



Abba Hillel Silver Collection Digitization Project

Featuring collections from the Western Reserve Historical Society and
The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives

MS-4787: Abba Hillel Silver Papers, 1902-1989.

Series I: General Correspondence, 1914-1969, undated.

Sub-series A: Alphabetical, 1914-1965, undated.

Reel

35

Box

13

Folder

861

Jewish Agency, Epstein, Eliahu, 1946-1948.

CONFIDENTIAL

July 17, 1946

Members of the Executive of The Jewish Agency for Palestine

Eliahu Epstein

SUBJECT: Turkey's attitude toward the Palestine Problem.

Yesterday I had a long conversation with an old friend of mine who is attached to the Turkish Embassy in Washington and who has recently returned from Ankara. He has been serving for the past year in the Middle Eastern Division of the Foreign Office in Ankara and was intimately associated with the policies of his Government in the Arab world.

The internal situation in Turkey, according to my informant, is very difficult because of the growing divisions on new party lines. Rather than introduce modern democratic developments, the newly formed political parties tend to revive many of the personal and regional jealousies of the pre-Ata Turk days. The Turkish people, who lived for 20 years under a one-party government regime, are confused by the new situation. The national unity established at such sacrifice by Ata Turk may, under the new conditions of political competition, reach the critical point where the very existence of the Turkish Republic may be in jeopardy. The Turkish people need discipline, and the multi-party system may, under the present circumstances, contribute more toward chaos than toward real democracy.

There is still one thing which unites the Turks practically without exception and is a point on which both Republican and Democratic parties agree: fear of Russia. All the foreign policies of the Turkish Government and of the different parties are inspired and dictated by this factor. The Communist party has slight prospects for success in Turkey, especially as long as it remains a Russian tool.

The Turks also hate the British and the last thing they want is to go back to the Ottoman days of the nineteenth century when Russia's aggressive aspirations against Turkey could be checked only by Turkey's unconditional dependence upon England. The Turkish Government understands perfectly that to be entirely dependent upon England would not be, in some respects, much better than to cede its sovereignty to Russia.

Ata Turk made the Turks nationalist conscious, and for them to go back and depend upon any foreign country would be, in itself, a calamity. Practical considerations, however, force the Turks more and more to seek British assistance coupled with American support. Never in her history was Turkey so interested in having American backing as now and there is no price too dear for the Turks to pay to cement the ties with the U.S.A. (My informant remarked at this point that this is a factor which Jews of influence in this country have to consider and which can be of benefit to the Jewish interests in Palestine.)

Turning to Turkish relations with the Arab countries, my informant said that the Turkish Government objected to the pressure of the British for closer support and association with the Arab League. His Government has no confidence in the Arabs who, given the opportunity, would betray the Turks as they betrayed them in World War I and as they betrayed their British friends in World War II. Arab leadership is unreliable and their statesmanship is below the standards which could command the respect of the Turks.

The fear of Russian penetration into bordering Turkish countries - like Iraq, Syria and Lebanon - forced the Turks to seek bi-lateral arrangements with each individual country. The political vacuum created in Syria and Lebanon after France withdrew created a positive potential for Russian infiltration. If realized, this would mean the encirclement of Turkey and a threat to her position both militarily and politically. The Turkish Government is willing, if forced to the choice, to see Great Britain control that region military-wise, and the Turkish Government will support any arrangement which could be made in this respect between the Syrian and Lebanese Governments on one side and the British on the other. The British military position in Iraq is stable and if, sooner or later, some changes occur in the Anglo-Iraq Treaty in favor of Iraq, they will be of a nature that will satisfy some of the superficial demands of the Iraqis, but the British will not yield any concessions in the military sphere after the lesson which Rashid-Ali taught them in 1941.

With regard to the Palestine situation, my informant mentioned that anything that diminishes the military power of the British in the Middle East cannot be looked upon favorably by the Turks. "As long as the Jews," he said, "continue to apply terrorist methods against the British, the Turks will favor British action regardless of how drastic it may be." Although not encouraged by the prospect of making Palestine an Arab state, which will facilitate the process of Arab unity, the Turkish Government in its present state of relations with the Arabs will, if publicly requested to explain her position, support a pro-Arab decision either at UN or through any other medium of international settlement. If, however, England and America decide on a pro-Jewish solution of the Palestine problem, the Turks would not object and would not start a campaign of opposition against such a solution especially if America will share in the responsibility for it.

The Turks fundamentally object to Arab unity. The growing importance of the Arabs in international affairs make them a competitor for the role which Turkey played in the interim between the two wars. The unification of the Arab countries would make of them a dangerous neighbor for Turkey if not militarily, then from the social and political points of view. Knowing the deep affiliations of the Jewish people with democracy, the Turks feel that a Jewish Palestine would be a more stable and reliable factor in defending that country against Soviet penetration than an Arab Palestine.

My informant was explicit in stating that we should not expect in the present international situation any help from his Government and we should not blame them should they vote against us when publicly challenged to do so under pressure of their present association with the British and the Arabs. We should not consider them, however, as our enemies and we should continue to cultivate friendly relations with his country by using for this purpose among other means our influential friends in this country.

RM:zho

001 Dr. B. Akiba for Dr. Silver and Messrs. Korman and Shapiro; Mr. L. Lapsky, Mr. A. Kewloj Jewish Agency, New York, Executive Jewish Agency in London

CONFIDENTIAL

July 17, 1946

Members of the Executive of The Jewish Agency for Palestine

Eliezer Epstein

SUBJECT: Middle Eastern Institute in Washington

Some time ago the press announced the establishment in Washington of a Middle Eastern Institute with a membership composed of businessmen, scholars and Government officials connected in one or another way with the Middle East. The Institute was chartered under the Diplomatic Affairs Foundation of New York and includes among its founders: George Allen, U. S. Ambassador to Iran, Eric Arvidsson, member of the Board of Directors of Technical Engineers, Inc.; Dr. Harold W. Glidden, Director of Islamic Department in the Library of Congress, George Camp Kelsor of Winter Park, Florida, Dr. Halford L. Hoskins, Director of the Foreign Service Educational Foundation and Henry S. Villard and Colonel Marvin Wright of the State Department.

Directly after the announcement of the Middle Eastern Institute, I interviewed Dr. Glidden and Colonel Wright, who are old acquaintances of mine since both served in the Middle East. Dr. Glidden was one time Assistant Director of the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem, and Colonel Wright was Chief of the Middle Eastern Branch of the Military Intelligence of the American Headquarters in Cairo. Important information on the subject was also given to me by Colonel Robert MacDowell of the War Department, closely associated with the Institute although not among its official founders.

According to the information I gathered the main purpose of the Institute will be to develop cultural and social relations with the Middle Eastern and especially with the Arab countries. The objectives of the Institute and some of its activities, will be similar to those of the British Council.

The Institute will publish a quarterly on Middle Eastern affairs and establish facilities to promote research and teaching on and in the Middle East. American students and teachers will be sent at the expense of the Institute to the Middle East to carry out large scale investigations, especially in fields of current social, economic and political developments and problems. Simultaneously, Middle Eastern students and scholars will be invited to this country for specialization and better understanding of U. S. culture and social and political organization.

While establishing independent branches in the Middle East, the Institute will also operate through existing bodies such as Fudan University in Cairo, American University of Beirut, American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem, etc. The character of the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem will be changed under the new plan from a purely archaeological institution to one which will deal with current problems in the Arab countries. It will become, under this scheme, a center of the Institute for Palestine proper, Transjordan

and Saudi Arabia.

The Quarterly which the Institute is to publish will be composed mainly of articles of topical interest. In some respects it will resemble the Foreign Affairs Quarterly - in others, the Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society in London. As regards its similarity to the former, it will try to get authoritative views and statements from prominent people connected in one way or another with the Middle East. As regards its similarity to the latter, the new Quarterly will look for narratives of personal experiences and observations by American and non-American travelers and workers in the Middle East. The founders of the Institute are at present busy searching for an editor and a staff for the Quarterly.

The plans of the founders call for the construction of a building in the Washington embassy district to house the new Institute. Until the building is completed, the Institute will be located at the School of Advanced International Studies with which it is affiliated.

The most active member among the founders is Dr. Hoskins (a cousin of Colonel Hoskins, President Roosevelt's envoy to the Middle East in 1943). He is the main person engaged in collecting funds for the Institute which will have to be pretty large to cover the expensive and comprehensive program they envisage.

The character of the founders of the Institute shows its connection with the State Department, which will probably sponsor its activities both morally and materially. Some of the founders - like Wright, Glidden and indirectly Colonel MacDowell, at present Chief of the Middle Eastern and Balkan Intelligence Branch in the War Department, are bitterly anti-Russian and pro-Arab and under their leadership and guidance the Institute will undoubtedly sponsor Arab activities directed simultaneously against Russia and Zionism.

How much the activities of the new Institute will coincide with similar British organizations in the Middle East remains to be seen. While cooperating probably with the British in some fields, the Institute will generally try to follow an independent line of action among the Middle Eastern peoples aimed at strengthening American influence among them. Backed by powerful forces in this country like the State Department, and probably oil and missionary institutions as well, having access to large funds coming from these sources, the Institute may become a serious and dangerous factor of American imperialism in the Middle East. By coordinating the activities of the existing anti-Zionist organizations operating under the American flag in the Middle East, this Institute could become as dangerous an element as many of the other forces of opposition to our work in Palestine and highly detrimental to the improvement of our position in the entire Middle East.

TH:tkc

GO: Dr. B. Aksin for Dr. Silver and Messrs. Neumann and Shapiro

Mr. L. Lipsky

Mr. A. Lewis

The Jewish Agency, New York

The Executive of the Jewish Agency for Palestine in London

Charge to the account of

C O P Y

\$

CLASS OF SERVICE DESIRED	
DOMESTIC	CABLE
TELEGRAM	ORDINARY
DAY LETTER	URGENT RATE
SERIAL	DEFERRED
NIGHT LETTER	NIGHT LETTER

Patrons should check class of service desired; otherwise the message will be transmitted as a telegram or ordinary cablegram.

WESTERN UNION

1206

A. N. WILLIAMS
PRESIDENT

CHECK
ACCOUNTING INFORMATION
TIME FILED

Send the following telegram, subject to the terms on back hereof, which are hereby agreed to

FOR VICTORY BUY WAR BONDS TODAY
--

August 16, 1946

DR. ABBA HILLEL SILVER
AMERICAN ZIONIST EMERGENCY COUNCIL
342 MADISON AVENUE

YOUR ADVISABLE STATEMENT ON PALESTINE SITUATION WILL

REMAIN HISTORIC DOCUMENT ZIONIST ANNALS CORDIALLY

ELIAHU EPSTEIN

CLASS OF SERVICE DESIRED	
DOMESTIC	CABLE
TELEGRAM	ORDINARY
DAY LETTER	URGENT RATE
SERIAL	DEFERRED
NIGHT LETTER	NIGHT LETTER

Patrons should check class of service desired; otherwise the message will be transmitted as a telegram or ordinary cablegram.

WESTERN UNION

1207

JOSEPH L. EGAN
PRESIDENT

\$	CHECK
	ACCOUNTING INFORMATION
	TIME FILED

Send the following telegram, subject to the terms on back hereof, which are hereby agreed to
(PLEASE PRINT NAME AND ADDRESS)

WASHINGTON, D. C.

JULY 24

1946

To ABBA HILLEL SILVER

Care of or Apt. No. _____

Street and No. _____

Place _____

VIEW INCREASING POLITICAL TENSION LONDON AND OBVIOUS BRITISH GOVERNMENT DESIRE TO
EXPLOIT JERUSALEM BOMBING FURTHER ATTACKS YISHUV AND DENY ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND
ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL YOU COME WASHINGTON D.C. IMMEDIATELY AND CONTACT OUR FRIENDS
HILL ADMINISTRATION FOR THEIR SUPPORT THIS CRUCIAL MOMENT.

I A H U EPSTEIN

Sender's name and address
(For reference only)

Sender's telephone
number

September 24, 1948

Dean Howard M. LeSourd,
Secretary-Treasurer,
World Committee for Palestine
1705 "G" Street, N. W.
Washington 6, D. C.

Dear Dr. LeSourd:

I have received a copy of your letter of September 23 regarding the resignation of Mrs. Yarden. As you are aware, Dr. Goldman, who is responsible for the direction of this office on behalf of the Executive of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, is away on a mission to London. It seems to me, therefore, most improper for Mrs. Yarden to insist on her resignation in the absence of Dr. Goldman.

As to the reasons for Mrs. Yarden's resignation, as explained in her letter to Dr. Goldman of September 13, which has not reached him as yet, I would like to correct a misinterpretation by Mrs. Yarden of Dr. Goldman's reasons for postponing the World Christian Conference for Palestine. Originally this conference was supposed to have taken place during the session of the UN Assembly in New York. Since, however, the UN session has been postponed, there is no reason to call the World Christian Conference now, the main purpose being to coordinate its activities with the possible discussion of the Palestine question by the UN Assembly.

The instructions to postpone the World Christian Conference for Palestine were conveyed to Mrs. Yarden by me after my telephone conversation with Dr. Goldman. There was not the slightest mention, however, of cancellation of this Conference as suggested erroneously by Mrs. Yarden in her letter. On the contrary, the date of the Conference could be fixed as soon as it is known whether the Palestine question will be put on the next UN Assembly's agenda or postponed for a later calling.

Rather than enter into a discussion of your letter regarding the activities of the World Committee and its relations with our office, I would suggest strongly delaying any such discussion until Dr. Goldman returns. I would also suggest that Mrs. Yarden withhold her resignation until then. To drop her work at this crucial moment would be a most irresponsible act which would not be in accord with the spirit of devotion shown by Mrs. Yarden through the many years of her Zionist work.

Very sincerely yours,

EH:ke

Eliah Epstein

cc: Members of the Committee of Eight

Caplan
Notes of Conversation with Mr. Meyer Weismann and Mr. Joseph Linton, London, Oct. 2, 1946

A meeting took place yesterday at the Foreign Office in which Dr. Weismann and the members of the Executive participated on behalf of the Jewish Agency. Messrs. Bevin, Hall and high officials of the Foreign and Colonial Offices attended on behalf of the British Government. The meeting was unofficial and for this reason, in accordance with the wishes of the Jewish Agency, was not held at Lancaster House, where the British are meeting with the Arabs.

Dr. Weismann presented the conditions for our participation in official negotiations. Rabbi Fishman, Mr. Kaplan and Dr. Goldmann added later, to Dr. Weismann's opening remarks.

Mr. Bevin welcomed this unofficial discussion and mentioned that the British Government desires a constructive and lasting settlement in Palestine with Jewish participation in such a settlement. He indicated further the difficulties in the way of a solution which will satisfy both the Jews and the Arabs. He saw the necessity for a "truce" to be established in the present state of affairs in Palestine. Such a "truce" would make further official negotiations easier for both the British and the Jews. He did not elaborate, however, the meaning of the word "truce".

Dr. Weismann concurred in the need to re-establish peace and order. But unless they went into the fundamental issues of the Palestine problem and tried to solve them a state of "truce" would in itself accomplish little. It was further agreed that the Jewish Agency should prepare an elaborate statement of our interpretation of the "truce" suggested by Mr. Bevin. When Dr. Weismann mentioned the necessity to enter into immediate discussions of the major issues involved in the Palestine situation, Mr. Bevin said that he would prefer this question to be postponed until the next meeting which has been decided upon, by them, to be held on Friday of this week.

From Mr. Linton's remark I could understand that some of Mr. Bevin's general references to the Palestine situation were not encouraging.

After the meeting the members of the Executive left for Paris to discuss with Mr. Ben-Gurion the agenda for the coming meeting on Friday and to prepare an elaborate statement regarding our demands for the state of "truce" suggested by Mr. Bevin.

Late in the afternoon, yesterday, Mr. Martin, of the Colonial Office came with another colleague of his to see Dr. Weismann. They tried to convince Dr. Weismann of the good intentions of the British Government in their negotiations with the Jewish Agency. They were careful, however, to say nothing more than was said by their superiors at the meeting.

I indicated to Mr. Weisgal and Mr. Linton the importance of our being kept informed, regularly and continuously, about the situation in London not only by telephone, because they sometimes cannot give the full picture, but also by air mail letters.

E. Epstein



CONFIDENTIAL

Members of the Committee of Eight

October 3, 1946

Eliahu Epstein

The attached was prepared by me in accordance with the request of Mr. David K. Niles. It was his belief that the enclosed would be useful in presenting the matter to the President.

EE: rke

Attachment - 1

**Dr. Abba Hillel Silver
Dr. Stephen S. Wise
Mr. Louis Lipsky
Mrs. Rose Halpern
Mr. David Wertheim
Mr. Israel Goldstein**



October 2, 1946

Honorable David K. Niles
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Niles:

In accordance with your kind suggestion I am venturing to place before you in writing some of the facts pertaining to the recent British searches for arms in Jewish settlements in Palestine as well as the forcible removal of Jewish immigrants from Palestine to Cyprus.

It is not generally realized that in many cases the colonies which are now being subjected to arms searches received their arms originally either directly from the British authorities or with their knowledge and tacit assent. The reason for this was that by its own admission (as confirmed by the Report of the British Royal Commission in 1937) the Palestine Administration was unable to maintain adequate security for the Jewish population against Arab attacks. As a result, the Palestine police not only sanctioned the presence of unlicensed arms in Jewish colonies, but on certain occasions themselves drew arms from this very source in order to repel Arab attacks during the riot years 1936-1939. Indeed, during the most critical period of the war in the Middle East, when Palestine was threatened by the German armies advancing through Libya, the British military, knowing that ultimately they could rely for help only on the Jewish elements of the population, gave them additional arms for setting up a Jewish Post-Occupational and Guerilla Force which was trained and armed by British officers. In the circumstances it is, to say the least, deeply ironic that the British authorities today pretend surprise and alarm at the existence of arms among the Jewish settlers.

I am personally well acquainted with Huhama, the scene of an unrestrained, not to say brutal search which took place in very recent weeks. Huhama is a frontier settlement surrounded by Arab villages save that on the South its neighbors are nomadic Bedouins; it is entirely isolated from other Jewish settlements. In 1929 Huhama was destroyed by Arab hands. It was rebuilt and again destroyed during the 1936-1939 disturbances. It is not surprising that the British indeed thereupon granted arms and ammunition to Huhama as it did to other pioneering Jewish settlements. It was well known that in the light of the settlement's experiences the arms allocated to it by the government were inadequate for its protection should a crisis develop and that the settlers had supplemented this allocation from other sources. On August 28 last, soldiers of the Sixth Airborne Division began a six-day search at Huhama. A further search was conducted, at the same time, at another small frontier colony named Doroith. An official statement issued by the Jewish National Council in Jerusalem declared that an inspection carried out soon after the searches had concluded showed that not one farm building or dwelling was left undamaged in the settlements. Livestock, farm equipment, food and clothing had been destroyed or pilfered. Even the trees planted in the wilderness with tremendous sacrifice and devotion had been uprooted.

The same pattern of destruction was applied to every colony which the British searched. In numerous cases charges of physical assault upon the men, women and children of these settlements were brought against the British troops.

Ostensibly, the effort to disarm the Jewish community is aimed at rooting out the forces of terrorism whose destructive consequences have affected not only the British and the Arabs but also, and not least, the Jewish community itself. The responsible Jewish leadership in Palestine was the first to decry this terrorism and to take such steps as lay in its power to put an end to it. Instead, however, of finding their position strengthened by a Government ready to carry out, at least in some measure, those obligations to which it stands indubitably committed, these leaders have themselves become the objects of British repression. Today, confined in detention camps, they watch helplessly a General over-all attack on the Jewish community which bears all the earmarks of a desire to sabotage the normal growth of the Jewish National Home.

It is the harder to reconcile the systematic ruthless disarming of Jewish settlers with the British explanation that they will thus eradicate terrorism when it is realized that a) these searches are conducted, to judge only by the reports of representatives on the scene of leading American press agencies, in a manner not merely unnecessarily destructive, but indicative of deliberate malice, and b) at the same time the Administration and the military are closing their eyes to the efforts of the ex-Mufti and other Arab rabble-rousers to enlist new recruits in and to arm their terrorist bands. Thus, Mr. Carter L. Davidson, the respected correspondent of the Associated Press, in a dispatch from Jerusalem dated September 3, stated that arms now in the

possession of three Arab military organisations are being swelled by a steady flow from the black market in arms currently operated by British military officers and men stationed in Palestine. Mr. Davidson claims to have the name, rank and unit of a British officer whom he accuses of delivering arms to an Arab group in Nablus. Other dispatches in recent weeks corroborate Mr. Davidson's charges.

