of seldom—paralleled rebuke and criticism of the Egyptian economy and its government."³⁴

Within two days, authoritative press reports from Washington confirmed that United States aid was conditional on subservience to United States policy—and not any doubt about Egypt's economy—was precisely what had moved Mr. Dulles. State Department spokesmen told reporters that not only Egypt, but "other countries," must be taught that they could not "extort concessions from the United States." There was talk of "slapping Nasser down for his neutralism." World Bank spokesmen were so annoyed that they scarcely concealed their view that *no* new factor had altered the merit of the Aswan Dam, or Egypt's ability to finance her share of its cost.³⁵

As a reaction to this humiliation, President Nasser announced on 26 July 1956 the nationalization of the Suez Canal Company. President Nasser later told Anthony Nutting that "his decision was not dictated by anger so much as by a conviction that the cancellation of the Anglo-American loan for the Aswan Dam presaged a Western attempt to pressure him into making concessions to Israel over the Canal or possibly even a peace settlement on Israeli terms. The purpose of his dramatic reaction had therefore been to show that Egypt was not going to be pushed around by the West."³⁶

(34) *Ibid.*, p. 157.

(35) *The Times*, report from Washington, July 21, 1956.

(36) A. Nutting, *No End of a Lesson, The Story of Suez*, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

The United States reaction to the nationalization measure was less severe than that of Britain and France. The initial pronouncement of the State Department, made in the absence of Mr. Dulles, who at the time was south of the Panama Canal, did refer to the "seizure" of the Suez Canal Company but it indicated that the matter was one of concern mainly to the principal users of the Canal.³⁷ On 28 July, the Acting Secretary of State, Mr. Herbert Hoover, protested to the Egyptian Ambassador in Washington, not about the nationalization of the Suez Canal Company, but about the "intemperate, inaccurate and misleading statements" which President Nasser had made about the United States and especially in his speech at Alexandria on 26 July.³⁸ And on 31 July the United States froze all Egypt's dollar balances and assets.

The American President then was invited to exchange views with the British and French governments on the best means of undoing President Nasser's action and placing the management of the Canal once more in international custody. Two days later Eden, British Prime Minister, went a stage further, and, as Eisenhower has revealed in his book *Waging Peace*, sent the President a very secret message saying that he had decided that the only way to break President Nasser would be to resort to force without delay and without attempting to negotiate. To this President Eisenhower responded by sending Dulles on 1 August to London with instructions to promote the earliest practicable meeting of the maritime powers with a view to bringing President Nasser to negotiate a rea-

(37) *Department of State Bulletin*, 6392, p. 32.

(38) *Ibid.*, p. 33.

sonable settlement. At the same time, he telegraphed to Eden his grave misgivings about the decision to use force straight away, which would "outrage" American as well as world public opinion.³⁹

On 1 August, Dulles arrived in London to take part in the talks between Britain, France and the United States which had begun a few days earlier. He lost no time in saying that he was in full agreement with Eden's statement in the House of Commons that no arrangements for the Suez Canal's future would be acceptable "which would leave it in the unfettered control of a single power which could . . . exploit it purely for purposes of national policy."⁴⁰ And to Eden's delight, he spoke of finding a way "to make Nasser disgorge." He even admitted the possibility of using force, although only in the very last resort and after all other methods had failed.⁴¹

As a result of Dulles' visit a tripartite Anglo-French-United States statement was made on 2 August. In this statement, the three Foreign Ministers agreed that the Egyptian decision involved "far more than a simple act of nationalization." They claimed that it involved an "arbitrary and unilateral seizure by one nation of an international agency which has the responsibility to maintain and to operate the Suez Canal so that all the signatories to, and beneficiaries of, the Treaty of 1888 can effectively enjoy the use of an international waterway on which the economy, commerce and security

(39) A. Nutting, *No End of a Lesson, The Story of Suez*, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

(40) *Ibid.*, p. 52.

(41) *Ibid.*

of much of the world depends."⁴² They proposed a conference of these signatories to the 1888 Convention and other nations largely concerned with the use of the Canal to be held in London on 16 August 1956 to consider the establishment of an operating arrangement for the Canal "under an international system."

In a broadcast on 3 August, Mr. Dulles said that "there were some people who counseled immediate forcible action by the governments which felt themselves most directly affected. This however would have been contrary to the principles of the United Nations Charter and would undoubtedly have led to widespread violence endangering the peace of the world."⁴³

On 12 August, the Egyptian Government issued a statement in which it refused to attend the projected conference. All the other nations invited, with the single exception of Greece (due to the situation in Cyprus), accepted to attend the London Conference which opened in Lancaster House on 16 August.

Many plans were suggested at the conference one of which was Mr. Dulles'. In his plan Dulles proposed that the Canal should be subjected to the control of an international board on which Egypt would be represented but over which it would not be sovereign. Neither of the plans proposed commanded the support of the whole conference.⁴⁴

(42) *Cmd.* 9853, pp. 3-4.

(43) *Department of State Bulletin*, 6392, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

(44) *Cmd.* 9853, *op. cit.*, pp. 11-12.

The conference then decided to appoint a committee, known as the Suez Committee, to negotiate with President Nasser. But the negotiations, which took place in Cairo at the beginning of September, were fruitless.

Thus, the conference method failed and a deadlock was seen to exist. The British then suggested to refer the issue to the United Nations, provided the French agreed. When the French were approached, they accepted only on condition that the United States and a majority of the Security Council should undertake in advance of the debate to defeat any attempt to bind them and the British not to resort to force if they failed to get satisfaction from the United Nations. The United States Government refused to give any such guarantee. And Dulles, contending that there was not sufficient unity of approach between the French, the Americans and the British to risk exposure to the divisive tactics of the Russians in the Security Council, decided that this was not the time to take the issue to the United Nations.

The Americans had been put on notice that Britain and France wanted to settle the issue by force, and not to use force just as a last resort, and they were not going to be parties to such a course of action.⁴⁵

Having turned down the suggestion of a reference to the United Nations, Dulles felt obliged to come up with an alternative proposal. He suggested that a Suez Canal Users'

(45) A. Nutting, *No End of a Lesson, The Story of Suez*, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

Association (SCUA) should be formed. The precise purpose of this body was not explained at the time, although Dulles rather vaguely indicated that it should stand ready to organize navigation, hire pilots and generally supervise the management of the Canal. But since such an arrangement would have been disagreeable to Egypt, no really precise definition of the purposes of the SCUA was agreed.

However, no sooner had the SCUA project been accepted in London than a couple of statements emanating from the United States revealed a wide gulf between the American and British attitudes. Eisenhower was asked, at a press conference on 11 September, whether America would back Britain and France if they resorted to force against Egypt. Obviously taken aback by this blunt enquiry, he replied that "this country will not go to war ever while I am occupying my present post unless the Congress . . . declares such a war."⁴⁶ And, following this up, Dulles stated on 13 September that even if Egypt used force over the Canal, "we do not intend to shoot our way through." And he went on to say that, so far as he understood Eden's position, "I did not get the impression that there was any undertaking or pledge given by him to shoot their way through the Canal."⁴⁷

Following this Britain and France, despite Dulles' opposition and before the SCUA was even formally born, referred the issue to the Security Council on 23 September. Alarmed at this, Dulles set to work with Hammarskjöld, the Indians

(46) For text see *Department of State Bulletin*, 6392, pp. 331-333.

(47) For text see *Department of State Bulletin*, 6392, pp. 335-345.

and Dr. Fawzi of Egypt to try to fashion sound working principles for a United Nations resolution that would, once again, keep the crisis away from Anglo-French force. "Six Principles" were indeed formulated and agreed. But Britain and France attached riders in a formal resolution—riders which could be predicted that they would be vetoed by Russia and opposed by Egypt. The chief one was that, pending a settlement, Egypt should cooperate with SCUA and keep the Canal open to all ships. (Eden here admits he intended to "make" a test case on the banning of Israeli ships.)⁴⁸

Virtually every major newspaper in the world had by then reported that SCUA was conceived in London and Paris as a calculated Trojan Horse. Even Dulles had publicly indicated his fears of Anglo-French use of it to provoke trouble and then use force. There was never the faintest possibility of Egypt accepting this rider. Eden knew this. Mollet knew this. Russia did veto. Egypt did refuse. On 11 October, Pineau emerged from the Council saying there was "no basis for negotiations"; Selwyn Lloyd that "we have done all we can." Dulles, Hammarskjold, the Indians and Fawzi continued to try to overcome the setback. But "peaceful redress" was over.

Throughout this period, the French Government was denouncing President Nasser's action as comparable to Hitler's reoccupation of the Rhineland in the thirties. And as consultation between London and Paris went underway about the

(48) A. Eden, *The Memoirs of Sir Anthony Eden*, London, Cassel and Company Ltd., 1960, p. 504.

nationalization of the Canal, Eden began to ally himself more and more closely with his French counterpart, Guy Mollet. There was, of course, one grave danger in this growing Anglo-French partnership—the existence of a close alliance of France and Israel. But when Anthony Nutting pointed this out to Eden, he brushed him aside, saying that he was a prisoner of the anti-Israel prejudice in the Foreign Office. Eden refused to listen to Nutting's warning that the French might involve the British with the Israelis, whose obvious interests lay in control of the Canal and of the terminal ports of Suez and Port Said being taken out of President Nasser's hands. Eden took the line that France had a justifiable grievance against President Nasser over Algeria, as had Israel over the Suez Canal and the Arab blockade.

It is almost universally believed, and Israeli spokesmen continuously assert, that the Sinai attack was decided only in late October, 1956: specifically, that it was decided only after a resumption of commando raids, and the announcement after the Jordan elections on 22 October that a Joint Egyptian-Syrian-Jordanian Command had been formed. But the full evidence, when fully assembled, indicates something altogether different: it indicates a far more long-term intention to seize the Sinai Peninsula at the appropriate moment.

"The motives behind this aim were, as always, a fluctuating combination of religious historical dreams, strategic designs, political necessity, and self-defence. It is in no way whatever farfetched to claim that the Sinai Peninsula began to figure in Zionist-Israeli thinking as early as 1948-49."⁴⁹

(49) E.B. Childers, *The Road to Suez*, *op. cit.*, p. 175.

First of all, there was the influence of the mystical memory of Eretz (ancient) Israel in the minds of leaders like Ben Gurion. Sinai contains, among other vital symbols, the very Mount that is the focus and source of Jewish history. There is no doubt whatsoever how profound was this magnetism to Zionists. The Israeli Order of the Day, to the troops launched into Sinai on 29 October 1956, was expressly "to enclose the Nile Army in its own country."⁵⁰ Ben Gurion told the Knesset that the troops had been ordered "not to cross the Suez Canal or to attack the territory of Egypt proper." He spoke of the campaign's aims, and cited one as being "the liberation of that part of the homeland which was occupied by invaders." As the attack began, Kol Israel radio broadcasts declared that Sinai was really "part of Palestine" and "of much the same character as the Negev."⁵¹ The Israeli Information Department had ready a war bulletin complete with chronicle setting out the millennial Jewishness of the Sinai Peninsula. And on 7 November 1956, when Israeli troops had reached Mount Sinai, Ben Gurion congratulated them before the Knesset by saying "you have brought us back to the place where the Law was given, and where we were commanded to be a Chosen People."⁵²

Referring to the Israeli seizure of the Island of Tiran in the Gulf of Aqaba, Ben Gurion laid claim to it on the grounds that "an independent Hebrew state" had existed on Tiran "until one thousand four hundred years ago."⁵³ None of this

(50) *Jewish Observer*, 9 November 1956.

(51) E.B. Childers, *The Road to Suez*, *op. cit.*, p. 176.

(52) *Jerusalem Post*, 8 November 1956.

(53) E.B. Childers, *The Road to Suez*, *op. cit.*, p. 176.

vital information really penetrated to the West, where the picture presented was of an invasion of Sinai solely to clean out nests of commandos and forestall an Egyptian attack. But it was in these highly significant terms that the Sinai Peninsula was in fact invaded by Israel. And there is no reason whatsoever to believe that these mystic-expansionist attractions occurred to Ben Gurion only in October 1956. As early as 1951 he was declaring, officially and openly that: "Israel . . . is a State identical neither with its land nor with its people . . . it has been established in only a portion of the Land of Israel. Even those who are dubious as to the restoration of the historical frontiers, as fixed and crystallized and given from the beginning of time, will hardly deny the anomaly of the boundaries of the new State."⁵⁴

And again, in 1955, there were further official Israeli references to these "historical frontiers": "The creation of the new State by no means derogates from the scope of historic Eretz Israel."⁵⁵

It is at this point in time, towards the end of 1954 and the beginning of 1955, that Ben Gurion's Sinai-wards thinking intensified. Two new factors provided the stimulus: the Anglo-Egyptian agreement for British evacuation of the Suez Canal Zone; and the rise of President Nasser in January 1955 as a new kind of dynamic, widely popular neutralist Arab leader. The presence of a large force of British troops on the banks of the Canal had always provided Israel with some minimal

(54) *Government Yearbook*, 1952, p. 15.

(55) *Government Yearbook*, 1955, p. 320.

sense of security: any major, aggressive Egyptian force moving eastward against Israel must first get through this British "buffer." Now, in 1954, Britain was agreeing to evacuate that force: Israel's strategic situation would drastically change. Nothing but the Sinai Peninsula would stand between Israel and the largest, now-revolutionary Arab state.

In 1955, a year before the world in general was even thinking of an Israeli attack into Sinai, Colonel Richard Meinertzhagen, who had been intimately associated with the rise of Israel ever since 1917, pondered the implications of Britain's impending evacuation of the Canal Zone, and of Egypt's denial of the waterway to Israeli ships. In his diary, 2 November 1955, R. Meinertzhagen formulated the following memorandum for Israel on the situation as he sees it. His main points were:

- "1. Make Egypt the *aggressor*.
- "2. (Attack towards and) reach the Canal in *fifty-six hours*, and at once.
- "3. Proclaim it to be an *International Waterway* under *International* control, with a *neutral zone on either side* so as to isolate Egypt from Israel for all time.
- "4. Proclaim *Israeli sovereignty* over Sinai."⁵⁶

Colonel Meinertzhagen presumably delivered his 1955 memorandum to the Israeli Ambassador in London, Mr. Eilath, whom he saw quite often. There is no reason whatsoever to

(56) Richard Meinertzhagen, *Middle East Diary*, New York, Thomas Yoseloff, 1960, p. 278.

believe that its suggestions were novel, even then, to senior Israeli officials.

And it was in February 1955, that Ben Gurion suddenly came out of his long retirement, took over the Defence Ministry, and as we noted earlier launched the biggest and bloodiest attack into Ghaza since 1949. It was in the ensuing months that Israel secretly began negotiating the huge arms deal with France the very details of which President Nasser publicized in November 1955, and which were fully corroborated in the French weapons Israel received and used for the Sinai war.

In September 1955, Ben Gurion ordered the seizure of the El-Auja Zone, with its vital complex of desert-roads leading westwards.

In summary, then, there is a formidable body of evidence, and an overwhelming complement of entirely reasonable inference, that Ben Gurion and a few advisers were working towards occupying Sinai for months, even for years before their attack was launched. And we will see how a warm Franco-Israeli engagement turned into a munitions alliance, at least in the first days of the orthodox "Suez crisis"; and very possibly before that crisis ostensibly began on 26 July.

It remains to remind the reader that, as we have noted, throughout the first half of 1956, Israel's diplomats and active supporters were also engaged in a strenuous campaign of opposition to the Aswan loans offered by the United States, Britain and the World Bank. Virtually every responsible newspaper in the United States and Western Europe reported strong

Zionist lobbying of the United States Congress against the loan offers; and equally reported that Congressional hostility to the loans owed much to this Zionist lobbying.

It will be noted that a strange thread seems to be running, willy-nilly, through this enquiry. So far, we may note as a straight fact that both France and Israel were actively seeking a withdrawal of Western loan offers—that withdrawal that sparked off the Suez crisis. It has been clearly inferential that the French, seeking the overthrow of President Nasser, could not simply go into Egypt without a cause, or alone. There had to be some permissive circumstances, some situation that would seem to justify direct action, and that would join France in such action at least with Britain.

And when we turn to Israel's assessments and aims, this thread takes a further extraordinary turn. What did actually happen in July of 1956 was fortuitous for Israel to a degree almost miraculous in the usual play on one world event upon another. From 26 July the world's attention was focused on the Suez Canal Zone—Israel's optimum western frontier. From 26 July two powers were contemplating how to reoccupy that zone. From 26 July, as never before, Western hostility towards Egypt was pronounced and clamorous. And by the end of October, Britain and France, "intervening" to "halt" an Israeli-Egyptian war begun by an Israeli invasion of the Sinai Peninsula, were presenting an ultimatum that gave Israel Sinai and demanded international occupation of her new western frontier "to protect the Canal."

In short, things could not have worked out better for Ben Gurion's government if they had planned—or sought to

develop and help along—the sequence of events from mid-July to late October 1956.

On 1 October 1956 Eden appealed to Eisenhower to be firm with President Nasser and to find a way for all American ships, irrespective of flag, to withhold payment of dues to Egypt. President Nasser, Eden contended, was to Russia what Mussolini had been to Hitler, and Russia was the real danger in the Middle East. The Soviet Government had been loud in their support of President Nasser's act and, both in public and in diplomatic notes, they had denounced every action taken by Britain and France since nationalization as provocative and threatening towards Egypt and as likely to endanger peace.⁵⁷

But Eden's efforts to bring the Americans into line by parading communist bogey were to no avail. Dulles was convinced that Britain and France wanted war with Egypt. Rumors had begun to reach the Central Intelligence Agency that France and Israel were in league and that large quantities of French military equipment had been promised to the Israelis. And Dulles was thoroughly frightened by these rumors. Accordingly on 2 October, one day after Eden had sent his appeal to Eisenhower, Dulles held a press conference at which he went out of his way to dissociate the government of the United States from Britain and France. There were differences, he said, between the three governments arising "from fundamental concepts." In the NATO area they were at one, but in areas

(57) A. Nutting, *No End of a Lesson, The Story of Suez*, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

outside, "encroaching in some form of manner on the problem of so-called colonialism," the United States was to found "playing a somewhat independent role." The United States, would hardly identify itself "100 percent either with the so-called colonial powers or with the powers which are primarily and uniquely concerned with the problem of getting their independence as rapidly as possible." As far as the Suez Canal Users' Association "there is talk about teeth being pulled out of the plan, but I know of no teeth. There were no teeth in it, so far as I am aware."⁵⁸

The loud cries of British protest which poured into the State Department following Dulles' statement were not, however, without effect on the American Secretary of State. And when Lloyd and Dulles met in New York for the Security Council session, Dulles hastened to deny that he was at cross-purposes with Britain and France in anything save the use of force.⁵⁹

The more the Americans felt cut off from contact with Britain and France, the more frantic became their efforts to maintain the precarious peace in the Middle East. And during the last week of October it became evident through military intelligence that Israel was mobilizing her armed forces. The Israeli Ambassador in Washington, Abba Eban, was summoned by Dulles (just before the former went back to Israel to join Israel's other key ambassadors for consultation with Ben Gurion) and told: "If he thought that (American) Jewish

(58) *Department of State Bulletin*, 15 October 1956, p. 577.

(59) A. Nutting, *No End of a Lesson, The Story of Suez*, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

sympathy would have any part, iota of influence on the election, or that would have any influence on me (Eisenhower) as to what this Administration would do to prevent any outbreak of hostilities, he should disabuse his mind about it."⁶⁰ In addition, Abba Eban was warned that America would stand by her obligations under the Tripartite Declaration and would oppose whomsoever committed aggression across the armistice frontiers of Israel. A similar warning was sent on 28 October in a personal message from Eisenhower to Ben Gurion, with an offer to discuss the problem of Israel's security with Britain and France, America's so-signatories of the 1950 Tripartite Declaration. And at the same time America's representatives in the capitals of Israel's Arab neighbors were told to urge the need for restraint.⁶¹

Inevitably, all Eisenhower's urgings were ignored by Israel. As Major General Moshe Dayan has explained all too clearly in his book *Diary of the Sinai Campaign* this was the opportunity to settle accounts with the Arabs for which all Israelis had been waiting. Never before had Israel been promised the military support of two major powers in an attack on Egypt, jointly planned and executed. For Israel this offered the irresistible prospect of destroying the Egyptian army, and, by occupying the Sinai Peninsula, of neutralizing the Arab hold on the Gulf of Aqaba and so forcing a passage for oil tankers and other ships to bring supplies to the port of Eilat. And Israel, through the Anglo-French occupation of the Canal, would have her ships pass through it. So, on the

(60) E.B. Childers, *The Road to Suez*, *op. cit.*, p. 246.

(61) *Department of State Bulletin*, 5 November 1956, pp. 699-700.

afternoon of 29 October, Israeli forces invaded Sinai and advanced rapidly both in the direction of the Straits of Tiran and in that of the Suez Canal.

On the following morning Mollet and Pineau flew to London for the ostensible purpose of discussing the "grave issues" posed by the Israeli invasion and drawing up the terms of the Anglo-French ultimatum to the belligerents. This document, which had, of course, been prepared five days earlier, began by calling upon both sides to stop fighting and to withdraw their forces to a distance of ten miles on each side of the Suez Canal. And it concluded with the demand addressed solely to the Egyptians that Anglo-French forces should be allowed to move "temporarily" into key positions at Port Said, Ismailia and Suez. Egypt and Israel were to be given twelve hours to reply to these demands. And if after the time-limit had expired, one or both had not undertaken to comply, notice was served that British and French forces would intervene in whatever strength might be necessary to seize the Canal and its terminal ports by force of arms.⁶²

The replies came in the evening of 30 October. Israel of course accepted the ultimatum and Egypt rejected it. The timing of the ultimatum was full proof of the collusion of Israel, France and Britain. The ultimatum demanded that both belligerents withdraw to a distance of ten miles from the Canal at a moment when the Egyptian army was still engaging the Israelis at a distance between 75 and 125 miles to

(62) A. Nutting, *No End of a Lesson, The Story of Suez*, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

the east of the Canal. This meant that, at the moment of its issue, the powers who were pretending to put a stop to the fighting by separating the belligerents were ordering one of them—and the victim of the aggression at that—to withdraw up to 135 miles, while the other, who happened to be the aggressor, was told to advance on all fronts between 65 and 115 miles.

As for the United States, Mr. Hagerty, the press secretary to the President, announced on 29 October that Eisenhower has obtained "his first knowledge" of the ultimatum "through press reports. The United States has pledged itself to assist the victim of any aggression in the Middle East." The statement also pointed out that the "situation shall be taken to the United Nations Security Council tomorrow morning."⁶³

Accordingly, on 30 October the United States sponsored a resolution in the Security Council calling upon Israel to withdraw her forces behind the "established armistice lines" and upon all members of the United Nations "refrain from the use of force or threat of force in the area in any manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations." The Soviet Union, the United States, China, Cuba, Yugoslavia, Persia and Peru voted in favor of the resolution. Australia and Belgium abstained. Britain and France vetoed it.

The air attack on Egypt began on 31 October. Eisenhower announced that he would make an address by radio and television to the nation that night, canceling a brief political cam-

(63) *Department of State Bulletin*, 12 November 1956, p. 749.

paign trip he had planned for that day. Dulles worked most of the day helping him prepare it. In New York the Security Council adopted a Yugoslav resolution calling an emergency session next day of the United Nations' General Assembly, where the veto could not be exercised. World capitals reacted strongly against the British-French stand, and Canada announced that it was halting delivery of jet planes ordered by Israel.

In his speech that night Eisenhower reviewed the crowded series of developments in the Middle East. "In the circumstances I have described," he said, "there will be no United States involvement in these present hostilities." They were words chosen with care, limited to the situation as it existed when he spoke. Then in five terse and eloquent paragraphs, which Dulles had written for him, he summed up the American viewpoints:

"In all the recent troubles in the Middle East there have, indeed, been injustice suffered by all nations involved. But I do not believe that another instrument of injustice—war—is a remedy for these wrongs.

"There can be no peace without law. And there can be no law if we work to invoke one code of international conduct for those we oppose, and another for our friends.

"The society of nations has been slow in developing means to apply this truth. But the passionate longing for peace on the part of all people of the earth compels us to speed our search for new and more effective instruments for justice.

"The peace we need and seek means much more than mere absence of war. It means the acceptance of law and the fostering of justice in all the world.

"To our principles guiding us in this quest we must stand fast. In so doing, we can honor the hopes of all men for a world in which peace will truly and justly reign."⁶⁴

On 1 November, Israeli forces cut off the Sinai Peninsula. Egypt collapsed a bridge across the Canal and scuttled ships along its length. British-French air attack on Egypt continued. In Washington, with the General Assembly scheduled to convene in New York, Eisenhower asked his Secretary of State to go there personally to handle the United States' case. Dulles took off by air on forty-five minutes' notice.

When he got finally the floor, late in the evening, Dulles spoke extemporaneously under strong emotion. "I doubt," he began, "that any delegate ever spoke from this forum with as heavy a heart as I have brought here tonight . . . The United States finds itself unable to agree with three nations with whom it has ties, deep friendship, admiration, and respect. The fact that we differ with such friends has led us to reconsider and reevaluate our position with the utmost care, and that has been done at the highest levels of our government. Even after that reevaluation, we still find ourselves in disagreement. Because it seems to us that that disagreement involves principles which far transcend the immediate issue, we feel impelled to make our point of view known."⁶⁵

(64) For full text see *Department of State Bulletin*, 12 November 1956, pp. 743-745.

(65) J.R. Beal, *John Foster Dulles, op. cit.*, pp. 282-283.

Dulles concluded the speech by introducing a resolution urging: (1) that all parties involved in hostilities agree to an immediate ceasefire and halt movement of military forces and arms into the area; (2) that the parties to the Arab-Israeli armistice of 1949 withdraw all forces behind armistice lines and desist from raids; (3) that all United Nations members refrain from introducing military goods into the war area; (4) that, after ceasefire, steps be taken to reopen the Canal; (5) that the Secretary General report on compliance; and (6) that the General Assembly remains in emergency session pending compliance.

When this resolution was brought to vote after midnight it was approved 64 to 5. The only opposition came from Britain, France, Israel, and two British Commonwealth members, Australia and New Zealand.

On 3 November, Britain and France rejected the United Nations' ceasefire resolution unless various conditions were met, one of them being acceptance by Egypt and Israel of the United Nations police force. Egypt went on scuttling ships in the Canal, and four pumping stations on the oil pipeline which crossed Syria on its way from Iraq to Tripoli in Lebanon were sabotaged by Arab commandos. And, finally, in a gesture of Arab solidarity Saudi Arabia had broken diplomatic relations with Britain and France and placed an embargo on any shipments of Saudi oil to Britain and France.

The damage done both to the Canal and the pipeline forced Britain to overcome the shortage of oil supply by importing it from the dollar areas of North and South America, if she could pay for it. But in the previous two months a run

on the pound in the world's financial markets threatened seriously to deplete Britain's dollar reserves. Without credits from the United States, Britain should therefore be unable to buy the oil it needed; and the Americans were violently opposed to Britain. This helped in forcing Britain to accept the ceasefire and finally to withdraw its forces as will be shown later.

At the United Nations one day merged into the next as the Assembly sat through the night seeking to deal with the crisis. On the night of 3-4 November the Assembly adopted, 59 to 5, a resolution calling on the Middle East belligerents to comply with the previous ceasefire recommendation. It also approved a Canadian resolution requesting Hammarskjold to submit a plan within forty-eight hours for a United Nations police force. Hammarskjold was back the next night with a proposal that small nations make up the force, and it was adopted 57 to 0. At dawn on 5 November—just about the time the Assembly was voting—Britain and French paratroops were landing at the north end of the Suez Canal. That same day fighting ceased between Egypt and Israel.

At this point Soviet Premier Nikolai Bulganin sent strong messages to Eden, Mollet and Ben Gurion saying that Russia "is fully determined to apply force in order to crush the aggressors and restore peace in the East." He also sent Eisenhower a message proposing that Russia and the United States should form a military alliance to stop the British and French invasion of Egypt.⁶⁶

(66) For full text see N. Frankland, *Documents on International Affairs*, London, Oxford University Press, 1959, pp. 288-294.

Eisenhower promptly rejected the proposal as "unthinkable." In his reply Eisenhower pointed out that "the introduction of new forces under these circumstances would violate the United Nations Charter, and it would be the duty of all United Nations members, including the United States, to oppose any such effort."⁶⁷ Simultaneously he dispatched instructions to Ambassador Bohlen in Moscow to let the Russians know that the United States meant business in saying that it would oppose by force any Soviet attempt to interfere. Thus, the fear of having any Soviet forces enter the Middle East seemed to afford increased urgency to the United States policy makers to secure the immediate withdrawal of all foreign occupying forces from Egypt.

At this point, petrol-rationing had been announced in Britain and France, and until the Canal was cleared, both countries had to depend on the United States for help in buying the oil essential for their industry. And American aid would not be forthcoming until they were seen to be withdrawing.

The first stage of withdrawal was reached on 6 November when, on certain conditions, not all of which, incidentally, were met, the British Government informed the Secretary General of the United Nations that a ceasefire would be ordered at midnight. But the question of an actual withdrawal remained. The principal surviving obstacle to its achievement was the attitude of Israel. Israel wanted two conditions from President Nasser before withdrawing her troops.

(67) *Department of State Bulletin*, 19 November 1956, pp. 795-796.

The first condition that Israel demanded was United Nations police occupation of the Ghaza Strip. Israel also wanted Egypt's guarantee of free passage of shipping through the Tiran Straits, which connects the Gulf of Aqaba, where Israel's southern port of Eilat is located, with the Red Sea. This access to the sea from its southern border was a vital factor in Israel's economic plans.⁶⁸

Meanwhile the Israeli Government continued its attempts to get some form of assurance from the United States that it would guarantee Israel against attack. In Congress there were signs of restlessness, and in an open letter to Mr. Dulles seventy Democratic members sought an assurance that the United States did not propose a return to the conditions of the previous October which, they contended, had precipitated the Suez hostilities. But the administration remained adamant in its view that the only course for Israel was first to comply with General Assembly resolutions.

On 11 February 1957, in an aide-mémoire to Israel, the United States administration gave details of the final extent to which Washington was prepared to go before using more forceful methods to ensure Israeli compliance. It stated unequivocally that "with respect to the Ghaza Strip it is the view of the United States that the United Nations General Assembly has no authority to require of either Egypt or Israel a substantial modification of the Armistice Agreement, which, as noted, now gives Egypt the right and responsibility of occupation." Therefore, in the view of the United States Government, the Israeli withdrawal should be prompt and unconditional, "leav-

(68) Text in *Times* (London), 27 January 1957.

ing the future of the Ghaza Strip to be worked out through the efforts and good offices of the United Nations." In addition, the United States was prepared to use "its best efforts" to help ensure that United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) should move into the area and be on the boundary between Ghaza and Israel. In respect to the Gulf of Aqaba, Washington expressed its belief "that the Gulf comprehends international waters and that no nation has the right to prevent free and innocent passage" there or in the Tiran Straits.⁶⁹ The United States was prepared to exercise this right itself and to join with others to secure its recognition; meanwhile "as a precautionary measure" UNEF should move into the Straits area as Israel withdrew. This was as far as the United States intended to go. Indeed, in view of current trends in American policy and of the fact that the recently launched Eisenhower Doctrine⁷⁰ was already being coolly scrutinized in Arab countries, the State Department could hardly be expected to say more in Israel's favor. On the other hand, it appeared as if the continuing obduracy of Ben Gurion might confront the United States with the uncomfortable alternative either of losing what trust the Arabs had come to have in Washington or of joining sanctions against Israel.

A strong majority in the United Nations General Assembly, consisting of the twenty seven nations in the Asian-African block and the Soviet Union republics and satellites, were preparing to call for economic sanctions against Israel to force her to make an unconditional withdrawal from the

(69) G. Barraclough, *Survey of International Affairs 1956-1958*, Oxford University Press, London, 1962, pp. 156-157.

(70) Cf. below pp. 113-125.

Egyptian territory she was occupying on the Ghaza Strip and the occupied territory along the Gulf of Aqaba. Dulles had worked hard with Dag Hammarskjold and with a Western group in the United Nations led by the Canadian Foreign Minister, Lester Pearson, to avoid such an impasse with Israel by getting Egypt to allow the Ghaza Strip and Sharm el-Sheikh to be occupied by United Nations police forces after the Israelis withdrew. President Nasser refused to submit to any such conditions. Dulles likewise failed to get Ben Gurion to compromise in return for promises of future support. Thus, the United States had to make the choice whether or not to join the United Nations majority in imposing sanctions on Israel. Dulles and Lodge flew to Thomasville, Georgia, where Eisenhower was vacationing and decided with the President that the White House had to support sanctions. This meant trouble in Washington. Not only were Lyndon Johnson and the Democratic policy committee in favor of giving Ben Gurion the guarantees that he wanted, but Senator Knowland, the Republican leader in the Senate, was in complete agreement with Johnson. Knowland threatened to resign from his position as a United States delegate to the United Nations General Assembly, if sanctions were imposed on Israel. The President cut short his vacation in Georgia and flew back to Washington to have it out with the leaders of both parties in Congress at a tense and strained meeting in the Cabinet Room at the White House.⁷¹

On 20 February, the President opened the meeting with a strong and explicit explanation of why he was in favor of putting pressure on Israel to comply with the United Nations

(71) S. Adams, *First Hand Report*, *op. cit.*, p. 280.

demand for an unconditional withdrawal. Such compliance was needed for Israel's own good, he said, pointing out that Ben Gurion's government would soon be in a dangerous financial crisis unless it obtained help from the Export-Import Bank, which would be possible only if peace was restored. Furthermore, the President went on, there could be no resumption of full-scale traffic in the Suez Canal and no end of the brawls between the Egyptians and the Israelis unless the excuses for Arab retaliation against Israel were completely removed.

Eisenhower warned the legislators that Russian influence among the Arabs would most certainly increase if the Israelis continued to resist the compliance order. Besides, there would be further interruptions in the supply of oil from the Middle East, with more disaster to the economy of Britain and the Western European nations. "And then the whole thing might end up in a general war," the President said.

The President told the legislators that he was well aware of their opposition to sanctions against Israel and that he could understand their attitude. Then Eisenhower stated flatly that he did not know how to protect American interests in the Middle East except through the United Nations. If the United States failed to support the United Nations on the Israel issue, he declared, it would be a lethal blow to the principles of the world peace organization. "Nobody likes to impose sanctions," the President concluded, "but how else can we induce Israel to withdraw to the lines agreed on in the 1949 armistice? The Arabs refuse to discuss a permanent settlement until that move is made."⁷²

(72) *Ibid.*, p. 282.

Eisenhower turned to Dulles for his comments, but before Dulles could speak Johnson interrupted to mention a letter that he had written to the Secretary of State protesting against sanctions on Israel. The letter had appeared in a New York newspaper and Johnson wanted to say that it had not reached the newspaper from his office. He added that he had not even discussed the subject matter of the letter with Senator Knowland, but he thought it significant that he and Knowland had both come to the same conclusion on the sanctions question.⁷³

Dulles told disagreeing Congressmen that if Israel was allowed to defy the withdrawal order any longer, the basic principle of the United Nations forbidding any individual nation from taking the law into its own hands would become ineffective and worthless. The Secretary pointed to the fact that Israel, along with Britain and France, had agreed to withdraw its troops from Egypt as soon as the United Nations emergency force arrived in the Suez area. That had been more than three months ago. Britain and France had lived up to the agreement and had withdrawn at a considerable cost of prestige and loss of political power, Dulles argued, but Israel had refused to leave, even though he and Hammarskjöld had assured Ambassador Eban that Egypt would probably accept a neutral administration in the Ghaza Strip and that the United States would exercise the right it considered its to free passage to the "international waters of Aqaba," and the United States was prepared to join others in their exercise of the same right. Either sanctions had to be imposed, Dulles

(73) *Ibid.*

said, or some forceful alternative had to be found.⁷⁴

In answer to a question from Senator Wiley, Dulles drove home another important point in the administration's support of sanctions, namely, the rest of the world believed that on any crucial question such as this one Israel could control United States policy because of the strong favor it enjoyed in America. Therefore, Dulles said, the Arabs were watching the Americans intently and, if the Americans confirmed this belief, the Arabs would feel compelled to turn to Russia. "But this does not mean that we have to follow an anti-Israel policy,"⁷⁵ he added.

Then Knowland took the floor and offered a five-point counterproposal in the form of a United Nations resolution imposing economic, moral and diplomatic sanctions against any nation violating the provisions of the Charter against aggression. It then called for the Israeli forces in the Ghaza and Gulf of Aqaba regions to be replaced by United Nations troops until either a United Nations settlement or an Egypt-Israel agreement could be reached. Knowland reminded the meeting that the present United Nations police force in Egypt was there with President Nasser's consent and would have to be withdrawn if he demanded it. He suggested a neutral zone be established between Egypt and Israel. Knowland's proposal was discussed and finally he admitted that it did not seem feasible for the United States to vote against sanctions on Israel.⁷⁶

(74) *Ibid.*, pp. 282-283.

(75) *Ibid.*, p. 283.

(76) *Ibid.*, pp. 283-284.

Lodge reminded the legislators that since November, when Eisenhower opposed the use of force by the British, French and Israelis in Suez, there had been a steadily increasing respect for the United States among the Arab people. "Now they won't understand it if we abandon our position on the Israel withdrawal," Lodge said. "Unless the Israelis withdraw, the Canal will not be reopened."⁷⁷

Knowland asked if the United States could postpone United Nations action on sanctions for two weeks while further attempts at a settlement with Ben Gurion were made. Lodge told him that if the United States asked for a postponement, it would appear as if it was opposing sanctions.

A unified statement of Congressional support for the stand that the administration was to take on the question of sanctions could not be reached. Thus the President had to shoulder the burden alone and make a statement to the people.

Eisenhower asked Dulles to work with Lodge on a draft of a speech and Jim Hagerty called the television and radio companies to arrange for time on the networks.

In his address Eisenhower said that Israel's insistence on firm guarantees as a condition to withdraw its invasion raised a basic question of principle:

"Should a nation which attacks and occupies foreign territory in the face of United Nations disapproval be

(77) *Ibid.*, p. 284.

allowed to impose conditions on its own withdrawal. If we agree that armed attack can properly achieve the purposes of the assailant, then I fear we will have turned back the clock of international order. . . . If the United Nations once admits that international disputes can be settled by using force, then we will have destroyed the very foundation of the organization, and our best hope of establishing a world order. That would be a disaster for us all."⁷⁸

Eisenhower did not avoid the "double-standard" argument which pointed to the United Nations' failure to punish Russia for its invasion of Hungary, but he disapproved of the comparison. "It would indeed be a sad day if the United States ever felt that it had to subject Israel to the same type of moral pressure as is being applied to the Soviet Union," he said. "There can, of course, be no equating of a nation like Israel with that of the Soviet Union. The people of Israel, like those of the United States, are imbued with a religious faith and a sense of moral values. We were entitled to expect, and do expect, from such peoples of the free world a contribution to world order which unhappily we cannot expect from a nation controlled by atheistic despots."⁷⁹

Thus, the President in his address appealed to the emotions of the American people by rejecting to compare Israel with the Soviet Union and expecting much more of Israel than the Soviet Union. In addition, the President avoided the

(78) *Ibid.*, p. 286.

(79) *Ibid.*

word "sanctions" in discussing his support of United Nations action against Israel, preferring the less technical and more understandable term "pressure," but left no doubt about his position if there were "no choice but to exert pressure on Israel to comply with the withdrawal resolutions."

As soon as Eisenhower had finished that statement of his position, things began to move. The next day before the Israeli Parliament in Jerusalem, Ben Gurion said that his government would make further efforts to reach an understanding with the United States. The day after that in the United Nations General Assembly the resolution asking for a denial of military, economic and financial assistance to Israel was introduced by Lebanon with the support of Iraq, the Sudan, Afghanistan and Indonesia. Lodge delayed taking a final United States position on the resolution, pending further talks between Dulles and the Israelis. On 1 March 1957 and before a vote on the sanctions resolution was taken, Golda Meir, then Israeli Foreign Minister, announced to the General Assembly that her government was "now in position to announce its plans for a full and complete withdrawal."

The strain caused in American-Israeli relations by such an attitude was neither great nor of long duration. It was asserted, for example (without any formal denials from the State Department), that to pave the way for Israel's free navigation of the Gulf of Aqaba, the United States would arrange for an American vessel on its way to Port Eilat to pass through the Straits of Tiran—under the protective presence of United Nations troops—and thus establish a precedent in favor of Israel. This took place early in the month of April

1957 when the United States oil tanker Kern Hills reached the Israeli port of Eilat after sailing through the Gulf of Aqaba.⁸⁰ The docking of this tanker at Eilat meant the opening of a trade route which could carry Israeli products to markets in East Africa and the Far East. To the Arabs, the discharge of 16,500 tons of Iranian oil by the Kern Hills meant the weakening of the economic blockade of Israel.

Furthermore, as soon as Israel's forces withdrew from the Ghaza Strip, the United States quietly but promptly resumed the flow of its economic aid to Israel.

It became evident that the United States opposition to its allies and Israel was largely governed by a strong urge to dissociate itself actively from the action of the three attacking powers in order to prevent the rest of the world from drawing what would seem a natural conclusion that the United States was in collusion with them. The urge was all the more compelling because it was supported by resentment on the part of the United States Government at the fact that its allies had kept it in the dark about their plans, and Israel had flouted its warnings. Underlying this almost impulsive reaction, however, there had been an American predisposition against the type of action undertaken by the French, British and Israelis resting on substantial calculations made months before. These were based on the fear that a direct open attack against President Nasser might set the entire Middle East aflame and imperil all the Western positions and interests in the area, even as it would give Russia a unique opportunity to pose as

(80) *Christian Science Monitor*, 8 April 1957.

the sole defender of the Arabs. From such a conflict a general war might ensue.

From the Suez war Israel derived a greatly improved understanding with the United States, and the initiation of a regular consultation procedure between the two governments which underscored continually the basic American moral commitment to Israel's security and integrity. The Eisenhower administration continued to uphold the United States' commitment to resist any attempt to alter by force the territorial and political *status quo* between the Arab states and Israel. The root of the trouble lay in a far-reaching difference in the assessment of Arab attitudes and the possibility of modifying them. The Secretary of State recognized the importance of solving the Palestine problem for the stability of the area. He was inclined to believe that American military and economic cooperation with the Arab states was the best way of placing the West in a position in which it could exercise a restraining influence on the Arab governments and perhaps induce them in due course to come to terms with Israel. In the meantime, it would be in Israel's best interest if the Israelis would keep quiet, stop trying to press the United States to identify itself openly with them and protesting against every Western gesture towards the Arabs, and refrain from any action that might exacerbate Arab feelings against them.

Following the Suez war, as we shall see, the United States gave up the pretenses of its declared policy of neutrality between the Arabs and Israel. It openly adopted a policy which urged Israel to put its faith in the United States which will

consider itself responsible for Israel's integrity, security and independence.

The Eisenhower Doctrine

In the Middle East after the turning point of Suez, all Western initiative passed to the United States—together with the priceless opportunity to study the real lessons of Suez. Eisenhower began to talk of filling the vacuum in the area. France and Britain had indeed left a kind of vacuum in the region. But what kind? The Arabs were poised on a delicate fulcrum between gratitude towards the Soviet Union, and surprised, almost incredulous expectations of America. That was precisely the balance—gratitude to Moscow, hope in Washington. Yet there was a fundamental misreading by the West. Gratitude towards Moscow did not mean readiness to sign alliances with or grant bases to Russia: indeed, on the contrary, the very manner of Russia's action in threatening Britain and France with rockets had reminded nationalist leaders most forcefully that this was another Great Power.

At the same time, many Arabs no less seriously misunderstood what the United States had done. They took it as condemnation of an imperialist attack. For a very brief moment in November 1956, there was a small but widespread hope that the United States Government had abandoned the kind of policy involved in the Aswan Dam loan withdrawals. If there was a vacuum in the Middle East, it was not one of influence, but of expectations directed towards America.⁸¹

(81) E.B. Childers, *The Road to Suez*, *op. cit.*, p. 307.

At no time since 1948 had the United States been poised on the edge of such opportunity in the Middle East. What did it imply? The need was not for any sensational moves; nor were there any panaceas. Nothing could even be attempted over Palestine—not for months. Nothing rapid could be expected over the Suez Canal. The immediate need was for a cautious but clear American policy-stance that would encourage Arab nationalist confidence, capitalizing slowly but surely the precious fund of expectations set up by the American stand on the tripartite Suez attack.

Ideally, there was need of clear indications that the United States was now willing to concede Arabs the right to remain non-aligned; that she recognized the Arab dream of closer unity; that she was willing to allow Arabs to choose their own leadership. But if this was out of the question, then at least America's opportunity made vital that she refrain from asking Arabs, while the shock of Anglo-French-Israeli aggression had scarcely abated, to believe that they were in danger of Soviet aggression.

Above all, one thing was so clear that it seemed almost platitudinous to record it while moving around the region in November 1956. The United States could not, having regard for her own and the West's interests in the area, seek to secure any fresh strategic commitment, by whatever name, from any Arab government. It was not a question of choosing between Arab governments—of selecting those regimes willing to make such commitment. Suez had vindicated all over again the Middle East as a whole. There was no use carping about this. It was a fact that the Baghdad Pact's Special Agreement facilities

for RAF bases in Iraq were part of the strategic network of a power that had just invaded Egypt.

Secondly, if the United States Government adopted policies or special relationships manifestly hostile to Egypt and Syria, it would be taking on millions of Arabs outside those countries as well.

These two needs of United States policy were neither idealism nor benevolence. They were assessable on hard-headed self-interested and counter-Soviet premises. The Soviet Union had indeed become a Middle Eastern power in diplomacy—and that could no more be changed in 1957 than averted in 1954. The Soviet Union intended to enter the continuing contest in a revolutionary Arab world. The Soviet Union was seeking to penetrate deeper into the economic aid and trade market of the Arab world. The Soviet Union intended to become a major prestige-power in Arab eyes by championing their nationalism, assuring them of respect for their neutralism, selling arms and goods without political conditions, granting unconditional loans at a flat 2.5 percent long-term interest.

As for the United States, its policy was manifested by an announcement made by Dulles on 29 November 1956, in which he reaffirmed American support for the Baghdad Pact.⁸² Washington was humming with authoritative reports of a new American initiative “to meet the growing communist danger in the Middle East,” and to deal with the “vacuum of influence.”

(82) *Department of State Bulletin*, 10 December 1956, p. 918.

On the night of 5 January 1957, President Eisenhower in a special message to the Congress made specific proposals for the Middle East— soon to be known as the Eisenhower Doctrine. This was the first major statement of American policy on the Middle East since the Sinai-Suez convulsion. The message ran into several thousand words. It was addressed in the first instance to United States Congress. But prior official and diplomatic preparations had been made, quite naturally, to ensure that it received the widest possible audience among Arabs. In all its wordage, the following were the only references with the remotest relevance to the ideas, fears, and emotions then sweeping the Arab world as it came out of the trauma of Sinai and Suez: "Just recently there have been hostilities involving Western European nations that once exercised much influence in the area. Also the relatively large attack by Israel in October has intensified the basic differences between that nation and its Arab neighbors. All this inability has been heightened and, at times, manipulated by international communism . . . This program will not solve all the problems of the Middle East . . . There are problems of Palestine and relations between Israel and the Arab states, and the future of the Arab refugees. There is the problem of the future status of the Suez Canal. These difficulties are aggravated by International Communism, but they would exist apart from that threat . . . The proposed legislation is primarily designed to deal with the possibility of Communist aggression, direct or indirect . . ."83

President Eisenhower was talking about a Middle East

(83) For full text see *Department of State Bulletin*, 6505, pp. 15-23.

that did not correspond to the existing one. The Arab world was still heeling from the shock of a triple Western aggression. But the President of the United States, after exactly two sentences describing these events as "hostilities" and a "relatively large attack by Israel," went on to suggest that they were as nothing compared to the danger of Communist aggression.

The Eisenhower Doctrine proposed to do three things: (1) authorize the President to employ as he deems necessary the armed forces of the United States to secure and protect the territorial integrity and political independence of any nation or group of nations in the general area of the Middle East requesting such aid against overt armed aggression from any nation controlled by international communism; (2) authorize the Executive to undertake programs of military assistance to any nation or group of nations in that area desiring such aid; (3) authorize cooperation with any nation or group of nations in the development of economic strength for the maintenance of national independence. The President also requested specific authority to spend \$200 million of already appropriated funds for military and economic aid in the Middle East, free of restrictions of existing legislation.

When the Doctrine was presented in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee it was criticized on the basis that it did nothing about such immediate Middle Eastern problems as the "continued dispute between Egypt and Israel and the working out of a permanent agreement with Egypt over the use of the Suez Canal, which at that time was still blocked and

unusable."⁸⁴ Furthermore, proposals were made to the effect that the commitment should be expanded to cover aggression within the region, by the Arab states against Israel or vice versa. Dulles rejected these proposals on the ground that in such a local controversy "international communism" would not be directly involved and the problem would be suitably handled by the United Nations.

It is true that the Doctrine spoke of providing protection only against overt aggression, and only hinted at the Nasser threat by speaking of aggression on the part of "a nation controlled by international communism." But these, as events were to prove, were merely diplomatic phrasings designed to give the Doctrine the necessary international legal coating and to facilitate the aim of openly rallying friendly governments behind it, they did not restrict the freedom of action of the United States Government, which was, after all, free to interpret as it wished the meaning of its own Doctrine as in the Jordan and Syrian cases to be discussed below.

Following the approval of the Congress on 9 March of the Eisenhower Doctrine, President Eisenhower sent Special Ambassador James P. Richards to the Middle East with the mission of rallying the area's governments behind the Doctrine. Richards obtained endorsement for the Doctrine from Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Israel. The attitude of the Israeli Government was defined in the following statement issued on 21 May 1957:

"The Government of Israel welcomes the support of the

(84) S. Adams, *First Hand Report*, *op. cit.*, p. 273.

United States for the preservation of the independence of Middle Eastern states and for the development of economic strength dedicated to the maintenance of their independence.

"In the course of (the conversations with Ambassador Richards) the Government of Israel reaffirmed its adherence to the following principles which, it is confident, also command the sympathy and support of the United States:

"1. Israel reaffirms that in the conduct of its international relations it is guided by the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations to strengthen universal peace, to develop friendly relations among nations, to settle international disputes by peaceful means, and to achieve international cooperation in the economic, social and humanitarian spheres.

"2. In conformity with its obligations under the Charter, it is opposed to aggression from any quarter against the territorial integrity and political independence of any country. It entertains no aggressive intent against any other people or nation anywhere, and is agreed on the importance of preserving the political independence and territorial integrity of the countries of the Middle East.

"3. It recognizes that every effort must be made to achieve lasting peace both in the Middle East and throughout the world and will cooperate with the United States and other friendly governments to this end.

"4. It recognizes that for the promotion of stability, well-being and peace in the Middle East it is vital to promote economic development dedicated to the strengthening of national independence.

"5. The Government of Israel expresses its appreciation of the interest shown and assistance rendered over many years in the development of the State of Israel by the Government and people of the United States."⁸⁵

The United States, in a communiqué published the same day, "noted the statement made by the Government of Israel... in which that Government expresses its support of the purposes of the Middle East policy set forth by President Eisenhower ... The United States shares and supports the principles and objectives outlined in Israel's statement relating to the American policy under the Doctrine."⁸⁶ Thus, Israel was openly associated with the objectives of American policy in the Middle East.

In his visits, the Doctrine acquired the character of a kind of subscription list against communism and neutralism, as the willing regimes issued joint statements with Mr. Richards. Stage by stage, fresh maps of the area were produced in the United States shading off the Middle East into—"pro-Western" and "pro-Nasser" countries according to reactions to the Doctrine. None of this was lost on Arab nationalists. On 23 March, the United States announced that

(85) Walter Eytan, *The First Ten Years, A Diplomatic History of Israel*, London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1958, pp. 146-147.

(86) *Ibid.*, p. 147.

it would join the Military Committee of the Baghdad Pact. Mr. Dulles had just avowed that the United States did not regret the decision to withdraw the Aswan Dam loan offer, and that "events" had proved it was not in the interests of America.

Significantly, Richards was not received in Egypt and Syria. His plan to go to Jordan was upset by the outbreak of a crisis in that country, which provided the first practical test of the American policy outlined in the Doctrine, when King Hussein, on 10 April, dismissed his government which was following a pan-Arab nationalist policy. The King used as an excuse his premier's declared intention of establishing diplomatic relations with Russia, and denounced the machinations of international communism. At several points in the crisis, the American President and the Secretary of State expressed the desire of the American Government to "hold up the hands of King Hussein," invoked the Tripartite Declaration of 1950 and the Eisenhower Doctrine to warn all Jordan's neighbors to keep their hands off, and declared the independence and integrity of Jordan to be "vital" to the national interest and world peace. To give the desired weight to these statements, the Sixth Fleet was ordered to the east Mediterranean.

On 13 August 1957, the Syrian Government requested the immediate departure of the American military attaché and two members of the American diplomatic mission—accused of plotting for a *coup* with a few army officers during the visit of President Quwwatly which he was paying to Moscow to seek Soviet military and economic support—and followed this

move by retiring ten senior army officers and replacing the conservative Chief-of-Staff by Brigadier Afif al-Bizri, an alleged communist. The United States reacted by declaring the Syrian Ambassador in Washington person *non grata*, and sending Loy Henderson, Under Secretary of State, on a flying visit to the Middle East to consult with governments of the countries neighboring Syria, except Israel. On his return, Henderson reported the "deep concern" of these neighbors over the build-up of arms and increase of communist threat in Syria, whereupon Eisenhower expressed his intention to carry out the policy expressed in the Eisenhower Doctrine to help the threatened nations. This move on the part of Eisenhower was contrary to the principles of the Eisenhower Doctrine because there was no threat of international communism and in addition Syria was not even a communist country. Thus, orders were given to speed up arms deliveries to Jordan and other countries of the area, the Sixth Fleet held maneuvers off the Syrian coast, and the President called upon the Syrian people "to act to allay the anxiety caused by recent events." All of this amounted to an invitation to the Syrian people to revolt, and a promise of backing Syria's neighbors should they decide to take action to protect themselves. But the Syrian people did not revolt, and the only country among Syria's neighbors that made some move was Turkey which concentrated troops on her Syrian frontier. The strong impression created in the Arab world that the United States, with the help of Turkey, was out to crush Syria made it impossible even for the Arab governments most loyal to Washington to take a public stand that could be understood as supporting this move.

These cumbersome attempts to justify American policy politically were almost totally irrelevant. Shorn of irrelevancies, the situation quite simply was that, as the bases of British power crumbled, the State Department had suddenly, or at least more clearly, seen the Middle East in military terms. The problem was how to explain this to the American electors and to the other governments concerned. The former had just returned the Eisenhower administration to power for a second term after a campaign bent on inducing the belief that peace and prosperity had been secured on a lasting basis, and it was less than a year since Dulles had stated that the Russians had made very little progress in the Middle East and that the military danger was less than the dangers of competitive coexistence. The administration kept ignoring the fact that it should stop concentrating on the communist menace in the Middle East—a menace that did not exist—and consider the menace of Israel.

Israel, for its part, eagerly welcomed any indication of further United States involvement in the area, and regarded the more general references to the Middle East as an advance on the previous United States statement in support of the Baghdad Pact.

For its part the Soviet Union had never left any doubt that it regarded the Eisenhower Doctrine as an attempt to oust British and French influence from the Arab world and put American economic and military domination in its place. This interpretation was neither very novel nor very startling. To counter the American advent, the Soviet Union sent a note to Washington on 11 February 1957 containing a proposal to

secure lasting peace in the Middle East "by means of joint efforts of the great powers—the USSR, USA, England and France, permanent members of the United Nations Security Council." The proposal included six principles as a basis for the big powers relations with the Middle East countries. "These were the settlement of disputes by peaceful means, non-interference in internal affairs, the renunciation of attempts to incorporate the Middle East countries into military blocks with the great powers, the removal of foreign bases and the withdrawal of foreign troops, a reciprocal ban on arms deliveries, and the promotion of economic development without political or military terms attached."⁸⁷ These principles were rejected by the United States.