The other aspect of British policy which has contributed so greatly to the present tense situation in Palestine has been their action in deporting Jewish refugees from Palestinian waters to Cyprus. It is unnecessary to emphasize the innumerable personal tragedies stemming directly from the present British policy of shutting the gates of Palestine to Europe's long-suffering victims of the Nazi holocaust. It is beyond comprehension, however, that British troops should be allowed to turn guns, tear gas, high pressure hoses upon the sick and, in some cases, dying men and women whose only crime is that of seeking refuge among their own people after their endless years of travail and sorrow.

It is inevitable that the inhumanity of the British military personnel, as very scantily sketched here, has had the effect of producing indignation and bitterness throughout the entire Jewish community of Palestine. Many thousands of that community have patiently waited for six long years for the freeing of their parents, wives, husbands, children, brothers and sisters from the Nazi Gehenna. The hopes of these people were buoyed up by the request last year of President Truman for the issuance by the British Government of 100,000 certificates of entry into Palestine. After all that has happened they do not and cannot

believe that the United States will not press their cause.

In conclusion, it must be stated that indiscriminate British searches throughout the Jewish colonies in Palestine, the arming with British connivance of Arab terrorist groups and the inhumane treatment accorded the refugees has had the effect of strengthening the hand of the irresponsible Jewish terrorist groups. The fact, at the same time, that the responsible leaders of the Jewish Agency are kept in prison has served to increase the influence of the extremist elements in the Jewish community and has facilitated the work of the terrorists..

Unless the British Government recognizes the reality of the situation and abandons its present policy - thus fulfilling its obligations under the Mandate and at the same time regaining the confidence and friendship of the Jewish people throughout the world - there is no hope for a peaceable solution to the Palestine problem.

The President of the United States, who has shown a deep humanitarian interest in the problem of the Jewish refugees and an earnest desire to promote a constructive settlement of the Palestine problem, will, by maintaining a well-defined and determined policy in this regard, render a historic service of far-reaching importance not only to the much tried Jewish people but to all suffering humanity.

Very sincerely yours,

HR:ke

Elihu Epstein

October 11, 1946

Mrs. Moses P. Epstein
276 Riverside Drive
New York, N. Y.

My dear Mrs. Epstein:

Permit me to reply to your telegram which I received this morning.

- 1) There is nothing in the Ad which appeared in this morning's New York Herald Tribune "which insults the President".
- 2) There is nothing in the Ad which questions his sincerity. The Ad reads "the sincerity of presidential statements has thus been laid open to question by the State Department of the United States. This you will recall was the charge which Bartley C. Crum made against the State Department and which was never refuted. I have seen the complete dossier which was given by the State Department to the American members of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry, and it completely substantiates Mr. Crum's accusations.
- 3) There is nothing in the Ad which is not the absolute truth.
- 4) There is nothing in the Ad which does not follow the argument of the statement issued by the American Zionist Emergency Council on October 9. Please re-read that statement carefully, especially paragraphs 2, 3 and 4. The Ad simply restates in its own words, as it should, what was in the official statement of the Emergency Council.
- 5) Please remember that the Ad is not signed by the Emergency Council but by the Greater New York Zionist Actions Committee, and countersigned by some 130 or 140 men and women, heads of various Zionist organizations who assume responsibility for that Ad. We encouraged the creation of such a body in order that it might act independently in the spirit, of course, of the political action which the Emergency Council favors, but without necessarily committing the Emergency Council to everything which the Actions Committee does or says.

- 6) The Hadassah is not obligated to subscribe to the statements issued by the Greater New York Zionist Actions Committee. It did not sign the first Ad of this Committee because as you stated you were not asked. I assume that the reason that Hadassah was not asked was the negative attitude to the whole question of political mobilization expressed by Mrs. Halperin at the meeting of the Emergency Council on September 10. (Please see Minutes). You were asked to sign the second statement and you not only refused to do it but you "demanded" that the Ad be withdrawn altogether. This, of course, the Zionist Actions Committee could not accede to.

With all good wishes, I remain

Most cordially yours,

AHS:GR



C O N F I D E N T I A L

October 17, 1946

Members of the Executive of the Jewish Agency
for Palestine
Eliahu Epstein

The following is a confidential report written about the Palestine situation by a prominent American journalist at present in London and sent to his paper in New York. I understand that this will not be published but used as background material by his editor and his associates who deal with the Middle East.

"The following guidance is based on interviews with Herbert Morrison, Colonial Secretary George Hall, Chaim Weizmann, J. Linton (Political Secretary of the Jewish Agency's London office), T. Kollek (intelligence officer of Haganah who served during the war as liaison officer with OSS and British Intelligence Service in Palestine), Albert Hourani (Acting Secretary Arab League's London Office), Robert Coe (first Secretary American Embassy), Foreign Office and other contacts. None of the following research, however, should be attributed to any of these people.

"The Arab League has many weaknesses. Because of dynastic differences, there is little or no prospect of welding its military forces into a unified army. Ibn Saud is on bad terms with Hashamite rulers of Iraq and Trans-Jordan. Imam of Yemen, beaten in war by Ibn Saud, is also none too happy. Farouk plays a balance of power game, acts as more or less youthful go-between holding things together. (Thus the forces of Saudi Arabia, for example, probably never would be allowed to enter Hashamite Trans-Jordan or Iraq.) The Arabs are ill-equipped and ill-trained for full-scale modern war, but they showed by the 1936 to 1939 revolt which they pointed out in mobilized British forces fought off 40,000 to 50,000, that they are able to cause serious trouble and quite difficult to cope with. Such a revolt, they say, they are prepared to repeat on a bigger scale and probably in several places at once.

"Formal declaration of war by the Arab states, individually or collectively, seems unlikely; tribesmen would merely start guerilla fighting on the Khyber Pass model. Individualistic temperments and rifles are the main requirements for this type of warfare and the Arabs have a good supply of both.

"The British Government seriously expects a violent reaction if this kind of attempt is made to impose a Palestine solution unfavorably to the Arabs. The British also expect such a rising would imperil not only British forces and Palestine Jews but the 400,000 Jews scattered throughout the surrounding Arab states. The Jews still insist that the danger of a major Jewish-Arab clash has been exaggerated by the British. But if it should come about, they are fairly confident that on their own they could meet any Arab threat in Palestine itself, but admit it would be impossible for a Jewish army in Palestine to defend those Jews in Arab states. However, Hall's view is that a well-trained, comparatively well-equipped Jewish army could probably score initial successes that would be worn down in the end by Arab guerilla tactics.

Thus to the question "Can the League lead a war against the Jews without outside help?" the short answer seems to be yes. However, it is probably that help will be given discreetly by the Russians in the same way as Germany and Italy supplied arms and money to the Arabs in the 1936-39 revolt. The Arabs would not be likely to solicit such help, as the ruling classes are aware of the danger of becoming committed to Soviet Russia. The Arabs say that violence will be directed primarily at the British, who they believe will not do anything unless they are forced to it. On the principle that the wheel which makes the most noise gets the most grease they say there will be trouble "not only in Palestine but also elsewhere" -- presumably a threat to interfere with British oil supplies.

While admitting that a sporadic outburst against the Jews might develop, they say they would as a matter of policy avoid anything like a "holy war" or organized pogroms against the Jews, which they realize would be most likely to bring strong foreign intervention, particularly from America. They truly realize that their violent efforts would be much better employed raising such hell with the British that they will be induced to change their Palestine policy to the Arab's benefit. Any plans for the further 100,000 Jews into Palestine or to federate the country in a way contrary to Arab wishes would meet with a "violent" Arab reaction, according to the British official view, though British Zionists like Barnett Janner, Labor M.P., doubt this.

The British Government seems fully determined not to face the risk of an Arab revolt upsetting their strategical position in the Middle East and interfering with the oil supply. This oil, important to the U.S., is vital to Britain. As one British official puts it: "Without this oil, Britain's economic machine would tend to freeze up." Already Britain is worried about her supply of coal to fuel her industrial machines. Any serious interference with her oil supplies would be fatal to her campaign of economic recovery, and the latest movement of British troops to Basra to safeguard the Angl-Iranian Oil Company's Abadan properties points up the importance attached to oil. The British Government feels that it simply cannot afford to take a chance on this point and the policy is therefore directed towards coming to an understanding with the Arabs.

The British Cabinet has therefore to take into account that there are only 11-12 million Jews scattered throughout the world, while the Arabs form a fairly solid block of 60-65 millions within the world Moslem community of 250-350 millions. If they have to choose between the two, Britain feels bound to favor the Arabs. He reasoned further that the Middle East is predominantly Arab and will remain so even if the Jews are able to achieve their full aims in Palestine. The Jewish community is merely a thorn in our flesh, and British politicians argue that they cannot possibly produce a calm -- and productive -- Middle East if they drive the thorn any deeper into flesh. Within the Cabinet there are minor differences as to ways and means but this is the broad policy -- there is a general agreement.

You are broadly right in assuming that the Arab world is not politically conscious, that the major unifying force behind the League is the Palestine question. There are, however, stirrings of political consciousness among the oppressed classes and intelligentsia of these feudal countries, still fairly vague and generally backward, but such stirrings have as yet not gone far enough to be an important political factor.

On the question of political ambitions: The political ambition of King Farouk is to make Egypt the leader of the Arab League. By his balance-of-power tactics he has already succeeded to some extent in this. In regard to the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan question, he also seems avid for Egyptian prestige -- prestige even more than real power. It is said he might be quite content to let the present British administra-

tion carry on in Sudan as before if only they would formally acknowledge Egyptian sovereignty.

The Emir of Trans-Jordan would dearly like to be king of Syria and even possibly Lebanon and an Arab Palestine. By a close alliance with his nephew, the young King of Iraq, he would hope to complete a strong Hashamite block against the house of Saud. King Ibn Saud, although a kind of legendary tribal chief, has not much political influence in the councils of the Arab League. The British Government, I understand, has been paying him a subsidy for some time, as a kind of "hush money" to keep things quiet for the British in his end of Arabia. He does not appear to have any particular political ambition except perhaps to embarrass the Hashamite dynasty by harboring Rashid Ali. Presumably when the time is right he might try to put Rashid Ali on the Iraq throne.

The Mufti's ambitions are thought here to be centered on becoming head of an independent Arab Palestine. He has tremendous influence, particularly among the peasants of Palestine.

Further oil details:

Palestine ties into the oil question in two ways:

1) The pipeline from Kirkuk (Iraq) field terminates at Haifa (the second branch of the pipeline terminates at Tripoli, north of Haifa. Tripoli, however, is regarded as an inferior port to Haifa). This oil terminal on the Mediterranean is regarded by the British Cabinet as a "great convenience" -- to say the least. In peacetime it means no more than a tremendous convenience and saver of time and money for the ships of all nations that pick up this oil. In wartime, however, its ready availability is a priceless asset to a belligerent whose ships are able to use the Mediterranean. The whole deployment of sea, air and land forces may be greatly affected by this one factor.

2) Palestine is regarded by the British Government as a fuse that may set off an Arab uprising, jeopardizing oil fields in many parts of the Middle East, as when discussing even an apparently localized issue such as illegal immigration into Palestine, the Cabinet has an eye cocked to the possible affect of its decisions on the distant oil field of Kirkuk, of Abadan, or Arabia. The importance of Aqeba is generally discounted here. This is said to be a small fishing village difficult to develop into a great port or military base because of the difficulty of access by road or rail. I understand that it is hemmed in by hills and a main road from port to railhead at Ma'an is steep, narrow, winding and generally unsuitable for heavy military traffic. Doubtless this might be improved, but only at great cost and effort. When it appeared that Rommel was going to break right through to Alexandria, I am told that plans were put in hand to develop Aqeba as a possible alternative base, but these plans were allowed to lapse after the Germans were turned back at El Alamein. Kollek assures me that since then there has been virtually no development in this site as a possible base. On the other hand there are great evidences of military and airforce construction around Gaza. This will, it is believed, become the main British Mediterranean army and air base quarters, Middle East, probably established near Ramleh. There is evidence, he says, that Haifa is being developed as a naval base and it is thought that some of the recent naval operations at Haifa, ostensibly against immigrant ships, were really connected with strengthening of the port as a regular naval base.

The British Government being apparently committed to quitting Egypt, it is difficult to see where else but in Palestine suitable sea, air and land bases guarding the Suez Canal, best could be established.

Evidence of Russian expansionist pressure in the Middle East is of course to be found in:

- 1) Intervention in Azerbaijan pressure on Iranian Government brought to notice of United Nations.
- 2) Tudeh Party, which British blame for fomenting strikes in Anglo-Iranian Oil Company's Abadan oil fields.
- 3) The recent Russian note to Turkey re the Dardanelles.

Russia's main tactics in the Middle East are propaganda appeals to minorities of all kinds. Currently the main efforts are said to be concentrated on Lebanon and Egypt. But the most successful Russian effort in this direction has been with the Kurds, to whom Russia is said to be supplying arms -- and propaganda -- and who have already acted as a sort of 5th column for the Soviets in Persia and Azerbaijan. There are rumors that a Kurdish army is now being trained in Azerbaijan, ready to march across the border to help their oppressed fellow Kurds and incidentally to take over oil fields in northern Iraq.

At the American Embassy here I picked up a story (which I have not yet been able to confirm) that Turkish authorities used agents provocateurs to break up subversive activity among the Kurds of Turkey about six months ago. These Turkish Government agents posed as Russian representatives, thereby locating Kurd ringleaders, who were then rounded up. Armenians, Circassians and even Greek Orthodox are other minorities on which Russian efforts, propaganda, etc., are lavished.

The sometime councillor at the Russian Legation in Cairo was Sultanov, a Russian Moslem. On Fridays, it is said, he regularly accompanied the king to the mosque, where the rest of the diplomatic corps could not follow because they were not Moslems. Despite his unique position, the view at the Foreign Office is that Sultanov made little or no headway with the king, who is regarded as strongly anti-Communist. As a form of political blackmail, ruling class Arabs may perhaps give the appearance of flirting with Russia. But even if some might accept Russian bribes, it is thought that in a showdown they would doublecross Russia simply because the Soviet regime is the last thing they want to see established in the Middle East.

The large, poverty-stricken industrial population of Egypt is now being subjected to a certain amount of Communist propaganda. But because of the prevalent illiteracy, pamphlets are of little use and slower methods of personal contact are being used instead. Indications are that these Communist efforts have not yet had a very marked effect. The Russian Legation, intent on winning over elements of the ruling class, has been careful to have no ostensible connection with these local Communist efforts.

Russian methods in Iran seem to provide the classic pattern probably to be followed in any other Middle Eastern country where ineffective government leaves a military or political vacuum: Russian propaganda makes a two-fold appeal:

- 1) To some particular oppressed minority like the Kurds
- 2) The general mass of poor, improvement of whose standard of living is probably long overdue.

Russian forces hold themselves in readiness to accept an invitation to intervene once the door has been unbolted from the inside. They then enter the country as liberators of the oppressed.

The British Cabinet seems convinced that Russian policy is to stir up as much trouble as possible for the British on the broad assumption that anything the British lose will probably fall into the Russian lap. The apparent case with which the Jews can pass through the iron curtain on their way to Palestine is a case in point. There is a thinly veiled conviction here that Russia permits it if it does not actually encourage this mass migration, knowing full well that it will add to Britain's headaches.

EE:rke



C
O
P
Y

C
O
P
Y

THE JEWISH AGENCY FOR PALESTINE
2210 Massachusetts Ave. NW
Washington 8, D. C.

October 25, 1946

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver
American Zionist Emergency Council
342 Madison Ave.
New York 17, N. Y.

Dear Dr. Silver:

Just a few remarks regarding the excellent statement of the Emergency Council on Ibn Saud. Ibn Rashid, who is mentioned in the statement, was not of the Nejd, but of Shammar. At the time of the attack on Ibn Rashid, Ibn Saud was himself the ruler of the Nejd. Another point is the reference to the amputation of arms or legs as "a characteristic form of punishment" in Saudi Arabia. It might be well enough to mention arms only, which is a punishment for thieves in accord with Quranic law. These little inaccuracies, when read by specialists on the subject, tend to make a rather unfavorable impression and mar the effectiveness of the points which are well taken.

As I have mentioned before, I shall be glad to assist in preparing statements dealing with Arab matters before they are issued.

Very sincerely yours,

EE:rke

Elishu Epstein

CABLE ADDRESS
JEWAGENCY

הסוכנות היהודית לארץ ישראל

The Jewish Agency for Palestine

2210 Massachusetts Ave., N. W.
WASHINGTON 8, D. C.
ADAMS 5411

November 11, 1946

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver
19810 Shaker Boulevard
Shaker Heights, Cleveland, Ohio

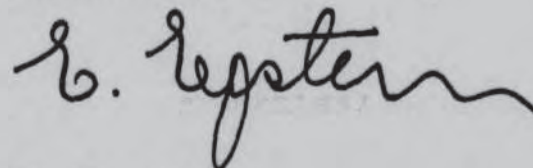
Dear Dr. Silver:-

Thank you very much for your kind letter of November 5th. I was very sorry indeed that there was no chance for me to spend some time with you when we were in Atlantic City for the Z.O.A. Convention, but you were so busy that I did not even attempt to do so and decided to postpone our talk for another suitable opportunity.

I am enclosing a copy of my confidential memorandum on the recent anti-Zionist activities of the oil companies. The information contained in my memorandum is completely reliable and calls for immediate action. May I suggest that you call an urgent meeting of the group of our friends connected with oil companies whom you organized some time ago and mobilize them for immediate action to counteract the machinations of ARAMCO and other oil companies?

With kind personal regards,

Yours sincerely,



Eliahu Epstein

EE/rm

200 Liber

CONFIDENTIAL

Members of the Committee of Eight

November 19, 1946

Eliahu Epstein

Attached is a copy of a confidential report by
Major Aubrey Eban, Director of Information and Middle East Departments
in our office in London, of his conversation with Mr. Howe, Head of
Middle East Department of the Foreign Office, on November 8, 1946.



RE:rke

Attachment, - 1

FOI Dr. G. Volsmann.
Political Committee - London. (Mr. Linton)
Mr. Eliezer Ben-Zion - Washington.
Executive of the Jewish Agency - Jerusalem.

From: Major A. S. Thompson - Jewish Agency, London. (Information and Middle East Departments).

.....

CONVERSATION WITH MR. H. G. HOWE, HEAD OF MIDDLE EAST DEPARTMENT
OF THE FOREIGN OFFICE ON 6th November, 1946.

I spent an hour with Mr. Howe at his invitation at the Foreign Office.
 Mr. Dooley was present for most of the time.

Mr. Howe explained that his function at the Foreign Office was the overall supervision of Near Eastern affairs, while Mr. Dooley confined his specialised attention to the Palestine question.

After personal exchanges, he asked me to interpret the results of the Congress elections. I said that there were on the whole a vote of confidence in the present Executive and in the proposal for a viable Jewish State in an adequate area of Palestine. At the same time, the militant extremists who were the opponents of the Executive had benefited from the tension and bitterness existing in America and achieved a substantial representation. This was not alarming in its present state, but would, of course, increase if there were another period of non-immigration and repression. Mr. Dooley intervened to ask whether Dr. Silver's success in Palestine did not alter my general picture of support for the Executive and acceptance of the Jewish State in part of Palestine? I replied that it was not to be expected that the entire American Delegation would echo Dr. Silver's recent speeches, but the viable State project would have an assured success at Congress if it could be reported there that H. M. Government had a positive interest in it. I thought this last condition was crucial for the success of the plan, both in Jewish and in Arab circles.

We turned to a discussion of Arab-Jewish relations, and Mr. Howe asked me for my views. I proceeded to analyse the three plans "on the table" from the particular viewpoint of this relationship. The Morrison plan of Federal Autonomy failed in three respects, which could be defined under the headings Finality, Independence and Peace. It prolonged the uncertainty about Palestine's political future, and exposed Great Britain to the effects of that uncertainty. It conferred no measure of independence on either Arabs or Jews and, therefore, held no inducement to either, and as a corollary it could not produce peace or bring Arabs and Jews together on a basis of mutual accord. Mr. Howe questioned whether it was accurate to say that the plan was one of uncertainty, since it was specifically stated that it might lead either to Partition or to an Independent Unitary State. I said that I thought this to be nothing more than a definition of uncertainty. Jews would be uncertain about the prospect of Statehood and, indeed, about the prospects of their immigration from year to year. Arabs would be uncertain that Jewish development was really confined to a framework of visible frontiers and dimensions. Peace would founder on the rock of these uncertainties.

I discussed the second project - Assan Pasha's proposal for a "Unitary Palestinian State", saying that this was little more than the embodiment of the White Paper which, by common consent, had been the primary cause of Palestine's recent disorders. This in itself should be sufficient to condemn it as a measure for producing peace. It was not realistic to expect the Jews, who had assembled in Palestine for the very purpose of developing a specifically national society, to accept the position of individual citizens in an Arab State. Under Assan's proposal, the Jews in Palestine would be exactly similar to the Jews of Cairo, Baghdad or Damascus. The Vichay had a different conception of its mission and destiny. It may be that this conception was wrong-headed, and that the status of the Jews in Cairo, Baghdad or Damascus represented a higher vision than the desire to restore the Jews as a nation amongst the nations of the world. At any rate, the two visions were quite distinct and irreconcilable, and the national character of Jewish settlement in Palestine could not peacefully be suppressed. The illusion of peace could be produced by violent suppression, but it would be the peace of an acquiescent volcano, which was a peace that passed without understanding. Mr. Howe laughed appreciably at the reference to Jews in Baghdad, Cairo and Damascus with their higher vision, but Mr. Dooley intervened to ask me if I would not agree that the Morrison plan, and even the Arab counter-proposal, offered the Jews something more than individual citizenship. I replied that the point was that they offered them something far less than national

independence, or the prospect of it. Relationships between Jews and Arabs under Assan's proposal would be that of a more powerful Sudetenland and a weaker Czechoslovakia. The writ of the Government would not run in the Jewish community, and a disgruntled Yishuv would be a factor of discord in the Middle East.

We turned to discuss the third plan, that of a viable Jewish State in an adequate area of Palestine. I pointed out that its chief virtue lay in its potential effect on Arab-Jewish relations. It possessed the three requisites which the Morrison plan lacked - Finality, Independence and Peace. To the Jews the inducement of finality was that it released them from the necessity of being a perpetual pressure group, and laid the opportunities of national restoration into their hands, albeit on a much smaller scale than had been promised them in 1917. For the Arabs the inducement of finality was if anything more vital. Every Arab, to whom I had spoken, and I had spoken to many during the last six years, ended by saying that he wished to see Zionism confined to an area within which it could operate freely, but beyond which it could not expand. The viable Jewish State proposal gave precisely that assurance, and it was objectively impossible, therefore, that it could fail to secure Arab acquiescence. Mr. Howe said that he was glad to hear me agreeing that Arab fears of Zionist expansion were real. I said that a fear could be groundless yet genuinely and sincerely felt, and that the Zionist policy to-day took this fear into account and tried sincerely to meet it. Mr. Beeley said that most Arabs of his acquaintance disbelieved this point about finality in the conviction that Jews would accept part of Palestine with reservations of irredentism about the remainder. I suggested that he could reassure his Arab friends on three grounds. Firstly, the objective conditions for Jewish irredentism no longer existed. Now that the population pressure from Europe was so tragically reduced, it could not longer be assumed that if one to two million Jews were accommodated in a Jewish State there would be masses of others clamouring at the gates. Secondly, if U.N.O., Great Britain, the United States and the Arab League could not jointly or severally provide the frontier guarantee, the outlook of international politics was hopeless indeed. Thirdly, the Arab States themselves had sufficient strength and influence to dispose of the idea that an agreed boundary could be set aside by the Jews at will. Mr. Beeley said that the second argument would carry no weight with the Arabs, though the first and third might. I said that I regretted this token of Arab contempt for the strength and sincerity of international opinion. I had spoken to Egyptian and Syrian delegates to the U.N.O. Assembly, and they had a more sanguine view. Passing from a discussion of finality, I pointed out that the viable State proposal had the virtue of independence; apart from giving formal recognition of Jewish nationhood it conferred immediate independence and freedom to join the Arab League upon at least 700,000 Palestinian Arabs. It was an important extension of Arab Sovereignty, more significant, for example, than that involved in the recent granting of Transjordan independence. Finally, because it offered such powerful inducements to both sides this project carried within it the seed of peace. The Arab world had much to gain from the conversion of Jewry into a factor of harmony in the Middle East. A Jewish State would certainly enter any regional institutions that were established for concerting the social and economic policies in the Middle East within a coherent pattern. Mr. Howe asked me whether I was not committing my associates too far. I replied that I had had conversations with both Dr. Weismann and Mr. Ben-Gurion on this point recently, and was convinced that they would support this commitment.

In further discussion, I elaborated the idea of a Middle Eastern League uniting all states and nationalities in that area together with the states representing the Arab League. Mr. Beeley said that the Iraqi Government for one would not look kindly on an attempt to give regional representation to one of its own minority communities. I said that the Arab League would be well advised to devote graver concern to the problems of minority nationalities. These would have to be either suppressed or expressed. Suppression would bring about intermittent disorder, would undermine the pattern of unity in the Middle East, and would be a permanent invitation to foreign powers to intervene in the Middle East. If minority nationalities received no satisfaction of their national aims within the framework of the Arab League and British influence they would look elsewhere for satisfaction. Mr. Howe asked what I meant by "elsewhere". I replied "Northward across the mountains or westward across the seas." What I meant by the first alternative was illustrated by recent events in Persia and Turkey; what I meant by the latter was illustrated by current developments in the United States. The viable State project would remove Palestine from these great power manoeuvres. A Middle Eastern League, reflecting the ethnic diversity of the area and expressing it in constitutional terms, would remove all incentive for discordant power politics throughout the whole area. Mr. Howe said that the idea of a Middle Eastern League was for him a new and original conception, which he would like me to elaborate in writing.

Mr. Howe asked whether it could now be taken for granted that the Jews would come to the Conference to put these interesting proposals forward. I said that if the conditions for Jewish participation had been created before the postponement of the Conference the answer would be an unqualified affirmative. Now, however, the verdict must await the decision of Congress. I personally thought and hoped that a Jewish Delegation would come, but that it would be strictly held to certain commitments in advance. Mr. Bealey said, "Do you mean that there is still some doubt in the matter, and if so why?" I said that the motive of Jewish hesitation was the belief that H.M.G. was not prepared to give a fair chance to the only plan which had a chance of solving the problem, and was firmly wedded to the idea of the Morrison plan as the final and ulterior wisdom."

This brought me to the crux of the conversation. We were guessing about the motives of H.M.G. opposition to a plan which commanded so wide a support and acquiescence amongst all parties concerned. There was an idea that considerations of strategy lay at the bottom of this attitude. If so, we thought it was bad strategy. Could we not be told at this stage what the real grounds of H.M.G.'s objections were? For then we might either meet those objections or come to see their wisdom. I thought that a confidential statement of the Government's reasons for not favouring the Partition plan would be the most valuable step at the present juncture in solving the deadlock. There was an awkward silence at this point and the exchange of significant looks, and Mr. Howe said, "You should remove from your mind and those of your associates any idea that our hearts are closed against your proposal. At the moment there is a feeling here that the Morrison plan is the most logical next step to take, and that it does not prejudice the ultimate future in any way." He had seen no evidence of a contention that I had previously made that Partition had any prospect of Arab acquiescence. Had I not read statements of the Arab Delegates at Lancaster House? I said that those statements could have been foreseen in advance. If a public Conference were called in which Arab Delegates were exposed to the pressures of opinion at home they would obviously do nothing but assert their maximal demands. This was inherent in the very nature of the public Conference, and this was one of the reasons why we believed that ordinary diplomatic discussions with no pomp, ceremony or publicity would have been a better procedure from the start. Mr. Howe said that the Arabs would not even look at this scheme on its merits, because it was a Jewish-Zionist scheme. I said that I agreed most fervently with this remark. It was for this reason that we urged that it should be presented by Great Britain and the United States together. This was not a method of dressing up a Jewish proposal in false clothing. The Plan really was a British Plan, proposed by a British Royal Commission, and accepted at the time by H.M.G. We had merely given new consideration to this British Plan and declared it to be appropriate to the present circumstances. Our own contacts convinced us that if the Plan were presented in this way, it would have a substantial chance of influential Arab support. Mr. Bealey said that we could probably get them to agree to a Jewish State along the coastal plain. I said that once we reached the stage of discussing frontiers great progress would have been made. We would convince them that their fears about Jewish irredentism could only be dispelled by the Jewish State having an adequate area in which to be viable. Mr. Howe asked why I thought a State was necessary to enable the Jews to develop their specific national culture. I said that a nation's culture included not only literature and art, but also its political institutions, its conceptions of economic organisation, and its particular idea of social relationships.

I received the impression that Mr. Howe was by no means favourable to our cause, and that many echoes from Devin's speeches could be traced to him. I also had the impression that he was to-day having his first fundamental discussion of the Zionist viewpoint. He asked me to keep in touch with his Department every three or four weeks, and to come again in about three weeks' time. I thanked him and said that one of our major frustrations, which had had bad effects in Palestine, was the feeling that our views had no access to places where policy was formulated. Would it not, therefore, be fair and helpful if I could have this same discussion with others amongst his colleagues? He said that he certainly agreed to this, and I should make arrangements with Mr. Bealey.

On the way out, Mr. Bealey questioned me about Dr. Weismann's intentions. I said that his health difficulties were very real, but that if there seemed to be a chance of carrying our proposals through he would probably continue to give direction and assistance.

הסוכנות היהודית לארץ ישראל

The Jewish Agency in Palestine

MEMORANDUM

January 17, 1947

To: **Members of the Executive**

From: **Eliahn Epstein**

Pursuant to the request of Dr. B. Akzin, attached is copy of his letter regarding the conversation I had with Mr. Ley Henderson about an American observer to participate in the informal talks in London between the Jewish Agency and the British Government.

ee/nf
encl

0
0
P
Y

AMERICAN ZIONIST EMERGENCY COUNCIL

Washington Bureau
1706 G Street, N.W.
Executive 1060

January 16, 1947

Mr. Eliahu Epstein
Jewish Agency for Palestine
2210 Massachusetts Ave. N.W.
Washington, D. C.

Dear Epstein:

I thank you for the copies of your reports No. 1 and 2 of January 15.

I notice that in your report No. 2 you mentioned that Mr. Henderson brought your attention to a request which he received from me for an American observer to participate in the informal talks in London. This is certainly a misunderstanding. At no time did I request anything of the sort.

The question of an American observer at the London Conference came up in my conversation with Mr. Henderson on December 3, 1946, at which time, of course, no one thought of any informal talks in lieu of the London Conference. I asked him whether he had any further information in regard to Secretary Byrnes' announcement that he would send an observer to the London Conference if all parties participate. I also asked whether, if and when the Jews agreed to participate, thought was being given to the choice of an observer who, by his personality and knowledge of the subject, would be really in a position to press the British to agree to the President's announced policy, and whether, in view of experiences in the past, it might not be possible to give the Jews an opportunity to be consulted before a decision as to the identity of the observer is reached. Mr. Henderson replied that he will take up this question with the Secretary.

The point again came up in my talk with other members of the Near Eastern Division on December 10, in the same sense. On both occasions I made it most emphatic that I was interested in the question only in connection with the London Conference, if and when the Jewish Agency decides to take part in it.

The question never came up again in any talks which I had with anyone in the Department of State until January 13, at which time Mr. Henderson told me that the Secretary did not intend to send an observer to the London Conference unless the Jews participated in it officially and that the question whether we should be given an opportunity to be consulted about the identity of the observer would be taken up at that time. I thanked Mr. Henderson for this information, and that was all.

I would be grateful if you would send copies of this letter of mine to the recipients of your original report. If you wish, you may show this letter to Mr. Henderson, who will undoubtedly confirm the picture given by me.

Sincerely yours,
(SIGNED) B. AKSIN

Benjamin Aksin.

BA:ME

January 21, 1947.

Members of the Executive of the Jewish Agency for Palestine

Elihu Epstein

Attached are memoranda on Mr. Shartek's interviews with Under-Secretary of State Dean Acheson and the Director of Near Eastern and African Affairs of the State Department, Mr. Loy Henderson on January 15th and 16th respectively.

Members of the Executive of the Jewish Agency for Palestine

M. Shertok

SUBJECT : INTERVIEW WITH UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE DEAN ACHESON ON JANUARY 15, 1947

I called on the Under-Secretary by appointment, together with Mr. Epstein. Mr. Wilkins, in charge of the Palestine Desk in the Near Eastern Division, was also present.

Mr. Acheson greeted me cordially. I said that I was deeply conscious of the responsibility placed on me as representative of the Jewish Agency for Palestine in Washington. It was to me a thrilling and somewhat bewildering prospect to survey the Palestine scene from this political pinnacle of the world and I was not sure whether my eyesight would prove match to the distance. Mr. Acheson said that he felt sure I would find it most confusing. I said that I hoped to find it instructive and edifying.

Passing on to my main subject, I said that in all probability there would be some talks between the British Government and ourselves toward the end of January; that actually the talks had already started, as some of my colleagues had seen the Colonial Secretary and discussed the situation with him. I explained that it was not yet quite clear whether the talks that had started and would continue were to serve as a preliminary stage leading up to our attending the Palestine Conference, or whether it would be a self-contained opportunity to clear up the position. Whichever form our negotiations were to take, it was obvious that we were approaching a decisive stage in our relations with the British Government. Some decision would soon have to be taken regarding the future of Palestine and we felt that at long last the British Government was impressed with the urgency of the problem and would not delay the decision much longer. I told the Under-Secretary that I felt sure that we were fully aware of what was at stake as far as we were concerned; that our Executive had taken a bold step in tentatively throwing out a proposal for a compromise solution; that it was a terribly painful thing for us to envisage the cutting up of the body of our country, particularly for those of us who had grown up in it and had become accustomed to seeing it as one physical unit, small as it was. Nevertheless, we were prepared to be realistic and suffer a certain loss of territory, provided it was within reasonable bounds and was the price which we had to pay for the immediate achievement of Statehood. The crux of the matter were the size and configuration of the area which would be set aside for the Jewish State. We felt that we were on the threshold of a great historic opportunity but that the dangers we were facing were equally great. What we would lose now, might not be retrieved for generations to come, if at all. We had been extremely fortunate in having had on our side, through

all the recent vicissitudes, the active and sympathetic interest of the U.S. Government. We hoped very much that that interest would be sustained. If the talks which had just started were to go in the right direction, we felt that it was essential that the friendly influence of the American Government should be brought to bear on them.

I went on to explain that the questions which we would have to elucidate in the course of our talks with the British Government were, first, whether they were prepared to concede the principle of the Jewish State; secondly, whether the area in which they were prepared to see the Jewish State established would be such as might prove acceptable to us; and thirdly, whether they were ready to introduce immediate changes in their immigration policy such as would enable us to embark upon a large-scale program of immigration and settlement without delay. I stressed the particular urgency of the last point, both on humanitarian grounds, in view of the critical condition of our people in Europe, and as a measure designed to produce a substantial Jewish majority within the State to be established. I added that as regards American influence, it was immaterial whether our present talks in London would be merely exploratory, with a view towards finding out whether conditions had been created enabling us formally to attend the Palestine Conference or whether these discussions would go to the core of the problem. In the first instance, American assistance would help to produce those changes of policy without which our attendance at the London Conference was impossible; in the second instance, it would be a direct contribution to the attainment of a favorable solution, without which contribution things might go wrong. Should the offer of the British Government prove unacceptable, Palestine would again be plunged into a state of unrest and instability. It was not easy, I said, for us always to have to come and plead for outside help. We wished to God that this dire necessity were spared to us, but although it was a little difficult for people so directly and vitally concerned as we were to take a detached view of the problem, we firmly believed that it was an international problem in the widest possible sense of the term and that upon its constructive solution depended the prosperity, peace and stability not only of Palestine and the Jewish people but of much wider spheres.

Mr. Acheson said that this was undoubtedly so. He considered, however, that the British Government was already fully aware of the American attitude on the problem. There had been long and exhaustive talks between Mr. Byrnes and Mr. Bevin during the latter's stay in America in which the subject had been fully thrashed out. Dr. Silver had also seen Mr. Bevin during that period and he had also had a conversation with Mr. Byrnes, so he knew exactly how things stood. The American Government did not feel that any further intervention on their part was called for at this stage. They felt convinced that the British Government was sincerely anxious to find the right solution and they did not think that a further approach on their part was necessary. Many statements had been made in the past and repetition was superfluous.

Mr. Epstein interposed that what was now intended was not in the nature of any public statement but merely an internal approach. Mr. Acheson again indicated that this was not considered necessary or possible.

I said that in entering into our negotiations with the British Government we were, of course, taking our own risks and acting in discharge of our responsibility. We had hoped, however, that in so doing we might be carrying with us the active and friendly support of the American Government. It would take a very great effort to dislodge the British Government from their present position into which they had managed to maneuver themselves as a result of Arab pressure and the fears, real or imaginary, of Arab opposition. I doubted whether the power of our persuasion alone would suffice. So long as the British approach to the solution of the problem remained governed by the main consideration of keeping Arab opposition at a minimum, it was difficult to see how any constructive solution could be arrived at. In the case of partition, that political principle translated into numerical terms would mean keeping the number of Arabs to be included in a Jewish State at the lowest possible figure; translated into territorial terms, it would mean reducing the area of the Jewish State to the barest minimum. But if the area were too small, the whole project would be defeated and the problem again thrown into the melting pot, with incalculable consequences.

Mr. Acheson said that it was not their impression that the British Government were prepared to yield to Arab pressure regardless of the consequences. They rather seemed to keep an open mind on this aspect of the problem. On the other hand, he pointed out that in any case the British Government were not prepared to impose a solution. Unless an agreed solution was arrived at, their idea was to refer the whole matter to the U.N.

I said that I found it rather difficult to accept as a realistic possibility the readiness of the British Government to withdraw from Palestine. Once they stayed in Palestine they could only do so on the basis of some policy. Unless a new and more acceptable policy were adopted, their present attempt to continue enforcing the policy of the White Paper of 1939 would presumably go on. This would mean trying to impose a solution in the teeth of Jewish resistance.

Mr. Acheson expressed no specific reaction to this point but merely repeated, in general terms, what he had already said about their conviction that the British were sincerely anxious to solve the problem. An attempt on my part to call special attention to the problem of immigration in the interim and involve the oft repeated request of the President in this regard elicited no response. I said that all that remained for me to do was to report to my colleagues the rather negative results of my mission and, after a few weeks, to report to Mr. Acheson what had happened in London. This terminated the conversation.

Members of the Executive of the Jewish Agency for Palestine

M. Shertok

SUBJECT: INTERVIEW WITH MR LOY HENDERSON ON JANUARY 16, 1947

After the exchange of greetings I thanked Mr. Henderson for his and his colleagues' accessibility and helpfulness to Mr. Eliahu Epstein. Mr. Henderson said that they, on their part, were deeply indebted to Mr. Epstein for his assistance. They felt happy about their contacts with the representatives of the Jewish Agency in Washington whom they had found deserving of every confidence.

There ensued a lengthy conversation on Palestine, on Mr. Henderson's reminiscences of the tour of the settlements which he made together with Dr. Leo Kohn, etc. The operative part of the interview was the following:

Mr. Henderson said he had heard from Mr. Dean Acheson about the interview I had had with him the day before. Mr. Acheson had told him that he had seen Secretary Byrnes before receiving me and that thereupon he informed me of the exact position of the State Department in connection with the forthcoming talks in London. Mr. Henderson then proceeded to reassure me that what had been said by Mr. Acheson by no means meant to convey the impression of indifference on the part of the American Government to our problem. On the contrary, their representatives in London were in almost daily contact with the Foreign Office on the question of Palestine and were being kept fully informed of the developments. The British Government was thus daily receiving "a physical and forcible reminder" of the American Government's interest in the matter. He knew that we too were keeping in close touch with the American Embassy in London. At the moment, as Secretary Byrnes had put it, he did not feel it proper for him to "jog at Mr. Bevin's elbow" but in the course of the discussions, if the necessity arose for a renewed approach on the part of the American Government, they would not hesitate to make it.

I thanked Mr. Henderson for this reassurance and repeated to him the fears I expressed to Mr. Acheson regarding the British Government's likely approach to the territorial aspect of the Jewish State problem. Mr. Henderson said the British knew that the U.S. Government wanted the Jewish State to be a viable one. He said he would eagerly be looking forward to the resumption of our contact on my return from London.

CONFIDENTIAL

#8

Jan. 28, 1947

Members of the Executive of the Jewish Agency for Palestine

Eliahu Epstein

SUBJECT:

Conversation with Mr. Edward Wright, Assistant Chief in Charge of the Afghanistan and Iran Desks in the Division of Middle Eastern Affairs of the Department of State, Washington, D.C.