As for the Arabs, the question was not simply whether or not they were to subscribe to the Eisenhower Doctrine. Of importance to them was the question of Israel and of the American attitude to Israel. If, on the one hand, Washington had used its influence to halt Israeli aggression against Egypt, on the other there was the fact that Israel had still not been forced to complete evacuation, and there was also the fact that in the declaration of 11 February 1957 Washington had come out unequivocally in support of the theory that the Gulf of Aqaba was an international waterway.

In fact, the Eisenhower Doctrine proved difficult to apply even from the American point of view (let alone the fierce Arab resistance to the whole idea). This was not only because

(87) G. Barraclough, *Survey of International Affairs, 1956-1958*, *op. cit.*, pp. 167-168.

continuous propaganda had made it an almost unusable term, but also because through it American policy was attempting to reconcile at least two irreconcilable aims. On the one hand, Washington hoped to capitalize on the sudden increase of favor it had found among the Arab countries as a result of its actions in the autumn of 1956; and on the other, it had irrevocable policy commitments to Israel. For example, as was pointed earlier by the declaration of 11 February and by a later notification to shippers, the United States had announced that it regarded the Gulf of Aqaba as international waters; but Arabs described it unequivocally as territorial waters and were prepared to go to the International Court with their case. Thus in the last analysis no attempt to rationalize American friendship with the Arabs and continued support of Israel was possible.

The third phase of American-Israeli relations began in 1958 and continued to the present. The United States' attitude towards Israel, until that time, had been characterized by a continuous inner conflict between competing considerations about the distribution of American strategic and economic interests between the Arabs and Israel. In this new phase of American-Israeli relations we see that this conflict is greatly mitigated. The main cause for the alleviation of the conflict is economic. The United States came to realize that its economic interests in the Arab states were not gravely threatened if it adopted an outright pro-Israel policy. On the other hand, the United States also became convinced that President Nasser had his own game to play in the Arab countries which conflicted with American objectives in the area. Not only was he not to be drawn into any Western alliance, but he was bent on doing his utmost to prevent other Arab governments from entering or staying in such an alliance. As a result the United States developed a policy aimed at containing President Nasser's influence and even rolling it back, which created an obvious harmony between America's immediate objectives and Israeli interests.

III

By 1958, developments in the Middle East and in the strategic balance in the world further reduced the ground for conflict between American objectives in the Arab East and American support for Israel. Thus, when Iraq and Jordan formed on 14 February 1958 the Arab Union with Western

blessings in order to counter President Nasser's United Arab Republic (UAR), the Israeli Government warned against the introduction of Iraqi troops into the west bank of Jordan but otherwise refrained from making further difficulties on this issue which it had always considered as vital. A few months later, when the Iraqi revolution of 14 July 1958 brought about the complete encirclement of Jordan, Israel allowed British paratroops to fly over its own territory to bring help to King Hussein's threatened regime. Israel also allowed American tanker-planes to use Israeli air space in order to replenish Jordan's exhausted fuel reserves after the Saudi Arabian Government had refused to allow help to come from its side.

In the situation that developed after the Iraqi revolution, the agreement of American and Israeli immediate objectives became even more harmonious, creating at least a promise of enhanced cooperation between the two governments. The American commitment to preserve the *status quo* on the Palestine issue tended, by identifying America with Israel's interest, to handicap the efforts to rally the Arab countries into the Western camp. The decisive collapse, after the loss of Iraq to the Baghdad Pact, of the American Government's efforts to organize the Arab East on the basis of the *status quo* in the area removed all sources of possible friction between the United States and Israel.

America's initiatives from that time on to gain the friendship of the Arab countries no longer appeared so threatening to Israel, on the contrary, to the extent that they tended to preserve the general balance in the area (as conceived by the

United States), they redounded to Israel's benefit by helping to maintain the *status quo* between it and the Arab countries.

During the period under review, and more specifically following the Iraqi revolution and the landing of United States marines in the Lebanon and British forces in Jordan, Khrushchev took the initiative to find a settlement in the Middle East. He proposed, on 19 July 1958, "a meeting of the USSR, the US, the United Kingdom, France and India, with the participation of the Secretary General of the United Nations, in order that immediate steps may be taken to put an end to the conflict which has broken out."¹ In letters to the governments concerned he suggested a meeting "any day and hour, the sooner the better," to reconcile the sovereign rights of the peoples of the Near and Middle East with the commercial interests of the Western powers, and "to take up the question of putting an end to deliveries of arms." In his view it was "essential that the meeting . . . having prepared practical recommendations . . . should submit those recommendations to the Security Council, in order that the United Nations organ may examine them together with the representatives of the Arab countries"; and he concluded by proposing a meeting at Geneva on 22 July. Moreover, he also emphasized that "the question of the date and place of the meeting" must not be allowed to constitute an obstacle. "The Soviet Government," he made clear, was "prepared to meet any where, including Washington, if for any reason Geneva or the capital of some other neutral country is not suitable for the Western powers. The most important thing is to avoid delay."

(1) From Khrushchev's letter to Eisenhower; *Security Council, Official Records*: Document S/4059.

Nevertheless the immediate reaction in Washington was unenthusiastic. The meeting between Dulles and Lloyd to coordinate American and British policy, and the somewhat reluctant reexamination of policy towards Egypt, which was currently going on there, were already causing the administration sufficient concern. Hence the White House simply issued a formal statement saying that the United States was studying the Soviet note and intended "promptly, after appropriate consultations, to make a calm and constructive response" and adding that it would do nothing to "undercut . . . the work of the United Nations."²

In his reply, Eisenhower began with a long defence of American actions to date and asserted that "the real danger of war would come if one small nation after another were to be engulfed by expansionist and aggressive forces supported by the Soviet Union." Khrushchev's proposal, he said, was in his view "further calculated to derogate from the authority and prestige of the United Nations." . . . If the Soviet Union believed that there was an imminent threat to world peace, it was "bound by the United Nations Charter to take the matter to the Security Council." Furthermore, "under the Charter . . . heads of government . . . may represent a member nation at the Security Council. If such a meeting were generally desired the United States would join in following that orderly procedure." On the other hand, Eisenhower did not go so far as to turn down Khrushchev's proposals outright, and he concluded by stating that "I do not, of course, exclude the discussion, outside the United Nations, of world or regional prob-

(2) Text in *Manchester Guardian*, 21 July 1958.

lems, not posing alleged imminent threats to peace. I cannot but deplore the persistent refusal of your government for so many months to agree to the adequate preparation of a 'summit' meeting at which we could exchange considered views on the great problems which confront the world. In conclusion . . . I hope that ways can be found to act for peace in accordance with the standards described by the Charter of the United Nations."³

This frigid, non-committal document had a mixed reception. As one commentator said, it was "all anger and argument until suddenly, almost as an afterthought, there comes the cautious welcome of the Russian proposal."⁴ But Khrushchev was not to be daunted. In his reply, on 23 July, he stated that he considered the situation too serious for polemics and continued: "We note with satisfaction that the Soviet Government's proposal for a meeting of the heads of government has met with a favorable response on your part . . . as regards the calling of the meeting of the heads of government within the framework of the Security Council. The Soviet Government pointed out in its message of 19 July that the Security Council should not be circumvented."⁵

Washington made no immediate comment on Khrushchev's acceptance of the Western proposals for a meeting in the United Nations, but there was much to sustain the view that Eisenhower and his principal advisors believed that the

(3) *Department of State Bulletin*, Vol. 39, p. 241.

(4) *Manchester Guardian*, 24 July 1958.

(5) Text in *Security Council, Official Records*: Document S/4064 (23 July 1958).

course on which they had agreed would lead to the "wrong meeting at the wrong time and place on the wrong subject." Nevertheless preparations went ahead, and high-level exchanges continued. And on 6 August Khrushchev despatched another communication in which he again asserted that Eisenhower had made it clear that the United States refused to consider "the possibility of a meeting of the heads of government outside the procedure of the ordinary sessions of the Security Council," although, he continued, "it is well-known that, under the existing state of affairs in the Security Council, in which a majority of the members consists of states belonging to aggressive blocs, and the great Chinese People's Republic is not represented, this organ is not in a position to draw objective conclusions on the question of foreign armed intervention in the countries of the Arab East."⁷ Since the American Government had evaded the calling of a conference, and the Security Council was not in a position to solve the Middle East situation, the representative of the Soviet Union had been instructed to ask for an extraordinary meeting of the General Assembly. In fact, Khrushchev's proposal was put forward as a formal request by Mr. Sobolev, and was agreed to by the other heads of government; and on 7 August the Security Council decided unanimously to convoke a special session of the General Assembly.

On 13 August Eisenhower attended the General Assembly meeting and presented an American plan for the area. He defined six elements in his program for the Middle East:

(6) Mr. James Reston, quoted in the *Times*, 24 July 1958.

(7) G. Barraclough, *Survey of International Affairs 1956-1958*. *op. cit.*, p. 389.

United Nations' concern for Lebanon; United Nations' measures to preserve peace in Jordan; an end to the fermenting of civil strife from without; United Nations' peace force; a regional economic development plan; and steps to avoid a new arms' spiral. Eisenhower said that his government would support measures to these ends and appealed particularly to Arab countries to work towards a comprehensive "plan for peace."⁸ This plan seemed in many ways to mark a departure from the Eisenhower Doctrine. The United States realized that its policy to draw Arab nationalism into its system of alliances has failed. On the other hand, the imagined Soviet threat to the area had not taken hold, and Western policy was beginning to acknowledge that the Middle East should be approached less as a military vacuum than as a theatre of economic and political competition with the communist bloc.

The Zionists recognized this change in the American policy towards the Middle East and began to declare that "the state of Israel today represents the only effective challenge to communism in the Middle East that is not based on military force."⁹ This kind of thinking was able to rally around it supporters in the United States. Republican Senator Everett Dirksen declared that "the Soviet Union is looking for new area to conquer: what would be a better place for them to look than the state of Israel? Israel shall not become another Czechoslovakia."¹⁰ The United States has again rationalized

(8) *General Assembly, Official Records, 732nd Plenary Meeting*, pp. 4-5.

(9) Bernard A. Rosenblatt, *The American Bridge to the Israel Commonwealth*, New York, Farrar, Straus and Cudahy Inc., 1959, p. xiii.

(10) *The New York Herald Tribune*, 14/15 September 1968.

its full support of Israel by appealing to the old idea of standing up to communism. However, any study of the history of the state of Israel would show that there was never any "communist threat" against it either direct or indirect. This special emphasis on Israel as a bulwork against "communist infiltration" in the Middle East became less pronounced when the Kennedy administration took over in the United States. But before we review American-Israeli relations under the Kennedy administration there remains a number of points to be mentioned and discussed prior to the inauguration of President Kennedy. One of these is American reaction to the Arab Boycott of Israel.

The United States' policies in the Middle East, under the slogan of preserving the stability of the area, worked for the containment of the progressive Arab forces which challenged existing political structures, and for the maintenance of the *status quo* in the entire area.

This is the direct result of the United States' desire to preserve the American interests in the area. The most important of these interests are the important role the Middle East plays in military and commercial world communications; the petroleum supplies of the area which are the principal source of power for the Western European economy, and for American (and Western) military campaigns all over the globe. Sixty percent of these petroleum supplies are controlled by American capital alone. Needless to say these interests heighten other types of interests (religious, cultural, political) whose existence is a concomitant to the Western position in the area. A writer, John S. Badeau, has summarized the nature of these

American interests from the point of view of the Western powers by saying that the Middle East, or any vital part of it, shall not be occupied or controlled by a foreign power hostile to the United States. Such a power which could either deny oil and passage to the West, or use access to them as diplomatic blackmail to force changes in Western policy. Here also the global aspects of American policy are pertinent. The falling of Middle Eastern nations into hostile hands would have a shattering political effect on the Western world. Strategically, it could mean a major shift in the balance of power.¹¹

Badeau again summarizes the American rationalization of the United States' total support of Israel by saying that Israel's dedicated supporters in the United States argue, on the presupposition that Israel is "the only democratic society in the area, (and) is an example of progress and development which the Arab states themselves need. In their eyes, Israel's continued growth is thus a vital American interest. Taken to the extreme—as it frequently is during American political campaigns—this argument leads to the proposition that Israel should be the cornerstone and the chosen instrument of American policy in dealing with Arab states."¹²

Under these circumstances one is hardly surprised to see that American commitments to Israel have been unlimited. The commitments have been set forth in various official statements, and policy-makers are always under pressure to increase them. The American commitment to the existence of Israel

(11) John S. Badeau, *The American Approach to the Arab World*, New York, Harper and Row, 1968, p. 22.

(12) *Ibid.*, p. 26.

has lead the United States to furnish the means of safeguarding that existence—arms, a special security treaty, joint defense planning, pressure on the hostile Arab countries through all sorts of means such as withdrawal of foreign aid.¹³

United States Efforts to Uplift Ban on Israeli Ships to Pass through the Suez Canal

In the following pages I shall review the United States' position *vis-à-vis* the Arab boycott of Israel beginning with the question of the passage of Israeli ships in the Suez Canal. The United States played an active role in trying to secure passage through the Suez Canal for Israeli ships and for ships bound to or from Israel. The question became of crucial importance in 1960, when on 26 February of that year a Liberian ship carrying an Israeli cargo to Ceylon was halted at Port Said and the cargo impounded; after another similar incident involving a West German vessel, Israel made a formal complaint to the Security Council. The Egyptian Government's justification for its action was that the UAR and Israel were still "in a state of war."

In the United States the popular reaction was unequivocally favoring Israel: the longshoremen of New York picketed the Egyptian ship *Cleopatra*, and a Congressional amendment to the Mutual Security Act was put forward by 18 members of the Congress (known as the "Douglas Amendment"), in order to "support efforts towards eliminating trade restrictions in the Middle East, particularly with respect to those practiced

(13) *Ibid.*, pp. 27, 61.

against the State of Israel."¹⁴ Furthermore, on 28 April the United States Senate voted to add an amendment to President Eisenhower's foreign aid bill which gave the President discretionary authority to withhold foreign aid from any nation engaging in economic warfare against any other nation which receives United States aid under the program. This amendment was "aimed at the United Arab Republic's blockade of Israeli shipping."¹⁵ The amendment was denounced by Senator J.W. Fulbright, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, as an effort by pro-Israeli groups in the United States to influence American foreign policy with regard to the Arab states. On 30 April the Arab boycott of United States' shipping began.

On 2 May 1960, the State Department presented its views on the Douglas Amendment in a letter from the Acting Secretary of State (Dillon) to the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations (Fulbright). In his letter Dillon pointed out that the amendment would be widely interpreted as: (a) demonstrating favoritism for the state of Israel to the extent that it would render more difficult the United States' efforts to bring about a relaxation of tensions between Israel and the Arab states; and (b) an attempt to "tie strings" to United States' economic aid. The incorporation of this amendment would without doubt have the effect of making the task of eliminating the Arab boycott of Israel more difficult and "would play into the hands of the Soviet bloc which seeks to exacerbate Middle East tensions to further its penetration of the area."

(14) Full text in *Department of State Bulletin*, 23 May 1960.

(15) *The New York Times*, 29 April 1960.

The United States Government, the letter continued, has repeatedly made clear, publicly and through diplomatic channels, its support for freedom of transit through the Suez Canal, as well as its opposition to the Arab boycott against Israel.

Dillon also pointed out that the picketing—set up by the American labor unions in New York—against the United Arab Republic did not serve its objective. Asserting their determination to resist such pressures, the Arab countries established counter-picketing against American shipping. This reaction against coercion meant in effect that at least 20 American ships with 1,000 seamen abroad would be affected within one month. It also meant that for every Arab ship Americans might boycott some 30 American ships might be subjected to Arab boycott.

In the Department of State view, Dillon continued, avoidance of coercive tactics against Israel's neighbors is in Israel's interest. In just over a decade, Israel had quadrupled its exports. Its unfavorable trade balance has steadily been reduced. Israel's Gross National Product per capita is now more than twice that of any of its neighbors and even exceeds that of Netherlands and Italy. Foreign funds from various sources at an average rate of nearly \$1,000,000 per day have been responsible for this progress. The United States Government has been consistent in its support to Israel. It has extended to Israel with its population of under 2,000,000 a sizeable total of various types of assistance, including P.L. 480. Such assistance is continuing. Conditions has thus far been sufficiently favorable to allow Israel to make great strides. The State Department is of the view that it would be a grave mistake to

have that progress disturbed by actions which can only stir up area tensions to Israel's detriment.¹⁶

On 6 May 1960, the State Department issued a statement of policy with regard to the Arab boycott of Israel. The statement pointed out that the United States Government has long and unequivocally maintained the principle that there should be freedom of transit through the Suez Canal for all nations. This policy has been publicly emphasized on numerous occasions, and was specifically reiterated by the Secretary of State during his address before the United Nations General Assembly on 17 September 1959.¹⁷

With respect to Arab trade restrictions arising out of the Arab-Israeli conflict, the State Department reemphasizes that the United States Government "neither recognizes nor condones the Arab boycott, which includes the black-listing of United States flag vessels in part because of prior calls at Israeli ports." Every appropriate opportunity will be utilized, on a continuing basis, to reemphasize this fundamental position to the governments concerned. At the same time every suitable occasion will be emphasized both within and outside the United Nations, to facilitate progress towards a solution of the basic Arab-Israeli conflict from which the Arab boycott arises.

The United States navy in February 1960 discontinued the use of a clause formerly employed in contracting procedures for the delivery of oil to United States naval installations

(16) *Department of State Bulletin*, 23 May 1960, pp. 832-834.

(17) Text in *American Foreign Policy: Current Documents 1959*, pp. 93-105.

abroad, lest this clause, which was designed to assure the efficient operation of the fleet, be misconstrued as acquiescence to the Arab boycott.¹⁸

The Israeli reaction to the picketing of Cleopatra, as expressed by the Israeli press and Foreign Ministry officials, was one of satisfaction and pleasure. At stake in this dispute was the whole fabric of American-Arab relations built up painstakingly over the past 18 months. "This can be clear when the dispute is stripped of its 'labor problem' covering and viewed for what it essentially is—a shrewd Israeli maneuver to punish President Nasser for closing the Suez Canal to Israeli ships and cargoes—using the United States merchant marine as a weapon."¹⁹

The Kennedy Administration

The Kennedy administration sought to introduce into United States foreign policy new tactics, if not a new strategy,

(18) The clause read as follows:

"A. In event the vessel is prevented from loading or discharging in any port by the local authorities because of the vessel having previously traded with Israel, the charterer will have the option:

"(1) To cancel the charter as of the date loading is refused or after discharge at another port.

"(2) To require the substitution of another vessel of similar size, class, condition of tanks or cargo holds, and in a similar position.

"(3) To nominate other loading or discharge port or ports.

"Expenses incurred by the charterer in exercising an option shall be for the account of the owner."

(19) *Christian Science Monitor*. 21 April 1960.

which led to a revision of policy guidelines. The new administration realized that the previous American policy, designed supposedly to keep Soviet influence out of the Arab world (or at least keep it unimportant), has had opposite results. The Soviet Union has made its presence felt in the Middle East partly by exploiting to great advantage the unpopular Western policies in the Middle East. Russian power and prestige were everywhere evident in the form of arms, trade, technical assistance and cultural missions, etc

The Kennedy administration tried to follow a different line of policy toward the Arabs while maintaining its unwavering support of the state of Israel. The new approach attempted to relax the unsuccessful effort to line up the Arabs in Western military pacts and assistance agreements. It realized that it is no longer necessary to support, rigidly, the *status quo*. The new administration wanted to use a more intelligent and flexible approach for maintaining and furthering American interests and influence in the Arab world.

In essence, the new policy approach meant a recognition by the United States that the Arabs had achieved political independence and would henceforth have to be approached on that basis. However, the United States policy in the Middle East continued to be a failure. The immediate reason being, as has been pointed out, the unwavering support of the state of Israel. For example, the Kennedy administration decided to sell directly United States arms to Israel (which will be discussed in due course). This meant to the Arabs that the Kennedy administration, like previous administrations, saw in Israel a means for preserving American interests in the area

and as a result had to be maintained militarily superior to the Arabs.

John F. Kennedy took over the Presidency on 21 May 1961, and nine days later David Ben Gurion conferred with him in New York. Informed sources indicated that 'Ben Gurion had expressed particular concern over continued Arab intransigence towards his country . . . (and) over the continued flow of heavy modern arms to the Arab states from the Soviet bloc . . . Mr. Ben Gurion stressed his desire for an effective guarantee by the big powers, including the Soviet Union, of all borders in the Middle East.'²⁰

Thus, Israel from the start attempted to exploit the American fear of the communist menace in the Middle East. A theme which they have been successfully exploiting since 1955. Later, Israeli leaders decried Washington's attempt to win over President Nasser. The Israelis saw in the strengthening of President Nasser a deepening threat to Israel. The Egyptian leader, it was said, successfully had played off East against West. In a television interview on 3 May, Ben Gurion proposed that the United States and the Soviet Union jointly guarantee the territorial integrity of Israel in order to stabilize the situation in the Middle East. Both countries, he said, could refuse all aid to the United Arab Republic President until he accepted the existence of and negotiated a peace settlement with Israel. As an alternative, Ben Gurion proposed that the United States and Israel should sign a defensive treaty proclaiming that aggression against one party would be considered aggression against the other.²¹ The State Department pointed out that

(20) *The New York Times*, 31 May 1961.

(21) *Deadline Data*, 8 May 1963.

Soviet influence in the Middle East had been checked. Furthermore, Washington believed that Israel's insecurity has not been heightened. The American pledge to defend Israel against aggression was as explicit as before. President Nasser had shown his awareness and even tacit acceptance of this pledge, renewed by President Kennedy on 8 May 1963, when he declared in his news conference that the United States supports the security of both Israel and its Arab neighbors. He added that in the event of "aggression or preparation for aggression, whether direct or indirect," the United States will support appropriate measures in the United Nations and will also adopt "other courses of action on our own to prevent or put to a stop such aggression."²²

The crucial difference between the United States and Israel lay in their assessment of President Nasser's view of the situation. Both governments agreed that the Arab leader was unlikely to attack Israel with ground troops, because he was aware of Israel's military superiority to that of the United Arab Republic, and because the Soviets would oppose such a move, since it would involve the United States. But Israel could not exclude from its planning the (ill-founded as it proved to be after the 6 day-war) possibility of an air attack from Cairo. To the United States this possibility seemed too slight to warrant a radical shift in previous United States policies.

The Johnson Mission

As has been indicated earlier the United States believes

(22) *Deadline Data*, 3 May 1963.

that the Arab-Israeli conflict can be solved by solving the refugee problem. Accordingly, in 1961 it endeavored to break the stalemate reached as a result of Israel's refusal to implement the General Assembly resolution 194/III concerning the Arab refugees. Paragraph 11 of this resolution declares "that refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbors should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for property of those choosing not to return . . ."

Israel points to the phrase "live at peace with their neighbors," as operative. It argues that it cannot be assured of the peaceful intentions of returning refugees, at a time when the Arab states that house them refuse to make peace with the Israeli state and continually incite their peoples against it. On the other hand the Arab governments have declared that the solution of the refugee problem could lead to a settlement of the Arab-Israeli dispute. Israel's main reason for refusing to allow the Palestinian refugees to return to their homes, is its own massive program for Jewish immigration which forbids it to reintegrate large numbers of Palestine Arabs.

In an effort to break this stalemate, the United States through the Palestine Conciliation Commission (a United Nations body composed of the United States, France and Turkey) engaged in 1961 Dr. Joseph E. Johnson, president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, to make a fresh study of the refugee problem. According to Dr. Johnson the intransigence of both sides ruled out any formal agreement

on the number of refugees who might be permitted to return to Israel.

To Israel the security problem precluded an accord on any large number of returnees. The Arabs on the other hand, refused to proceed to details until Israel had accepted in principle the provisions of paragraph 11 of the General Assembly resolution 194/III.

As a basis for his discussion, Dr. Johnson sought to define the intentions of the General Assembly when it had passed this basic resolution in 1948. According to him the primary consideration had been the human welfare and wishes of the refugees themselves. But this welfare, according to Dr. Johnson, could not be allowed to conflict with the legitimate interests of the states concerned. Specifically, the General Assembly had not intended a solution that would threaten either the existence or security of Israel, a nation brought into being by the United Nations itself.

On 2 October 1962, Dr. Johnson proposed a solution along the following lines. Refugee heads of families, insulated by the United Nations from pressure from any source, should be allowed to choose voluntarily between a return to Palestine and compensation. These choices must be made specific—that is, each refugee should know exactly what opportunities for resettlement existed in Israel and what amounts of compensation would be made available as an alternative. Compensation should be based on 1947-1948 values of property in Palestine, plus accrued interest. The United States and other members of the United Nations, including Israel, would

contribute to this compensation. Israel would have the right to run a security check on each refugee opting for return.

Those refugees who had lacked property in Palestine would receive a reintegration allowance, wherever they might choose to go. Such allowances would be administered through the United Nations, which also would act as a cushion between the two sides during the long process of settlement.

Such a settlement scheme demanded compromise from the Arabs and Israel alike, including a willingness not to intimidate the hopeless refugees during their process of choice. Some United Nations agency would need to operate freely on both sides of the armistice lines. Any government would have the right to withdraw from the plan, if it considered its basic interests threatened. The entire operation would need to be gradual and of a type which, if abandoned along the way, would not leave the refugees worse off than they had been before.

Dr. Johnson's proposals in effect were rejected by Israel in November 1962. Without referring to the plan as such, Foreign Minister Golda Meir reiterated a Knesset resolution of November 1961, which stated there could be no returning of the Arab refugees to Israel and that the only solution to the problem was their settlement in the Arab states. Since that time, Mrs. Meir told the Knesset, there had been no change in Israel's stand *vis-à-vis* the refugee problem. This statement is contradictory to other Israeli statements declaring that their refusal to allow refugees to return to their homes is based on the refusal of the Arab governments to make peace

with Israel. Here it could be objectively pointed out that the latter explanation given by Israel for not returning the refugees is only for international popular consumption since Israel will never accept any project which aims at returning and/or compensating the Palestine refugees.

The Arab governments, while not rejecting Dr. Johnson's proposals openly, continued to insist that Israel first must accept in principle the pertinent United Nations' resolution(s). In January 1963, Dr. Johnson resigned from his United Nations work. And on 20 November of that year the United Nations General Assembly's Special Political Committee approved a United States-sponsored resolution [by a vote of 83 to 1 (Israel)] calling on the Palestine Conciliation Commission "to continue its efforts for the implementation" of paragraph 11 of resolution 194/III quoted above. The Israeli delegate to the United Nations declared that the resolution is "wholly unacceptable to Israel."

On the same day, Premier Eshkol (in Jerusalem) protested the contents of the resolution "in the strongest terms" to the United States Ambassador to Israel, Walworth Balfour. Eshkol pointed out that "Israel has two objections to the draft. First, it involves a choice by the refugees and is believed to give greater weight to repatriation than to settlement as a solution. Second, Israel basically favors direct negotiations rather than third-party mediation to settle the disputes between her and her Arab neighbors."²³

On 3 December 1963, a report submitted by the Palestine

(23) *The New York Times*, 21 November 1963.

Conciliation Commission, filed with the General Assembly, disclosed that with the approval of other commission members (France and Turkey), the United States has been conducting a series of quiet talks . . . at a high level since the beginning of 1963, with Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and the United Arab Republic. The report stated that "all sides had shown good will, a desire to achieve progress on the refugee problem, and a desire to continue talks, which are not yet completed."

Also on the same day, Arab delegates to the United Nations issued a joint statement formally denying that such discussions have ever taken place and declaring "our governments are not prepared to undertake any talks of any nature with the conciliation commission" and that the only solution of the refugee problem is repatriation by Israel.²⁴

The United States, through the application of economic pressure, could have forced Israel to comply with decisions adopted by the United Nations concerning the Palestinian refugees. But since it is not in the interest of the United States to see Israel weakened, threatened or embarrassed, it never seriously thought or intended to put into effect any resolution pertaining to the refugees if objected to by Israel.

The Johnson Administration

With the coming of Lyndon B. Johnson to the presidency, the American policy gradually manifested more openly the real vitalities between Israel and the United States without any pretense of impartiality in the dispute. The policy adopted by

(24) *The Baltimore Sun*, 4 December 1963.

Johnson may be compared to that of Truman in spite of Johnson's declarations which emphasized the strong desire of the United States for friendly relations with all the nations of the Middle East.