In a recent conversation with Mr. Wright on conditions in the area with which he deals in the Division of Middle Eastern Affairs, he gave me a rather optimistic description of the present situation in Iran subsequent to Russia's withdrawal from Azerbaijan.

He said the fact that the troops of the Central Government of Teheran did not meet with much opposition in their drive through Azerbaijan and that they have, at least temporarily, reunited that province with Iran, indicates that the policy of the Soviet Government was not to object to such a move which, a year ago, might have caused a serious international crisis. In Mr. Wright's opinion this new policy of the Soviet Government indicates, if only for reasons of expediency, the desire to impress both the British and the American Governments that they have no aggressive designs on the Middle East. The fact that no increased pressure has been brought to bear recently on Turkey in connection with the Straits is another indication of Moscow's having adopted, at the moment, a moderate policy in relation to the Middle East.

In reply to my questioning him regarding the reasons behind this policy on the part of the Soviet Government, Mr. Wright gave me the following explanation: First, Moscow knows that unless the United States and Great Britain are convinced of the peaceful intentions of the Soviet Government, there is very little chance for her to share in the control of the atomic bomb. Secondly, the reconstruction of industry in Soviet Russia has proved to be a more difficult and prolonged task than was originally expected. According to information in the possession of the American Government, Russia's full industrial capacity can not be built up in less than ten years. Until that time Russia will not be able to wage war against any first rate Power. Thirdly, the Soviet Government is aware that the conditions for their penetration in the Middle East are not as favorable as first anticipated. The vast majority of the population in Iran resented Tuda's propaganda and domination. This same situation would probably prevail were the the Communist Parties to gain control over the Arab countries.

Mr. Wright went on further to say that this phase of Russian policy in the Middle East should not be interpreted, however, as a complete cessation of Russian propaganda and penetration in the Middle East. There are, for instance, signs of an increase in Soviet propaganda among the Kurds. Mulla Mustapha has recently been seen in the Soviet Zone of Azerbaijan in the uniform of a Soviet general. Also there is evidence of more Russian agents operating among various

youth organizations in Egypt and the Lebanon . With all this in mind, the changed situation in the Middle East created by the withdrawal of the "Fedayis" (the "democratic" troops) from Azerbaijan is a very significant event which cannot be overlooked in its relation to other problems in the Middle East.

Knowing his strong anti-Russian feelings and his sympathy with the Arab Cause, I used this opportunity to develop Mr. Wright's own theory to point up the weakness of the British and some of the American arguments about the Middle East being a danger spot for Soviet penetration - viewed in the light of the attitude of the native populations towards such penetration. We have always maintained, I told Mr. Wright, that the backward, feudal structure of Arab society in the Middle East is not likely to be influenced by or give ground to Soviet propaganda. Here and there there might be dealings between certain leaders and Soviet agents who, for selfish, personal reasons, would play Russia's game, but even Qawan switched over when he felt that his power and prestige would be more advanced by a pro-English and pro-American line than by his previous pro-Soviet line. There is very little chance that not only the Turkish Prime Minister but the Chiefs of State and Heads of Governments in Egypt, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq would or could behave differently. I expressed to Mr. Wright my satisfaction with the fact that the new Soviet policy in the Middle East will at least do away with one of the arguments which has been repeatedly used by our opponents against us - namely, that we are forcing the Arabs into the Russian bloc if Great Britain and America do not satisfy their demands on Palestine.

I believe that it would greatly benefit our cause if we were to start a campaign to make the public in this country and in England aware of the new situation in the Middle East created by the Soviet withdrawal from Azerbaijan. Our propaganda facilities everywhere should be utilized to destroy the Russian bogey which has been continuously, and often successfully, used by our enemies against us. From my own experience here in Washington I can say that in many cases all our arguments in discussing the Palestine situation fall on deaf ears because of the fear of the listener of "what may happen to American interests if the Arabs jumped into Russian arms?". In view of the coming developments in London and possibly in Washington it would look as though now is the moment to undertake a campaign to enlighten the public on this matter.

[January 1947?]

#4
STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Members of the Executive of the Jewish Agency for Palestine

Wliahm Epstein

SUBJECT:

Conversation with Herbert Fierst, Adviser to General John Hildring,
Assistant Secretary of State.

Mr. Herbert Fierst, Adviser to General Hildring on Displaced Persons in the American Zone of Occupied Germany, has helped us on many important occasions in the past and is one of the most reliable friends we have at present in the State Department. It was he who was primarily responsible for the pro-Zionist attitude of General Hildring throughout the critical period of Grady's activities in London and which found expression in checking the unconditional support which these activities enjoyed in the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs of the State Department. Along with Dean Acheson, General Hildring was the main factor influencing the State Department's rejection of the Grady plan and in this way facilitated the parallel efforts of our other friends within and outside the U.S. Government.

The main topic of conversation during today's luncheon with Fierst was the effect upon our situation of General Marshall's appointment as Secretary of State.

Mr. Fierst confirmed the impression that General Hildring will probably be one of General Marshall's closest advisers in the State Department. The association between the two dates back to the early days of the War when Hildring was chosen by Marshall, personally, for the responsible job of Chief of Civil Affairs in the War Department. Hildring's tact and good sense of public relations were in part responsible for General Marshall's success in his post as Chief of Staff. It was upon Marshall's advice that Hildring accepted the post of Assistant Secretary of State, a post in which he combines his capabilities as a professional soldier with those of civil administrator. General Hildring would be glad to be of every assistance whenever approached by us. It is important, however, in Mr. Fierst's opinion, to coordinate his activities with other efforts made more or less simultaneously in order to produce the maximum effect desired by us.

If things follow the normal course of events, there is very little chance that General Marshall will start dealing with the Palestine question before next summer. All his attention, at present, is concentrated on matters pertaining to the coming Moscow Conference of Foreign Ministers. He has already given orders to his subordinates in the State Department to permit as little interference as possible from any other matters no matter how important they may be.

Marshall has always favored the system of decentralization, which was successfully applied by him in the War Department. It is therefore most probable that Dean Acheson will be the person who will bear the actual responsibility in dealing with the Palestine problem and whatever Acheson suggests, Marshall will accept. However, Acheson's position on the question as expressed during the interview with Herbert and I had with him on January 15th does not encourage us to believe that Acheson, on his part, will press Marshall for action in the early future, which may be one of the most crucial and decisive periods when the active intervention of the United States Government may be more urgently required by us than ever.

The routine procedure, in Mr. Pierst's opinion, can be changed only if the President speaks to Marshall and explains to him the general position of the Palestine problem which will require Marshall's special attention. The President can even interest Marshall personally in the problem, if, for instance, he speaks to him as he did before his mission to China which became for Marshall a matter not only of duty but of interest as well. It developed consequently into one of the most comprehensive and constructive assignments Marshall ever dealt with, in spite of the failure to achieve immediate results. There is not the slightest doubt that a favorable word from the President will bear, in the eyes of Marshall, more weight than was usually accorded it in this respect during Byrnes' term of service. While Byrnes had his own views on many international problems and, if not openly contradicting, preferred rather to interpret the President's instructions in his own way, Marshall will carry out the President's instructions literally if properly instructed to do so.

The other man who can influence Marshall is Secretary of War Patterson. They were close friends during the latter part of the War and the fact that Patterson will now meet Marshall every week at the meetings of the Small Cabinet (President, Secretaries of State, War and Navy) will make it possible for Patterson to help us more than anyone other than the President.

Billings will have to come into the picture at the stage when Marshall will be properly instructed by the President and briefed and influenced by Secretary Patterson. Billings's support may be very valuable in explaining to Marshall the problems of the Jewish D.P.'s in the American Zone in Occupied Germany and emphasizing their desire to go to Palestine.

In Pierst's opinion, we should not make any efforts at present to meet Marshall personally but should rather concentrate our attention on the President and Secretary Patterson. Only if and after their support is achieved, should we come to Marshall with some definite proposals. Marshall's interview with people usually start with: "What do you want me to do?". Our reply to this question must find Marshall in a proper state of mind, otherwise he may react to our suggestions unfavorably - a reaction which may be difficult at some later date to change due to the rigidity of his decisions - a military trait, not so strongly marked, however, as in most military leaders.

Following Fierst's advice, Hildring has already put on the list of urgent matters which will be presented by him to Marshall the problem of the Jewish D.P.'s. Hildring is, however, not ready to enter at this moment into a major discussion with the new Secretary to get his consent for some general policies, one of which is the problem of reducing the present ration of food supplied by the American Administration to the Jewish D.P.'s by 200 calories.

Hildring has been negotiating lately with the J.D.C., proposing that they undertake to supply this reduction at their own expense. The Budget difficulties which Hildring's Department anticipates from the new Congress is the main reason for trying to cut the expenditure on these 200 extra calories. When Fierst asked my opinion on this subject I advised him to try to influence his Chief from pressing for the reduction because unless the J.D.C. replies favorably to General Hildring's request (which, in my opinion, is unlikely) trouble may be forthcoming among the Jewish D.P.'s who are already in a desperate need mainly because of the disillusion of not being moved as yet to Palestine. Any trouble now in the American Zone may cause not only increase of tension among the D.P.'s themselves but could also have undesirable political repercussions in this country as far as Jewish interests are concerned.

Fierst promised to consider my advice although there is little hope, according to him, that Hildring would change his mind because of the pressure of the present antagonistic attitude of the Republican majority to every kind of relief work carried on by the American Administration in Europe.

Mr. Fierst informed me further, confidentially, that Mr. George Warren, another assistant to General Hildring on matters connected with D.P.'s, has just returned from Europe where he participated in a Conference initiated by the British and held in Paris, on checking illegal Jewish immigration to Palestine via Marseilles. While the French went along with the British in promising, at least formally, their support in checking every effort to use Marseilles as a port for illegal Jewish immigration to Palestine, Warren refused emphatically to participate in any arrangements suggested by the British, saying that the American Government is responsible only for what goes on in their Zone of Occupation in Germany and they will not collaborate in anything which is outside of that part of Europe.

Mr. Fierst asked me to keep everything he told me most confidential in order to avoid the harm which might result not only to his own position and security, but also to our cause in general. Never before have we been faced with such a responsible and delicate task in the State Department as now with the appointment of General Marshall as Secretary of State and any slip or careless action on our part can cause more harm now than under the former administration of James Byrnes.

I thanked Mr. Fierst for his cooperation and promised that we, on our part, shall do everything to facilitate our future contacts by adhering strictly to his valuable suggestions in this respect.

In conclusion I take the liberty of advising the Chairman and other members of the American branch of the Executive to consider during the forthcoming discussions in the Executive on our immediate political activities in Washington Mr. Fierst's suggestions for approaching and dealing with General Marshall.

Dr Silver

#13 CONFIDENTIAL

February 3, 1947

Members of the Executive of the Jewish Agency for Palestine

Eliahu Epstein

SUBJECT: Conversation with Mr. Arthur Hays Sulzberger, Publisher of THE NEW YORK TIMES

While in Paris on my way back from the Congress, I met Cyrus L. Sulzberger, chief foreign correspondent of THE NEW YORK TIMES, with whom I have been friendly since our first meeting in Ankara in 1941. He suggested that I see his uncle, Arthur H. Sulzberger, upon my arrival in New York and gave me a very warm letter of introduction.

Mr. Arthur H. Sulzberger invited me to lunch with him on January 28th. When I arrived at his office he told me that Mrs. Anne O'Hare McCormick and Mr. Charles Merz, both of the editorial board of the TIMES were to join us at lunch. Mr. Merz is in charge of the editorial page of the paper. Mr. Sulzberger told me that they have a tradition in their office of free and off-the-record conversations at their editorial lunches and said that they would appreciate it if I would briefly review the Palestine situation and afterwards reply to any questions which might come up in the course of the conversation. I gladly accepted Mr. Sulzberger's suggestion, indicating, at the same time, that my coming to see him was in no sense an official visit.

On our way to the dining room, Sulzberger mentioned that I probably had read the negative publicity given to his recent statement about the Jewish State and Jewish nationalism and that there had been a lot of misinterpretations and distortions of what he had said. He went on further to say that although he considers himself a Jew only by faith, he is not the kind of an anti-Zionist that Dr. A. H. Silver and most of the local Zionist leaders are trying to make him out to be. In reply I could only express my satisfaction with his rather apologetic form of explanation.

When asked by Mr. Sulzberger at the end of the luncheon to summarize the current situation in Palestine and to explain our present relations both with the British and the Arabs, I outlined the situation in a few, carefully-worded sentences, leaving plenty of openings for their questions and for their views on the subject.

Mrs. McCormick opened the discussion with a few personal remarks about our friendship, touching on my knowledge and experience of the Arabs and my studies at the American University of Beirut. However, when she turned to the Palestine situation, she expressed herself in the most unfriendly terms I had ever heard from her, although I had already noticed in a previous conversation with her a few months ago a very definite change for the worse in her attitude towards us. She attacked the "double-faced" policy of the Yishuv and the Jewish Agency in their attitude on terrorism. While disassociating themselves publicly from the "gangsters", as she repeatedly called the terrorists, both the Jewish Agency and the other Jewish national institutions in Palestine have done nothing to help the

British in their struggle against terrorism.

The second point of her attack, which she repeated throughout the conversation, was that by supporting the Jewish State, the British will be confronted with such Arab and Moslem opposition as will destroy the foundations of the new Pax Britannica, which is needed for the stability of the world requisite for peace. Furthermore, she said that the Jews would never be satisfied with the partition of Palestine and sooner or later would try to take revenge by attacking the Arab countries.

Both Sulzberger and Merz were definitely impressed by Mrs. McCormick's arguments and waited for my rebuttal. I tried to explain the underlying causes for the success of terrorist methods in Palestine after all the attempts of the Jewish Agency to change the White Paper policy failed to meet the expected response from the British Government. I described the driving forces behind the so-called "illegal" immigration to Palestine and how the Yishuv responded to the deportations of these immigrants to Cyprus. I spoke of what the White Paper policy meant in the field of Jewish land colonization and settlement. I concluded my remarks on this point by pointing out how terrorism threatens the very existence of the Yishuv and Zionism and stressed that policy action alone will not succeed in destroying terrorism; that Jewish Public opinion must be turned against the terrorists - and to effect this requires a change in the fundamental policy of the British Government; that to drive us into a civil war in Palestine at this moment would be vicious and would never result in restoring order in the country.

In discussing the nature of terrorism in Palestine, I said that whatever our attitude toward the terrorists may be, by calling them mere "gangsters" one misinterprets the desperate temper of these young men and women who are ready to sacrifice their lives without hesitation to serve the cause in the way they believe to be right. History provides us with many similar examples in the struggle of other peoples for independence. For us, however, terrorism is more dangerous than for others, saking, as it does, the very foundations of the Zionist movement from the moral, social and political points of view.

Mrs. McCormick interrupted me with some kind of a ~~xit~~ conciliatory remark on this subject, explaining that she entirely agrees with my objective explanation of the matter.

I explained our attitude on relations with the Arabs and the possibilities for future cooperation when the political controversy is settled. I said that the problem of the frontiers of the future Jewish State will be an internationally settled and safeguarded matter. Naturally, the more adequate the frontiers of the future Jewish State, the less dissatisfaction will prevail among the Jewish people and consequently the less chance for possible complications in the future.

Because both Sulzberger and Merz evinced interest in how we plan to build our future relations with the British, I explained our desire to carry on relations with the British in the most amicable way possible. I described our vital interest in living and developing within a democratic framework- which in the Middle East can be better guaranteed by cooperation, in one way or another, with a British Empire in which the progressive and democratic forces are becoming

more dynamic and influential (as evidenced in recent developments between Great Britain and India and Burma and in the field of Colonial Administration since the Labor Department came to power).

Mr. Mers then inquired in a cautious manner about our plans for the social and economic foundations of the Jewish State, and about our future relations with the neighboring Arab countries. Some of my explanations were again interrupted by unfriendly remarks by Mrs. McCormick.

Mr. Sulsberger, who listened attentively to my explanations, then came out with a rather unexpected statement. He said that if there is no other way to solve the Jewish refugee problem in Europe and no other way to stop terrorism and to satisfy the Jews in Palestine but through the establishment of a Jewish State, he doesn't see why this should not be made possible. "Let them have a 'Mogen-David' if they want it on their flag, let them have their own Government, and let them be members of the UN if that is their desire. However, I will remain an American of Jewish faith, as I am." He went on further to say that Dr. Silver's propaganda makes it quite difficult for most Jews to feel comfortable in this country. It furnishes fuel to many anti-Semites and he, Sulsberger, wants to get rid of the present state of confusion once and for all. Mrs. McCormick, obviously displeased with Mr. Sulsberger's statement, said that by supporting the Zionist demand for a Jewish State, it would only make things more difficult and not at all easier, either in Palestine or as it relates to the Jewish problem in this country. She was very bitter on this aspect and at this point reached the climax of her enmity towards our demands in Palestine. Sulsberger, however, became stubborn and did not show a desire to be persuaded by Mrs. McCormick's arguments. He repeated again that if partition is the only possible solution, let it be so, and let all those involved look for the best and most peaceful settlement of the matter as soon as possible.

The conversation was concluded at this point and Mr. Sulsberger asked me to join him for a private talk in his room. He thanked me for the talk which he considered quite enlightening to himself and his associates, and asked me to keep in touch with him and write to him whenever I desired. He also asked me to come to see him sometime again in the near future.

I feel that much of Sulsberger's goodwill can be attributed to his being host. Because I found him more confused and emotional over the Palestine situation than he was informed, I believe that we should intensify our work among the Jewish circles represented by the Sulsbergers, where the feelings of the tension and insecurity are on the increase and can be profitably exploited by the Bergen Group - for the latter adapt themselves with facility to the psychology of these people. The harm resulting to our cause could thus, in certain instances, be turned to our benefit. In view of the growing necessity to intensify our political activities in this country, I submit that the importance of our continuous penetration and informational work in these circles cannot be over-emphasized.

I am attaching a copy of the letter which I sent to Mr. Sulsberger the day after our conversation.

C O P Y

January 29, 1947

Mr. Arthur Hays Sulzberger
New York Times
229 West 43rd Street
New York, New York

Dear Mr. Sulzberger:-

I did not want to return to Washington without sending you a few words to express my warm appreciation of the opportunity which you kindly gave me of meeting with you as well as with Mrs. McCormick and Mr. Herz and of exchanging views on the present situation in regard to Palestine.

I was particularly glad to have heard your frank expression of opinion, and although we may not be in entire agreement, you will permit me to say that I feel that your approach to the problems involved was open-minded and without dogmatism. I was especially impressed by the weight, which, in your concluding remarks at luncheon, you attached to partition as possibly the best solution out of the present impasse.

I shall take advantage of your kind suggestion to keep in touch with you as occasion arises, and I hope that the opportunity may offer itself before long for a further talk.

Please remember me kindly to Cy if you should be writing to him.

Sincerely yours,

Eliahu Epstein

The Jewish Agency in Palestine

MEMORANDUM

February 24, 1947

To: Members of the Executive

FROM: Eliahu Epstein

Enclosed is copy of letter addressed to Professor S. Brodetsky from Professor Ernst Frankenstein.

Professor Brodetsky asked me to circulate the letter among the members of the Executive in the United States who may like to consider Professor Frankenstein's proposals.

ee/mf
encl



C
O
P
Y

THE JEWISH AGENCY FOR PALESTINE

77, Great Russell Street,
London, W.C. 1.

12th February, 1947.

CONFIDENTIAL.

To - THE EXECUTIVE OF THE JEWISH AGENCY.

From - S. BRODETSKY.

I enclose copy of a letter addressed to me by Prof.
Frankenstein, which the Executive might like to consider.

C
O
P
Y

COPY OF LETTER FROM -

ERNST FRANKENSTEIN, DR. JUR.,
48, Kewferry Road,
Northwood, Middx.

28th January, 1947.

A Legal Department of the Jewish Agency.

The Jewish people is a nation in the making, and the Jewish Agency has developed into a kind of semi-Government. But its organisation has not kept pace with the growth of its responsibilities.

Every Government, every Foreign Office, even of the smallest State, have their Legal Department. For international relations have become so complicated that almost every political move has its legal implications. The more the world has become lawless the more the States, especially the small countries, try to strengthen their legal defences.

This part of our task has, so far been neglected. For the last 30 years, our national development has been depending more than that of every other people, on the fulfilment of definite international obligations. Yet, no proper machinery has been created for dealing with these problems, and our official pronouncements, as far as the legal aspect is concerned, have been sadly inadequate.