On 20 January 1964, Deputy Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, U. Alexis Johnson, outlined American objectives in the Near East in an address before the Citizens Committee as follows:

"First, as a fundamental contribution to world peace, we are deeply concerned with helping to create political stability, to advancing economic development, and to modernizing the social systems of the area. Our concern is both for the sake of the peoples involved and for strengthening the free world against expansion by those hostile to it.

"Second, we are concerned to limit hostile Soviet influence in the area. Arab experience with the Soviet Union since 1955 has tended to increase awareness that the Near East in fact shares in larger measure mutual interests with the West.

"Third, there should be an accommodation between Israel and its Arab neighbors, which we believe is the only way in which the area as a whole can develop political stability, self-sustained economic growth, and, thus, true independence. We know this is difficult, but we also know it is important to our national security interests and to the attainment of our objectives in the area.

"Fourth, the continued flow of oil at economically reasonable rates to Western Europe is of great importance. Europe's economic strength, so essential to free-world strength, relies on an elastic supply of Near Eastern oil at reasonable cost. The oil-producing states, conversely, have an interest in Western markets.

"Fifth, access to the air and sea routes to and through the Near East is important to us commercially and militarily."²⁵

In trying to achieve these objectives, the Under Secretary continued, the United States faces certain forces and factors that may enhance or hinder its efforts. Among the more important factors are:

(1) *Arab nationalism*: On its positive side, the drive for Arab unity and national dignity is based on the dream of a national, unified, and prosperous Arab future. Although Arab nationalism has a large component of neutralism, it is also one of the strongest forces resisting Soviet expansionism in the area.

Negatively, Arab nationalism contains the strains of resentment and suspicion engendered by the colonial past and by the frustrations of the mid-20th Century. In the past year ideological and practical differences between various Arab national groups have even been the cause of regrettable violence,

(25) Jules Davids, Ed., *Documents on American Foreign Relations 1964*, Council on Foreign Relations, New York, Harper & Row, 1965. pp. 321-322.

governmental upsets, and continued instability. The United States is not opposed to Arab unity. It does believe, however, that all the peoples of the area have a right to determine how and when it will be realized.

(2) *The historical gap in social, cultural, and political understanding* poses serious difficulties of communication between the United States and the peoples and governments of the area.

(3) *The Soviet drive for domination* is demonstrated by the continued Soviet efforts to create dissension and undermine any trends towards peace and stability in the area. The Soviet position and the Communist potential in the Near East have markedly declined in the past few years, but the Communists have by no means given up their objectives.

(4) The Near East is important to the United States in its own right. United States Near Eastern interests must be fitted into and sometimes must necessarily be modified by the United States *worldwide security and strategic concerns*. At times what the United States Government would *like* to do in the Near East may be obstructed by what it *must* do elsewhere in the world.

Those are the main forces and factors constituting the policy environment in which the United States seeks to attain its Near Eastern objectives, Under Secretary Johnson continued. In that policy environment the United States is faced constantly with choices. Practically speaking, the United States is faced with such questions as:

- (1) How can it deal with a single Arab state without alienating other Arab states temporarily at odds with it? or—
- (2) How can it maintain constructive relations with the more conservative and traditional states without stifling modernist democratic forces in the area? or—
- (3) How can the Americans act to ensure the security and integrity of the individual states of the area, including Israel, without becoming directly involved in their disputes and the United States losing its ability to act as a moderating influence in area disputes? How can it most effectively pursue its bilateral relationships with individual Arab states without appearing to stand in the way of the attainment of Arab unity?

Over the years, Alexis Johnson pointed out, the United States has found that an essential element in a workable Near Eastern policy is to avoid taking sides in regional disputes. This does not mean that the United States will stand idly by if aggression is committed. The United States has shown it will not. Nor does it mean that it will not use appropriate occasions to be helpful to disputing parties or to discuss frankly possible solutions to issues and problems as the United States sees them. It does this constantly. Whenever possible it does it quietly. The United States has an interest in the independence and well-being of all the states of the Near East. Instability, uncertainty, and insecurity in one Near Eastern state may quickly spread into the region as a whole. The United States cannot afford to pick and choose. It must maintain constructive and balanced relationships with the area as a whole. This the United States has endeavored to do. It was

in this spirit that last May (1963) President Kennedy publicly reiterated United States general policy. He said in part: "The United States supports social and economic and political progress in the Middle East. We support the security of both Israel and her neighbors . . . We strongly oppose the use of force or the threat of force in the Near East, and we also seek to limit the spread of communism in the Middle East which would, of course, destroy the independence of the people." The President also said that in the event of direct or indirect aggression the United States would support the appropriate courses of action to be taken by the United Nations on its own to prevent or put a stop to such aggression.

Alexis Johnson continued by stressing that he believes what Kennedy said on 8 May 1963, contains no ambiguity and lends itself to no misinterpretation. Any intended victim of any would-be aggressor can count on American support. In so saying the United States does not threaten or cajole. The United States underline its commitment to its objectives. It may be that some believe they do not need American help, but the Americans are certain all states are aware of their intentions and commitments and of their capability if need be to carry them out. Those who wish American help can count on it when they need it.

In the coming months many of the United States policies will be put to the test. The Under Secretary pointed out that he does not pretend to believe that the decisions the United States Government reach and the actions it believes it must take will always meet with full approval on the part of the Arab states or of Israel. The United States will seek their

understanding and will value their approval. The United States will always endeavor to act in such a way as not to damage its interests. But in the final analysis United States policies will be based on the United States interest as those in power see it.²⁶

In one analyzes this address on United States policy in the Middle East, he will find, inspite of the sugar-coated words, that the United States main objectives are protecting and maintaining its economic interests and presence in the area, especially the oil interest; and curbing what it calls the communist influence in the area.

Alexis Johnson also unfolded another important aspect of United States policy in the Middle East. One of the reasons given for American support of Israel is the fact that it is a democratic, progressive state. But, in its approach to the Arab states, the United States is always supporting the conservative forces and reactionary regimes under the pretext of curbing communist influence. American policy even supports the forces of reaction in their efforts to overthrow or subdue the more progressive regimes. The declarations made by United States officials to the effect that they are interested in "political stability," economic development and modernizing the social systems of the area, are very superficial in their understanding of these processes and their full-scale implications. Such declarations are more often made for international public consumption than as expressions of actual intentions and policies. No fundamental change can take place in the texture

(26) *Ibid.*, pp. 322-324.

of Arab life towards modernization, genuine economic independence and development as long as the present reactionary regimes remain in power. In the very nature of the case such radical changes are destructive of the very basis on which these regimes are erected and are detrimental to the sources of power from which these regimes derive their authority and traditional legitimacy.

The claim that the United States supports the security and integrity of both Israel and the Arab states is probably false. Events have shown that the United States is mainly interested in acting such that the security and integrity of the state of Israel is maintained.

On 1 June 1964, Israeli Prime Minister Levi Eshkol paid an official two-day visit to the United States at the invitation of President Johnson. The fact that it was the first official visit by a Prime Minister of Israel was stressed by President Johnson himself. Israeli officials saw in the emphasis the "dawn of a new and closer relationship between Israel and the United States."²⁷

At the end of the visit, 2 June, a joint communiqué was issued by President Johnson and Prime Minister Eshkol. The joint communiqué pointed out that after two days of discussions "on matters of mutual interest and concern, both welcomed the opportunity presented by the Prime Minister's visit at the invitation of the President for a full exchange of views."

"The President . . . emphasized the strong desire of the United States for friendly relations with all nations of the

(27) *The Washington Post*, 2 June 1964.

Near East, and its devotion to peace in the area and to peaceful economic and social development of all countries in the area. He congratulated Prime Minister Eshkol on the progress made by Israel since 1948 in the economic, technical, social and cultural fields. He noted the example provided by Israel in economic growth and human development in conditions of freedom.

"Prime Minister Eshkol expressed deep appreciation for the consistent interest and sympathy shown by the United States and for the generous economic assistance rendered by the United States Government and the American people to Israel over the years. He was confident that Israel's development would continue unabated towards the rapid achievement of a self-sustaining economy. It was his deep conviction that peace and the maintenance of the territorial integrity and national independence of all countries in the Near East is of vital interest to the region and to the world.

"The President welcomed assurances of Israel's deep concern, which the United States shares, for peace in the area. He reiterated to Prime Minister Eshkol United States support for the territorial integrity and political independence of all countries in the Near East and emphasized the firm opposition of the United States to aggression and the use of force or the threat of force against any country. In this connection, both leaders expressed their concern at the diversion of vitally important resources from development to armaments.

"The two leaders declared their firm determination to make every effort to increase the broad area of understanding

which already exists between Israel and the United States and agreed that the Prime Minister's visit advanced this objective.

"The agreement reached to undertake joint studies on problems of desalting provided concrete evidence of the desire of the United States to continue to assist Israel in its efforts to solve remaining economic problems. Both countries view this as part of the worldwide cooperative effort being undertaken to solve the problem of scarcity of water and hope for rapid progress towards large-scale desalting in Israel. The knowledge and experience obtained from the joint effort will be available to all countries with water deficiencies.

"In conclusion, the President and Prime Minister expressed their conviction that their peoples shared common values and were dedicated to the advancement of man, to individual freedom, and to human dignity."²⁸

According to press reports Premier Eshkol had indicated that he considered Israel's armed forces as sufficient deterrent to the Arab states now. But he expressed concern that the arms build-up in the Middle East was continuing and that these were no signs that tensions were easing. United States officials insisted that no specific request for economic or military aid had been made.²⁹

Upon his return to Israel, Premier Eshkol reported to the Knesset on 23 June that President Johnson's commitment to

(28) Jules Davids, Ed., *Documents on American Foreign Relations 1964*, *op. cit.*, pp. 326-327.

(29) *The New York Times*, 3 June 1964.

defend Israel in the event of Arab aggression was "a firm political decision with all that involves." Informed sources in Tel-Aviv said that "Eshkol was convinced by President Johnson that the United States has the capacity to intervene in a matter of hours in case of aggression in the Middle East and really means to do it if necessary. The Premier's statements have been interpreted in some quarters as a retreat from the government's demands for specific American military aid."³⁰

The Arab-Israeli June 1967 War

The year 1965 witnessed a new development in the Arab-Israeli conflict, namely, the emergence of the Palestinian guerrillas who started operating inside Israeli territory. The United States attitude towards the guerrilla activities was decidedly negative. It condemned their activities and accused Syria of being remiss in permitting the guerrillas to operate across its border. Israel's retaliations against guerrilla operations was then directed against Syria.

On 27 May 1966, the Soviet press agency, Tass, published a statement, which was formally delivered to the Israeli Government, accusing Israel of "provocations" against Syria: "The Soviet Union cannot and will not remain indifferent to the attempts to violate peace in a region located in direct proximity to the borders of the Soviet Union."³¹

Upon receiving this warning, Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban promptly decided to persuade "the United States

(30) *The New York Times*, 24 June 1964.

(31) Theodor Draper, *Israel and World Politics*, New York, the Viking Press, 1967, p. 36.

to make a countermove." "The Soviets," Eban believed, "were trying to demonstrate that they could dominate the area and that the United States was incapable of making a stand in favor of Israel such as the Soviets had made on behalf of Syria. Israeli diplomats thereupon attempted to get the United States to make some fitting reply to the Soviet challenge. They were advised that the United States wished to avoid a 'polarization' of power in the Middle East . . . The Israelis thought that such passivity would further encourage Arab extremists to think that they could count on the Soviet Union but that Israel could not count on the United States."³² The official Israeli fears were ill-founded, since the United States had declared on more than one occasion that it was committed to maintain the territorial integrity and security of the state of Israel as has already been stated. The Israelis were merely trying to exploit the guerrilla activities and to show the world that they were justified in retaliating by hitting as hard as possible. The best example is the Israeli raid of 7 April 1967, which precipitated the events leading to the third Arab-Israeli war two months later. During this raid Israel shot down six MIG-21's of the Syrian Air Force with no losses of its own.³³

In an interview with *US News and World Report* of 17 April, Premier Levi Eshkol stated in a reply to a question about Israeli expectations regarding United States help in the event of an Arab attack in force against Israel: "I would surely expect such help, especially if I take into consideration all the solemn promises that have been made to Israel. We

(32) *Ibid.*

(33) *Ibid.*, p. 47.

get these promises when we ask the United States for arms and are told: 'Don't spend your money. We are here. The Sixth Fleet is here'."

On 10 May ex-Chief of Staff Major General Yitzhak Rabin, declared that his forces might attack Damascus and topple the Syrian regime.³⁴ And on 12 May, Eshkol declared that "there will be no immunity for any State which aids and abets such acts,"³⁵ (i.e., guerrilla operations). He noted that Syria seemed to have taken on itself the leadership in the Arab struggle against Israel. But, Eshkol added, Syria's forces were not great, and "not without reason is she looking for protection among larger countries." Although this need not cause any alarm, he cautioned, "we shall go on manning our posts, ready for any possible deployments. However, Israel alone shall choose when, where and how to reply to the attacker."³⁶ The following day, 13 May, he again spoke on the same theme saying:

"The firm and persistent stand we have taken on behalf of our rights has strengthened the awareness among our neighbors that they will not be able to prevail against us in open combat. They recoil today from any frontal clash with Israel, and they postpone the date of such a confrontation to the remote future. Among the Arab rulers and their saboteur-minions, there are some who nowadays attempt to manifest their hostility to Israel in deeds,

(34) Randolph S. and Winston S. Churchill, *The Six Day War*, London, Heinemann, 1967, p. 29.

(35) T. Draper, *Israel and World Politics*, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

(36) *Weekly News Bulletin*, Israel, May 9-15, 1967, p. 20.

diligently in search of ways of attrition, subversion, and aggression against human lives. We have furnished proof that we shall not permit our borders to be opened to attack. We have proved that to their attempts to pick easy and exposed targets, we were able to respond at a place, time, and by a method of our own choosing. Thus, the saboteurs and their employers found out that they would not accomplish their aims this way. We do not recognize the limitations they endeavor to impose upon our acts of response. The Arab states and the nations of the world ought to know that any border which is tranquil from their side will also be quiet from our side. If they try to sow unrest on our border—unrest will come to theirs.”³⁷

And on 14 May, Eshkol, speaking at the Yhdar Club in Tel-Aviv, said “in view of the 14 incidents in the past month, we may have to adopt measures no less drastic than those of April 7.”

These statements on the part of Premier Eshkol and General Rabin were the immediate cause for President Nasser’s decision to move troops to the Israeli border and to blockade Eilat on the Gulf of Aqaba.

Before indulging in the discussion of the 5 June 1967 war, let us consider the international background of the events leading to that war. According to Isaac Deutscher, in an interview “On the Israeli-Arab War” published in the *New Left*

(37) Theodor Draper, *Israel and World Politics*, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

Review, July-August 1967 issue, declared that we have to relate this war to the worldwide power struggle and ideological conflicts which form its context. In these last years American imperialism, and the forces associated with it and supported by it, have been engaged in a tremendous political, ideological, economic, and military offensive over a vast area of Asia and Africa; while the forces opposed to them, the Soviet Union in the first instance, have barely held their ground or have been in retreat. This trend emerges from a long series of occurrences: the Ghanaian upheaval, in which Nkrumah's Government was overthrown; the growth of reaction in various Afro-Asian countries; the bloody triumph of anti-communism in Indonesia, which was a huge victory for counter-revolution in Asia; the escalation of the American war in Vietnam; and the 'marginal' right-wing military coup in Greece. The Arab-Israeli war was not an isolated affair; it belongs to this category of events. The counter-trend has manifested itself in revolutionary ferment in various parts of India, the radicalization of the political mood in Arab countries, the effective struggle of the National Front of Liberation in Vietnam; and the worldwide growth of opposition to American intervention. The advance of American imperialism and of Afro-Asian counter-revolution has not gone unopposed, but its success everywhere outside Vietnam has been evident.

In the Middle East the logic of American policy was still the same as in the late 1940's, when the state of Israel was in the making. As long as the American ruling class was interested primarily in squeezing out the old colonial powers from Africa and Asia, the White House pretended to be a mainstay of 'anti-colonialism'. But having contributed to the debacle of

the Old Empires, the United States took fright at the 'power vacuum' that might be filled by native revolutionary forces or the Soviet Union or a combination of both. Thus America stepped in as the neo-imperialist power. In the Middle East this happened during the period between the Suez crisis and the third Arab-Israeli war. The American landings in Lebanon in 1958 were designed to suppress a high tide of revolution in that area, especially in Iraq. Since then the United States, no doubt relying to some extent on Soviet 'moderation', has avoided open and direct military involvement in the Middle East and maintained seeming posture of detachment. This does not make the American presence any less real.

The Israelis have, of course, acted on their own motives, and not merely to suit the convenience of American policy. That the great mass of Israelis believe themselves to be menaced by Arab hostility need not be doubted. That some 'blood-thirsty' Arab declarations about "throwing the Jews in the sea" made Israeli flesh creep is evident.

Yet whatever their own motives and fears, the Israelis are dependent in a special and unique manner on external powers. The factors of Israel's dependence were to some extent 'built in' its history over two decades and were not simply the product of these fears. All Israeli governments have staked Israel's existence on the 'Western orientation'. This alone would have sufficed to turn Israel into a Western outpost in the Middle East, and so to involve it in the great conflict between neo-colonialism and the Arab peoples struggling for their emancipation. The cold war imparted great momentum to the reactionary trends in the area and exacerbated the Arab-

Israeli conflict. Israel was firmly committed "to anti-communism" as the Americans understood it. Irreconcilable hostility to Arab aspirations for emancipation from the West thus became the axiom of Israeli policy. Israel's social democratic ministers, no less than Western colonialists, have embraced a *raison d'être* which sees its highest wisdom in keeping the Arabs backward and divided and playing their reactionary regimes and other feudal elements against the republican national-revolutionary forces.

The prelude to the events of June 1967 was provided by Israel's adoption of a menacing attitude towards Syria's regime which it denounced as 'Nasserite' or even 'ultra-Nasserite', (for Syria's Government appeared to be a shade more anti-imperialist and radical than Egypt's).

Did Israel, in fact, plan to attack Syria some time in May, as Soviet Intelligence Services believed and as Moscow warned President Nasser? We do not know. But most probably the answer will be yes. Israel's economic situation was deteriorating, the number of unemployed workers in Israel totalled 95,000. Immigration into Israel was at its lowest ebb. A move had to be taken to overcome some of these difficulties. This move could be a limited war against Syria. The mere fact of Israel being threatened would rally around it the Jews of the world, bring in plenty of financial and economic aid.

It was in formal response to this warning (with Soviet encouragement), that President Nasser ordered mobilization and concentration of troops on the Sinai frontier. If Israel had such a plan, President Nasser's move may have delayed

the attack on Syria by a few weeks. In any case, Israel's rulers were quite confident that their aggressiveness *vis-à-vis* either Syria or Egypt would meet with Western sympathy and bring them reward; this calculation underly their decision to strike the pre-emptive blow on 5 June. They were absolutely sure of American, and to a lesser extent of British, moral, political and economic support. They knew that no matter how far they went in attacking the Arabs, they could count on American diplomatic protection or, at the very least, on American official indulgence. And they were not mistaken. The White House and the Pentagon could not fail to appreciate men who for their own reasons, were out to put down the Arab enemies of American neo-colonialism. General Dayan, acted as a kind of Marshal Ky for the Middle East and appeared to be doing his job with startling speed, efficiency and ruthlessness. He was, and is, a much cheaper and far less embarrassing ally than Ky.³⁸

The sequence of events in the latter part of May was as follows:

On 16 May, a message from General Fawzi, Chief of Staff of the United Arab Republic Armed Forces, was received by the Commander of UNEF, Major General Rikhye, requesting withdrawal of "all UN troops which install OPs along our borders" (A/6730, para. 6, sub-para. 3 (a)). This message was communicated to UN Secretary General U Thant. The UNEF Commander was immediately instructed to await

(38) Isaac Deutscher, "On the Israeli-Arab War," *New Left Review*, July-August, 1967, pp. 30-45.

further instructions from the Secretary General and, pending this later word from him, to "be firm in maintaining UNEF position while being as understanding and as diplomatic as possible in your relations with local UAR officials."

In New York the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Republic visited the Secretary General at the latter's request. The Secretary General requested the Permanent Representative to communicate with his government with the utmost urgency to transmit to it his views (A/6730, para. 6, sub-para. 3 (c)). In particular, the Secretary General requested the Permanent Representative to obtain his government's clarification of the situation, pointing out that any request for the withdrawal of UNEF must come directly to the Secretary General from the Government of the United Arab Republic.

On 17 May, the Secretary General held an informal meeting in his office with the representatives of countries providing contingents to UNEF to inform them of the situation as then known. There was an exchange of views. The Secretary General gave his opinion on how he should and how he intended to proceed, observing that if a formal request for the withdrawal of UNEF were to be made by the Government of the United Arab Republic, the Secretary General, in his view, would have to comply with it, since the force was on United Arab Republic territory only with the consent of the government and could not remain there without it.

On 18 May the Egyptian Government submitted an official request for the withdrawal of the UNEF. The request read as follows: "The Government of the United Arab Republic has the honour to inform your Excellency that it has decided

to terminate the presence of the United Nations Emergency Force from the territory of the United Arab Republic and Ghaza Strip. Therefore, I request that the necessary steps be taken for the withdrawal of the force as soon as possible."

Accordingly U Thant drafted a formal note giving the necessary orders for UNEF to make "without delay an orderly withdrawal with its vehicles and equipment and for the disposal of all properties pertaining to it."

On 19 May, ex-United States representative at the United Nations, Mr. Arthur Goldberg, met with U Thant for forty-five minutes. Goldberg pledged full support "for any United Nations action required to keep peace." Later he publicly expressed "deep concern" over the rising tension in the area.

On 20 May, Israel completed a partial mobilization of its reservists and the United Arab Republic's Deputy Commander of the Armed Forces issued an order calling up the reservists. By the third week of May, then, both sides were fully mobilized.

On 22 May, Egypt declared the Straits of Tiran closed to Israeli ships. President Nasser announced that the United Arab Republic had closed the Gulf of Aqaba to Israeli shipping and also to strategic materials being shipped to Israel on board non-Israeli vessels.

With the escalation of the crisis, Johnson met with the National Security Council (NSC), and officially announced that McGeorge Bundy would work with a special committee

of the NSC, which would include Richard Helms, Head of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). The function of McGeorge Bundy's new committee of the NSC was to coordinate efforts to end war and work out a long-term United States policy for the Middle East, establishing firm relations with both Israel and the Arabs.

After the announcement of the closure of the Straits of Tiran to Israel, Under Secretary for Political Affairs Eugene V. Rostow met with Israeli Minister Ephraim Evron at the State Department. (The Israeli Ambassador, Avraham Harman, happened to be out of Washington on an engagement). Rostow told Evron that the United States hoped there would be no shooting over the incident and asked him to remain in closest consultation for the next few days. Rostow had previously delivered the same message to the Egyptian Ambassador in Washington. About the same time, the Israeli Government was asked more precisely by the United States Ambassador in Tel-Aviv, Walworth Balfour, to wait forty-eight hours before taking any action.

The first official American reaction to the closure of the Gulf of Aqaba came on 23 May, when President Johnson made the following statement:

"In recent days, tension has again arisen along the armistice lines between Israel and the Arab states. The situation there is a matter of grave concern to the whole international community.

"We earnestly support all efforts, in and outside the United Nations and through its appropriate organs, in-

cluding the Secretary General, to reduce tensions and to restore stability. The Secretary General has gone to the Near East on his mission of peace with the hopes and prayers of men of good will everywhere.

"The Near East links three continents. The birthplace of civilization and of three of the world's great religions, it is the home of some sixty million people; and the crossroads between East and West.

"The world community has a vital interest in peace and stability in the Near East, one that has been expressed primarily through continuing United Nations actions and assistance over the past twenty years.

"The United States, as a member of the United Nations, and as a nation dedicated to a world order based on law and mutual respect, has actively supported efforts to maintain peace in the Near East.

"The danger, and it is a grave danger, lies in some miscalculation arising from a misunderstanding of the intentions and actions of others.

"The Government of the United States is deeply concerned, in particular, with three potentially explosive aspects of the present confrontation.

"First, we regret that the general armistice agreements have failed to prevent warlike acts from the territory of one against another government, or against civilians, or territory, under control of another government.

"Second, we are dismayed at the hurried withdrawal of the United Nations Emergency Force from Ghaza and Sinai after more than ten years of steadfast and effective service in keeping the peace, without action by either the General Assembly or the Security Council. We continue to regard the presence of the United Nations in the area as a matter of fundamental importance and shall support its continuance with all possible vigor.

"Third, we deplore the recent build-up of military forces and believe it a matter of urgent importance to reduce troop concentrations. The status of sensitive areas, as the Secretary General emphasized in his report to the Security Council, such as the Ghaza Strip and Gulf of Aqaba, is a particularly important aspect of the situation.

"In this connection, I want to add that purported closing of the Gulf of Aqaba to Israeli shipping has brought a new and grave dimension to the crisis. The United States considers the gulf to be an international waterway and feels that a blockade of Israeli shipping is illegal and potentially disastrous to the cause of peace. The right of free, innocent passage of the international waterway is a vital interest of the international community.

"The Government of the United States is seeking clarification on this point. We have urged Secretary General Thant to recognize the sensitivity of the Aqaba question and to give it the highest priority in his discussions in Cairo.

"To the leaders of all the nations of the Near East, I wish to say what three Presidents have said before—that the *United States is firmly committed to the support of the political independence and territorial integrity of all the nations of the area.*

"*The United States strongly opposes aggression by anyone in the area, in any form, overt or clandestine.* This has been the policy of the United States led by four Presidents—President Truman, President Eisenhower, President Kennedy, and myself—as well as the policy of both of our political parties. The record of the actions of the United States over the past twenty years, within and outside the United Nations, is very clear on this point.

"The United States has consistently sought to have good relations with all the states of the Near East. Regrettably, this has not always been possible, but we are convinced that our differences with individual states of the area and their differences with each other must be worked out peacefully and in accordance with accepted international practice.

"We have always opposed—and we oppose in other parts of the world at this moment—the efforts of other nations to resolve their problems with their neighbors by aggression. We shall continue to do so. And we appeal to all other peace-loving nations to do likewise.

"We call upon all concerned to observe in a spirit of restraint their solemn responsibilities under the Charter

of the United Nations and the general armistice agreements. These provide an honorable means of preventing hostilities until, through the efforts of the international community, a peace with justice and honor can be achieved.

"I have been in close and very frequent contact—and will be in the hours and days ahead—with our able Ambassador, Mr. Goldberg, at the United Nations, where we are pursuing the matter with great vigor and in the hope that the Security Council will act effectively."

And on 24 May, the United States and Britain, during talks in Washington between British Minister of State for Foreign Affairs George Thompson and United States Secretary of State Dean Rusk, agreed that the Gulf of Aqaba must be reopened to international shipping. "It was emphasized that both countries sought a diplomatic solution, and that sterner action would be taken only as a last resort. Units of the United States Sixth Fleet have taken up position in the Eastern Mediterranean in a maneuver intended to support American diplomatic efforts . . . An undisclosed number of ships were said to be off the Suez Canal area . . . The fleet comprises some 50 ships, including two attack aircraft carriers, *America* and *Saratoga*. By coincidence, a third carrier, *Interpid*, is passing through the Mediterranean bound for Vietnam."³⁹

Thus, Johnson in his statement criticized the Secretary General for his decision to withdraw the UNEF. In addition, Johnson formally, and immediately committed the United States to the Israeli point of view by regarding the Strait of

(39) *The Times* (London), 25 May 1967.

Tiran as an international waterway. Needless to say Johnson is not an authority on the subject. The two latest international conferences which dealt with the question of the width of a state's "territorial waters" (the Geneva conference of 1958 and 1960) failed to establish a uniform standard acceptable to the majority of states. However, there is no dispute over the minimum width claimed by all states—namely, the traditional three-mile width of "territorial waters." The United Arab Republic asserts its sovereignty over a twelve-mile-wide belt of "territorial waters." But, even if the minimum standard of three miles were to be applied, the waters of the Strait of Tiran would still fall in their entirety within the territorial belt thus defined.