We can no longer afford to maintain this attitude. If, in face of the general lawlessness, even the mightiest States use legal arguments and technicalities for pursuing their political aims, a weak people is still less justified in renouncing this weapon.

The present crisis confronts us with dangers and possibilities. We must be prepared to meet them both. There may be a return to the (more or less changed) Mandate or a Trusteeship or an administrative or political partition with or without Jewish statehood; there may be other schemes. We cannot wait until the day when we are presented with some draft and find ourselves unable to examine it, in the allotted time, under every aspect. We must work on the lines of Government Legal Departments, and prepare, if not complete plans, at least detailed claims and safeguards for a number of possible solutions.

At the same time we must create the necessary machinery for dealing with every emergency. It should consist of a small central office and a panel of voluntary collaborators in various countries. For this type of work demands the co-operation of several outstanding lawyers who may bring new solutions to a given problem.

To this end the London Executive should set up a Legal Department. It is necessary to have it in London as, in all probability, the decisive negotiations will take place here, and the most important legal work will in future be done in London. The Department should be headed by a man of international standing who is able to secure the co-operation of prominent lawyers in other countries. The routine work should be done by a legally trained secretary.

It is not necessary to stress the urgency of the matter. Steps should be taken immediately.

(Signed) Ernst Frankenstein.

March 6, 1947

His Excellency
The British Ambassador
Washington, D. C.

Your Excellency:

I am directed by the Executive of the Jewish Agency for Palestine in America to address you with reference to the following:

In connection with the forthcoming meeting in Jerusalem of the General Council of the World Zionist Organization, the good offices of the Embassy were sought for the purpose of obtaining the necessary authority from Palestine for the grant of visas to the American members of the Council.

We warmly appreciated the ready help of the Embassy in this connection, but we now learn with deep regret that the Palestine authorities have refused to grant a visa in the case of a member of the General Council, Mr. Aaron Z. Propes. The visa for Mr. Propes has been refused despite the fact that the Jewish Agency here has indicated that it is ready to take full responsibility regarding the visit to and departure from Palestine of Mr. Propes. We are not aware of any previous case where a member of the General Council of the Zionist Organization has been singled out in this way and, in recording our protest against the unwarranted rejection of Mr. Propes' application, we would express the hope that immediate action may yet be taken so as to enable him to attend the meeting.

I should be grateful if you could let me know of any further action in this matter.

I remain,

Faithfully yours,

Eliahu Epstein
Director, Washington Office

ee/mc

The Jewish Agency in Palestine

MEMORANDUM NO. 24

CONFIDENTIAL

March 7, 1947

To: Members of the Executive of the Jewish Agency for Palestine

From: Eliahu Epstein

SUBJECT: Conversation with Mr. Gordon P. Merriam, Chief of the Division of Near Eastern Affairs, Department of State, Washington, D. C.

Acting on instructions from Mr. M. Shertok, I asked on March 5th for an urgent interview with Mr. Loy W. Henderson to discuss the Palestine situation in the UN. Mr. Henderson was busy and asked me to see Mr. Merriam.

At the beginning of our conversation, I called the attention of Mr. Merriam to the fact that the idea of bringing the Palestine question to the UN did not originate with us. We should, however, be ready to cooperate, on our part, with any effort of Mr. Bevin to try to solve the Palestine problem through the channels of the UN, provided it would help to expedite the solution of the problem and that an interim policy meeting our demands in matters of immigration, land purchase, and colonization would be adopted by the British Government.

In the event that Palestine is brought before the UN, we should like to have the full support of the American Government for safeguarding the rights of the Jewish people and the Jewish Agency, and assurance that any treatment of the problem be as just to Jews as to Arabs.

I went on to say that from information gathered by Mr. Shertok and by our office in New York, we have learned of the possible establishment of a Committee which would prepare the Palestine case for the coming General Assembly of the UN in September of this year. It is our request that this Committee should not include any of the Arab States. The Arab members of the UN are at the same time members of the Arab League, which has a very definite, negative attitude towards Zionism and the Jewish National Home in Palestine. Their presence on the UN Committee would prejudice the proper execution of its terms of reference and would cast doubt on the value of the Committee in the eyes of the Jewish people and the general public interested in a just solution of the Palestine problem. The Jewish Agency, I said, would request the support of the United States Government for authorization to present and to defend its case before the Committee and other institutions of the UN.

Mr. Merriam replied that the American Government, on its own initiative, has already approached the British Government with a suggestion to increase immigration to Palestine. In reply to my question as to whether the figures for such increase had been indicated to the British Government, Mr. Merriam replied in the negative. He informed me that no reply has as yet been received from the British. Mr. Merriam asked me to consider this information as strictly confidential.

March 7, 1947

He went on to say that as yet the British Government had not approached the United States Government with any definite proposal of putting Palestine on the UN agenda. Although the plan of the Committee is known to the State Department, it is very doubtful whether the United States Government will support it as long as the British Government has not presented to the UN any definite plan for the solution of the Palestine problem which could be used as a basis for the Committee's proceedings and inquiries. The State Department, said Mr. Merriam, will probably make a decision on this matter in a day or two. Our views regarding the handling of the Palestine question by the Committee, if constituted, will be taken into consideration by the State Department.

Although Mr. Merriam tried to explain American objection to the Committee primarily on grounds of procedure, I believe that the real reason for such an attitude is the fear of the American Government of further interference by the UN in Middle Eastern affairs at this crucial moment when American decision with regard to her future foreign policy in that part of the world is in creation. In my opinion, the American Government would also prefer to maintain British paramount responsibility with regard to the Palestine problem instead of being forced by circumstances, in the event that the Committee is constituted, to initiate a solution which may bring her in an undesirable conflict, whether with Jews or Arabs.

Again I raised the question of Emir Saud's statement to the Arab press in Cairo. Mr. Merriam told me that after my conversation on this subject with Mr. Henderson (see my Memorandum No. 23 of March 6), the State Department had approached the Saudi Arabian Legation in Washington for inquiries. The Saudi Arabian Minister cabled to Mecca and is awaiting a reply from the King. Mr. Merriam stated that if any newspaper reporter were to contact the Press Division of the State Department with a query on this matter, the State Department would reply that "authoritative sources are not aware of any statement by President Truman made to Emir Saud on Palestine." A more definite statement may be possible after the reply from Mecca.

In conclusion, Mr. Merriam repeated that the State Department will take into consideration our views in connection with the handling of the Palestine question at the UN. He will share our views in this matter with both Mr. Henderson and Mr. Acheson.

Mr. Wilkins was present during the conversation which lasted thirty minutes.

The Jewish Agency in Palestine

MEMORANDUM NO. 25

CONFIDENTIAL

March 7, 1947

TO: Members of the Executive of the Jewish Agency for Palestine

FROM: Eliahu Epstein

SUBJECT: Activities of Peter Bergson in Paris.

Mr. J. P. Benard, First Secretary of the French Embassy in Washington, came to see me on March 3d and, among other things, informed me of Peter Bergson's Paris activities on the basis of reports which he obtained from some of his colleagues who had just arrived here from Paris. Mr. Benard himself had been approached by two members of a delegation sent to this country from Paris, composed of M. M. Rene Capitant and Geste Floret, to act as liaison between the newly established branch of the League for a Free Palestine, in Paris, and Senator Gillette and other associates of Bergson, in the United States.

Bergson apparently has been most successful in gaining the support of many prominent people in France, including Jean Paul Sartre, Paul Eluard, Louis Marin, and others. Bergson was especially eager to obtain the services of Rene Capitant, who opened to him the door into the Gaullist Camp, still important and influential in many respects and still maintaining contacts with influential people in the Government. One of the reasons why he gained the Gaullist support was that the propaganda spread by him in the name of a "National Liberation" movement in the eyes of the Gaullistes, was identified with the nature and name of their own struggle. In his talks, Bergson drew the facile analogy between the Jewish Agency representing the Vichy Government and his League representing the Gaullist Movement. This argument was very appealing to the ignorant and misled Frenchmen, many of whom evinced a sincere desire to help the Zionist Cause.

According to Mr. Benard's information, both Capitant and Floret were advanced large sums of money by Bergson before their departure from Paris and they spent a most luxurious fortnight in this country where they were constantly entertained by Bergson's associates, both in New York and in Washington. They tried to gain the backing, for Bergson, of some of the prominent officials in the French Embassy in Washington and the French Consulate in New York.

In M. Benard's opinion the activities of Bergson in Paris may constitute a serious danger to our movement. Anti-British feelings, especially among the Gaullistes, and terrorist activities in Palestine (which fire the imagination of the French far more than does the official, moderate line of the Jewish Agency) can easily be exploited by Bergson to strengthen his influence and expand his activities in France. Although Bergson is operating primarily among the conservative elements in French political life, whose influence is rather limited as far as the present Government's policies are concerned, nevertheless there are still many ways open for them at least to harm the prestige of the

March 7, 1947

Jewish Agency and to undermine the support which we may need from Paris if the Palestine question is brought to the UN.

According to Mr. Benard, Bergson and his group are becoming increasingly active in different parts of the world--including Latin America--and may soon become a serious threat to the Zionist Movement and a challenge to the authority of the Jewish Agency in many capitals of the world. M. Benard gained this impression from the recent conversations he had with Bergson himself and some of his associates who came to see him (Benard) in connection with various matters.

In conclusion, M. Benard expressed his complete confidence in the Jewish Agency and his appreciation of the help which he constantly receives from this office, and assured me of his desire to help us in every respect through both the Embassy here and his Government in Paris.



The Jewish Agency in Palestine

MEMORANDUM NO. 26

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

March 7, 1947

To: Members of the Executive of the Jewish Agency for Palestine

FROM: Eliahu Epstein

SUBJECT: Conversation with Mr. Arthur Newmyer, Sr., Chief Advisor on Public Relations in Washington to the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey.

I had met Mr. Newmyer on several occasions in the past, having been introduced to him by his close friend, Mr. Edmund I. Kaufmann. I requested an interview with him in connection with the news in the press concerning the joining of the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey with the Arab-American Oil Company (Aramco) in exploiting the oil resources in Saudi Arabia.

Mr. Newmyer received me very cordially. He gave me a detailed and comprehensive picture of the situation as far as his company is concerned. Final conclusions of the negotiations between the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey and Aramco have been handicapped by the French, who claimed a share in Saudi Arabian oil--their claims being based on an agreement made between the six partners, including the French, of the Iraq Petroleum Company. This agreement provided that in case one of the partners undertook any new oil venture in the Middle East, all of the others should automatically have a share in these interests. However, the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey does not have any desire to bring the French into Saudi Arabia, not only for financial reasons but for political reasons as well, because the present instability of the French political scene could cause serious repercussions to the position of the oil companies in Saudi Arabia should France turn Communist. After long negotiations the French finally agreed to settle for sufficient oil from Saudi Arabia to cover her fuel requirements, at a reasonable price, and Mr. Newmyer expected a formal agreement to be signed within the course of a few weeks. He showed me a memorandum prepared for release as soon as the agreement is signed.

The Standard Oil Company of New Jersey will share 30% of the Aramco interests in Saudi Arabia. As a matter of fact, the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey would prefer not to be a party to Aramco at all; they would be satisfied with having the rights to sell at least a part of the Saudi Arabian oil in Europe, which is their most important market next to America. The Standard Oil Company of California and the Texas Oil Companies have insisted, however, that Standard Oil Company of New Jersey come in on an equal membership footing and carry all the responsibilities and obligations involved in the Saudi Arabian enterprise.

While discussing this subject, Mr. Newmyer showed me the minutes of a conversation that Mr. Golman, Director of the Board of the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, had with Senator O'Mahoney, Chairman of the Special Committee of the Senate to Investigate Petroleum Resources. In this conversation Mr. Golman interpreted the desire of the Standard Oil Company of California and

March 7, 1947

the Texas Oil Company to bring the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey into partnership as being primarily not for financial reasons but to strengthen the position of Aramco where affected by the Jewish-Arab controversy and the Russian ambitions for oil concessions in the Middle East.

Mr. Newmyer went on to say that Aramco saw no other way but to support Ibn Saud in every possible demand in order to gain his cooperation and to check not only French and Russian but also British ambitions as far as oil interests are concerned. The company has been backed in its activities by the State, War, and Navy Departments and has not taken any steps on its own initiative. Unless we are ready to view the oil companies' activities as part of American security, we shall miss the point in interpreting their policies. The American Government has backed the general policy of the American oil companies to preserve the oil in this country for local requirements and to develop their distribution markets outside the western hemisphere by exploiting the oil resources--the richest being in the Middle East, and especially in Saudi Arabia.

The new arrangements made with the British in this respect will make distribution of the oil on the markets in the eastern hemisphere better managed by giving the British more dollars and leaving in the hands of the Americans more control of price and markets.

Mr. Newmyer admitted it is his duty to see that the company he is working for should avoid, as far as possible, attacks and criticisms of its policies, and it will be within his authority to come to the Board of Directors of the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, after it becomes a partner of Aramco, and bring proposals to avoid Jewish criticism, possibly backed by non-Jewish supporters of the Zionist Cause in America, should Standard Oil Company of New Jersey identify itself with any action of Aramco which could be interpreted as being anti-Jewish or anti-Zionist. He, himself, as a Jew, although not a Zionist, favors the views of the American Council for Judaism but still finds it quite possible for him to deal with this matter from the point of view of the interest of his company.

Some time ago Mr. Newmyer was approached by Mr. E. I. Kaufmann on the same subject, but neither Mr. Kaufmann nor Mr. Robert E. Nathan, who also spoke to him, could make any proposals as to what the oil companies could do in order to help us without prejudicing their own interests in Saudi Arabia. He would be very glad to receive concrete proposals in this respect, and only then would he be able to deal with the matter from a practical point of view. He rejects the idea of boycott suggested to him by Mr. Kaufmann, not only as politically harmful to the interests of the Jews in this country and elsewhere, but also as most unrealistic.

Mr. Newmyer asked me whether I could propose anything concrete. I told him that I did not consider myself competent to bring proposals to him on my own, but we shall be glad to prepare a special memorandum for him on this subject and should welcome his cooperation in this important matter.

However, I expressed one idea which seemed to me a quite moderate and

March 7, 1947

reasonable way for the companies to approach Ibn Saud without in any way harming their own and the general American interests in Saudi Arabia. Aramco could explain to Ibn Saud, I said, that what they are interested in is to sell their products in the United States and elsewhere in a way that would put them in the most favorable position as far as public opinion is concerned. This will make it easier for Aramco to sell more oil and to pay more royalties to the King. The King must appreciate that there are five million Jews in America and many more non-Jewish supporters of the Zionist Cause. It is, therefore, to Aramco's and to the King's interest that Saudi Arabia should be cautious when dealing with the Palestine question and should avoid any action which might be considered one of enmity to the Jews and to public opinion in America, which supports their rights in Palestine. Ibn Saud, I told Mr. Newmyer, is a very reasonable man and would be able to understand this argument. It requires, certainly, not only authoritative people but those who could make this explanation to the King in a bona fide sense to get his positive reaction to their explanations.

Mr. Newmyer agreed that this may be one means of influencing the King. He, however, expressed doubts as to whether the people responsible for setting the political policy in Aramco, and especially the Standard Oil Company of California representatives on the spot, would desire to say anything of this kind to the King. When the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey joins Aramco, they will also have their people in Saudi Arabia and that may give them an opportunity of doing something more and better, from our point of view, than what has been done previously in this field.

Mr. Newmyer suggested that we should meet again after the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey officially joins Aramco, on condition that our meetings remain strictly personal and confidential. He would like to have by that time a memorandum prepared by us which he could then use for immediate action.

At the conclusion of the conversation, I mentioned our interest in having a share in building the new pipeline from Saudi Arabia, especially if and when it reaches the territory of Palestine, and I told him that we should like to have his assistance also in this as well as in other matters connected with the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey in Palestine, who own an important share in the Haifa oil refineries. Mr. Newmyer replied that he would be glad to assist us also in this field when we approach him with some concrete proposals. He will then introduce me to the proper people in the company to whom I may present our views and requests.

The conversation lasted one and a quarter hours.

CONFIDENTIAL

NO. 29

June 24, 1947

Members of the Executive of the Jewish Agency for Palestine

Eliahu Epstein

SUBJECT: Conversation with Mrs. Anne O'Hare McCormick

I had dinner a few days ago with Mr. and Mrs. McCormick at their apartment where I had a chance to inform Mrs. McCormick of our present situation and our concern over the failure of the State Department to present the views of the American Government before the Committee. I was especially interested in elaborating our case to her at this time, knowing her close contact with Secretary Marshall and with some prominent people in the War Department.

Mrs. McCormick told me that we would be entirely wrong to assume that the American Government could state its policy on Palestine at this time with the same relative ease as it did in the past, when Palestine was an independent issue with practically no connection with other Middle East problems as far as the American Government was concerned. The American Government must find a way of fitting her Palestine policy into the Truman Doctrine, its short and long term interpretations.

Mrs. McCormick went on to say that the State Department does not make important decisions on its own without consulting other Departments and services. Secretary Marshall's system, according to Mrs. McCormick, is one in which no decision is taken on major issues until all available data is gathered and analyzed by experts. Only after a careful study is made of this material does he make his own decision and, if necessary, pass it on for confirmation to the President. Marshall is a very methodical man and invariably follows this pattern in his work.

When the conversation turned to the possible solutions, Mrs. McCormick asked me a number of questions which indicated her interest in partition—a solution which she has opposed in the past. Her questions were directed primarily to what political orientation in world affairs will be adopted by the Jewish State, whether we should prefer to follow a line of our own or coordinate it with that of the Arab League; what our relations are with Turkey, etc. She was also interested in knowing the affiliations that exist between some of our organizations in Palestine and international organizations, such as the World Trade Union Organization and the Socialist International. She was particularly interested in the strength of the Socialist Movement in Palestine, and whether its trends are moderate or extreme. Finally, she asked me what will be the military and economic potential of a Jewish State in Palestine ten years from now, given the most favorable conditions and opportunities for free and uninterrupted development in fields of immigration, colonization, industry, etc.

Besides the explanations I tendered offhand, I promised to send her more comprehensive data on the subject.

The conversation reached its climax when Russia came into the discussion.

June 24, 1947

and in no ambiguous terms. Mrs. McCormick wanted to know what possible influence Russia would have on a Jewish State in which the majority of the population will be composed of those who were born in Russia and in other Slav countries. She further inquired whether a highly industrialized State, such as the Jewish State will probably be, and having a large labor class, will not naturally lean toward Russia.

It took me some time to explain to her the nationally independent and self-sufficient character of the Yishuv, the democratic nature of which is preserved and defended by the labor class, no less than by any other groups of the Yishuv. Considering itself an organic part of the Western democracies the Yishuv, comprising all sections and classes of the population, struggles for a nationally and socially independent democratic structure of a Jewish society under all conditions. The progressive social and economic structure of the Yishuv is the best guarantee for the preservation of its political aspirations.

At the conclusion of the conversation, which lasted for more than two hours, Mrs. McCormick told me that apparently the U.N. will have to recommend partition as the only possible solution, although, if adopted, this solution will require coercion in order to be carried out. At this point I explained to her that only a partition which allows for a further unlimited development of the Yishuv, and possibilities for a large and continuous flow of immigration, will make it a working and constructive settlement. A partition which will only seemingly "settle the situation" and result in a token Jewish State will, without doubt, dissatisfy the Arabs and will not gain support from the Jews, and certainly cannot be a lasting solution to the Palestine problem.

Since our conversation I have forwarded some of the material she was interested in to Mrs. McCormick.

The Jewish Agency in Palestine

MEMORANDUM

June 26, 1947

To: Members of the Executive of the Jewish Agency for Palestine

FROM: Eliahu Epstein

Attached for your information is copy of a letter received today from Mr. Loy W. Henderson, Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs, Department of State, in reply to a memorandum presented to him by Mr. Eliezer Kaplan, on May 28, on the UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT FINANCING OF PALESTINIAN DEVELOPMENT.

WRHS



see

Loy Henderson

6-25-47

#37 CONFIDENTIAL

July 10, 1947

To: Members of the Executive of the Jewish Agency
for Palestine
From: Eliahu Epstein

SUBJECT: Conversation with Dr. Habib Awad

Dr. Awad called at our office to inform me that there was a possibility of Mgr. Ignatius Mubarak, the Maronite Bishop of Beirut, coming to the United States.