In addition to being an indivisible part of the continuous belt of United Arab Republic "territorial waters," and, therefore, an integral part of its territory, the area between the Island of Tiran and the coast of Sinai at Sharm al-Shaikh (i.e., the Strait of Tiran, at the mouth of the Gulf of Aqaba) has the additional quality of being a "territorial strait" under International Law.⁴⁰

Oppenheim-Lauterpacht sums up the universally-recognized rules of International Law governing such situations in the following words:

"All straits which are not more than six miles wide are certainly territorial. Therefore, straits of this kind which

(40) Fayez A. Sayegh, "The Status of the Strait of Tiran," *Middle East Economic Survey*, Vol. X, No. 31, 2 June 1967, pp. 1-2.

divide the land of one and the same state belong to the territory of such state. Thus the Solent, which divides the Isle of Wight from England, and the Menai Strait, which divides Anglesey from Wales, are British; the Straits of Messina are Italian; and the Great Belt, which divided the islands of Fyn and Sjaelland, is Danish."⁴¹

The rules governing passage through such "territorial straits" are summed up in the same authoritative source in the following words:

"... the rule that foreign merchantmen cannot be excluded from passage through territorial straits applies only when they connect two parts of the open sea. Where a territorial strait belonging to one and the same state connects a part of the open sea with a territorial gulf or bay ... foreign vessels can be excluded."⁴²

The crucial question, then, is whether the Gulf of Aqaba is a "territorial gulf," or whether it is a part of the "open sea," under the general rules of the Law of Nations. The Gulf of Aqaba is a "territorial gulf," and is possessed of the characteristics of a "closed area."⁴³ Its three littoral states are the Arab states of the United Arab Republic, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Its

(41) *Ibid.*, quoted from L. Oppenheim's *International Law: A Treatise*, edited by H. Lauterpacht, Vol. 1, Eighth Edition, Sixth Impression, 1962, para. 194, p. 510.

(42) *Ibid.*, p. 2, quoted from L. Oppenheim's *International Law: A Treatise*, para. 195, p. 512.

(43) *Ibid.*

status is thus analogous to that of the Gulf of Fonseca, which was the subject of a decision by the International Court of the Central American Republics in 1917. According to that decision, the Court, taking into consideration the geographical and historical conditions, as well as the situation, extent, and configuration of the Gulf of Fonseca, decided that the Gulf must be regarded as "an historic bay possessed of the characteristics of a closed area," and that it therefore was part of the territories of San Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua.⁴⁴

Not only Johnson was mistaken on the status of the Strait of Tiran and the Gulf of Aqaba but also U Thant during his visit to the United Arab Republic, 23-25 May, was assured by President Nasser that ships passing through the Gulf and destined to Israel would not be searched. This was disclosed in President Nasser's speech of 23 July 1967. Nasser said: "He (U Thant) asked us for a respite for the Gulf of Aqaba and we agreed. He said he wanted some time to give everybody a breathing space. The first point was that no Israeli ships were to go through the Gulf and at the same time we were not to carry out inspection." It should be added that U Thant had suggested something of the sort for a period of two weeks to gain time for the Security Council to deliberate and act. His actual suggestion was that the Israelis should agree not to send any of their flagships through the Straits of Tiran into the Gulf of Aqaba, and that the Secretary General would ask all other maritime powers not to send oil or strategic materials, which he left undefined, to Eilat and in return Egypt would

(44) *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3, quoted from L. Oppenheim's *International Law: A Treatise*, para. 192, p. 508.

not search any ships going through the Straits. *Nasser agreed; Eban refused.*⁴⁵

Nasser's move to blockade the Straits of Tiran was a provocative one, though practically of very limited significance. The Western powers did not consider it important enough to try and "test" the blockade. It provided Nasser with a prestige gain and enabled him to claim that he had wrested from Israel the last fruit of its 1956 victory. The Israelis played up the blockade as a mortal danger to their economy, which it was not; and they replied by mobilizing their forces and moving them to the frontiers.⁴⁶

On 23 May, the Israeli Government rejected the plea of its military command for immediate action and decided to send Foreign Minister Eban to Paris, London and Washington. Eban was to find out in Washington what the United States could do about the closure of the Gulf of Aqaba. But before Eban could get to Washington, the very nature of the problem had changed in the view of Prime Minister Eshkol and his chief advisors. As Eshkol has related, he changed his mind on 24 May about Sharm al-Shaikh being "the heart of the matter." The Israeli Government had relegated the question of Sharm al-Shaikh to second place before Eban could get to Washington. The main question had now become, from the Israeli view point, the "offensive" build-up of the Egyptian army on the Israeli borders.⁴⁷

(45) T. Draper, *Israel and World Politics*, *op. cit.*, p. 63 n.

(46) Isaac Deutscher, "On the Israeli-Arab War," *op. cit.*

(47) Interview with Prime Minister Eshkol, *Ma'ariv*, 4 October 1967.

While Eban was still *en route*, Eshkol sent him a message to this effect. The message prompted Eban to ask Secretary of State Dean Rusk to advance the time of their first meeting, which had been set for 5:30 p.m., 25 May, by two hours. When Eban conveyed Eshkol's message to Rusk, he was told that the information at the disposal of the United States did not bear out this grim prospect. According to the best United States estimate, Rusk said, Egypt was not prepared to strike a quick blow.

That same evening, 25 May, the top Israeli diplomats, including Foreign Minister Eban and Ambassador Harman, and the leading United States officials, including Rostow and Lucius Battle, continued to wrestle with the problem at a "working dinner." The Israelis urged speed and pressed for a "timetable." The Americans were not prepared as yet to suggest much more than "going to the United Nations."

Nevertheless, Under Secretary Rostow called in the Egyptian Ambassador about 10:30 p.m. on 25 May and, on behalf of President Johnson, asked him to request the Egyptian Government not to resort to force. On 23 July 1967, Nasser gave the following version of this meeting: "The Counsellor of the American President summoned our ambassador at a late hour in the night in Washington and told him that Israel had information that we would mount an attack, adding that this would expose us to a dangerous situation. He asked us to *retain self control* and said that *the Americans were doing the same thing with Israel to have it maintain self control.*"⁴⁸

(48) T. Draper, *Israel and World Politics*, *op. cit.*, Speech of President Abdel Nasser at Cairo University Auditorium, 23 July 1967, Appendix 14, p. 240.

On 26 May, President Johnson sent a message to Premier Kosygin suggesting Soviet cooperation to restrain Egypt. On 27 May, at 3:30 a.m., the Soviet Ambassador woke up Nasser to give him a grave warning that the Egyptian army must not be the first to open fire. Nasser complied.

In preparation for Eban's visit, a joint memorandum had been drawn up by the Secretary of State, Rusk, and by Secretary of Defense, R.S. McNamara. They advised President Johnson that the United States was faced with two basic policy choices in making good its commitment to Israel to keep open the Straits of Tiran. They were (1) to permit Israel to deal with the problem alone (in official circles, this was sometimes referred to as the "unleashing Israel" alternative), and (2) for the United States to assume responsibility for opening the Straits.⁴⁹

The policy outlined in the Rusk-McNamara memorandum envisaged three phases or stages:

- (1) To exhaust all possibilities of resolving the conflict peacefully in the United Nations;
- (2) To draft and circulate a declaration to be signed by as many maritime powers as possible in support of freedom of passage through the Straits of Tiran and in the Gulf of Aqaba.
- (3) If all else failed, to use warships to escort vessels through the Straits of Tiran.

(49) *Ibid.*, pp. 89-90.

Theodore Draper pointed out that the key meeting between President Johnson and Foreign Minister Eban (together with their main advisors and leading officials) took place on 26 May. Eban made an eloquent statement of the Israeli position, which he defined as one of "surrender or fight." The President made clear his determination to live up to the commitments made by previous administrations, especially the assurance given by the Eisenhower administration in 1957, to uphold the right of Israel's "free and innocent" passage in the Gulf of Aqaba. But he also drew attention to the constitutional and congressional difficulties to be faced before the United States could take any action. In the end, Eban put the following question to the President: Would the United States make every possible effort to assure that the Straits of Tiran and Gulf of Aqaba would be open to free and innocent passage? The President answered: Yes. In return, Eban was asked for two weeks to enable the United States to attempt to settle the dispute peacefully.

Theodore Draper also reported that the Israelis left the meeting with President Johnson feeling that he sincerely intended to take whatever action might be necessary to open the Straits of Tiran and the Gulf of Aqaba to Israeli shipping. But they had also been made acutely aware of the fact that he did not feel that he could act on his own and that much would depend on the international and domestic support he might be able to muster. Meanwhile, Mr. Johnson had taken the precaution of obtaining the backing of former President Eisenhower. The latter was called to give his opinion of what the United States had committed itself to in 1957, and he forthrightly answered that he considered it a "commitment of

honor" for the United States to live up to his implicit assurance to former Israeli Prime Minister Ben Gurion that the Straits would be kept open. Eban returned home recommending that President Johnson should be given a chance to see what he could do to reopen the Straits of Tiran one way or another.⁵⁰

The Israeli leaders deliberated from the evening of 27 May to 5 a.m. the next morning on the situation brought about by Foreign Minister Eban's report from Washington and the Israeli military's continued pressure for action. While the meeting was still in session, a message from President Johnson to Prime Minister Eshkol arrived. The message strongly urged restraint and reiterated the President's request to Foreign Minister Eban for a waiting period. According to Eshkol, it also cited a warning by Premier Kosygin to President Johnson that the Soviet Union would help whichever side was attacked. Another message followed from Secretary of State Rusk warning the Israeli Government that one-sided Israeli action would be catastrophic and he reemphasized the promise by the United States that it will take action to reopen the Straits of Tiran, Eshkol says that he was then prepared to go to war but the President's letter persuaded him to wait.⁵¹

An informal poll at the meeting disclosed that the Israeli cabinet was evenly divided—nine for war and nine for waiting. Eshkol says that he could have exerted enough pressure to gain two more votes for a pro-war majority of eleven to seven but that he was loath to take the country into war without a greater degree of political unity. The decision to wait was

(50) T. Draper, *Israel and World Politics*, *op. cit.*, pp. 89-91.

(51) *Ibid.*, p. 93.

made official at a second meeting on the afternoon of 28 May. Eshkol conveyed the news to the Israeli military, who still tried to impress him with danger. The Prime Minister also sent a reply to President Johnson agreeing to the request for a waiting period without specifying its duration.⁵² The Americans assumed that it would be two weeks.

On 28 May, then, the government of Israel was too divided to take military action. The division was not between those who favored war immediately and those who opposed it indefinitely. There were, roughly, three viewpoints—that Israel had “missed the boat” by waiting too long, that it was necessary to fight without further delay, and that it was necessary to exhaust all other possibilities before going to war. The third was not so much a “peace party” as a “not-yet-war” party. For this group, of whom Prime Minister Eshkol was the control figure, the main inhibition came from President Johnson’s request to let the United States and the “maritime powers” open the Straits of Tiran for Israel. The war mood expressed itself in an irresistible demand for the inclusion of the former Chief-of-Staff, Major General Moshe Dayan, who enjoyed the reputation of a “hawk,” in government. Despite his reluctance to give way, the Prime Minister surrendered his second post as Minister of Defense to General Dayan on 1 June in a reorganization of the cabinet which was enlarged to include two other representatives of opposition parties without port folio.

Meanwhile, on the evening of 23 May, Canada and Denmark requested an immediate meeting of the Security Council

(52) Interview with Prime Minister Eshkol, *Ma'ariv*, *op. cit.*

to deal with the Middle Eastern question. After the closure of the Gulf of Aqaba, the full dimensions of the emergency were clearly visible. The Canadian-Danish request was supported by United States Ambassador Arthur J. Goldberg, who offered to join with the Soviet Union, Britain and France "in a common effort to restore and maintain peace in the Middle East."⁵³

But the Soviet Union prevented any "intervention" by outside powers in the consummation of the Arab plan. On 24 May, Soviet Ambassador Fedorenko barred the way to the Security Council's even taking up the subject. "Having heard the statements of representatives of the Western powers," Fedorenko said, "we are even more convinced that certain forces are artificially heating up the climate for reasons that have nothing to do with a true concern for peace and security in the Near East." He rejected the proposal that the Soviet Union should take part in consultations.⁵⁴ As a reaction to the Soviet attitude, Ambassador Goldberg tried to spell out a key phrase in Secretary General U Thant's report of 27 May. U Thant had urged "all the parties concerned to exercise special restraint, to forego belligerence and to avoid all other actions which could increase tension, to allow the Council to deal with the underlying causes of the present crisis and to seek solutions." In his statement on 29 May, Mr. Goldberg paid special attention to the words, "forego belligerence." He said: "We believe, from the context of the situation, that with respect to the particularly sensitive area of Aqaba, belligerence

(53) United Nations, *Security Council Provisional Verbatim Record*, 2 May 1967, S/PV. 1342, p. 11.

(54) *Ibid.*, pp. 22 and 51.

must mean foregoing any blockade of the Gulf of Aqaba during the breathing spell requested by the Secretary General, and permitting free and innocent passage of all nations and all flags through the Straits of Tiran to continue as it has during the last ten years.”⁵⁵

Indeed, both the Soviet Union and the United States were virtually working together on 27-28 May to prevent an outbreak of hostilities. But they were also working at cross-purposes politically, and, in the end, they negated more than they supported each other.

After this the three-point Rusk-McNamara plan was effectively reduced to two points—the declaration of the “maritime powers” and, as a last resort, the naval escort through the Straits of Tiran.

The “Maritime Declaration” took some days to draft to the satisfaction of all parties concerned because its sponsors did not wish to make it too threatening in tone and yet wished to hint that some action might be forthcoming if Egypt proved to be completely unyielding. As finally adopted, the brief statement contained this key paragraph:

“In regard to shipping through the waterways that serve ports on the Gulf of Aqaba, our Governments reaffirm the view that the Gulf is an international waterway into which and through which the vessels of all nations have a right of passage. Our Governments will assert this right on behalf of all

(55) *Ibid.*, 29 May 1967, S/PV. 1343, p. 16.

shipping sailing under their flags, and our Governments are prepared to cooperate among themselves and to join with others in seeking general recognition of this right."⁵⁶

The negotiations for the maritime powers' declaration dragged on. Charles W. Yost later admitted that the maritime powers' declaration had few potential signatories: "Equally unavailing were efforts made to forestall a unilateral Israeli response by organizing a group of maritime powers to issue a declaration reaffirming the right of free passage through the Strait and presumably, if passage continued to be denied, to take effective multilateral action to reopen it. Very few maritime powers showed any interest in participating in a confrontation with Nasser and the Arab world."⁵⁷ At the same time, but far more quietly, plans were being worked out for a collective maritime flotilla—soon dubbed the "Red Sea Regatta"—to provide a naval escort for ships through the Straits of Tiran if Egypt did not heed the declaration. The United States had the fifty-ship Sixth Fleet with its two aircraft carriers, *America* and *Saratoga*, and a third carrier, *Interpid*, in the area, and the British had about half a dozen ships there, but two British aircraft carriers, *Victorious* and *Hermes*, were about a thousand miles away in the vicinity of Aden. Hugh Sidey reported in *Life*,⁵⁸ a report that was also mentioned by Dan Rather of CBS news, that General Earle Wheeler, then chairman of the Joint Chief's of Staff, had provided capability estimates to President Johnson which showed that the Israeli army would

(56) T. Draper, *Israel and World Politics*, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

(57) Charles W. Yost, "The Arab-Israeli War: How It Began," *Foreign Affairs*, January 1968, p. 316.

(58) *Life*, 23 June 1967, p. 23 B.

gain victory in three or four days. Wheeler rechecked his conclusions with CIA director Richard Helms and then came back with the same estimate.⁵⁹

On 30 May, Richard Scott reporting in the *Guardian* stated: "The United States is prepared to sustain Israel, politically and economically, if she is attacked militarily by the United Arab Republic. If, however, Israel is provoked by the Egyptian blockade of the Gulf of Aqaba, or by any other non-military means, into launching hostilities against Egypt, then Washington will give Israel little more than moral support."⁶⁰ This hardly looks as though Israel would be condemned for committing aggression. It is almost suggesting to Israel that there could be an armed attack against a non-military action.

Meanwhile, the United States hoped that diplomacy had not yet been exhausted. On 31 May, Robert B. Anderson, former Secretary of Treasury in the Eisenhower administration, met with President Nasser in Cairo. Anderson had been sent as President Johnson's personal envoy on a mission of inquiry that was one of the best-kept secrets of the period. According to President Nasser, Anderson proposed that an Egyptian Vice President should be sent to the United States to explain the Arab viewpoint to President Johnson.⁶¹ President Nasser agreed, and on 2 June sent a message to Johnson offering to

(59) Only then, apparently, did the Johnson Administration declare its "neutrality" in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

(60) *The Guardian*, 30 May 1967.

(61) It is not altogether clear, however, whether the proposal first came from Anderson or from President Nasser. The idea arose because President Johnson had previously offered to send Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey to Cairo (T. Draper, *op. cit.*, p. 108).

send then Vice President Zakaria Mohieddin to Washington for that purpose. President Nasser's offer was accepted on 3 June, and Mohieddin's visit was scheduled for 7 June.⁶²

Furthermore, President Nasser declared on 4 June, in reference to maritime powers: "We shall consider any declaration by them as a transgression of our sovereignty. It would be considered a preliminary to an act of war."⁶³

Nevertheless, telegrams went out on the weekend of 3-4 June from the State Department in Washington to United States envoys abroad requesting definitive answers to the proposed Maritime Declaration by 5 June. The declaration was to be issued publicly during the week the hostilities actually began.

While diplomacy was taking its course in Washington, New York and London, the crucial meeting of the Israeli cabinet and its chief military advisors started on the evening of 3 June. Two things were clear to the Israelis. Firstly, that they would not incur the wrath of the President of the United States if they attack. Secondly, the Soviet Union would not intervene.

As the tension was mounting, the 'hot line' between the Kremlin and the White House went into action. The two super-powers agreed to avoid direct intervention and to curb the parties to the conflict. If the Americans went through the

(62) Eugene V. Rostow, "The Middle East Crisis and Beyond," *State Department Bulletin*, 8 January 1968, p. 46.

(63) *The Times* (London), 5 June 1967.

motions of curbing the Israelis, they must have done it so perfunctorily, or with so many subtle hints that the Israelis felt, in fact, encouraged to go ahead with their plan for the pre-emptive blow. The curb on Nasser was heavy, rude and effective. Even so, Egypt's failure to take elementary military precautions remains something of a puzzle. Did the Soviet Ambassador in the course of his nocturnal visit tell President Nasser that Moscow was sure that the Israelis would not strike first? Had Washington given Moscow such an assurance? And was Moscow so gullible as to take it at face value and act on it? It seems almost incredible that this should have been so. But only some such version of the events can account for President Nasser's inactivity and for Moscow's stunned surprise at the outbreak of hostilities.

Behind all this bungling there loomed the central contradiction of Soviet policy. On the one hand the Soviet leaders see in the preservation of the international *status quo*, including the social *status quo*, the essential condition of their national security and their policy of "peaceful coexistence." They are therefore anxious to keep at a "safe distance" from storm centres of class conflict in the world and to avoid dangerous foreign entanglements. On the other hand, they cannot, for ideological and power-political reasons, avoid altogether dangerous entanglements. They cannot quite keep at a safe distance when American neo-colonialism clashes directly or indirectly with its Afro-Asian and Latin American enemies, who look to Moscow as their friend and protector. In normal times this contradiction remains latent. Moscow works for a *détente* and a *rapprochement* with the United States on the one hand; and cautiously aids and arms its Afro-Asian or Cuban friends

on the other. But sooner or later the moment of crisis comes and the contradiction explodes in Moscow's face. Soviet policy must then choose between its allies and protégés working against the *status quo*, and its own commitments to the *status quo*. When the choice is pressing and ineluctable, it opts for the *status quo* as was the case with the Arab-Israeli war of 1967.⁶⁴

Under such circumstances the Israelis took the decision to strike. Meeting in secret session on the night of Saturday 3 June and the morning of Sunday 4 June the final doubts and hesitations were swept away or overcome. By Sunday evening the soldiers and airmen knew that the following morning they would be at war.

On Monday 5 June Israel started her air attack on the Egyptian Air Force. At 2:50 a.m. (Washington time) Walt Rostow, President Johnson's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs, was roused by the White House duty officer. At 4:30 a.m. Rostow, by then established in the Situations Room at the White House, woke the President. Soon after dawn a Russian message was received over the hot-line. The message was against war in the Middle East and would not intervene if the United States acted similarly; and Kosygin hinted that the two super-powers might work together to restore peace. The message was relayed to Johnson.

At 5:50 a.m. Press Secretary George Christian released the first White House statement on the war. It read as follows:

(64) Isaac Deutscher, "On the Arab-Israeli War," *op. cit.*

"The United States will devote all its energies to bring about an end to the fighting and a new beginning of progress to assure the peace and development of the entire area. We call upon all parties to support the Security Council in bringing about an immediate ceasefire."⁶⁵

At 8:15 a.m. Rusk, McNamara, Rostow and Christian were present with Johnson at the first formal policy meeting. They discussed the possibility of cooperating with the Soviet Union to bring about a ceasefire.

At a midday briefing the State Department's press officer, Robert McCloskey, declared that "our position is neutral in thought, word and deed." This remark was an inadvertence never intended to represent the United States real policy. Later on an official briefed Mr. McCloskey for the State Department's press conference that afternoon without using these words, and they did not appear in Mr. McCloskey's opening statement. But reporters were asking whether McCloskey's statement on neutrality meant an abandonment of Israel. Johnson called in Rusk and briefed him. The White House press secretary, George Christian, soon made known that McCloskey's *faux pas* had not been cleared with the White House. Then Rusk made the following statement:

"I want to emphasize that any use of this word 'neutral', which is a great concept of international law, is not an expression of indifference and, indeed, indifference is not permitted to us because we have a very heavy obligation under the

(65) R. and W. Churchill, *The Six-Day War*, *op. cit.*, p. 148.

United Nations Charter, and especially as one of the permanent members of the Security Council, to do everything we can to maintain international peace and security."⁶⁶

It would appear that the White House and the State Department found it so hard to recover from this incredible blunder because they were then confronted with a most awkward question: If the United States was not "neutral," what was it then?

In fact, the United States was not neutral either in word or in thought or in deed. President Johnson's public statement on 23 May, let alone his private statements to Foreign Minister Eban, committed the United States politically to the Israeli position on all the issues in dispute between Israel and the Arabs. Indeed, the United States had been committed to this position for at least ten years. Nor did the United States propose to be neutral in deed if nothing else succeeded in convincing the Egyptians to step back before the outbreak of hostilities.

In its 10 p.m. news bulletin the BBC quoted its Jerusalem correspondent, Michael Elkins, as follows:

"Less than 15 hours after fighting began Israel has already won the war. Egypt is no more a fighting factor . . . it's the most instant victory the modern world has seen."⁶⁷

Shortly after 10 a.m. on Thursday, 8 June, news that USS communications ship *Liberty* had been attacked by Israeli

(66) *Ibid.*, p. 149.

(67) *Ibid.*, p. 157.

planes and torpedo boats in international waters about 15 miles north off the Sinai Peninsula coast were received. Immediately following the incident, the Israeli Government informed the United States Embassy in Tel-Aviv that the ship was attacked "in error by Israeli forces" and delivered an official apology. "Pentagon sources said she (the Liberty) had been dispatched from Spain to the war zone to provide additional communications to facilitate the evacuation of American citizens from the Middle East and North Africa."⁶⁸ One need not wander much about the truth of this official explanation. According to the *Washington Post* "the real mission of the Liberty almost certainly went beyond that. Its basic function is electronic corresponding—what specialists call a 'feret'. Such ships have equipment for listening in on coded military communications and radar signals. They usually record coded military communications on tape and then send them to a cryptography center to break the code. The Liberty, however, was equipped with computers to do its own decoding . . . The White House informed the Soviet Union of the incident by 'hot line' before the Israelis notified the United States that they had accidentally hit the Liberty. The hot line message, signed by President Johnson was sent so the Soviets would understand why the (United States) carrier—based planes (of the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean) were scrambling and heading towards the stricken vessel."⁶⁹

One may raise a question here. What would have been the reaction of the United States Government if the attack

(68) *The New York Times*, 9 June 1967.

(69) *The Washington Post*, 9 June 1967.

on the Liberty had been carried out by planes belonging to one of the Arab countries? America would have accepted an apology or would have considered the attack an act of war which requires appropriate contrary measures?

The official end to the six-day war came at 19:30 hours on 11 June. The territorial integrity of three Arab countries was violated, namely, Jordan, Syria and the United Arab Republic. The territorial gains of Israel included the Old City of Jerusalem, the West Bank of the Jordan River, the Golan Heights in Syria, the Ghaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula.

It seems that President Johnson's declarations on the maintenance of the territorial integrity and independence of the Middle Eastern countries apply only in the case where the integrity of Israel seems threatened. In other instances they remain forgotten.

President Johnson declared at a news conference held in Washington on 13 June: "The United States believes that the political existence of Israel must be accepted by the Arab states and that steps must be taken to insure for Israel unobstructed passage through the Suez Canal and the Gulf of Aqaba and protection against Arab 'terrorist' raids. The United States is hopeful that in return for such guarantees Israel will moderate her demands so that the issue of 'territorial integrity' of the Arab states will not arise."

And on 19 June President Johnson, in a television address in Washington presented five conditions for establishing a lasting peace between the Arabs and the Israelis. These were:

- (1) Each nation in the Middle East has the right to exist in "peace and security."
- (2) The political and territorial integrity of each must be inviolate.
- (3) Something constructive must be done about the Arab refugee problem.
- (4) Freedom of navigation must be guaranteed to all "innocent" cargoes in international waterways.
- (5) A check must be kept on arms deliveries to the Middle East.⁷⁰

President Johnson's proposal emphasized that there can be no partial or piecemeal moves towards peace in the Middle East. He took it for granted that Israel will not agree to a proposal which asks it to surrender all the territorial gains of its military success before achieving all its objectives in the area.

Glassboro Meetings

On 17 June, Mr. Kosygin arrived in the United States for the meetings of the United Nations General Assembly. Kosygin's appearance at the United Nations was designed to provide the Russian Premier with both the opportunity and the excuse for talks with Johnson.

(70) *Christian Science Monitor*, 21 June 1967.

Johnson, for his part, was definitely not pleased when the news first reached him that Kosygin was coming. It is believed he only allowed himself to be persuaded to a summit after great hesitation. He accepted on the ground that the public expected it of him; and after reminders of his first state of union message in 1964, when he sought to pursue a detente in the Kennedy style, saying: "I hope the new Soviet leaders can visit America so that they can learn about this country at first-hand."⁷¹

The summit took place at the small town of Glassboro, midway between Washington and New York, on 23 and 25 June. The first meeting between Kosygin and Johnson was certainly a greater success, at least on a personal plane, than most Americans, including White House officials, had dared to hope.

Immediately after his five and a half hours' talk on Friday 23 June with Kosygin, President Johnson flew to a Democratic Party banquet where he said: "We reached no new agreements—that does not happen in a single conversation—but I think we understand one another better." In their discussions, three hours of which they spent alone except for interpreters, the two leaders touched on Vietnam, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Middle East. They seemed to make most progress on agreement to limit the spread of nuclear weapons. It was, of course, the least contentious of the three items.⁷²

(71) R. and W. Churchill, *The Six Day War*, *op. cit.*, p. 210.

(72) *Ibid.*, pp. 210-211.

There was nothing to suggest that Kosygin and Johnson did more than state their respective positions on Vietnam and the Middle East. It was scarcely an advance for them to have reached consensus, as White House spokesman George Christian expressed it, that "Israel does exist as a nation." Moscow has never held otherwise.