In the recent parliamentary elections in the Lebanon, Mgr. Mubarak lent vigorous and determined support to the opposition and has since then issued an open letter to the Lebanese President condemning the present regime in the Lebanon. He is now in Rome discussing the Lebanese situation with the Vatican authorities.

It was Mgr. Mubarak who, on several occasions, came out in open support of our work in Palestine and during the visit to Beirut of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry, his discussion of the Palestine situation with the members of the Committee showed him to be most sympathetic to us. An able speaker and a shrewd politician, Mgr. Mubarak has maintained his influence in Lebanese public affairs during this crucial period of Pan-Arabism which, since the achievement of Lebanese independence, has increasingly threatened the traditional Christian character of the country and the dominance of the Maronite Church. By forcing Mgr. Mubarak to leave the Lebanon, at least temporarily, the ruling clique has removed from the spot one of its determined and outspoken enemies. Undoubtedly his absence from the country will be keenly felt by those who oppose the Present regime of Khouri-Salp.

While I expressed my approval of Mgr. Mubarak visiting the United States and promised him our help during his stay here, at the same time I called Dr. Awad's attention to the fact that the previous visits of Lebanese delegates to this country failed primarily because of lack of organization and the little initiative shown by the delegates themselves. I was rather outspoken in my criticism of Dr. Awad's own behavior in this respect. Despite excellent credentials his mission proved abortive because of the limited personal authority he exercises, even in his own Maronite community, and due to the fact that, as an American citizen, there were many instances where he could not act as a spokesman for the Lebanese. He also harmed the cause by overemphasizing the pro-French angle in his presentations.

Although Mgr. Mubarak is a person of much greater stature, intelligence and experience than Mgr. Aql, Elias Kharfush and Dr. Awad, still his mission to this country may turn out to be as great a fiasco as that of his predecessors if the arrangements are left to Awad.

I frankly expressed my doubts as to whether a one-man mission would be effective, especially at this time, or could rally a sufficient amount of solidarity to the opposition in their mother country from within the Lebanese community in the United States. Although a spokesman for the opposition like

Mgr. Mbarak, with the authority of the Patriarch behind him, would certainly carry greater weight in the eyes of most of his own co-religionists than any layman, there are still prominent circles in the Maronite community, and especially among the non-Maronite Lebanese, who would prefer to listen to a political leader who is not a clergyman. As the opposition was composed in the last elections of prominent representatives of different communities, so here their case could gain in the presentation if a delegation consisting of more than one-spokesman - a Maronite clergyman - were sent. A well selected and representative delegation composed of three or four members, including Mgr. Mbarak, would have a better chance for success both among the Lebanese and the general American public. I mentioned as possible candidates for such a delegation Emile Hadd and Alfred Haccache, former Presidents of the Lebanese Republic and Kamel Jambalatt, a Druze leader, and also suggested that a Shia Moslem (Ketwall) should be included, if possible. Although Mgr. Mbarak would probably have to carry the burden within his own Maronite community and the Catholic circles, he, Hadd and Haccache could do more together among the general public in the United States. Moreover, a delegation composed of one or more Maronites, a Druze, and a Ketwall would carry more weight in the eyes of official and public bodies and organizations interested in the minorities problem in the Middle East than if the delegation were limited to one man speaking only for the Maronite community.

I asked Dr. Arnd to communicate these views to Mgr. Mbarak personally and also to his people in Beirut. I assured him further that if ultimately Mgr. Mbarak is the only one sent on behalf of the Lebanese opposition to the U.S., we shall be only too happy to give him every possible assistance out of appreciation both for his personal contributions to our Cause and because of our deep sympathy with the struggle of the opposition for the democratizing of the existing regime in their country.

On my coming visit to New York I shall try to find out the attitude of Mr. Salim Moharsel, President of the Lebanese League and publisher of Al-Moda, to the project. Mr. Moharsel's attitude toward the matter is bound to have an important effect on any results achieved. Although in the past he has given practically unlimited support to the delegates of the opposition visiting ambiguous terms following the announcement of the results of the elections in the Lebanese capital, he was nonetheless very much disappointed by the selfish behavior of Mgr. Agl and by the ineptitude of Dr. Arnd who harmed the opposition cause more than they helped it. This caused much personal and public embarrassment to Mr. Moharsel and to his paper. Unless he is convinced this time of the serious and solid nature of a new enterprise by the opposition, Mr. Moharsel is apt, in my opinion, to want not to commit himself to any responsibilities in advance.

The Jewish Agency in Palestine

MEMORANDUM NO. 38

MOST SECRET

July 10, 1947

TO: Members of the Executive of the Jewish Agency for Palestine

FROM: Eliahu Epstein

SUBJECT: Conversation with Faiz el-Khoury, Syrian Minister in Washington, on July 10, 1947

The new Minister has only recently arrived in Washington where he succeeds Dr. Kosty Zureik who returned to Beirut and a professorship of Arabic Literature at the American University of Beirut. Although the official version circulated here by the Syrians was that Dr. Zureik himself requested that he be relieved of his duties, the real reason for his departure was the alleged pressure on the Syrian Government by many of its own people that Syria be represented by a Syrian and a Moslem. Zureik is a Lebanese and a Christian.

I have known the new Minister for the past fifteen years and used to see him quite often during my frequent visits to Damascus. He was one of the founders and leaders of the Syrian National Bloc and held posts in the Syrian Government during various administrations as Minister of Justice and Minister of Foreign Affairs. Although on several occasions he betrayed his Party discipline and collaborated closely with the French when the Nationalists were out of power and even when being persecuted by the French, this did not impair his influence with the Nationalists which was kept operative through his brother, Fares el-Khoury, the Syrian Representative on the Security Council of the UN and one of the leading figures in the Arab Bloc during the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly. It is undoubtedly his brother's influence that effected his appointment to Washington despite Faiz' bad record with the present Administration and the fact of his being a Christian. For a short time he served as Syrian Minister to Moscow but because, as he put it, he suffered from the severe cold of the Russian capital, he left last winter in such a hurry that he did not even wait for the arrival of his successor.

My visit to him this morning was primarily a courtesy call, but he engaged me almost immediately in a political conversation about the situation in Palestine. The first thing he told me was that sometime ago he was asked by Shukri el-Kuwatli, President of the Syrian Republic, to submit all available data on the conversations between representatives of the Jewish Agency and a number of leaders of the National Bloc. These conversations took place in the summer of 1936 and were initiated by us to investigate the possibilities of a Jewish-Arab rapprochement. On the Jewish side, the participants were the late Dov Hoz, Yossef Hanmani, Amos Landman, and myself. On behalf of the Syrian National Bloc were Shukri el-Kuwatli, the present President of the Syrian Republic, Jamil Mardam, the present Foreign Minister, Faiz el-Khoury, Fakhri el-Barudi, and Lutfi Haffar. Dr. Joseph Pinto, Chairman of the Jewish community in Damascus, was also present.

Views were exchanged by both sides at two extensive meetings. Kuwatli, the main spokesman on behalf of the Syrians, was outspoken in his position that as long as there is no agreement between us and the Mufti, the Syrians would neither

desire nor be able to come to an understanding with us at the expense of their Palestine brethren. The meetings brought no results and the conversations with the Syrian National Bloc were not continued at that time.

Detailed minutes were taken by us of the two meetings and copies were later handed to Faiz el-Khourri and Jamil Mardam for the representatives of the Syrian National Bloc who participated in these meetings. Both Mardam and el-Khourri acknowledged the correctness of the minutes.

When the President mentioned these conversations to Khouiri and asked him for all available data thereon, the latter gave him the minutes which he had in his secret files. The President did not explain the reason for his interest in the matter; Khouiri himself, however, gathered that this had something to do with the possible visits of the UN Committee to Damascus. He thought that, as one of the participants in the negotiations, I might be interested to know the above story, which he asked me to keep most secret.

He went on to say that he was rather skeptical about whether there would be any essential change in the Palestine situation after the September Session of the UN General Assembly. The British desire to remain in Palestine and will not accept any recommendations which will spell their withdrawal from the Holy Land. America will apparently support Great Britain in her efforts to stay in Palestine. The Arabs are too strong, or at least too important to the British and the Americans, for their demands in Palestine to be completely ignored. On the other hand, he continued, the Jews are too influential in America for President Truman to disregard their views on Palestine. Besides, the Jews in Palestine have become too great a headache for the British and they would like a settlement which should satisfy at least some of the Jews there, as represented, for instance, by Dr. Magnes and his supporters. Taking all this into consideration, only the vaguest kind of settlement can cover all the contradictory factors involved in the situation. In Khouiri's opinion some kind of a trusteeship, with limited Jewish immigration and a possible cantonization plan along the lines of the Morrison-Grady proposals, is the most obvious possibility for a settlement. Although neither the Jewish Agency nor the Arab Higher Committee will accept anything short of their demands for a Jewish State and an Arab State respectively, the British will strengthen their position by adopting a moderate line if supported by the Americans and backed by the majority of the UN. The UN, including the United States, is fully cognizant of the fact that unless the British views and desires are accepted, Britain will refuse to carry her responsibility in Palestine and, with the exception of the Slav Bloc, no one would like to saddle the UN with the responsibility for the Palestine situation. The trusteeship plan which is contemplated by the British and the Americans will preserve the actual power in the hands of the British as it was under the Mandate of the League of Nations.

Khouiri told me this story in a way that led me to believe that he was expressing views which he knows are not only his own personal thoughts on the subject.

He went on to say that while passing through Cairo on his way to the States, he had a long talk with the Mufti. He found the Mufti very confident about the outcome of his struggle for Palestine independence. He spoke with bitterness

about Azzam Pasha and Faris el-Khoury, both of whom tried to pressure him to accede to the Arab Higher Committee's cooperation with the UN Committee. Being necessarily hampered in his criticism of Faiz el-Khoury's brother, the Mufti spoke very angrily about Azzam Pasha.

According to Faiz el-Khoury, Azzam has done a splendid job since his arrival in this country and he has gained many influential friends for the Arab Cause by the moderation exercised in his approach to American leaders. In most of his conversations with Government officials he made the impression of being extremely anti-Russian and has in this way gained many sympathizers for the Arabs and for himself. Azzam is at present in New York waiting for the arrival of Nakrashi Pasha, the Egyptian Prime Minister, who is coming here to plead Egypt's case in the Sudan controversy with the British before the Security Council.

When the conversation turned to the situation in Syria the Minister was rather reluctant to go into too much detail but mentioned that the situation there is "pretty complicated." However, it was he who suggested that we should discuss this subject on the occasion of our next meeting and said he would like to hear my views on the question of Greater Syria, Palestine partition, etc. Although an official representative of the Syrian Republic, the Minister may still have contacts with King Abdullah, whom he supported only recently in the propaganda for Greater Syria. Whether his appointment to Washington was a result of his own attempts to get this job, or whether the Syrian Government wanted to get rid of him because of his pro-Abdullah bent, is open to conjecture. His readiness, however, and his aptitude for becoming involved in political intrigues was never doubted by anyone who is familiar with him and it would not surprise me at all to hear from him in the future regarding matters which do not coincide with his duties or his loyalties to his post.

Our long-established personal relationship may be a considerable help in sounding out Arab sentiment and activities in Washington.

The Jewish Agency for Palestine

2210 Massachusetts Ave., N. W.
WASHINGTON 8, D. C.
ADAMS 5411

July 15, 1947

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver, Chairman,
American Branch of the Executive,
The Jewish Agency for Palestine,
19810 Shaker Heights Boulevard,
Cleveland, Ohio

CONFIDENTIAL

My dear Dr. Silver:

I regret very much that the sudden illness of my wife prevented me from coming to the Executive meeting in New York yesterday. I should like, therefore, to put in writing a number of suggestions which I had thought to submit at the meeting of the Executive.

Whereas the over-all of the American scene is not my direct concern, I must nevertheless make some observations based on my proximity to certain developments here in Washington, developments related to our situation and inseparable from the general problem of our relations with the United States Government. If some of the thoughts which follow seem repetition of my letter to you of June 27, it is because I am now able to elaborate certain suggestions only roughly touched upon in my previous letter.

1) Apparently the President remains passive in our matter; it is doubtful whether any initiative can be expected from this quarter. I have heard that his military advisors, and especially his Military Aide, Major General Harry H. Vaughan, have a very bad influence on him where the Palestine question is concerned. According to my information, Vaughan is an anti-Semite and is strongly swayed by some of the British members of the Combined Chiefs of Staff. I also bring to your attention the conversation which one of our Christian friends had recently with the Mexican President. According to this friend, President Aleman told him that at the last meeting in Washington with President Truman, the latter expressed views on the Palestine question most unfavorable to us. I understand that this information has reached you directly and there is, therefore, no need for me to go into detail. Whatever the truth may be, and irrespective of what President Truman's personal feelings are toward our problem, it is very doubtful whether he would be ready at this moment to exercise any direct initiative on our behalf. It is quite safe to assume that he will do nothing on the Palestine question--or, probably, on any other question of foreign policy--without consulting Marshall. Under the present setup in the Administration, the initiative will have to come, according to normal procedure, from Marshall himself.

2) According to information which has reached me, the top people of the Democratic Party machine in Washington, and especially Gael Sullivan, know very little about the Palestine problem and the Jewish case. Hannegan, who knows more than the others about it, participates very little in Party affairs, and,

July 15, 1947

according to rumors, is soon to withdraw completely from the Chairmanship of the Democratic Party. This is due, allegedly, both to poor health and to the opposition of the Southern Democrats and the reactionary clique in the President's entourage. Incidentally, one of the influential men among the planners of Democratic Party policy at present is Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal. His knowledge in matters concerning Zionism and Palestine in general is as poor and superficial as that of the others. No need to mention the importance of Forrestal's position both as a leading person in the Democratic Party and as Secretary of the Navy. It is primarily the Navy which has vital interests in Saudi-Arabian oil. These interests may well outweigh many other considerations in determining American policy in the Middle East, especially now that that policy is being formulated against the background of growing tension between the United States and the U.S.S.R.

3) It is not difficult to see that even in essential problems of foreign policy, relations between the Democratic Administration and the Republicans are becoming more complicated and less harmonious than they were during the war under Roosevelt. It is now clear that Truman's inherited bi-partisan foreign policy is no longer as stable as it used to be. This is primarily a result of recent developments in relations between the President and the Congress, and of the coming 1948 elections. Although this situation may ultimately work to our favor--should the present Administration adopt a clear-cut anti-Zionist policy--it may, however, hinder some of the bi-partisan spirit which was favorable to Zionism and the Jewish cause in general and which, over the last thirty years, shaped American support for our cause into traditional American policy.

4) Apparently the State Department, while considering several possibilities for the solution of the Palestine problem, is withholding any decision of its own until the United Nations Committee makes public its proposals on the matter. I gather that, without as yet giving any preference to one solution or another, the State Department is more and more inclined to exclude international trusteeship as a form of settlement of the Palestine problem desirable to the United States. This view has gained strength in State Department circles since the pressure exerted on them in this matter by the Foreign Office and the arguments made against international trusteeship by the War Department.

In a conversation I had on July 11 with Mr. Henry S. Villard who, during the absence of Mr. Henderson, is in charge of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs, he made it clear to me that no American statement of policy on Palestine can be expected before the September Session of the United Nations General Assembly. He indicated that the American Government, before making such a statement, will first have to study the recommendations of the United Nations Committee. (A detailed report on my conversation with Mr. Villard is forthcoming.)

In view of this stand, it becomes more important for us to determine at what moment in the situation the Jewish Agency will be called for consultation with the State Department, as promised to you by Secretary Marshall. There is the obvious danger that we may be called in at that time that we can turn least

July 15, 1947

to our advantage, namely, just previous to the September Session of the United Nations General Assembly. This will, of course, make it impossible for us to prepare and launch any effective counter-offensive.

5) This past week I had informal talks with the Chief and some of the members of the Eurasian Branch of the Military Intelligence Division of the War Department. These talks were carried on during luncheon meetings and will be resumed on Thursday next. Incidentally, the Eurasian Branch covers the U.S.S.R., the Balkans, and the Middle East, and the people who deal with our problem are the same ones who are advising the Chief of Staff and the Secretary of War on practically every subject of importance in the Eastern Hemisphere as affected by United States relations with Moscow.

Although I should prefer to write a full report on these useful conversations after their conclusion, I do, however, wish to indicate in this letter the great importance to us of strengthening every possible contact we may have with the War Department and of using each available link for influencing their decision on the Palestine question in our favor. It is unnecessary to elaborate on the influence which the War Department and its opinions carry at present with the State Department and Secretary Marshall personally.

I found that Dr. Robert McDowell, Chief of the Branch (whom I met first during the war in Cairo and with whom I meet quite frequently here), and his assistants are very well informed about the situation in the Middle East. I also get the impression that their approach to the problems of that part of the world are less dogmatic and more constructive than that of the members of the Middle and Near Eastern Divisions of the State Department. This facilitated the presentation of my views and made our discussion more useful. What I have learned up till now from these talks is that Dr. McDowell and his assistants believe that this moment is the most desirable and also most appropriate for a final settlement of the Palestine problem. Among the favorable factors for such a settlement he mentioned the psychological effect on the Moslem and Arab worlds of the Indian settlement; the existing internal struggles and divisions among the Arabs themselves; and the authority of the United Nations which in a year, or even less, may become less effective and will make still more difficult an international settlement of the Palestine question than the one still possible at present.

Without expressing any optimism regarding the War Department's position on our matter, the new, rather constructive approach to the Palestine problem of people influential in the War Department, like Dr. McDowell, who was in the past extremely antagonistic toward us, is rather encouraging. This, combined with the attitude of some of the people in the War Department who are dealing with the DP problem, whose support of our cause is motivated primarily by considerations of the Jewish situation in Europe, and especially in the American zone of occupied Germany, may buttress our approaches to the top level in the Department, initiated by Judge Rifkind in his conversation with General Eisenhower.

July 15, 1947

6) Similar to the situation which obtained during the war, the Foreign Relations and Foreign Affairs Committees of the Senate and of the House, respectively, are becoming more and more important as the effective links connecting the State Department to the Congress, while secret diplomacy, justified by the growing tension in international relations, is increasingly curbing the weight of the floor. The transformation of Secretary Marshall's secret meetings with the Foreign Relations Committee into a more or less regular affair is strong evidence of this.

Although further representations on our behalf by friendly Senators and Congressmen, either individually or as groups, to the President and to the Secretary should be encouraged and may be of help--as a sign of the anxiety which prevails in the Congress regarding the Palestine situation--still it is primarily, in my opinion, the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate which can be instrumental in pushing our matter as far as the Congress is concerned.

7) As I have already mentioned in my letter of June 27, there is little publicity in the press and on the radio regarding the Palestine situation. This is a matter which must command our closest attention. The strong influence of press and radio over decisions of the United States Government was profoundly evidenced during the last Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly. Now--while the Government is busy working on and elaborating its policy on Palestine, it is of the greatest importance to mobilize our friends in every field of publicity to see that they exert the necessary pressure on the Government at this time.

Going back to the State Department--at present the center in dealing with our matter--I should like to stress the great importance of affording Secretary Marshall, in the coming crucial weeks, with more opportunity to hear our views on the Palestine question and not only those propounded by Mr. Loy W. Henderson and his staff. Whenever it is possible, we should personally contact Mr. Marshall, but in view of the difficulties of seeing Mr. Marshall frequently, we should, in my opinion, find people who are close to the Secretary to do this job for us. I have heard of a number of persons whose word will carry weight with the Secretary; one of these is former Secretary Stimson. The same applies to some of his chief assistants, and especially Lovett and Kennan.

Simultaneous with combined efforts to strengthen our contacts with the War Department at every possible level, we must seek and find contacts with the Navy Department, and with Secretary Forrestal. I should also like to mention in this connection the importance for us of proceeding with our efforts with the American oil companies. Apparently we have not gotten, at least as far as my information is concerned, very far in this direction. My efforts with the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey have not been successful as yet, primarily, according to the local liaison men of the company, because of the absence from this country of the policy-making members of the Board of Directors of the company who are now negotiating in London with the British and the French future arrangements for oil exploitation in the Middle East.