On Sunday 25 June, Johnson and Kosygin met again for four and three-quarter hours, as affably as before, but with little concrete results. Most American observers, looking back on Glassboro, feel that Johnson had the upper hand. The White House believed that it cost Kosygin more "face" than it did Johnson to have the meeting take place.⁷³

Following their second meeting, and at the end of the two-day summit conference, Soviet Premier Aleksei N. Kosygin and President Johnson made separate statements. President Johnson said: "We have . . . agreed to keep in good communication in the future through (US) Secretary (of State Dean) Rusk and (Soviet) Foreign Minister (Andrei A.) Gromyko . . . and also directly." Soviet Premier Kosygin said: "On the whole, these meetings provided (us) with an opportunity to compare positions on the questions under discussion and this, both sides believe, is useful." Later on the same day, 25 June, Johnson, in a televised report from Washington, confirmed that the United States and the Soviet Union hold decidedly different views of the situation in the Middle East and Vietnam, but also said that they are a "long way from total differences" on the Middle East because both nations believe

(73) *Ibid.*, p. 212.

that every state has a right to exist. "Mr. Kosygin left the impression that his most specific objective in the talks was to enlist the United States in an effort to force Israel to withdraw her troops from Arab territories occupied in the brief war. There must be withdrawal of course, Mr. Johnson is said to have remarked repeatedly in answering the Premier, but there can be no withdrawal of troops until there is also withdrawal of the dangers that led to war."⁷⁴

Also at the Glassboro Summit President Johnson proposed "ten essential elements of peace" to Premier Kosygin. They were:

- (1) The withdrawal of all armed forces and the end of a state of war.
- (2) An agreement by all members to a declaration of respect for the rights of every member to maintain "an independent national state of its own."
- (3) An assurance of the territorial integrity and political independence of all Middle Eastern states.
- (4) Guaranteed protection for the vital security interests of all states in the area.
- (5) The abandonment of force in relations between states in the Middle East.
- (6) The rights of all nations to free and innocent passage through international waterways.

(74) *The New York Times*, 26 June 1967.

- (7) A just and permanent settlement of the refugee problem.
- (8) An agreement that the improvement of national economies and living standards should take precedence over an arms race.
- (9) The safeguarding of the holy places and an international guarantee of freedom of access for all.
- (10) An international system, to include help from the United Nations, should be set up to help the states concerned achieve the aims outlined above.⁷⁵

Thus, the United States' main aim in dealing with the Middle East crisis after the June war was ensuring the fulfillment of the demands of Israel. The United States Government wants to see to it that the Arab-Israeli conflict is solved once and for all on Israeli terms. Such a solution amounts to a political and military surrender of the Arabs before Israel and the neo-colonial forces led by the United States.

In an attempt to justify its policy in the Middle East, the State Department declared, in a reply to the following question put to the Secretary of State Rusk by Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman J. William Fulbright in closed committee hearings on United States foreign policy on 17 August: "Does the United States have a national commitment in the event of attack from an external source or from internal subversion to come either to the military or economic aid of Israel or any of the Arab states?", "President Johnson and

(75) R. and W. Churchill, *The Six-Day War*, *op. cit.*, pp. 212-213.

his three predecessors have stated the United States interest and concern is supporting the political independence and territorial integrity of the Near East. This is a statement of policy and not a commitment to take particular actions in particular circumstances." The new policy statement . . . makes clear that the State Department . . . feels there is no firm commitment whatsoever to either Israel or the Arab states.⁷⁶

The abovementioned American statement of policy is in contradiction to previous statements issued by President Johnson and his predecessors since all of them were "committed" to the maintenance of the territorial integrity and independence of the Middle East countries.

Security Council November Resolution

On 7 November 1967, the United Arab Republic requested the meeting of the Security Council in "an urgent session to consider the dangerous situation prevailing in the Middle East as a result of the persistence of Israel not to withdraw its armed forces from all territories which it occupied as a result of the Israeli aggression committed on June 5, 1967, against the United Arab Republic."⁷⁷

As a result of this request the Security Council met on 9 November in an urgent session. Five draft resolutions were put forward for discussion: a proposal by India, Mali and Nigeria; two by the Soviet Union; one by the United States; and one by the United Kingdom.

(76) *The Washington Post*, 18 August 1967.

(77) *UN Monthly Chronicle*, United Nations Office of Public Information, Vol. IV, No. 11, December 1967, p. 8.

The representatives of the United Arab Republic, Israel and Jordan were invited by the President of the Security Council, Mamadou Boubacar Kante (Mali) to participate in the discussions without the right of vote. At the meeting of 13 November, the representative of Syria was also invited to participate on the same basis.

The draft sponsored by the United States, submitted on 9 November, would have had the Security Council affirm that a first and lasting peace in the Middle East would embrace withdrawal of armed forces from occupied territories, termination of claims or states of belligerence, mutual recognition and respect for the right of every state in the area to sovereign existence, territorial integrity, political independence, secure and recognized boundaries, and freedom from the threat or use of force. It would have had the Security Council affirm the necessity to guarantee freedom of navigation through international waterways in the area; to achieve a just settlement of the refugee problem; to guarantee the territorial inviolability and political independence of every state in the area, through measures including the establishment of demilitarized zones; and to achieve a limitation of the wasteful and destructive arms race in the area. A Special Representative, designated by the Secretary General would establish and maintain contacts with the states concerned with a view to assisting them in working out solutions in accordance with the purposes of the resolution and in creating a just and lasting peace in the area. The Secretary General would report to the Security Council on the progress of the efforts of the Special Representative as soon as possible.⁷⁸

(78) *Ibid.*, p. 9.

In explaining the draft resolution, Arthur J. Goldberg said that the object of his government was to open a new path to a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. Its terms reflected the conviction that a durable and reliable peace in the area must embrace the fundamental principles set forth by President Johnson in his (aforementioned) address of 19 June.⁷⁹

Upon careful examination of this draft resolution one concludes that its terms are satisfactory to the state of Israel, since it encompasses the fulfillment of all its demands and objectives without taking any serious account of the counter demands and objectives of the Arabs. In addition it ignored the fact that Israel, in occupying Arab territories by force, has violated the provisions of the United Nations Charter. While discussing the draft resolution, the representative of the Soviet Union Mr. V.V. Kuznetsov, Deputy Foreign Minister of the USSR, affirmed that the American draft "was unacceptable because it dealt ambiguously with the key provision for troop withdrawal, presenting it in such a context that Israel would be able to occupy Arab territories as long as it wished. The draft contained a faulty approach to the essential conditions for a lasting peace which served only the interests of Israel . . . Its provisions could be interpreted in various ways, retaining for Israel the right to establish new boundaries and to withdraw its troops only as far as it wished. And while its provisions on troop withdrawal were ambiguous, those supporting Israeli claims were extremely precise. It lacked a statement declaring the inadmissibility of the occupation or acquisition

(79) *Ibid.*, p. 12.

of territory through military conquest. The task of the Special Representative, according to the draft, would be merely to cover Israeli aggression with the United Nations flag. Further, the text did not mention a date when the Representative should present his report, opening in this way propitious conditions for delay and legalizing the occupation."⁸⁰

After discussing the United States draft resolution, the Security Council voted on the proposal it was not adopted, having failed to receive 9 votes. The vote was 8 in favor (Argentina, Brazil, Canada, China (Formosa), Denmark, Japan, United Kingdom and United States) to none against, with 7 abstentions (Bulgaria, Ethiopia, France, India, Mali, Nigeria and the Soviet Union).⁸¹

After further discussions Lord Caradon, representative of the United Kingdom introduced his delegation's draft resolution. (For text of resolution see overleaf). He said that while he could not guarantee that it would be accepted in full by either side, he trusted that it would be regarded as a balanced and just text. In commending the draft to the Council, he stressed the need for urgent action, saying that if a final decision was not reached during the week, the opportunity for a just settlement might be lost forever.⁸²

Mr. Goldberg declared that his delegation would vote for the United Kingdom draft resolution because it commanded a substantial consensus in the Security Council and was entirely consistent with the policy of his government as set forth by

(80) *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

(81) *Ibid.*, p. 10.

(82) *Ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

President Johnson on 19 June. Moreover, the United Kingdom draft was non-prejudicial to and sufficiently mindful of the legitimate and vital interests of all parties to the recent conflict, so that they should be able to receive and cooperate with the United Nations Special Representative.

Mr. Goldberg severely criticized the Soviet draft resolution on the basis that it "was not even-handed or non-prejudicial and did not meet the test of exact balance acquiescence by the parties, and workability."⁸³

After further discussion, Mr. Goldberg said he was prepared to give priority to the United Kingdom draft which coincided with his government's policy.

The Security Council then voted on the United Kingdom draft resolution, which was adopted unanimously on 22 November 1967. There follows the full text of the resolution:

"The Security Council,

Expressing its continuing concern with the grave situation in the Middle East,

Emphasizing the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war and the need to work for a just and lasting peace in which every State in the area can live in security,

Emphasizing further that all Member States in their acceptance of the Charter of the United Nations have undertaken a commitment to act in accordance with Article 2 of the Charter,

(83) *Ibid.*, p. 16.

"1. *Affirms* that the fulfillment of Charter principles requires the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East which should include the application of both the following principles:

"(i) withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict;

"(ii) termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force;

"2. *Affirms further* the necessity

"(a) for guaranteeing freedom of navigation through international waterways in the area;

"(b) for achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem;

"(c) for guaranteeing the territorial inviolability and political independence of every State in the area, through measures including the establishment of demilitarized Zones;

"3. *Requests* the Secretary General to designate a Special Representative to proceed to the Middle East to establish and maintain contacts with the States concerned in order to promote agreement and assist efforts to achieve a peaceful and accepted settlement in accordance with the provisions and principles in this resolution;

"4. *Requests* the Secretary General to report to the Security Council on the progress of the efforts of the Special Representative as soon as possible."⁸⁴

Commenting on the resolution Mr. Abba Eban said that the central and primary affirmation of the resolution adopted was the need for the establishment of a just and lasting peace based on secure and recognized boundaries. There was a clear understanding that only within the establishment of a permanent peace with secure and recognized boundaries could other principles be given effect. Mr. Eban also said he would communicate to his government for consideration nothing except the original English text of the draft resolution as presented by the sponsor. His government would determine its attitude to the resolution in the light of its own policy.⁸⁵

On 23 November, the Secretary General, U Thant, designated Dr. Gunnar Jarring, Ambassador from Sweden to the Soviet Union, as the Special Representative who would proceed to the Middle East in accordance with Security Council resolution 242 (1967) adopted on 22 November.⁸⁶

Ever since the Security Council's Resolution of 22 November 1967 was adopted there has been a continuous debate over its interpretation, but very little progress in reaching any conclusions. The Egyptian Government has switched from its initial position that no settlement in the Middle East is possible as long as the Israelis do not implement paragraph I

(84) *Ibid.*, Resolution S/RES/242 (1967), p. 19.

(85) *Ibid.*, pp. 17 and 19.

(86) *Ibid.*, p. 20.

of the resolution, calling for the withdrawal of the Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict, to demanding a clear statement by Israel that it will implement the resolution. Once Israel declares its acceptance of the resolution it would be up to Dr. Gunnar Jarring to work out a timetable for the progressive affication of the resolution. According to the resolution, the Arab states will terminate all claims to a state of belligerence and proclaim the right of all states of this region to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force. Egypt has accepted these provisions of the resolution.

In terms of specific measures the United Arab Republic has conceded to Israel a number of important points as part of the "package deal" contained in the Security Council resolution. To illustrate I shall refer to three important points of dispute on which the UAR took a conciliatory position that would have been absolutely unthinkable before the Six-Day War.

Concerning the Israeli demand for free passage in the Suez Canal Mr. Mahmud Riad, Foreign Minister of the UAR, made the following declarations on 11 May 1968:¹ "We have already emphasized our acceptance of the Security Council resolution which includes the freedom of passage through the Suez Canal. In return for this Israel has to carry out its responsibilities and obligations which include the withdrawal of forces from the Arab territories it occupies, and the settlement of the problem of the refugees. If Israel carries out its obliga-

(1) Reported by *Agence France Presse*, 11 May 1968.

tions we will carry out ours also, thus making for a more stable peace in the Middle East area."

Concerning Egypt's acceptance of the Security Council resolution, Riad declared on the same occasion: "We do not impose any conditions on our acceptance of the Security Council resolution as a whole. We have proposed to Dr. Gunnar Jarring, in the letter which we have delivered to him last Thursday (9 May), the preparation of a timetable (for the implementation of the resolution). We have also informed him that we are ready to discuss all proposals he presents according to the timetable."

Concerning Egypt's acceptance of demilitarized zones, Riad stated the following on the same occasion: "We cannot give up the territories occupied by Israel after 5 June (1967). This is a question of principle which is not subject to discussion at all. But we accept the creation of demilitarized zones on both sides of the Arab-Israeli frontiers."

This "package deal," however, still falls far short of what the Israelis want it to include. Namely a formal peace treaty to be concluded at the negotiations table. The Egyptians claim with some reason that there is nothing in the Security Council resolution which obliges them specifically either to conclude a peace treaty with Israel or to agree to negotiate directly with Israeli representatives. Thus a deadlock has developed at present.

In almost every way Israel stands as an exception among the world's recipients of foreign capital (particularly Western) for development. With the exception of Trinidad and Venezuela, Israel is the only recipient of substantial official bilateral aid to have a per-capita GNP above \$500.¹

And, far from running out of foreign exchange, Israel has managed to increase foreign exchange reserves every year but one since 1958. "Israel's level of income, and—

until quite recently—her growth rate, have been looked on with envy by many more-slowly-developing nations. That such a country should receive increasing flows of foreign capital for development while considerably 'poorer' countries face a drying-up of funds evokes several questions."²

IV

"The availability of foreign capital to any developing nation seems to be more a product of politics and ideology than the ability of donors to give, and the 'requirements' of any recipient for aid are very much a function of internal political decisions; the role of politics, culture, religion and propaganda in the case of Israel are especially strong."³ This is the case as far as United States' aid to Israel is concerned.

Israel receives aid from the United States in two ways:

(1) I.M.D. Little and J.M. Clifford, *International Aid*, Chicago, Aldine Publishing Company, 1960, p. 214.

(2) John Gault, *Israel: Demythologizing the "Miracle,"* (unpublished paper), May 1968.

(3) *Ibid.*

- (1) Aid offered to Israel directly by the United States Government or its affiliated organizations. Such aid is official and usually announced.
- (2) Indirect aid offered to Israel which takes two forms:
 - (a) Aid emanating from Zionist American institutions and organizations, and from American citizens who participate in campaigns for donation and the selling of Israeli bonds.
 - (b) Aid emanating from other governments and institutions under the pressure of the United States Government.

Direct Economic Aid

According to *A Detailed Review of United States Economic Assistance to Mideast and North African Countries 1945-1967*, Israel received a total of \$2177.8 million in the form of economic assistance from the United States (see also Tables 1 and 2). The break down of this figure is as follows:

- (1) Agency for International Development (AID) and predecessor agencies \$513.4 million.
- (2) Public Law No. 480, \$346.4 million.
- (3) Other US economic programs including the Export-Import Bank, \$229.1 million.
- (4) Loans, \$719.4 million.
- (5) Grants, \$369.5 million.

Table I

U.S. Government Economic Aid to Israel

May 1948 to 1961 (Fiscal years) (Obligations in \$ millions)

Year	Tech- nical Aid	Special ^a Assist.	Total M ^c P Assistance	DLF	Public Law No. 480			Exim- bank	IMG	Grand Total
					Title I	Title II	Title III			
1950	—	—	—	—	—	—	1.2	135.00 ^c	—	136.20
1951	—	—	—	—	—	—	21.5	—	—	21.50
1952	0.9	63.5	64.4	—	—	—	—	—	—	64.40
1953	2.5	70.0	72.5	—	—	—	0.04	—	0.9	73.44
1954	1.4	52.5	53.9	—	—	—	20.7	—	2.1	76.70
1955	1.4	39.7 ^b	41.1	—	12.7 ^f	—	0.4	—	2.0	56.20
1956	1.4	25.5 ^d	26.9	—	27.7	—	1.6	—	2.6	58.80
1957	1.7	25.0 ^e	26.7	—	10.5	—	2.3	—	1.5	41.00
1958	1.4	7.5	8.9	15	39.2	—	2.3	27.55 ^g	0.6	93.55
1959	1.6	7.5	9.1	10	38.3	—	1.7	—	0.5	59.60
1960	1.4	7.5	8.9	15	37.6	—	0.5	—	0.3	62.30
1961	1.0	7.5	8.5	16	25.9	—	0.8	35.90	0.3	87.40
Cumulative										
Total	14.7	306.2	320.9	56	191.9	—	53.04	198.45	10.80	831.09
Obligations										

Source: Compiled by the Economic Section, American Embassy, Tel-Aviv.

- (a) Development Assistance 1952-1957. Includes Relief Assistance in 1952 and 1953.
- (b) Fifty percent (\$20 million) was extended to Israel on a loan basis.
- (c) These credits were authorized in calendar year 1949. A total of \$86.4 million of principal has been repaid, leaving the principal outstanding as of June 30, 1961, at \$48.6 million.
- (d) Includes \$5 million of third-country currencies. Of \$25.5 million total, \$12.5 million was on a loan basis.
- (e) Of \$25 million total \$10 million was made available on a loan basis.
- (f) Values are carried at costs to the Community Credit Corporation and not at market prices.
- (g) Includes \$24.2 million for irrigation; \$0.35 million for research atomic reactor (has been repaid); and \$3.0 million for privately owned paper mill.

Table II

NET INFLOW OF FOREIGN CAPITAL BY SOURCE

(\$ millions)

	<u>1961</u>	<u>1962</u>	<u>1963</u>	<u>1964</u>	<u>1965</u>	<u>1966</u>
Private transfers	45.0	67.6	89	96	98.0	88.3
German restitution	110.5	133.9	139	134	112.7	110.4
German reparations	88.3	47.0	28	17	16.7	2.0
U.S. Government (grants-in-aid)	10.4	10.9	6	8	4.7	3.0
Institutional transfers	92.0	75.3	85	80	115.6	106.6
Independence and development loan	32.1	35.1	23	24	33.3	11.3
U.S. Government (D.L.F. and A.I.D. loans)	29.8	43.0	50	32	44.0	8.9
Private investment from abroad	52.2	85.3	135	133	82.7	74.2
Total (Including sources unitemized here)	481.6	558.1	524	565	589.2	493.5

As far as loans are concerned, the 1962 AID loans were at 0.75 percent; 1963 at 2 percent; since 1964 at 3.5 percent. The loans of counterpart funds from 1962 to 1965 were at 0.75 percent; the 1965 loan was at 4 percent (these, of course, are not to be repaid in dollars). Loans from Export-Import Bank and the International Bank for Reconstruction and De-

velopment (amounting together to about \$16 million net increase in 1966) are at nearly commercial rates.⁴

Institutional Funds

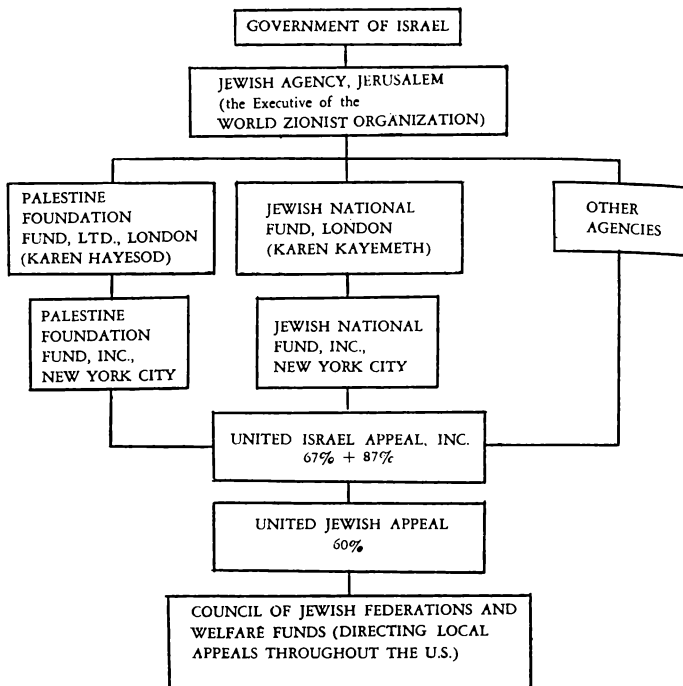
There are a number of Zionist organizations, associated with the state of Israel, operating in the United States. Their operations are carried out under the pretense of presenting themselves as "philanthropic organizations." Harry Ellis illustrates their role in connection with the aid offered to Israel: "By far the most substantial amount of help came from the United States. Consistently, from the state's inception, private American Jewry has contributed at least \$60,000,000 a year through the United Jewish Appeal and another \$50,000,000 through purchase of Israel bonds. In crisis years these private contributions have soared higher. They form the bedrock of Jewish support on which the Israeli economy depends."⁵ (The chart overleaf is an approximation of the organizational structure of these institutions as they apply to the United States).

At the time of establishment of the state of Israel an agreement was reached between its government and the Jewish Agency dividing certain responsibilities. "In 1952 this agreement was formalized in a Status Law, and today there is a Coordinating Board, including government ministers and Jewish Agency officers. The flow of funds at other levels are on a contractual basis; CJWF (see chart) annually advises its local campaigns to give 60 percent of their proceeds to UJA; and

(4) *Ibid.*

(5) Harry B. Ellis, *Challenge in the Middle East*, New York, the Ronald Press Company, 1965, p. 95.

THE FLOW OF INSTITUTIONAL FUNDS FROM THE UNITED STATES



"This chart is compiled from a variety of materials supplied by the American Council for Judaism, an anti-Zionist group. I have not uncovered any information which contradicts this structure, however, and the interpretation of its meaning for future aid flows is my own responsibility." (John Gault).

UJA is under a periodically renewed agreement to give 67 percent of its first \$55 million and 87 percent of any additional funds to the United Israel Appeal, Inc. From that point the flow is virtually automatic to Israel. Hence Israel can depend—at least in the short-and medium-run—upon a continuation of these funds.⁶ Furthermore, American banks and insurance companies are willing to underwrite loans of huge sums of money with only United Jewish Appeal's guarantee. This kind of borrowing began in 1954, and by 1962 the outstanding balance was \$55 million.⁷ "The debt was refinanced in 1965, but, not surprisingly, the Bank of Israel Annual Report for 1966 makes no mention of the debt."⁸

The funds that were raised by the United Jewish Appeal in the United States between 1946 and 1963 totalled \$1,489,000,000. The bulk of this amount went to Israel.⁹ In addition, the Israelis conduct other private drives in the United States on behalf of Hadassah, the Hebrew University, Technion, Histadrut, the Weizmann Institute and others.

The tax-exempt funds raised in the United States are not used by the Israelis for relief projects as laws stipulate, but are invested in profit making projects. In 1958, Senator E. Flanders of Vermont recognized that the funds which go to Israel from the United States in the form of charity are utilized

(6) John Gault, *op. cit.*

(7) *Bank of Israel Annual Report*, 1962, p. 49.

(8) John Gault, *op. cit.*, from Leonard R. Sussman, *Dollar Diplomacy and Politics*, (mimeo), 14 November 1966.

(9) Sami Hadawi, *Bitter Harvest, Palestine Between 1914-1967*, New York, The New World Press, 1967, p. 263.

for other than charitable causes. He, therefore, put to vote before the Senate the following resolution:

"Whereas the unrest in the Arab world is caused primarily by the forcible occupation of Arab land by the government of Israel; and

"Whereas the expansion of the population of Israel threatens an added seizure of Arab territory; and

"Whereas the over-population of Israel is largely financed by tax free contributions from American citizens;

"Therefore, be it

"Resolved, that the Treasury investigate the uses to which tax-free contributions of American citizens are put when sent to Israel, to see whether they tend to exacerbate Middle East turmoil rather than relieve unavoidable distress to the end that the tax-free status may be justified or withdrawn."¹⁰

The draft resolution failed to pass in the Senate. And in 1963 the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, in its hearings considered the effects of the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938, under which several organizations funded by the Jewish Agency are registered. The major issue concerned the use of tax-exempt "charitable" funds, collected in the United States, for lobbying and other purposes in that country and for the support of political parties in Israel. These hearings

(10) *Ibid.*, from *US Congressional Record and Proceedings*, 85th Congress, 2nd Session, 18 July 1958.

came to be known as the Fulbright Report and were soon forgotten.¹¹

In addition, the American Council for Judaism disclosed in a publication entitled "Profit from United States Relief Funds" how part of these tax-exempt funds is being used for profit making. The publication pointed out that "few contributors to the United Jewish Appeal know that the Jewish Agency for Israel—recipient of 80 percent of UJA dollars going abroad—has IL 150,763,332 invested in profit-making corporations. These 'relief' dollars go into El Al Airlines, Zim-Israel Navigation Co. and construction agricultural and other firms operating on a profit basis."¹² Furthermore, the Israeli daily newspaper the *Jerusalem Post* of 13 September 1965, disclosed that "the Jewish National Fund is diverting funds contributed by world Jewry for reclamation work into setting up joint contracting companies with private firms."

In spite of these facts, American politicians, businessmen and religious leaders continue to participate in fund drives for Israel.

Sale of Israeli Bonds

"Following the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948, the Israelis were granted the unique privilege of float-

(11) "Activities of Nondiplomatic Representatives of Foreign Principals in the United States," *Hearing before the Committee on Foreign Relations United States Senate, Eighty-Eighth Congress, First Session, Part 9, 23 May 1963, Washington, US Government Printing Office, 1963.*

(12) American Council for Judaism (New York), *Brief*, October, 1965.

ing bond drives in the United States—a privilege not accorded to any other nation. As a result, four bond issues have been floated since 1951: Independence Issue, Development Issue, Second Development Issue—and Third Development Issue began on 1 March 1964.”¹³ “Total sales for all bonds issued between 1951 and 1964 have exceeded the sum of \$840 million by the end of 1965; the amount realized from the sale of bonds during 1965, amounted to \$90.5 million.”¹⁴ John Gault points out that the total sales of Israeli bonds in 1967 were \$220 million, i.e. up 80 percent over 1966,¹⁵ sales to 2 March 1968 were running 37 percent ahead of the same time in 1967.¹⁶ Thus the total sales of bonds during 1966 amounted to \$122.3 million. If we calculate the aforementioned figures the total sales for all bonds issued between 1951 and 1967 equal \$1182.3 million.

“The original (1951) Independence Loan was at 3.5 percent; the two most recent Development issues have been at 4 percent.”¹⁷ Gault also points out that purchasers of Israel Bonds did not pay attention to the interest rate has long been suspected. In 1959 the New York representative of the Bonds Organization urged the raising of the interest rate to 4.5 percent. The reply from Jerusalem was, “the Ministry of Finance and its American advisers are of the opinion that 95 percent of those who purchase these bonds do not even know what

(13) S. Hadawi, *Bitter Harvest*, *op. cit.*, p. 265.

(14) *Ibid.*, p. 266, from Israeli Government, *Israeli Digest*, Vol. IX, No. 1, 14 January 1966, p. 2.

(15) According to Israel Bonds Organization, Milk Street, Boston.

(16) *The New York Times*, 3 March 1968.

(17) John Gault, *op. cit.*

interest the bonds bear; hence, any changes in the interest rates offered on the new bonds will not affect the volume of sales."¹⁸ A substantial amount of the money received by holders of bonds upon the redemption of their matured bond was reinvested in state of Israel bonds in 1963 and later years."¹⁹

Indirect Aid: West German Reparations to Israel

American aid to Israel is not confined to the United States itself. In 1950 the United States Government had exerted pressure on the West German Government to share in the responsibility of maintaining the existence of the state of Israel. At the time, the Bonn Government was willing to pay "reparations" to the state of Israel to atone for Hitler's crimes against the Jews and thus be relieved of the "guilt complex" under which it labored and absolve its future generations from blame.

"This German weakness was apparent and was exploited by both the United States—which had voluntarily assumed responsibility for Israel's well-being—and the Israelis who saw in West Germany the means to extract funds in order to consolidate their precarious existence."²⁰ Consequently, in 1952 the reparations agreement was concluded between the Bonn Government and the Israeli authorities. The agreement was signed at Luxembourg on 10 September by the late Chancellor Konrad Adenauer and Moshe Sharett, then Israeli Foreign Minister.²¹ The agreement covered the period 10 September

(18) Alex Rubner, *The Economy of Israel*, London, Frank Cass and Co. Ltd., 1960, p. 20, from *Davar*, 14 January 1959.

(19) *American Jewish Yearbook 1965*, p. 242.

(20) S. Hadawi, *Bitter Harvest*, *op. cit.*, p. 267

(21) Royal Institute of International Affairs, *Survey of International Affairs, 1952*, *op. cit.*, p. 234.