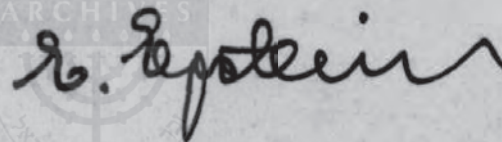
July 15, 1947

All the above-mentioned suggestions are made by me with a view to forming a plan of action here for the coming few weeks. Should we find, meanwhile, a continued passive attitude on the part of the American Government towards stating its position on Palestine, or, when the attitude of the American Government is made known, should we find it an unfriendly one, a new and more vigorous plan of action will have to be adopted. I do not believe the time has yet come for applying the strongest measures in our possession, such as public demonstrations, mass protests, petitions, etc. It might be useful, however, to appoint a small committee for the confidential task of planning what action should be taken in case of emergency. Although any plan will later have to be revised and adapted to the existing conditions and needs at the moment of its execution, still preparations made in advance may help us to avoid making decisions in a rush.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I want to call your attention and the attention of the members of the Executive to the necessity of our taking immediate steps to counteract the increase of Arab activities in the Latin American countries. I have dealt with this subject in detail in my memorandum No. 39 of July 11, 1947.

I am sending copies of this letter to members of the Executive and to the American Zionist Emergency Council.

Very sincerely yours,



Eliahu Epstein
Director

ee/mf

P.S.: Since dictating this letter, the press and radio have carried the news that Secretary of the Navy Forrestal is the most likely candidate for the post of Secretary of the Defense (the cabinet designation for the proposed merger of the War and Navy Departments).

E.E.

#63 MOST SECRET
August 6, 1947

Members of the Executive of the Jewish Agency for Palestine

Misha Epstein

SUBJECT: Conversations with Dr. Robert H. McDowell, Chief, Eurasian Division, Military Intelligence Branch, Department of War, Washington, D.C.

Twice during the early part of July I was invited by Dr. McDowell to have luncheon with him at the Pentagon. Although two of his assistants were present at the first luncheon, the nature of the conversation remained informal throughout.

I first met Dr. McDowell in Cairo, during the war, at the Headquarters of the American Forces in the Middle East. Before the war he had been a Professor at Michigan University, teaching Ancient History and Archaeology of the Middle East. He spent many years in Turkey and Iran, and is intimately acquainted with that part of the world. At the close of the war he was released from the Army and joined the War Department as Chief of the Eurasian Section in the Military Intelligence Branch. This section covers Russia, the Balkans and the Middle East, and is one of the most important and active sections of the Military Intelligence Branch in the War Department.

The following is a summary of the two conversations with Dr. McDowell, each of which lasted for several hours.

1. STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF THE MIDDLE EAST IN THE WAR

According to Dr. McDowell, the conservative school among American military strategists does not consider the Middle East, including Palestine, to be of much strategic importance should war with Russia break out within the coming two or three years. The Russians would easily overrun the Middle East and neither Great Britain nor America would be able to get reinforcements to the area in time to check the Russian drive. Dr. McDowell preferred the above information in reply to my statement that a strong Palestine could play an important role in strengthening the interests of the Democracies in the Middle East. He went on to say that, irrespective of how strong we were to become, it would be of very little value to America in the event of an early war with Russia. This is one of the reasons why American military circles do not want to see important industries develop in the Middle East - they wish to avoid their falling into the hands of Russia, which would clearly strengthen her militarily and economically. This situation may not obtain, however, if the war between the Western powers and Russia is staved off for the next five or ten years. By that time American may be better equipped to face the Russian challenge in the Middle East, and in that event, our assistance would certainly take on value.

2. OIL RESOURCES

When I asked Dr. McDowell what would happen, in the event of an early war with Russia, to the enormous oil resources in the Middle East, of such importance to the U.S., Dr. McDowell replied that British and American oilfields and installations are subject to the same fate as all the other interests of the two powers in that part of the world. America is interested, at present, in exploiting the oil resources of the Middle East to their utmost, hoping to reserve American oil purely for local consumption. In this way she can preserve her own oil stocks and still corner the market by exporting oil from the Middle East to other parts of the world. The American oil companies outside the Western Hemisphere will depend for their commercial operations almost exclusively on the oil of the Middle East. (I have been reliably informed that the Consolidated Refineries in Haifa are shortly planning to increase their output from 90,000 to 175,000 barrels daily. The Arabian American Oil Company and the Iraq Petroleum Company are planning to triple, and the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company to double their production of oil from a total of 651,000 to 1,500,000 barrels daily next year. The Arabian American Oil Company is planning to build a large refinery at the terminal of the Trans-Arabian pipeline in the Lebanon. In addition to increasing the output of crude oil and oil products in the Middle East, the American Government is busy studying cheaper and more efficient means of producing synthetic oil in this country).

Dr. McDowell pointed out that American interest in Yemen is largely due to the possibilities of finding oil there. Even small resources of oil in Yemen would be of greater value in case of war than the large resources in Saudi Arabia. The geographical position of Yemen makes it easily accessible to the U.S. Navy, while the oil in or close to the Persian Gulf would lie within close range of a Russian attack.

3. THE SUDAN

Returning to the strategic importance of the Middle East, Dr. McDowell mentioned the Sudan as being one of the key points in the defense of the British Empire. Less exposed to attack by Russia than other parts of the Middle East, the Sudan also constitutes a vital link in the trans-African chain of communications. Because of its proximity to India, the Sudan may one day be eyed by Indian Pakistan as suitable territory for its increasing population, but such a danger is still remote and does not constitute any serious problem for the British. The Egyptians, however, by stressing the Sudanese issue, are sharply challenging British imperial interests. Dr. McDowell strongly condemned the present policy of the Egyptian Government on this question. He disagreed with some of his colleagues in the Department of State who would like the U.S. to remain neutral in the Anglo-Egyptian controversy over Sudan. For the U.S. is vitally interested in seeing that England be given all facilities for building up her defenses in Eastern Africa, and, if because of Egyptian opposition this is made an impossibility, then American interests may suffer the consequences. In this context Dr. McDowell touched briefly on the importance of North Africa remaining under French control, especially now that the French Government is becoming more stable and less dependent on the Communist Party.

4. SYRIA AND LEBANON

When the conversation turned to the situation within the Arab countries, Dr. McDowell sharply criticized the present state of affairs in Syria and Lebanon.

In his opinion, these two years of independence from French control have proved to be the worst in the history of the Levant States. The political regimes in these countries do not show any signs of stability and thus lay the way open to Russian intrigue and penetration - to such an extent that, if conditions are allowed to remain unchanged, the danger from this source may be greater in time of peace than in wartime.

Again mentioning that he disagreed with the views of some of his colleagues in the Department of State, Dr. McDowell expressed himself explicitly in favor of the Greater Syria plan of King Abdullah. Great Britain and America can more confidently rely on a Federated Iraq, Syria, Transjordan and the Moslem parts of Lebanon and Palestine, controlled by a friendly ruler, than on the unstable and unreliable cliques which presently govern the Levant States.

5. PALESTINE PARTITION

This point led to Dr. McDowell's expressing himself in favor of the partitioning of Palestine. I was taken quite by surprise when I heard this, as in the past his attitude had been one of rigid opposition to us. Previously he had challenged our rights to statehood and held that any support of the Zionist case would mean a major crisis in Anglo-American-Arab relations. When I asked him how he arrived at the partition solution, he told me in clear and impassioned words that the facts have proved to him that the British have not succeeded in overcoming our opposition but apparently are not ready to do so by use of physical force; that it is most dangerous to let things continue as they are now in Palestine; some solution must be found that will satisfy at least a part of the Jews and that stands a chance of meeting with acquiescence by the Arabs. Upon examination of the possible solutions, he could find none that would present brighter prospects for the present and the future than partition. (A few days after this conversation with Dr. McDowell I received confirmation of Dr. McDowell's change in attitude from Colonel E. Wright of the Division of Middle Eastern Affairs in the Department of State. Colonel Wright told me that Dr. McDowell now supports both the Greater Syria Plan and the partition of Palestine).

My inquiries as to what kind of partition he is considering, found him rather vague, although he mentioned at once that the Negev must be included in the Jewish State. He added that even if the U.N. Committee should bring out a report recommending partition, and the U.N. General Assembly were to accept it by the required majority, still time will be needed to define the frontiers between the Jewish and the Arab sections of Palestine. It is to the Jewish interest, and to the interest of the American authorities in occupied Germany and Austria, that Jewish refugees should start moving, without delay, to those zones which will be generally recognized as the area assigned to the Jewish State. The final delineation of frontiers may require some time, as a complete investigation into this matter may be required and another U.N. Committee may have to be appointed for this purpose.

Dr. McDowell voiced strong objections to the idea of international trusteeship. It would be a calamity, he said, to allow Russia to participate in Palestine affairs. Participation of Russia in the administration of Palestine would, in effect, vitiate the objectives of the Truman Doctrine for it would give her access to territory lying this side of Turkey when Turkey has been designated as the last bulwark against further Russian expansion.

A propos of this, Dr. McDowell asked me whether it is true that a large number of D.P.'s are either Soviet agents or infected by Communist propaganda. He also asked me whether we will give priority of immigration into the Jewish State to the D.P.'s, or whether we would first start moving to Palestine Jews from Arab and other countries. In the belief that the U.S. authorities would continue meanwhile to take care of the D.P.'s. He was probably repeating what he had read and heard about the subject from some of his colleagues in the occupied areas in Europe and in the different Government offices here in Washington.

I emphatically denied the accusation about the political bad faith of the D.P.'s and said that we are vitally concerned with first moving to Palestine all the D.P.'s, who so desperately need a place where they can feel at home. I mentioned, however, the necessity for immigration into Palestine of the Jews both in the Arab countries and in certain other countries, not only for their own safety but to assure them a normal existence.

6. TERRORISM

Dr. McDowell discussed with me thoroughly the problem of terrorism and evinced quite an extensive knowledge of the subject. Apparently the fact that the terrorist movement in Palestine may be exploited by the Russians has brought him to favor a quick settlement of the situation in Palestine. The Jewish terrorists, he said, are well organized, well equipped and the desperation which pushes them to the extremes of sacrifice makes them a power to be reckoned with. Continuation of the present situation in Palestine is most undesirable, especially at a time when Russia is looking for every weapon which can be turned against British and American interests in the Middle East.

England is apparently sick of the Palestine situation, and, once the Indian problem is settled, would conceivably be ready to accept a solution which would safeguard her vital interests in Palestine.

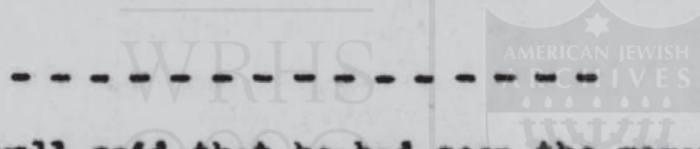
Dr. McDowell then inquired whether we shall be able, when the Jewish State is established, to stamp out terrorism by ourselves. In my reply I stressed the importance of fixing the frontiers of the Jewish State so that as little Palestine territory as possible should be excluded from the Jewish State. This will make it easier to get the support of the Yishuv and of the Jewish people all over the world for the partition plan and will offer good arguments to combat the terrorists, who will probably make the issue of partition the target of their coming struggle. The less area in Palestine that is cut off from the Jewish State, I said, the weaker the irredentist movement will be. It is therefore, in the interest of the stability and the future development of the Jewish State in Palestine, that its frontiers should be fixed in a way that will leave as little dissatisfaction as possible on the part of the Yishuv and the Zionist Movement.

If a Jewish State is established in part of Palestine, we shall, in Dr. McDowell's opinion, have a good opportunity to cooperate with Ibn Saud, who would be interested in having Christian Lebanon and a Jewish State in Palestine - the neighbors of his enemy, King Abdullah - well disposed towards him.

7 THE URGENCY OF ACTING NOW

Dr. McDowell believes that the present moment may be the last chance for a constructive and lasting solution of the Palestine problem. In this connection he mentioned three factors favorable to action at this time:

1. The effect of Indian partition both on world public opinion and on the parties concerned in the Palestine question - British, Jews and Arabs.
2. The political weakness of the Arabs, as indicated by their military and financial dependence on England and America, and their continuous internal struggles. Although strong opposition to any decision favorable to the Jews can be expected, especially from the Arabs of Palestine, the majority of the Arab States will acquiesce sooner or later to a solution which will put an end to their genuine fears about the expansion of the Jews, not only in Palestine but also in the neighboring countries.
3. The U.N. is becoming weaker and weaker, but it may still be possible at this time to get an international settlement of the Palestine question with the agreement of all the major powers. In a year it may be too late.



Dr. McDowell said that he had seen the memorandum which Judge Rifkind submitted to General Eisenhower. He found it of interest and capable presentation of our case. He could not tell me, however, whether, in accordance with his promise to Judge Rifkind, the Chief of Staff had passed this memorandum on to Secretary Marshall.

Dr. McDowell made it clear to me that the views he expressed were his own and did not necessarily represent those of the War Dept. However, Dr. McDowell's official position and his influence are such that even if these are his personal views, they are apparently the result of certain trends in the thinking of the Department.

Dr. McDowell asked me to come to see him again soon, to continue our conversations on subjects of mutual interest.

CABLE ADDRESS
JEWAGENCY

[cable not
attached]

הסוכנות היהודית לארץ ישראל

The Jewish Agency for Palestine

2210 Massachusetts Ave., N. W.
WASHINGTON 8, D. C.
ADAMS 5411

August 7, 1947

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver
R.F.D. No. 1
Northport, Long Island

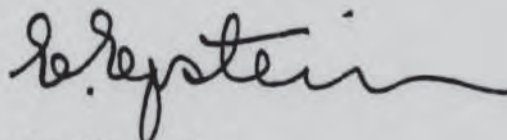
My dear Dr. Silver:

Attached is a cable in code received here for you.

I am sorry I could not attend the last meeting of the Executive, being preoccupied with matters here. If, by chance, I do not see you before your departure for the meetings of the Executive and Actions Committee in Zurich, I wish you a pleasant journey. May the coming meetings be a step towards greater unity in our camp and a stimulant for further action at this crucial moment of our struggle.

With kind regards.

Very sincerely yours,



Eliahu Epstein

ee/mf
encl

#63 August 11, 1947
CONFIDENTIAL

Members of the Executive of the Jewish Agency for Palestine

Elishu Epstein

SUBJECT: Conversation with Mr. Archibald Roosevelt of the Dept. of State, Washington, DC

On July 30th my wife and I dined with Mr. Roosevelt who is leaving shortly for the Lebanon to serve as attache to the U.S. Legation in Beirut. Archibald Roosevelt is the grandson of President Theodore Roosevelt; during the war he was attached to the Military Intelligence Branch of the American Headquarters in Cairo, and later acted as Assistant Military Attache at the Embassy in Teheran. He is a very intelligent and capable young man, possessing a quite extensive knowledge of current Middle East problems. Although he is apparently not too friendly, he has never expressed himself publicly as does his cousin, Kermit Roosevelt.

I first met Mr. Roosevelt during the war years in Cairo, and our relations since then have been on a more or less even keel, and friendly. He has many intimate friends in the upper strata of the State Dept., and I always value his opinions as they are, as a rule, based on a good knowledge of the facts and of the views prevalent in the State Dept.

In discussing the situation in the Middle East, Mr. Roosevelt said that our position is, in the eyes of the American Government, a weak one, because we have apparently not as yet made up our minds which side we are going to join in the present world controversy between the U.S. and Soviet Russia. He went on to say that it is wrong to deceive ourselves into believing that a showdown between the Western Powers and Russia can be avoided. This does not necessarily mean that a shooting war will start tomorrow, but the crisis in American-Russian relations is becoming chronic and both sides will do everything in their power to consolidate their positions and to line up everyone who can be of help to them in time of war. Unless we are ready to state our alignment, we cannot expect the American Government to go along with us as we would like them to. The American Government, Mr. Roosevelt said, is not going to support the establishment of a Jewish State unless it is sure that such a State will be an asset to her interests and not a liability. The American Government is further concerned over the fact that the D.P.'s going to Palestine are infected by Communist propaganda and may strengthen the Soviet Fifth Column in the Middle East. He mentioned in this connection the reports that have been received here proving how strong pro-Soviet sympathies in the D.P. camps in the American occupied zones of Germany and Austria are; many of the D.P.'s have refused cooperation with the American military authorities while being ready to cooperate with the Soviet authorities as their secret agents, etc. Unless all these points are sufficiently explained and cleared up, we may ultimately face great disappointments. We have to bear in mind that there are very few things that are decided on their own merits. Everything is affected one way or another by major considerations of world policy and relations with Russia, and whatever the attitude of the American Government may be towards us, as such, we should not expect special treatment of our case.

I took pains to answer the accusations about the D.P.'s bad faith in going to Palestine, and stressed that they are going as Zionists and not only as refugees, and that their individual and national interests are inseparable from those of the Yishuv and the World Zionist Movement. I went on to say that it is a vicious conspiracy on the part of the British, and apparently some American circles in Occupied Europe, to label the D.P.'s as Communists in order to make their transfer to Palestine more difficult. It would be a most regrettable thing if the American Government were to be taken in by this propaganda and to use it as an argument to oppose the Jewish case in the Palestine situation.

With regard to the Jewish Agency's position in the present world controversy, I explained to Mr. Roosevelt that only an ignorant or biased person could expect us to support an anti-American line. Most of the financial aid which has helped and is today helping to build Palestine, comes from this country. For the past thirty years America has been the Government most friendly towards Zionism; the Balfour Declaration was issued after President Wilson made known to the British his support of a Jewish Commonwealth in Palestine. We are a freedom-loving people, and the National Home in Palestine has been, from its very beginnings, based on democratic principles in the social, economic and political fields.

However, the American Government must understand the bona fide reasons for our desire to obtain the support for our case of as many members of the UN as possible. A friendly American Government should welcome the Soviet and other Slav Governments' contributions to the constructive settlement of the Palestine question which is essential if Palestine is to be prevented from becoming an object of power politics and international competition. I referred to Senator Austin's reaction to Gromyko's speech at the U.N. General Assembly. Austin was undoubtedly sincere when he commented on the speech as "a useful and constructive contribution which will make the settlement of the Palestine question easier". This speech, I said, has also shaken the conception, strong in many British and American circles, here and in the Middle East, that any support by the Western Powers of Zionism will push the Arabs into Russia's arms.

I mentioned further the significant fact that the Communist Party in the Yishuv is extremely weak, both in number and in influence, in spite of British action creating an atmosphere conducive to its growth. This is primarily because of the democratic character of the Yishuv, which is well channelized and operates through parties which, with the exception of the Communists, all support democratic forms of social organization and Government.

Mr. Roosevelt suggested that we should see that as many men as possible in the American Government are informed to this effect and that we should not tire of explaining to them again and again the things that seem obvious to us, but which sometimes escape the attention even of those who, in one form or another, deal with Middle East and Palestine affairs.

When the conversation turned to the situation in the Middle East, Mr. Roosevelt mentioned the chronic state of crisis which prevails in the Arab countries. The deep conflict between the desire to be independent of foreign domination and their inability to establish any form of stable self-government, is the gravest problem facing the Arab world at this moment. The Arab League has done much towards popularizing the idea of Arab unity at this moment, and has been an effective weapon in the fight against Zionism. It has proved, however, to be an entirely inadequate and impotent body, incapable of constructive plans in social and economic fields.

In answer to my request Mr. Roosevelt, who is leaving for the Lebanon early in September promised to establish contact with our people in Jerusalem, some of whom he has already met.

הסוכנות היהודית לארץ ישראל

The Jewish Agency in Palestine

MEMORANDUM

Washington, D. C.

August 14, 1947

To: Members of the Executive of the Jewish Agency for Palestine

FROM: Eliahu Epstein

Enclosed is copy of a letter depicting the present state of affairs in Palestine which I have addressed to the fifty journalists and radio commentators in the Washington area shown on the attached list.

ee/mf
encl

August 14, 1947

In view of the deteriorating position in Palestine, I feel that it may be useful to summarize the events which have led to the latest outbreak of violence in the Holy Land.

We are on the eve of a session of the United Nations which will have the great and historic responsibility of bringing about a settlement of the Palestine problem. America's stand at the Assembly is going to be of major importance in the deliberations of the United Nations, and it is essential that public opinion in this country be fully informed as to the current situation in Palestine.

It will be remembered that when the United Nations Special Committee left for Palestine, it carried with it the appeal made by the General Assembly to all parties to refrain from threat or use of force which might create an atmosphere prejudicial to the settlement of the Palestine question. Apparently even the terrorists were willing to respond to this appeal, provided that the Palestine Government did not carry out the sentence of death passed on the three members of the Irgun Zvai Leumi who had been involved in the Acre jail break of a few months ago. Incidentally, none of the three accused had caused the death of any British personnel. The Palestine Administration, however, confirmed the death sentence. As a result, the Irgun threatened reprisals and on July 11 succeeded in kidnapping two members of the British Forces stationed in Palestine.