1952 - 16 March 1965. After the signing ceremony Sharett declared in a press statement that the German-Israeli agreement was "unique in the annals of international relations . . . as it was the first time that a great people has spontaneously accepted the obligation to contribute to the reparations of crimes committed under a previous regime."²²

In a report on the implementation of the 1952 agreement, issued by the West German Foreign Office at the time of its expiration, stated that West Germany had paid a total of DM 3450 million or \$862.5 million to Israel between 1952 and 1965.²³ In 1960, with the end of the 1952 Agreement approaching and Israeli financial needs increasing, United States pressure was once again brought into play. A semi-secret agreement was reached between then Prime Minister David Ben Gurion and Konrad Adenauer, both of whom were visiting in New York. The terms of the agreement were said—but later denied by the West German Government—to involve the payment by West Germany to Israel of \$500,000,000 within ten years.²⁴ The Israelis were not satisfied with Bonn's new offers of aid. Negotiations ensued and on 12 May 1966 Germany agreed to grant aid to Israel on a yearly basis, the first starting on 1 April 1966 with "a long-term credit of 160 million Marks (about \$40 million)." Repayment to be made "up to

(22) *Keesings Contemporary Archives*, V. 9, p. 12621, A, col. 2.

(23) *Keesings Contemporary Archives*, Vol. 15, p. 21439, A, col. 1. (For a complete survey of West German aid to Israel see A. Abdul-Rahman, *United States and West German Aid to Israel*, Facts and Figures Series No. 6, Research Center — Palestine Liberation Organization, Beirut, October 1966.

(24) The Israel Oriental Society, *Middle East Record*, V. 1, 1960, p. 290.

twenty years with interest varying from zero to three percent. The accord delays repayment up to seven years."²⁵ It is understood that a "gentleman's agreement" was also reached whereby the Israelis would receive from West Germany economic aid on an annual basis.

In addition to what the state of Israel received from West Germany as its share of 'reparations' for Nazi crimes against the Jews, individual indemnification was also made. According to the *New York Times* in 1959 alone "about \$60,000,000 in individual restitution and indemnification payments have been sent to Israelis." The *London Times* estimated that "nearly 400,000 claims for individual damages have been filed by Israelis"; it disclosed that "since the first payments began in 1954, a total of \$186,000,000 has been granted." According to the *New York Times*, "at least \$250,000,000 more is hoped for (in Israel) before the West German Government's program is finished." The daily then explained that "the individual payments are made for personal injuries, for time spent in concentration camps, for loss of earning ability, or for loss of professional careers resulting from Nazi actions. They are also made for loss of personal and business property."²⁶

It is reliably reported that the amount of indemnification paid out to individual Jews in Israel by the end of 1965 was in the neighbourhood of \$525,000,000. However, Dr. Nahum Goldmann, President of the World Zionist Organization, disclosed that "about 12,000 million Marks (about \$3,000 mil-

(25) S. Hadawi, *Bitter Harvest*, *op. cit.*, p. 268 from *Jerusalem Post*, 3 May 1966.

(26) *The New York Times*, 18 October 1959.

lion) still remain to be paid out on personal restitution claims.”²⁷

“Israel’s financial difficulties have been greatly aggravated since the fulfillment of the ‘reparations’ agreement with West Germany. Hence their concern to renew the arrangement with the Bonn Government on a permanent basis. Its replacement by ‘economic aid’ is not likely to alleviate Israel’s precarious situation. Israeli leaders have therefore cautioned American Jewry that the ‘state’ will continue to need financial assistance at an increasing rate for many years to come. United Jewish Appeal Survey Missions from the United States visited Israel in 1965 and again in 1966 to consider the extent of financial aid needed to maintain the ‘Jewish state’ their initial conclusion was reported to be one of *grave concern*.”²⁸

Military Aid

The United States Government had always maintained that in the Arab-Israeli conflict its role has been one of impartiality. Such a stand of impartiality has been always affirmed by repeated official statements to that effect. In spite of such statements and declarations, the American attitude towards the Arab-Israeli conflict proved to be pro-Israel, especially in the military field. “There is ample evidence that the United States Government, prior to the creation of the state of Israel in 1948, closed its eyes to the smuggling of arms and ammunitions out of the country for the Zionist underground terrorists in Palestine and allowed funds to be donated tax-free, that

(27) *The Jerusalem Post*, 19 April 1966.

(28) S. Hadawi, *Bitter Harvest*, *op. cit.*, p. 270.

were used for the purchase of illicit arms from Czechoslovakia and other Communist countries.”²⁹ When the state of Israel came into being and prior to 1962 the United States adopted the following policies in supplying Israel with arms:

(1) It supplied Israel secretly with military equipment and arms. On 23 July 1952 the United States Government agreed to supply Israel with military equipment which Israel had been unable to get except from private American sources.³⁰ And on 3 September 1958 the State Department announced that an undisclosed quantity of United States arms had been sold to Israel “in recent months.” “The State Department denied Egyptian reports that weapons worth between \$40 million and \$50 million had been involved in the transaction.”³¹ On 23 May the *New York Times* reported “Israel is beginning to receive a small but steady flow of weapons from Britain, France and the United States.” And according to *United States News and World Report*, 19 September 1958, “arms which United States Government has now agreed to furnish Israel consist mainly of anti-tank guns.”

(2) It encouraged Canada, England, France and West Germany to supply Israel with arms. On 2 March 1956, Moshe Sharett asked the United States Government for a definite answer regarding Israel’s request for military aid from the United States. The American answer was given on 3 April by J.F. Dulles who stated that the United States Government maintained a policy of neutrality and non-involvement in the

(29) *Ibid.*, p. 257.

(30) *Keesings Contemporary Archives*, V. 13, p. 19017, A., col. 1.

(31) *The Times* (London), 4 September 1958.

"arms race" between Israel and the Arab states. Dulles added that such an attitude on the part of the United States Government does not imply that the Israeli request had been rejected, or that the United States had any "objection to the sale of arms to Israel by other Western countries." Geoffrey Barraclough and Rachel Wall commented on this answer in the following words:

"This statement appears to have determined the Western line, and as a consequence deliveries of *Mystère* fighters ordered for use by NATO (from France) were postponed in favor of Israel."³²

Mr. Robert McCloskey, the State Department spokesman, disclosed on 17 February 1965, that the United States Government had in 1960 supported the sale of arms to Israel by the West German Government. On the day of disclosure, it was revealed that at least 80 percent of the shipment had already been delivered.³³ This act on the part of the United States Government could be traced back to March 1960 when Ben Gurion paid an unofficial visit to the United States. On 10 March, Ben Gurion conferred for two hours with President Eisenhower at the White House. "He told the President about the fear that the Soviet Union was building up the United Arab Republic's armament to a dangerous level and about his hope that an arrangement (could be reached with the Soviet Union to) put an end to this build up . . . (he) made it clear . . . that he could see danger of Soviet violations in any

(32) G. Barraclough and R.F. Wall, *Survey of International Affairs 1955-1956*, London, Oxford University Press, 1960, p. 300.

(33) *Keesings Contemporary Archives*, V. 15, p. 20737, A., col. 2.

arrangement that led to an international embargo on arms shipment to the Middle East.³⁴ As a result of these talks, the *New York Herald Tribune* reported that "the United States has given Israeli Prime Minister David Ben Gurion assurances that this country's (US) policy is to oppose any change in the Middle East *status quo* by force of arms."³⁵ And on 3 May 1960, in response to journalists' questions, United States Defense and State Department officials declared that Israel has been allowed to buy modest quantities of United States weapons.

These modest quantities might have included the West German arms deal worth "\$80 million,"³⁶ which was reached after the consent of the United States Government, since West Germany could not resell any arms (already bought from the United States) without its consent. McCloskey acknowledged on 17 February 1965, that the United States was consulted in advance about the West German-Israeli arms deal and gave its approval to the transfer of American-made tanks from West Germany to Israel. "Abandoning its 'no comment' secrecy of the last three weeks, the Department made the acknowledgement apparently in response to appeals by West Germany for American support . . . it has been an open secret for some time in Bonn as well as Washington . . . that the arms deal with Israel had been made with the knowledge and support of the American Government."³⁷

The extent of American involvement in the arms deal appears to have exceeded mere 'approval'. The *New York Times*,

(34) *The New York Times*, 11 March 1960.

(35) *The New York Herald Tribune*, 12 March 1960.

(36) *The New York Times*, 9 February 1965.

(37) *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* (Zurich), 20 February 1965.

on 20 February 1965, reported that "a high United States official made the appeal directly to Chancellor Ludwig Erhard last summer to ship arms to Israel. The Chancellor agreed reluctantly to ship a large quantity of surplus tanks to Israel. But this belated and embarrassing admission appears not to have satisfied the West German Government which, through its Press Chief, Karl Gunther von Hase, complained that 'the United States support for West Germany in its difficulties in the Middle East had been given reluctantly. We do not hide the fact', he added, 'that a statement on its part in this whole affair was only gradually wrung out of the American Government'." ³⁸

A pertinent commentary on United States Middle East policy appeared in an editorial in the *Chicago Tribune*, 23 March 1965, entitled "The Rewards of Duplicity," which stated the following:

"West Germany's diplomatic dilemma in the Near East is troublesome enough even without recognizing our part in bringing it about.

"As matters stand, it is to a large extent our problem, too, because it was pressure from our government that West Germany agreed secretly to provide military supplies to Israel . . ." ³⁹

(38) S. Hadawi, *Bitter Harvest*, *op. cit.*, p. 260, from *The New York Times*, 20 February 1965.

(39) From an Editorial published in the *Chicago Tribune*, 23 March 1965 and quoted in S. Hadawi, *Bitter Harvest*, *op. cit.*, pp. 260-261.

In an attempt to express its support of the West German-Israeli arms deal, W. Averell Harriman, US Ambassador at Large, arrived in Israel on 24 February, Harriman's mission was to calm the fears of Israeli leaders. Washington, in fact, after some hesitation, recognized its responsibility in the complex matter of German military aid to Israel. It was reported that Harriman was entrusted with "reassuring the Israelis: since Washington has publicly admitted that it approved of this aid, it will do the necessary, in case of need, so that Israel does not suffer any harms."⁴⁰

With the coming of the Kennedy administration the United States gave up its policy of being cautious in supplying Israel with arms. On 26 September 1962, it was announced in Washington that the United States had agreed to sell short-range "Hawk" missiles to Israel. The sale of these missiles constituted a reversal of the previous "declared" policy of the United States, namely, that it will not be a source of arms supply to any nation in the Middle East.⁴¹ Thus the Kennedy administration set forth the "open door" policy for supplying Israel with arms. The reason given by the United States for this reversal of policy was the Soviet Union's decision to supply the United Arab Republic and Iraq with modern weapons. The United States administration said in explaining its new policy that France has long been the main arms supplier to Israel, an arrangement which the United States was willing to accept. The United States administration was free to pursue its diplomatic objective of wooing the Arab states, especially

(40) *Le Monde*, 25 February 1965.

(41) *Keesings Contemporary Archives*, V. 13, p. 19017, A., col. 1.

the United Arab Republic, with the knowledge that Israel could defend itself. This arrangement came to an end, however, when the Soviet Union began to supply the United Arab Republic and Iraq with modern arms. France, according to the United States administration, cannot at present provide the necessary defensive armory.⁴² The *New York Times* reported that "careful evaluation of the equipment recently furnished by the communist bloc (to the Arab states) aroused concern in the (United States) Defense Department that the Middle East balance of power would begin to tip in the Arabs' favor. Washington feared that such an imbalance would encourage either an attack upon Israel or a pre-emptive war by Israel to destroy some of Arab offensive power."⁴³ Such apprehensions were really ill-founded since Israel was receiving arms not only from France but also from Germany, and since the Defense Department knew well that the Arab states were incapable of destroying Israel.

On 2 October 1962, the Foreign Minister of the United Arab Republic declared in the United Nations General Assembly that the United States decision to sell missiles to Israel will spur it to "more aggressiveness and more hostility," and he termed "untenable" the claim that the Soviet shipment of arms to the Middle East had upset the balance of power in the area.

Playing on the theme of "fearing the balance of military power will soon swing in favor of Egypt," President Kennedy

(42) *The Times* (London), 28 September 1962.

(43) *The New York Times*, 27 September 1962.

at his news conference of 3 April 1963, declared that the presence of German scientists and technicians in the United Arab Republic could well increase tension in the Middle East. He stated that the United States is willing to sell arms to certain countries in order to maintain the present power balance, since an imbalance might encourage aggression. "It appears that the United States fears the balance of military power will soon swing in favor of Egypt. Negotiations have been going on for the sale by the United States of Hawk missiles to Israel."⁴⁴ And on 28 June 1963 the United States and Israel concluded an agreement for the sale of \$25 million worth of Hawk anti-aircraft missiles.⁴⁵

On 5 February 1966, the United States Government disclosed that it had been selling 200-M48-Patton tanks to Israel. "Presumably, the administration has also assumed the rest of an \$80 million arms contract concluded by West Germans and Israelis (and) cancelled after it became known and the United Arab Republic threatened to give diplomatic recognition to the communist regime in East Germany if the arms sales continued."⁴⁶

On 20 May 1966, the State Department disclosed that the United States has agreed to sell to Israel a "limited number of tactical aircraft," and stated that "this decision reflects our due regard for security in the Near East, our wish to avoid serious arms imbalances that would jeopardize area stability

(44) *The New York Herald Tribune*, 4 April 1963.

(45) *Ibid.*, 29 June 1963.

(46) *The New York Times*, 6 February 1966.

and our general restraint as to military equipment supplied to that area."⁴⁷

In a comment on the arms deal between the United States and Israel the *New York Times* stated "the new Israeli transaction marked the first time that the United States had introduced a strictly offensive weapons into the Middle East. The State Department described the planes as 'tactical', but they are tactical only in the sense that they do not have a strategic range . . . officials confirmed that the sale involved the A-4 Skyhawk, a small jet bomber designed primarily as a carrier attack bomber... to carry either a conventional or nuclear payload weighing up to 5,000 pounds."⁴⁸

The effect of this transaction on Israelis was one of elation. The military correspondent of the Israeli English-language daily newspaper, the *Jerusalem Post* reported that "the addition to the Israel Air Force of a number of Douglas Skyhawk light bombers gives it an important new striking force."⁴⁹

The United States Government view that its supply of military weapons to Israel is merely to keep the balance of military power in the Middle East and thus to maintain peace is not shared by the Arabs. In the first place, is it conceivable that parity in military strength between two and a half million Israelis and one hundred million Arabs could really be maintained for very long? Sami Hadawi in his book *Bitter Harvest* points out that "in effect, the United States was creating for

(47) *Ibid.*, 21 May 1966.

(48) *Ibid.*

(49) *The Jerusalem Post*, 22 May 1966.

the Arabs in the Middle East the same situation it so vehemently decried in the Caribbean in 1962. The United States would never see justice in a balance of power between it and Cuba; yet it sought to impose on the Arabs a formula it would not accept for itself."⁵⁰ The logic behind this irrationality on the part of the United States is that the state of Israel is an extension of the neo-imperialist policy of the United States. A military superior Israel could be used at any moment against the Arabs if the economic interests of the United States in the area are threatened. The argument that the United States has implanted in the Middle East a certain kind of power that could be used as a big stick against the Arabs to break them down whenever they indulge in a policy which threatens United States interests is valid.

In the second place, the argument that the military equipment was for defensive purposes is unconvincing. A 'defensive' weapon must be judged by the character of the state possessing it not by its range and calibre. Castro also claimed that the Russian missiles in Cuba were for defence purposes. In its record at the United Nations, Israel is known to have been condemned over forty times for aggression against Arab territory by its regular armed forces.⁵¹ The effect of maintaining Israel's superiority in the arms race culminated in the 5 June 1967 war which was discussed under the "Johnson administration" section.

After the June war the United States imposed an embargo on the sale of arms to the Middle East belligerent countries.

(50) S. Hadawi, *Bitter Harvest*, *op. cit.*, p. 258.

(51) *Ibid.*

Yet the post-war embargo was lifted on 25 October 1967, a day after Israel shelled the two main Egyptian refineries in Suez. Robert J. McCloskey, United States State Department spokesman, announced in Washington that "the embargo on United States arms shipment to the Middle East will be relaxed to permit the scheduled delivery of two squadrons (48) of A-4F Skyhawk attack bombers to Israel and military equipment."⁵² And on 27 December 1968, Mr. McCloskey announced that "the United States and Israel have reached agreement on the sale of 50 Phantom F-4 fighter aircraft to Israel (for rather more than \$200 million) with deliveries to begin before the end of 1969 and to continue throughout 1970."⁵³ The deal had been concluded after almost two months of official negotiations between United States and Israeli governments' officials. On 7 November 1968, President Johnson authorized Mr. Dean Rusk, Secretary of State, to begin negotiations with Israel concerning the sale of the jet fighters.⁵⁴

Unofficial negotiations about the sale of these fighters to Israel have been going on since the June war, following the embargo imposed by France on the delivery of 50 Mirage fighters to Israel. Commenting on the Phantom deal, David Hirst, Middle East correspondent of the *Guardian*, wrote: "An Egyptian spokesman was not very wide of the mark recently when he described Israel as 'America's sheriff in the Middle East',—a sheriff who in true Western fashion has a loose brief and rough and ready notions about keeping law and order. Israeli leaders have let no opportunity pass to propagate the idea of

(52) *The New York Times*, 25 October 1967.

(53) *The Guardian*, 28 December 1968.

(54) *Ibid.*

Israel's manning the frontiers of the free world against the encroachments of Soviet imperialism, and the United States appears to be coming round to this view. It seems to be evolving a new doctrine in the process: that Israel should not merely equal the Arabs in military strength but exceed them."⁵⁵

Nuclear Aid

Under President Eisenhower's atoms-for-peace program, the United States and Israel cooperated in the field of atomic energy. The United States has assisted Israel in constructing near Rehoboth a research reactor for peaceful purposes and the United States has exchanged unclassified information about atomic energy with Israel. The United States-Israeli bilateral agreement of 12 July 1955, provided that United States assistance may not be developed into military use and that safeguards, including inspection, will be enforced to this end. And on 9 December 1959, an agreement was signed for the formation of a joint United States-Israeli desalination company through the use of nuclear power.⁵⁶

In 1960 it was reported that the Israeli Government intended to produce nuclear weapons, thus violating the above-mentioned agreement and raising doubts about the effectiveness of United States inspection of Israeli nuclear projects. "(United States) suspicion has been aroused in particular by the secrecy which until now has surrounded the construction, with French help, of a large new reactor in the Negev."⁵⁷

(55) David Hirst, "Hefty Push towards a New Confrontation," *Guardian Weekly*, 17 October 1968.

(56) *Keesings Contemporary Archives*, V. 12, p. 17290, A., col. 1.

(57) *The Times* (London), 21 December 1960.

As a result of these reports, the State Department issued on 19 December 1960, a statement reaffirming that "United States cooperation or assistance in any program to develop a nuclear weapon capability would not be possible. Such action would be precluded both by our policy of discouraging the proliferation of independent nuclear weapons capabilities and by the United States Atomic Energy Act. As a result of unofficial reports to the effect that a new and larger nuclear reactor was under construction in Israel, the Secretary of State called in the Ambassador of Israel (Avraham Harman) on December 9 to express his concern and to request information."⁵⁸ On 20 and 21 December, the Israeli Ambassador held talks with the Secretary of State and the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, in which the Ambassador gave full assurances that the "reactor at Rehoboth, now in the early stage of construction, is for peaceful purposes only."⁵⁹ One wonders how did the Secretary of State and the Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs accept such assurances since their doubts were raised, in addition to the activities at Rehoboth, by the secrecy surrounding the construction of a new reactor in the Negev which Ben Gurion described as "24 times more powerful than a small reactor (Rehoboth) with a capacity of 1,000 thermal kilowatts, built south of Tel-Aviv, with American Government assistance."⁶⁰

In spite of United States suspicions of Israel's nuclear

(58) *Department of State Bulletin*, 9 January 1961, p. 45.

(59) *American Foreign Policy Current Documents 1960*, Department of State Publication 7624, Released March 1964, Historical Office Bureau of Public Affairs, p. 764.

(60) *The New York Herald Tribune*, 22 December 1960.

plans, President Johnson disclosed on 6 February 1964, at a dinner of the American Committee for the Weizmann Institute of Science in Israel, that the United States had begun discussions with Israel regarding cooperative research by the two nations to convert salt water into fresh water through the use of nuclear power. In his speech, Johnson said: "This would be part of a general program for pooling experiences and knowledge in this important field. The International Atomic Energy Agency is a focal point in this program . . . We can pool the intellectual resources of Israel (and) America." Commenting on Johnson's speech, the Beirut daily *al-Nahar*, 7 February, stated that it is "serious because it has officially revealed American-Israeli cooperation in nuclear research at the Rehoboth nuclear center, which has been evoking Arab fears on account of the possibility that Israel may develop the atomic bomb."

On 11 June, a communiqué was issued simultaneously by Israel and the United States announcing that a joint United States-Israeli technical team will be appointed immediately to conduct a survey defining the scope of the cooperative program aimed at implementing an agreement on sea water desalination made by President Johnson and Premier Eshkol. The announcement also stated that the International Atomic Energy Agency is to participate in the atomic aspects of the program.

On 10 August, United States and Israeli technicians announced their agreement on a program to use nuclear power to desalinate sea water and generate electricity on Israel's Mediterranean coast. The nuclear power plant to be built will supply 150 to 200 megawatt electric power and 80 to 165 million

gallons of fresh water daily, 1971 was set as the target date for beginning the operation of the plant.

On 14 October 1964, a memorandum of understanding between the United States and Israel was issued. It read as follows:

"Having examined the recommendations of the Joint Israeli-United States desalting team, the undersigned affirm the following Principles of Understanding:

- "1. That an invitation for proposals for the undertaking of a detailed feasibility study by a consulting engineering firm should be issued promptly by the Governments;
- "2. That, based upon review of the proposals, and interviews if necessary, an engineer be selected and an appropriate contract acceptable to both governments be executed;
- "3. That the cost of the engineering study be shared equally by the two Governments;
- "4. That a Joint Board, consisting of an equal number of representatives from each of the Governments (with a representative of the International Atomic Energy Agency as an observer), be appointed to prepare the invitation, make recommendations for selection of the engineers and the terms of the contract, and to perform such other functions in rela-

tion to the engineering contract as will later be defined by the Governments, and to make recommendations to the two Governments.

“Done at Washington in duplicate this fourteenth day of October 1964.”

Kenneth Holum
Acting Secretary United States Department of the Interior

Glenn T. Seaborg
Chairman United States Atomic Energy Commission

Avraham Harman
Ambassador of Israel

General Zvi Zur
Prime Minister of Israel's Coordinator of the Water
Desalting Project.⁶¹

On 15 October, President Johnson issued the following statement:

“I am pleased to announce that the Governments of the United States and Israel have agreed to a second step towards the solution of Israel's critical water needs.

“The first step was taken last June when Prime Minister Eshkol and I established a joint United States-Israeli study

(61) Jules Davids, Ed., *Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1964*, Council on Foreign Relations, New York, Harper and Row, 1965, pp. 327-328.

team to conduct technical surveys. These have already been completed.

"Now we have agreed that our Governments will share equally in the cost of a detailed engineering study for a large water desalting project to meet Israel's pressing demands for more fresh water.

"Both Governments will promptly issue invitations to American engineering consulting firms to participate in the second step. A joint board, with each Government equally represented, will assist in making the selection and will oversee the effort."⁶²

On 7 March 1966, the Joint United States-Israeli Board, established to supervise the study of the use of atomic energy to meet Israeli water needs, received its final report from the United States engineering team. The report concluded that a nuclear-powered plant for saline water conversion is technically feasible, with a 200-megawatt capacity and producing 100 million gallons of water daily, that such a plant could be commercially operational by 1972 and would cost \$200 million.

Cooperation between the United States and Israel in the nuclear field is not limited to water desalination. On 5 July 1966, Premier Eshkol, speaking in the Knesset, acknowledged press reports that United States engineers had recently visited the atomic power plant at Dimona, which normally is off

(62) *Ibid.*, p. 328.

limits to foreigners. The reason given by Eshkol for this visit is "the plant's capability of producing plutonium which is used in the manufacture of atomic bombs. Dimona has become a center of considerable controversy and anxiety in the Middle East," he said.

According to the editor of *Jane's all the World's Aircraft*, John W.R. Taylor, "Israel will have suitable nuclear warheads of its own design available by 1970, produced in the Dimona reactor center near the Dead Sea. Development of the missile itself is more advanced and firing trials were reported to be underway in the Mediterranean off Toulon a few months ago."⁶³ Israel's progress towards becoming a nuclear power is based by Taylor on details of the MD 660, a two-stage solid propellant surface-to-surface bombardment missile capable of carrying alternative nuclear or high-explosive warheads. Its designation "MD" implied that it had been developed by Avions Marcel Dassault of France.⁶⁴

(63) Quoted in the *Daily Star* (Beirut), 31 October 1968.

(64) *Ibid.*

APPENDIX I

UNITED STATES POLITICAL PLATFORMS AND ISRAEL

The Republican and Democratic parties are basically in agreement on United States' policy in the Middle East. The two parties have, since 1944, adopted similar planks in their election platforms. There was no real public controversy on the Middle East within either of the two parties, such as the controversy which exploded over Vietnam at the Republican and Democratic Conventions of 1968. In this appendix the reader will find the texts of the planks adopted by the Republican and Democratic parties concerning the problem of Palestine from 1944 to 1968.

THE 1944 PLANKS

Republican

In order to give refuge to millions of distressed Jewish men, women and children driven from their homes by tyranny, we call for the opening of Palestine to their unrestricted immigration and land ownership, so that in accordance with the full intent and purpose of the Balfour Declaration of 1917 and the resolution of a Republican Congress in 1922, Palestine may be constituted as a free and democratic commonwealth.

We condemn the failure of the President to insist that the mandatory of Palestine carry out the provisions of the Balfour Declaration and of the mandate while he pretends to support them.

Democratic

We favor the opening of Palestine to unrestricted Jewish immigration and colonization, and such a policy to result in the establishment there of a free and democratic Jewish commonwealth.

THE 1948 PLANKS

Republican

We welcome Israel into the family of nations and take pride in the fact that the Republican Party was the first to call for the establishment of a free and independent Jewish Commonwealth. The vacillation of the Democratic Administration on this question has undermined the prestige of the United Nations. Subject to the letter and spirit of the United Nations Charter, we pledge to Israel full recognition, with its boundaries sanctioned by the United Nations, and aid in developing its economy.

Democratic

President Truman, by granting immediate recognition to Israel, led the world in extending friendship and welcome to a people who have long sought and justly deserve freedom and

independence. We pledge full recognition to the State of Israel. We affirm our pride that the United States under the leadership of President Truman played a leading role in the adoption of the resolution of November 29, 1947, by the United Nations General Assembly for the creation of a Jewish State.

We approve the claims of the State of Israel to the boundaries set forth in the United Nations resolution of November 29, and consider that modifications thereof should be made only if fully acceptable to the State of Israel.

We look forward to the admission of the State of Israel to the United Nations and its full participation in the international community of nations. We pledge appropriate aid to the State of Israel in developing its economy and resources.

We favor the revision of the arms embargo to accord to the State of Israel the right of self-defense. We pledge ourselves to work for the modification of any resolution of the United Nations to the extent that it may prevent any such revision.

We continue to support, within the framework of the United Nations, the internationalization of Jerusalem and the protection of the holy places in Palestine.

THE 1952 PLANKS

Republican

The Republican Party has consistently advocated a national home for the Jewish people since a Republican Congress

declared its support of that objective 30 years ago. In providing a sanctuary for Jewish people rendered homeless by persecution, the State of Israel appeals to our deepest humanitarian instincts. We shall continue our friendly interest in this constructive and inspiring undertaking.

We shall put our influence at the service of peace between Israel and the Arab states, and we shall cooperate to bring economic and social stability to that area.

Democratic

We seek to enlist the people of the Middle East to work with us and with each other in the development of the region, the lifting of health and living standards, and the attainment of peace. We favor the development of integrated security arrangements for the Middle East and other assistance to help safeguard the independence of the countries in the area.

We pledge continued assistance to Israel so that she may fulfill her humanitarian mission of providing shelter and sanctuary for her homeless Jewish refugees while strengthening her economic development.

We will continue to support the tripartite declaration of May, 1959, to encourage Israel and the Arab states to settle their differences by direct negotiation, to maintain and protect the sanctity of the Holy Places and to permit free access to them.

We pledge aid to the Arab states to enable them to develop their economic resources and raise the living standards of

their people. We support measures for the relief and reintegration of the Palestine refugees, and we pledge continued assistance to the reintegration program voted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in January 1952.

THE 1956 PLANKS

Republican

The Middle East has been strengthened by the defensive unity of the four "northern tier" countries—Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Pakistan—which hold gateways to the vast oil resources upon which depend the industry and military strength of the free world. This was made possible by the liberation of Iran from the grip of the Communist Tudeh Party. Iran has again made its oil reserves available to the world under an equitable settlement negotiated by the United States.

We have maintained, and will maintain friendly relations with all nations in this vital area, seeking to mediate differences among them, and encouraging their legitimate national aspirations . . .

The Future

. . . We shall continue to support the collective security system begun in 1947 and steadily developed on a bipartisan basis. That system has joined the United States with 42 other nations in common defense of freedom. It has created a deterrent to war which cannot be nullified by Soviet veto.

Where needed, we shall help friendly countries maintain such local forces and economic strength as provide a first bulwark against Communist aggression or subversion. We shall reinforce that defense by a military capacity which, operating in accordance with the United Nations Charter, could so punish aggression that it ceases to be a profitable pursuit.

We will continue efforts with friends and allies to assist the underdeveloped areas of the free world in their efforts to attain greater freedom, independence and self-determination, and to raise their standards of living.

We recognize the existence of a major threat to international peace in the Near East. We support a policy of impartial friendship for the peoples of the Arab states and Israel to promote a peaceful settlement of the causes of tension in that area, including the human problem of the Palestine-Arab refugees.

Progress towards a just settlement of the tragic conflict between the Jewish state and the Arab nations in Palestine was upset by the Soviet bloc sale of arms to Arab countries. But prospects of peace have now been reinforced by the mission to Palestine of the United Nations Secretary General upon the initiative of the United States.

We regard the preservation of Israel as an important tenet of American foreign policy. We are determined that the integrity of an independent Jewish state shall be maintained. We shall support the independence of Israel against armed aggression. The best hope for peace in the Middle East lies in

the United Nations. We pledge our continued efforts to eliminate the obstacles to a lasting peace in this area.

Democratic

The Democratic Party stands for the maintenance of peace in the Middle East which is essential for the well-being and progress of all its peoples.

We will urge Israel and the Arab states to settle their differences by peaceful means, and to maintain the sanctity of the holy places and permit free access to them.

We will assist Israel to build a sound and viable economy for her people, so that she may fulfill her humanitarian mission of providing shelter and sanctuary for her homeless Jewish refugees while strengthening her national development.

We will assist the Arab states to develop their economic resources and raise the living standard of their people. The plight of the Arab refugees commands our continuing sympathy and concern. We will assist in carrying out large-scale projects for their resettlement in countries where there is room and opportunity for them.

We support the principle of free access to the Suez Canal under suitable international auspices. The present policies of the Eisenhower administration in the Middle East are unnecessarily increasing the risk that war will break out in this area. To prevent war, to assure peace we will faithfully carry out our country's pledge under the Tripartite Declaration of 1950 to oppose the use or threat of force and to take such

action as may be necessary, in the interest of peace, both within and outside the United Nations to prevent any violation of the frontiers of armistice lines.

The Democratic Party will act to redress the dangerous imbalance of arms in the area created by the shipment of communist arms to Egypt, by selling or supplying defensive weapons to Israel, and will take such steps, including security guarantees, as may be required to deter aggression and war in the area.

We oppose, as contrary to American principles, the practice of any government which discriminates against American citizens on grounds of race or religion. We will not countenance any arrangement or treaty with any government which by its terms or in its practical application would sanction such practices.

THE 1960 PLANKS

Republican

In the Middle East, we shall continue to support the integrity and independence of all the states of that area including Israel and the Arab states.

With specific reference to Israel and the Arab Nations we urge them to undertake negotiations for a mutually acceptable settlement of the causes of tension between them. We pledge continued efforts:

— To eliminate the obstacles to a lasting peace in the area, including the human problem of the Arab refugees.

— To seek an end to transit and trade restrictions, blockades and boycotts.

— To secure freedom of navigation in international waterways, the cessation of discrimination against Americans on the basis of religious beliefs, and an end to the wasteful and dangerous arms race and to the threat of an arms imbalance in the area.

Democratic

We urge continued economic assistance to Israel and the Arab peoples to help them raise their living standards. We pledge our best efforts for peace in the Middle East by seeking to prevent an arms race while guarding against the dangers of a military imbalance resulting from Soviet arms shipments.

In the Middle East we will work for guarantees to insure independence for all states. We will encourage direct Arab-Israeli peace negotiations, the resettlement of Arab refugees in lands where there is room and opportunity for them, an end to boycotts and blockades, and unrestricted use of the Suez Canal by all nations.

We shall establish priorities for foreign aid which will channel it to those countries abroad which, by their own willingness to help themselves, show themselves most capable of using it effectively.

Protection of the rights of American citizens to travel, to pursue lawful trade and to engage in other lawful activities abroad without distinction as to race or religion is a cardinal function of the national sovereignty. We will oppose any international agreement or treaty which by its terms or practices differentiates among American citizens on grounds of race or religion.

THE 1964 PLANKS

Republican

Respecting the Middle East, and in addition to our reaffirmed pledges of 1960 concerning this area, we will so direct our economic and military assistance as to help maintain stability in this region and prevent an imbalance of arms.

Democratic

(The commitment is to):

Work for the attainment of peace in the Near East as an urgent goal, using our best efforts to prevent a military unbalance, to encourage arms reductions and the use of national resources for international development and to encourage the resettlement of Arab refugees in lands where there is room and opportunity for them. The problems of political adjustment between Israel and the Arab countries can and must be peacefully resolved and the territorial integrity of every nation respected.

MIDDLE EAST PLANKS — 1968

Republican

In the tinderbox of the Middle East we will pursue a stable peace through recognition by all nations of each other's right to assured boundaries, freedom of navigation through international waters, and independent existence free from the threat of aggression. We will seek an end to the arms race through international agreement and the stationing of peace-keeping forces of the United Nations in areas of severe tension, as we encourage peace-table talks among adversaries.

Nevertheless, the Soviets persist in building an imbalance of military forces in this region. The fact of a growing menace to Israel is undeniable. Her forces must be kept at a commensurate strength both for her protection and to help keep the peace of the area. The United States, therefore, will provide countervailing help to Israel, such as supersonic fighters, as necessary for these purposes. To replace the ancient rivalries of this region with new hope and opportunity, we vigorously support a well-conceived plan of regional development, including the bold nuclear desalinization and irrigation proposal of former President Eisenhower.

Democratic

The Middle East remains a powder keg. We must do all in our power to prevent a recurrence of war in this area. A large Soviet fleet has been deployed to the Mediterranean. Preferring short-term political advantage to long-range stability and peace, the Soviet Union has rushed arms to certain

Arab states to replace those lost in the Arab-Israeli war of 1967. As long as Israel is threatened by hostile and well-armed neighbors, we will assist her with essential military equipment needed for her defense, including the most advanced types of combat aircraft.

Lasting peace in the Middle East depends upon agreed and secured frontiers, respect for the territorial integrity of all states, the guaranteed right of innocent passage through all international waterways, a humane resettlement of the Arab refugees and the establishment of a non-provocative military balance. To achieve those objectives, we support negotiations among the concerned parties. We strongly support efforts to achieve an agreement among states in the area and those states supplying arms to limit the flow of military equipment to the Middle East. We support efforts to raise the living standards throughout the area, including desalinization and regional irrigation projects which cut across state frontiers.

APPENDIX II

The following text is my translation of a section taken from Sadik J. Al-Azm's book: *Self-Criticism After The Defeat*.¹ In this section the author discusses critically the prevalent Arab conceptions about the United States' Middle Eastern policies.

There is a simple and popular explanation prevalent among the Arabs which attributes the recurrent Arab defeats before Israel to the fact that international Zionism dominates the whole world and controls the fate of nations, states and the entire course of modern history. This kind of explanation became prominent after the June (1967) defeat and found expression in a number of articles and books. For example, Dr. Kamal Yousef al-Hajj (Chairman of the Department of Philosophy at the Lebanese University), insists in his book that "capitalism is under the complete domination of the world Jewish movement" and that "the communist revolution is an invention of the Jewish mentality."² Dr. Hajj gave the following title to one of the chapters of his book: "Communism: Foster child of Zionism." Other writers refer to the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* to prove that the Jews fully dominate, by way of a hellish world conspiracy, the course of modern history (and may be ancient history as well). According to

(1) Tali'a Publishing House, Beirut, 1967, pp. 53-69.

(2) *Of the Zionist Philosophy*, Beirut, 1967, pp. 79-80.

this mythical mode of thinking the Elders of Zion meet at least once every century to draw up their horrifying secret plot for the enslavement of the world. The advocates of this "theory" assure us, in their explanation of historical events, that the course of history runs exactly and precisely in accordance with the abovementioned plot. Events do not deviate in the least from their interlocked course on account of the extreme shrewdness, cunning and devilish influence possessed by the Jewish master minds. These minds are capable of planning and executing, over a stretch of an entire century in a manner which the human mind is incapable of comprehending.³ This kind of fantastic thinking acquires a certain seeming respectability and reasonableness when it takes the form of trying to explain American policy (or Western capitalist policy in general) by saying that the Jews dominate the economy of the United States and control American life and society. This gives the Jews the power of directing American policies and attitudes in their own favor and that of Israel. Advocates of this line often stress the important role which the Jewish vote plays in American political life and in imposing a specific line of action on the country's foreign policy. Following are my critical remarks on this prevalent mode of Arab thinking.

One of the biggest mistakes that the Arabs have committed with regard to their conflict with Israel is their excessive underestimation of the strength of the enemy. The second biggest mistake which Arab thinking commits in estimating the strength and capabilities of Zionism, is magnifying its

(3) See: *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, and *The Teachings of Talmud*, by Shawqi Abdul Nasser, Dar Al-Ta'wun, Cairo, pp. 43, 50.

strength and influence to the point of giving Zionism fantastic powers which render it into a super power dominating capitalism, communism and the course of history all at the same time. Naturally, inflating the might of the enemy to such a fantastic degree provides a kind of neurotic justification for the continued Arab impotence *vis-à-vis* the Israeli strength. It rationalizes, on the level of pure fantasy, Arab incompetence by projecting the responsibility for the defeat into external forces which are so great and mighty that no one could have successfully stood before them any way. Accordingly, can one blame the Arabs for their repeated failures to face the Israeli challenge when they face the might of an enemy which controls (at least) the fate and life of the capitalist and communist blocks in the world?!

The prevalence of this kind of thinking in explaining the Arab defeat, shows that the Arab mentality still moves on the level of the most simple-minded and naive of explanations of the course of historical events. The simplest way to understand a complex situation, such as the foreign policy of the United States of America, is to attribute it to the will and design of a person or group of persons (e.g. the Elders of Zion) who are considered wholly responsible for that policy. This way we can heap abuse and blame upon these wicked people and then conclude that if they were to disappear then the course of events would undergo a complete change. That is to say the *Arab mentality* still looks for animistic explanations of events and prefers to think in terms of hidden personal wills, intentions and aims which presumably hide behind every occurrence. Accordingly the course of history during the last century is simply the actual execution of the will, aims

and intentions of the Elders of Zion who are secretly manipulating history. The Arab mind is not yet fully accustomed to explaining events in more modern scientific terms which do not depend on final causes and on the attribution of events to occult forces and animistic activation. The Arab mind still finds mechanistic or "dialectical" explanations of events foreign to its traditional bent of thinking. This is why it finds the explanation of American policy in terms of the "evil" wills and "wicked" intentions of a group of powerful men who control everything more congenial and comfortable than the more mechanistic explanations. The latter would, for example, attribute the course of American policy to economic and strategic interests or the need for protecting the massive capital investments of America in an area which comprises the whole of the Middle East and the entire of South East Asia. Needless to say the source of this widespread form of animistic thinking is the traditional mythico-religious thinking dominating in the area. This traditional manner of seeing the world always explains events by ultimately referring them to the will of God or the desires of invisible creatures. It also sees in the course of history a willful planning for every occurrence and a previously set plan according to which the pattern of events unfolds. "The conspiracy theory of history" is more or less the bad secular substitute for the older mythico-religious thinking on these matters.

At times, Arab writers, like Dr. Hajj, who work hard to over magnify the might and superiority of world Zionism, have certain specific aims in mind which can be discerned in their writings. Their aim is to defend the capitalist block in general and the United States of America in particular against

the charge of out and out enmity to the Arab cause over the Palestine conflict. The silly argument of such writers says that since the "West" is under the complete domination of the world-Jewish-Zionist might it should not be blamed by the Arabs for its anti-Arab policies and attitudes. Under these circumstances the "West" is really coerced to take the positions it has taken by the real masters of the international situation, namely, the Jews and Zionists.

In other words, the West is the natural ally of the Arabs and of their interests; and all that need be done at this stage is to point out to the West how Zionism is exploiting it for its own interests and ambitions. The "West" will, then, quickly come to its own reason and will remedy the wrong it has done to the Arabs. Thus, in principle, there is no need for the Arabs to make an enemy of the West because the West is really blameless.

Dr. Hajj says:

I think that the Arab peoples have made a mistake in considering the West as primarily responsible for Zionism.⁴

Then he describes this Arab belief as superficial and distorted, and concludes that:

What prompts me not to blame the West is the fact that it is deceived, exactly as we have been deceived for all this time. Yes the West is deceived (by the Jews and Zionists).⁵

(4) K. al-Hajj, *Of the Zionist Philosophy*, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

(5) *Ibid.*, p. 128.

The natural result of this extraordinary argument is that the Arabs find themselves burdened with the great responsibility of awakening the West from its great deception, as Dr. Hajj put the matter. After the Arabs complete the miraculous salvation of the West from Jewish domination, then "we (the Arabs) will control the West instead of the Zionists. And the great Western resources will be at our disposal instead of being at the disposal of the Zionists."⁶ All that one can do before this fantastic argument is to pity "the deceived West" and to pity the Palestine problem which has fallen into the whimsicalities of this illogic. Furthermore, the reactionary position expressed in this argument utilizes the supposed might of Zionism to tell the Arabs that their only hope of attaining their ambitions and securing their future is to return to the fold of the "Western" powers, economically, politically and culturally. After all the "poor" capitalist West is really blameless and deceived. Dr. Hajj is pretty explicit about this matter in his book.

As for those who explain American policy *vis-à-vis* the Palestine problem on the basis of the Jewish vote and the influence which the Jewish minority exercise in government circles they also work (intentionally or unintentionally) towards absolving America from the charge of open enmity to the Arabs in such vital matters as the Palestine problem and their attempts to liberate themselves from external economic domination and political subordination. The advocates of the theory of the Jewish vote do not want to attribute American policy to irrevocable commitments which emerge from Amer-

(6) *Ibid.*

ica's great neo-imperialist economic interests extending over the continents. They prefer to attribute this policy to purely political factors—which is more favorable to the American image—such as the great Zionist influence over American life. This influence results from a variety of sources one of which is the Jewish minority vote. Naturally, this sort of logic means, for example, that if one half of the American Jews were to leave the United States (thus reducing their voting influence by one half), then American-Middle Eastern policy would shift in a proportionate amount in favor of the Arabs! And why not? Is not the United States a democratic country in which the number of votes decides everything? But such Arab phantasies favoring non-Jewish America are one thing and the hard realities of the situation are another. If the number of Jewish votes were to diminish to one half in the United States, it is certain that the fundamental American position towards Israel, the Palestine problem and the Arab reactionary regimes will not really change. American positions and policies are, in the first place, based on extremely vital interests for America (e.g. Arab oil, the zinc, tungsten and rubber of South East Asia plus the massive capital investments in countries where the labor force is cheap) and not on the simple desire of candidates for political office to satisfy their electors.

It should be noted in the connection that the Jewish minority in the United States was never satisfied with the policy adopted by Eisenhower during the Suez Canal War of 1956 (this does not imply that the progressive Arab movement at that time was satisfied with the policies adopted by Eisenhower and Dulles) because it felt that the Eisenhower administration was less friendly towards Israel than the Truman

administration. However, in spite of all the Jewish and Zionist opposition Eisenhower entered the White House with the greatest majority ever known in American elections up to that time. Again, at the time when Hitler was organizing the Jewish massacres in Europe, the American Jewish vote, with all its supposed influence and power, failed to convince the American Government to open the doors of immigration to the persecuted and dispossessed Jews of Europe.

In spite of these facts and clear considerations, we still find a thinker like Walid Khalidi insisting on discussing and explaining American policy and attitudes over Palestine in terms of pure politics, elections and votes. In explaining the motives underlying American policy Khalidi says:

I do not think it is a secret that the basic motive I am referring to is the considerations pertaining to elections and to political matters. Consequently the American policy towards Palestine may be seen as a reflection of the morality of the American political elite on the highest levels of authority and for generation after generation.⁷

In our opinion this explanation remains superficial and incomplete because it views "the considerations pertaining to elections and political matters" and "the a morality of the American political elite" as irreducible and final facts which are not explicable by reference to more basic factors and vital interests in the life of American society. Does the American

(7) Walid Khalidi, "Palestine 1968," *The Journal of Arab Culture*, Beirut, July-August, 1968, p. 212.

political elite follow such an "a moral" course of action because it has somehow acquired bad moral habits and traits or because it has to protect a huge net-work of capital-investments, firms, banks, markets, sources of cheap raw materials, etc. extending all the way to Vietnam.

Concerning the story about the Jewish domination of the American economy and the Jewish control of American society and policy we can say that it is much closer to a myth than to a reality. It is the story which suited the Arab imagination in the sense that it explained away everything that they resented about the obvious superiority of Israel. The story also acted as a fine rationalization for the continuous Arab failure to effectively face the persistent Israeli expansion within Arab territories. The Arabs charmed themselves with this story without taking the trouble of studying the facts and evidence which supposedly either confirm or disconfirm its truth. This is all the more remarkable since the story of the Jewish domination of America indirectly acts to absolve the United States from all the serious charges which the Arabs have directed against it for the last twenty years. The United States is in effect rendered blameless by transferring the real blame over to a small minority which presumably enjoys ultimate and complete control of the life of America.

Now, to uncover the truth about the presumed Jewish dominance of the economy of the United States all we need to do is refer to the following book:⁸ *The Jewish Minority in the United States of America*. When we carefully examine the

(8) Mustafa Abdul 'Aziz, *The Jewish Minority in the United States*, Beirut, Palestine Research Center, 1968.

information contained in this book it becomes evident that Jewish interests dominate only certain limited aspects of the American economy which belong to the middle and lower sectors of the general economic activity of the country. There follows examples of the sort of economic activities dominated by the Jews (either fully or partially) in America: The clothing industries, the fur industry, fashion designing and make-up industries, the wholesale and retail dealing of a number of consumer goods, jewelry, groceries, liquor trade, publishing houses, advertising, cinema and the entertainment industry, etc. Furthermore, the Jews are influential among the stock exchange brokers (especially in New York) and in such professional fields as law, medicine, dentistry and university teaching. However, all these sectors of the economy are only a drop in the bucket when compared to the basic industries which form the backbone of the American economy. This is where the source of real political influence is found in America. Let us cite a few examples of the companies through which America really thrives: Standard Oil and all similar establishments, Dupont, the steel industry, starting with U.S. Steel, the largest concern, right through Bethlehem Steel, the sixth company in size. In banking we can cite as examples the Bank of America, the Chase Manhattan Bank and the First National City Bank. Other major industries are the airline companies, the car industry, mining, the major advertising firms, the food industry, etc. . . . The truth is that the group which dominates this sector of the economy also dominates the life of America.

There is no doubt that American Jews have no influence over this principal and absolutely vital sector of the economy.

In fact they are not allowed to come any where near it. The ones who control the American economy are the "White Protestants." They are also known, in the United States, as the "WASPS" which is an abbreviation for: White-Anglo-Saxon-Protestants." No matter how much one searches he will not find any real Jewish (or even Roman Catholic) control or influence over the sensitive and crucial posts which direct the activity of the abovementioned firms, companies and industries. We may note here that many of these concerns and establishments carry the name of well-known Anglo-Saxon Protestant families such as Dupont, Ford, Chrysler, etc. . . the Rockefeller family dominates the Chase Manhattan Bank. For further confirmation of these facts one only needs to review the names of the members of the boards of directors of the big industries and firms and the names of the important officials in them to see that Jews are almost completely absent from amongst them. I am not claiming that the Jewish minority in the United States is not powerful, rich and influential in government circles, but to grant this obvious fact is one thing and to claim that the Jews control the economy of the U.S.A. is quite another thing. The author of the *Jewish Minority in the United States of America* mentioned the following facts:

"Very few Jews own or work in steel mills, oil refineries, mines, automobile factories, machine shops, meat packing plants, or other basic industries. The public utilities, like railroads, electric and gas companies, telephone and telegraph companies, also have very few Jews as owners or employees. Jews are still relatively rare in the executive suites of banks, public utilities and heavy industry. Yet they have

great influence in the printing and publishing houses, broadcasting services, television, and movie houses."⁹

The same author alludes to the remarkably small number of Jews working in American banks. He says:

The following information was uncovered in a study made by the American Jewish Committee on the main 50 banks in the United States. In 45 banks no Jew occupied a higher executive suite. In four banks only a single Jew occupied a higher executive position. And in one bank only four Jews occupied higher executive posts. Furthermore, there were only 32 Jews out of a total of 3438 persons employed in the middle executive positions in these banks.¹⁰

One should never forget that racism is the basic social malaise of American society. The main source of this racist attitude in America is the dominant White Protestants. It should be also made clear that this ill of racial discrimination in America is not only directed against the negroes but extends to the Red Indians, Jews, Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, Chinese, Japanese and even to the Italian and Irish Catholics. This should give us a hint about the relationship which exists between the White Protestant economic domination of America and the policies of racial discrimination practised against the other groups who control relatively little in American life (like the

(9) Ben M. Edidin, *Jewish Community Life in America*, New York, Hebrew Publishing Company, 1947, p. 126; and *Time*, "The New American Jews," 25 June 1965.

(10) The American Jewish Committee, *Patterns of Exclusion from the Executive Suite: Commercial Banking*, New York, Institute of Human Relations, August 1966.

Jews) or practically nothing like the Red Indians, negroes and Puerto Ricans.¹¹ An interesting result of this discrimination against the Jewish minority in America consists of the following situation: In spite of the fact that Jewish students form 10 to 12 percent of the total number of university students in

(11) It is here that we find the correct explanation for the non-cordial Jewish attitude towards Eisenhower. In reality Eisenhower was no more sympathetic to the Arabs than any other president of the United States of America. This is clear from the basically antagonistic attitude adopted by Eisenhower and Dulles towards the issues of the moment (at that time) in the Arab world. These issues were represented in the new policies of positive neutrality, non-alignment, the construction of the Aswan Dam and the famous Egyptian arms deal with the Socialist Block. The Eisenhower administration was opposed to all these progressive measures and brought against them policies based on the idea of a "power vacuum" in the Middle East and the idea of Arab membership in Western military pacts. These facts were directed primarily against the Socialist Block as a part of the American policy of "encirclement," "containment" and "nuclear deterrent." The non-cordial Jewish attitude towards the Eisenhower administration does not really go back, then, to the presumed sympathy of Eisenhower towards the Arabs and particularly towards their point of view on the Palestine problem. The source of this Jewish coolness is the fact that his administration was famous for its undisguised partiality for Big Business (as the American would put it) at the expense of the interests of the small businessmen. And since Big Business is in the hands of the White Protestants and is "off limits" for Jewish influence there is little wonder if the Jewish minority did not find itself in complete accord with Eisenhower's administration and especially with Dulles who is himself a White Protestant to the core as well as the main representative of the group in government. In fact the American Jews do not support the Republican Party in general because it is known for its very conservative social and economic attitudes and ideas. This situation is the product of the Republican Party's deep and historic ties with American Big Business. The rule of the Republican Party means, therefore, a more effective policy of discrimination against minorities (including the Jews) than the rule of the Democratic Party. In spite of the fact that the majority of the Jewish votes were cast for the candidates of the Democratic Party, Eisenhower won the elections by a very great majority. In other words, the Jewish vote had little effect on the result as I pointed out earlier and as the Arabs ought to realize.

America, and in spite of the fact that Jews are present in relatively large numbers on the teaching staffs of universities, yet there is hardly a Jew who occupies a high administrative post in an American university or college; such as the dean of a school or the president of an institution. This situation is not unrelated to the usual constitution of the boards of trustees who control the lives of American universities. The members of these boards tend to be drawn from the circles of big business and banking, i.e., from circles dominated by conservative White Protestant attitudes, values and mentality.

From the above discussion we may conclude the following:

(1) The widespread illusion among the Arabs covering the complete Jewish domination of the American economy results from either of two sources: (a) Arab ignorance of certain basic facts about the American economy and the composition of American society. Consequently the Arab mental habit of seizing on the quickest and simplest explanation of a disliked situation no matter how simplistic and naive the explanation might be; (b) an attempt on the part of certain "Western oriented" Arab writers to absolve non-Jewish America (i.e. the real expansionist America fighting the neo-colonial war in Vietnam) from the "sin" of appearing fully and completely on the side of the enemies of the Arabs and from having actually contributed to the dispossession of the entire Arab Palestinian people.

(2) The idea which the Arabs have formulated about Zionism as merely being an extension of the United States neo-colonialist policy is false on account of over simplifying the historical facts to the point of absurdity. The history of

the Zionist movement shows clearly that it used to ally itself (or try to ally itself) with the great powers of the day in accordance with the prevailing political circumstances and major interests of these powers. This is why Herzl tried to depend on William II of Germany at the beginning (1897). When he failed he tried to approach the Ottoman Empire (1901) which attempt also resulted in failure. In 1902 the Zionist movement started to depend on Great Britain which became convinced that a Jewish State in Palestine will be a dependable and useful ally in protecting British Middle Eastern interests against potential Arab resistance and more immediately against the European colonial rivals of the British Empire (France at that time). The result was the well-known Balfour Declaration. At that time the Arabs said things about the relationship of Britain and the Zionist movement which are very similar to what they presently say about the relationship between Zionism and the United States. That is to say they said in those days that Zionism dominates and rules Britain and that Zionism is nothing but an extension of British colonial policies. The story of how the Zionist movement transferred its activities from Europe to America, during World War II, is well known. The United States emerged from the war as the greatest world power and its vital interests naturally extended to the Middle East area. It was only natural for the United States to benefit from the Zionist movement in the area as Britain had wanted to do previously. In other words, a meeting of wills and ambitions occurred between Zionism and the United States concerning vital interests and objectives in the Middle East in this historical period.

(3) The decisive factor in determining United States'

policy towards the Palestine question is the complex of vital American interests extending throughout the different parts of the world. In other words, the factors, which ultimately, determine the nature of American policy in Latin America, Vietnam, etc. . . also determine American policy in the Middle East. This policy takes the form of unlimited support for Israel, the protection of reactionary regimes and governments in the area, and the suppression of all progressive trends and liberation movements which might pose a threat to vital American interests in the area and to their stability, influence and growth. The Arab defeat of 5 June 1967 has shown the extent of the success of this American line of policy in the Middle East. In spite of the crushing Arab defeat the American policy in the Middle East emerged in the best condition that it could be in. The "Arab progressive or revolutionary movement" under the leadership of Nasser received a deadly blow, Israel has gained the advantage of greater strategic depth, the reactionary regimes in the Arab world have been strengthened and revitalized, and the vital American interests and concerns in the Arab world (economic, political, cultural, etc. . .) remained completely untouched and secure.

(4) The support coming to Israel from the old and new colonial powers is directly proportionate to the size of the interests (economic, political, cultural, etc. . .) that these powers have in the Middle East. Similarly the inability of the Arabs to face the continuous Israeli expansion in their territories is partly due to the effective control that the colonial powers have over the economics and policies of the Arab states, in particular the oil producing states. Consequently, we can see that the struggle for freeing the economies of the Arab states

from external capitalist domination is part and parcel of the continuing battle against Israel's persistent appropriation of Arab lands. It is also part and parcel of any serious Arab effort directed towards the eventual liberation of all occupied Arab territories.

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