Tension was heightened on July 17, when the refugee ship EXODUS 1947 was intercepted outside Palestine territorial waters and rammed by British naval forces. When the vessel was brought into Haifa harbor, with its 4500 refugees aboard, it was found that three Jews had been killed, including the first mate of the boat, a United States citizen named William Bernstein. According to the eye-witness account of Mr. Grauel, an American clergyman who had been aboard throughout the journey, Bernstein had been clubbed to death. On July 18 the refugees were transferred to deportation vessels, and on July 21 the Foreign Office confirmed that the people were not being sent to Cyprus, but were being returned to France "as Cyprus had not proved a sufficient deterrent." This action on the part of the British immediately led, as might have been expected, to a series of terrorist outrages.

Despite the fact that the kidnapped British sergeants had not yet been located, the Government announced on July 28 that the three members of the Irgun were to be hanged on the following day, and the sentence of death was duly carried out. At this point, members of the Haganah began their own search for the kidnapped men, in order to save them from Irgun retaliation, but on July 30 the sergeants were found dead. Horrified at this action by the Irgun, the organized Jewish community determined to

take strong measures to root out the terrorists, but just as they were about to carry out their plans news came that British troops or police (the military have denied that soldiers were involved) ran riot in Tel Aviv where they machine-gunned civilians, killing five persons and wounding scores of others. At the beginning of last week, the British arrested the Mayers of three Jewish towns in Palestine, as well as a number of persons known to be connected with the Revisionist Party. These men are still detained in Lebanon.

Just over a year ago, on July 29, 1946, the British arrested the leaders of the Jewish Agency in an effort to discredit this internationally recognised body prior to the Round Table Talks arranged in London during the summer of last year. It is possible that the latest arrests have been made in order to create confusion on the eve of the forthcoming session of the United Nations.

British action during the last six weeks seems designed to make impossible co-operation with the authorities in the suppression of terrorism for which the British have ostensibly been calling. The deportation of the EXODUS refugees, for example, was obviously an action which would forestall any cooperation on the part of the Jewish population in this respect. Again two of the Mayers arrested were among the Jewish leaders who had drawn up a plan to root out the terror. Finally, the British must have realised that the execution of the three Irgunists, just at a time when the Hagannah was trying to locate the kidnapped Britishers, was likely to be construed as provocation. None of these actions can be described as keeping the truce for which the United Nations asked.

One is reluctantly forced, therefore, to the conclusion that the British are not anxious to have peace in Palestine. This attitude gives added impetus to Arab intransigence and once again, as in 1929, the Arabs feel that "the Government is with us." The mass of the Palestinian Arabs do not want to begin with disturbances, as these proved highly unprofitable for them in 1936. But it is only natural that they should be willing to "cash in" on the results of British policy. The Mufti, in particular, is taking every advantage of the general unrest to incite his followers to violence and the latest news of an Arab attack on a Jewish cafe on the outskirts of Tel Aviv is indicative in this connection.

In the meantime, the problem of the refugees in Europe remains unsolved. Another winter, the third since the liberation of Europe, is now approaching, and with the passage of time the physical and moral condition of the refugees continues to deteriorate. As for the 4500 refugees of the EXODUS, it is clear that the British authorities are keeping them aboard the deportation vessels off the coast of France in an effort to break their spirit. The French Government, on the other hand, has maintained an admirable attitude, making every effort to assist the refugees, but refusing to compel them to land on French soil.

We feel that it is vital that the American public should be made fully acquainted with the facts underlying the present state of affairs in Palestine and that the United States Government should be requested to bring pressure to bear on H.K. Government in order to have the present tragic situation resolved as speedily as possible.

Very truly yours,

Eliezer Epstein
Director

Mrs. Anne O'Hare McCormick
 Miss Freda Kirchwey
 Mr. Edgar A. Mowrer
 Mr. Wm. Philip Simms
 Mr. Dillard Stokes
 Mr. Lowell Mellett
 Mr. Frank C. Waldrop
 Mr. Winston Burdett
 Mr. Richard L. Harkness
 Mr. Albert Warner
 Mr. Eric Severoid
 Mr. Leon Henderson
 Mr. Harold L. Ickes
 Mr. John Collier
 Mr. Marquis W. Childs
 Mr. Raymond Swing
 Mr. Herbert Elliston
 Mr. David L. Cohen
 Mr. Sumner Welles
 Mr. Frank Gervasi
 Mr. I.F. Stone
 Mr. Mark Sullivan
 Mr. Charles Van Devander
 Mr. Richard Stroudt
 Mr. Pierre Loving
 Mr. Anatol Visson
 Mr. Drew Pearson
 Mr. Stewart Alsop
 Mr. Joseph Alsop
 Mr. Blair Bolles
 Mr. Jean Davidson
 Mr. Jean Devan
 Mr. David Lawrence
 Mr. George E. Sokolsky
 Mr. Frank R. Kent
 Mr. B. Smoler
 Mr. Murray Frank
 Mr. B.M. McKelway
 Mr. G. Gould Lincoln
 Mr. Paul F. Realy
 Mr. Walker Stone
 Mr. Alan Barth
 Mr. Harry D. White
 Mr. Richard V. Gilbert
 Mr. Martin Agronsky
 Mr. Walter Waggoner
 Miss Helen Baller
 Mr. Frank Kelley
 Mr. Ladislav Farago
 Mr. Wm. Reynolds
 Mr. Alexander Uhl
 Mr. Raymond F. Brandt
 Mr. Barnet Hower
 Mr. George Beckman
 Mr. Felix Belair Jr.

New York Times, New York
 The Nation 20 Vesey Street, New York
 3301 Garfield Street N.W., Washington, D.C.
 Scripps-Howard 1013 - 13th Street N.W., Wash., D.C.
 Washington Post, Washington, D.C.
 Washington Star 11th and Penna. Ave. N.W., Wash, D.C.
 Washington Times Herald 1317 R St., N.W., Wash., D.C.
 CBS 501 - 13th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.
 ABC 724 - 14th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.
 NBC 712 Jackson Place, N.W., Washington, D.C.
 CBS Earle Bldg. 501-13th N.W., Washington, D.C.
 1026 - 17th Street N.W., Washington, D.C.
 3624 Prospect Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C.
 Box 312 Route 1 Vienna, Va.
 501 Dorset Ave., Chevy Chase, Md.
 1613 - 19th Street N.W., Washington, D.C.
 Editor, Washington Post, 1622 - 20th Street N.W. Wash.
 Hopewell, New Jersey
 Oxon Hill Manor, Oxon Hill, Md.
 2715 Dumbarton Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C.
 5618 Nebraska Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C.
 820 - 18th Street N.W., Washington, D.C.
 New York Post 1370 Natl. Press Bldg., Washington, D.C.
 Christian Science Monitor, 1293 Natl. Press Bldg., D.C.
 Intl. News Service 602 Times Herald Bldg. Wash., D.C.
 Time Magazine 815-15th Street N.W., Washington, D.C.
 2820 Dumbarton Street N.W., Washington, D.C.
 108 C Street N.W. Washington, D.C.
 108 C Street N.W. Washington, D.C.
 Foreign Policy Assoc., Natl. Press Bldg., Wash., D.C.
 France Press 1416 F. Street N.W., Wash., D.C.
 France Press 1416 F. Street N.W., Washington, D.C.
 U.S. News 24th and M Streets N.W. Washington, D.C.
 Kim Feng Farm Otis, Mass.
 Baltimore Sun 1214 Natl Press Bldg., Wash., D.C.
 J.T.A. 106 East 41st Street, New York, New York
 3959 Ames Street N.E., Washington, D.C.
 Washington Star, 11th and Penna. Ave., N.W., Wash, D.C.
 Washington Star, 11th and Penna. Ave., N.W., Wash, D.C.
 N.Y. Daily News 1272 Natl. Press Bldg. Wash., D.C.
 Scripps Howard 1013 - 13th St., N.W., Washington, D.C.
 1506 - 30th Street N.W., Washington, D.C.
 334 West 86th Street, New York
 2220 N. Quantico, Arlington, Va.
 3124 Woodley Rd. N.W., Washington, D.C.
 N.Y. Times 717 Albee Bldg., Washington, D.C.
 New Republic 1416 F Street N.W., Washington, D.C.
 N.Y. Herald Tribune 1285 Natl Press Bldg. Wash, D.C.
 U.N. World 1034 Woodward Bldg Washington, D.C.
 Chicago Sun Natl. Press Bldg. Washington, D.C.
 P.M. 1416 F. Street N.W. Washington, D.C.
 St. Louis Post Dispatch 201 Kellogg Bldg. Wash., D.C.
 Washington Post, Washington, D.C.
 World Report 1253 - 24th Street N.W., Wash., D.C.
 New York Times, 717 Albee Bldg. Wash. D.C.

CONFIDENTIAL

September 10, 1947

Members of the Executive of the Jewish Agency for Palestine

Eliahu Epstein

SUBJECT: Luncheon with the Editorial Board of THE NEW YORK TIMES, New York

On August 21 Mr. Arthur Hays Sulzberger, publisher of THE NEW YORK TIMES, invited me to lunch with him and members of his Editorial Board. At the luncheon were Mrs. Anne O'Hare McCormick, Mr. Edwin L. James, and Mr. Selim Sarper, former Turkish Ambassador to Moscow and Rome and now Chief of the Turkish Delegation to the U.N. (Mr. Cyrus L. Sulzberger, TIMES' correspondent in Ankara in 1941, was to some extent instrumental in introducing me to Mr. Sarper at that time). I had met Mr. Sarper in New York and he said that he would like to meet the publisher of THE NEW YORK TIMES, asking whether I could arrange such a meeting. In response to my request, Mr. Sulzberger invited both Mr. Sarper and myself to this luncheon.

After lunch, Mr. Sarper was asked to explain the present situation in Turkey. He spoke at length about the importance to America of strengthening Turkey--the only bulwark against Soviet expansion in the Middle East. He referred to his experiences in Moscow, saying that Stalin and Molotov had actually prepared a detailed plan for establishing in Turkey, after the war, a regime similar to those in the Balkans, which would make Turkey another Russian satellite. He went on to say that Turkey's determination to oppose Russia's ambitions, by force if necessary, had prevented Stalin and Molotov from proceeding with their plan. Despite his desire to control Turkey, Stalin did not want to involve Russia in a new war. Had Turkey not taken such a determined attitude of opposition to Russia, he concluded, Iran, Greece, and possibly Iraq, would by this time have been completely dominated by the U.S.S.R.

Asked about the character of the present Turkish Government, Mr. Sarper frankly admitted that his country was far from being democratic in the Western sense but said that a sudden change from one policy to another would create more confusion rather than prepare the way for further social, economic, and political development. He indicated that President Ismet Inom had a full understanding of the need for more democracy in Turkey.

Mr. Sulzberger asked about the situation of the minorities in Turkey and Mr. Sarper painted an extremely optimistic picture of the conditions under which Jews, Greeks, and Armenians found themselves under the Turkish aegis. Apparently in order to win over Mr. Sulzberger's sympathy, he went on to describe the friendly atmosphere in which the Jewish community lived in Turkey and the spirit of friendship which had always prevailed in the attitude of the Turkish Government towards their Jewish population.

Mr. Sarper was obviously embarrassed when Mrs. McCormick asked him about Turkey's position on the Palestine problem. Thinking that this question was put to him more as a challenge than in order to receive information, Mr. Sarper began to

September 10, 1947

apologize, elaborating on Turkey's difficulties, surrounded as it was by Arab countries and faced by the Russian danger, and, therefore, having to avoid as much as possible any friction with its neighbors. He referred again to traditional Turkish-Jewish friendship and emphasized his Government's appreciation of Jewish achievements in Palestine and its desire to see further Jewish development in Palestine made possible. He went on to explain that at the last Special Session of the U.N., the Turkish position had been misunderstood by those who described it as entirely pro-Arab, because in actual fact the Turks were trying to adhere to a position of neutrality.

Mrs. McCormick seemed rather amused by these explanations, but refrained from making any comments or asking further questions. She turned to me, however, and asked what we expected from the U.N. Special Committee on Palestine.

In the course of the conversation which then turned to Palestine, Mr. James made a very strong statement against terrorism, saying that in his opinion this harmed the Jewish cause more than anything else. It had raised in the minds of many neutral people serious doubts about the desirability of helping Zionism when the movement had adopted such means to achieve its ends.

I was glad to have the opportunity of explaining the present situation in Palestine, our stand with regard to terror, and the provocative role which the British Government had played in breeding movements like the Irgun and Stern Group.

Mr. Sulsberger did not participate in this part of the conversation. On leaving the dining room, however, he asked me to come to see him again soon and to keep him informed about the situation. This I did by later sending him some of the memoranda issued by our Jerusalem office in connection with UNSCOP.

CONFIDENTIAL

September 10, 1947

Members of the Executive of the Jewish Agency for Palestine

Eliahu Epstein

SUBJECT: Conversation with Mr. Selim Sarper

Following our luncheon with Mr. Arthur Hays Sulzberger and members of the Editorial Board of THE NEW YORK TIMES on August 21, Mr. Sarper invited me to his hotel for a talk.

He first thanked me for my help in arranging the meeting with the publisher of the TIMES. He then went on to blame his colleagues who represented the Turkish Government in this country for overlooking the importance of presenting the Turkish case to the American public. Understanding on the part of the American public of the situation in Turkey, he said, would strengthen the Truman Doctrine not only as a matter of expediency but as a link in establishing good relations between the two countries. He expressed the hope that we would help him in his work in this field, since he knew that the Jewish community played an important role in many fields of American life.

Apparently feeling that such a request should be followed by a suggestion of some kind of quid pro quo, Mr. Sarper told me that he would like to have my opinion about the desirability of having Turkey mediate between us and the Arabs for some kind of a settlement of the Palestine problem which would be satisfactory to both sides. He assured me that there was nothing Turkey would like better than to see a peaceful Palestine as the present situation there might become a source of more trouble from the viewpoints of both politics and security. Turkey sympathized with the Jews both for their work in Palestine and their sufferings, and did not want to line up with the Arabs in the Palestine controversy as this might result in loss of prestige for Turkey by indicating her dependence on her Arab neighbors.

Mr. Sarper made it clear that the above idea was entirely his own and that he had received no directives along these lines from his Government.

In reply, I told Mr. Sarper that we would welcome any help from him and from his Government in facilitating an understanding with the Arabs. We had never refused any opportunities of this kind in the past and we should be only too glad if our controversy with the Arabs could be settled through Turkish mediation. I emphasized that no mediation would have any chance of succeeding so long as the Arabs refused to recognize the rights of the Jewish people in Palestine and the connection between Palestine and the world Jewish problem. It was only on these assumptions, I said, that a practical plan for better understanding could be worked out. I found it necessary to stress that my remarks had been as informal and personal as his, and we both agreed that we should have a more detailed conversation on this subject after we had investigated the attitude of our superiors towards this plan.

September 10, 1947

At this point Mr. Sarper's secretary interrupted with a message from Ankara informing him that the Foreign Minister, Mr. Hasan Saka, would not be able to attend the Session of the General Assembly and that Sarper would be leading the Delegation. Mr. Sarper read the telegram to me and remarked that this new development would facilitate his activities and that he would do his best to help us as much as he could within the limitations of Turkey's need to maintain friendly relations with the Arabs.

Whether he would be able to help us and to what extent would depend, in his opinion, to a very large degree upon the position which the American Government takes on the Palestine issue. The Turks would be able to follow a more neutral line at the coming Session if America takes up a clear position in favor of the Jews. This was the only argument which he himself would be able to use in discussing the matter with his Government and in counteracting the arguments and pressure of the Arabs.

In conclusion, Mr. Sarper suggested that I should keep in constant contact with him before and especially during the Session of the United Nations General Assembly.



CONFIDENTIAL #27 59
September 11, 1947

Members of the Executive of the Jewish Agency for Palestine

Elihu Epstein

SUBJECT: Conversation with Mr. Oscar Chapman, Under-Secretary of Interior, Washington, DC

On August 27th I was invited by Mr. Chapman, Under-Secretary of Interior, to have luncheon with him. Mr. John Collier, President of the Institute of Ethnic Affairs and former Indian Commissioner in the Department of Interior, was also present.

Mr. Chapman, a Gentile, has in recent years given support to many Jewish organizations of both a local and national character and was at one time connected with the Hebrew Committee for National Liberation. He is one of the few New Dealers who have remained in the upper levels of the present Administration.

During the conversation Mr. Chapman explained his earlier sympathy for Bergson on the grounds that he had not been approached by any other Zionist group. As he always felt sympathy for the sufferings of the Jewish people and had decided to do something to help, he did not hesitate to promise his support when Peter Bergson came to see him, feeling that this would afford him an opportunity to do something tangible to help the Jewish cause. He went on to say that he understood the situation much better now and in this connection referred to a recent conversation with Dr. Silver who had enlightened him on many aspects of the Zionist question.

Mr. Chapman asked me to explain the present situation in Palestine, and Mr. Collier strongly condemned the terrorists and their supporters in the United States.

Both Messrs. Chapman and Collier asked me many questions regarding our capacity for self-government. They were especially interested in our interpretation of the meaning of a "viable" Jewish State and inquired about the possible reaction of the Yishuv to an UNSCOP recommendation for partition.

When the conversation turned to our situation in this country, Mr. Chapman said that, in his opinion, the support of the President for our case was never so essential as in the present stage of our struggle. Only a clear and determined stand taken by the President would prevent a possible misinterpretation by the Near Eastern Division of the State Department with a resultant alignment, as in the past, with the British Foreign Office. Mr. Chapman told me about some of his recent efforts to gain the support of Secretary Snyder who is one of the men closest to the President.

Mr. Collier warned against drawing a line between the White House and the State Department, as this, in his opinion, was more imaginary than real in view of the close relations between the President and Mr. Marshall. Mr. Chapman, however, insisted on the desirability of gaining the support of the President independent of his Secretary of State and stressed the possibility of attaining this if prompt and proper action were taken.

Mr. Chapman assured me that in cooperation with Dr. Silver, he would continue his efforts with Secretary Snyder and other people close to the President.

The Jewish Agency in Palestine

MEMORANDUM NO. 62

CONFIDENTIAL

September 11, 1947

TO: Members of the Executive of the Jewish Agency for Palestine

FROM: Eliahu Epstein

SUBJECT: Conversation with Mr. Joseph C. Satterthwaite, Acting Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs, Department of State, Washington, D. C.

On September 2 I called on Mr. Satterthwaite who, in the absence of Mr. Henderson, is in charge of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs in the State Department. The purpose of my visit was to ask what had been done in connection with EXODUS 1947 since my conversation with Acting Secretary Lovett (see my Memo No. 61, September 11). I also wanted to learn the first reactions of the Office to the UNSCOP reports.

The conversation was entirely informal and there were no others present at the meeting, contrary to the usual custom of the Near Eastern Division.

Mr. Satterthwaite informed me that the State Department had made further efforts to influence the British not to land the 4400 refugees in Germany. The British, for their part, were trying again to negotiate with the French for a possibility of landing them somewhere in France. The State Department had no further information regarding the final decision of the British or whether the pressure of the State Department and American public opinion was likely to lead to an alteration of their decision regarding Hamburg.

When the conversation turned to the UNSCOP reports, Mr. Satterthwaite told me that as the Department did not have the full text of the reports in their possession, they were unable to say anything regarding the merits of the majority and minority reports. Following receipt of the report it would take some time before a comprehensive and detailed analysis was made by the Near Eastern Division on which they would base their own conclusions for submission to the Secretary of State.

Mr. Satterthwaite asked about the Jewish reaction and I told him of the resolution adopted by the Zionist Actions Committee in Zurich, which I later submitted to him in full. I also referred to Mrs. Golda Myerson's statement to the press as reported in the NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE. This I also sent him.

Mr. Satterthwaite, who served for several years in the American Embassy in Baghdad, was especially interested in Iraq's reaction to the idea of a Jewish State to which they had always been opposed as they were afraid that such a State might cut them off from access to the Mediterranean along the Palestine coast.

This conversation brought us to King Abdullah's Greater Syria plan, the wisdom of which Mr. Satterthwaite questioned as it would have little chance of success in the face of Saudi Arabian and Egyptian opposition. Moreover, there were strong forces in Syria which would never admit the subordination of Damascus to any outside influence. Feisal had had many troubles with the Damascenes when he was King

September 11, 1947

of Syria, and Abdullah would have even more owing to his weaker personality. Damascus also feared a Hashimite conspiracy to make Baghdad a future capital of Greater Syria and to restore the Abbassides grandeur of that city. Mr. Satterthwaite admitted the critical state of affairs within the Arab League and agreed with me that the present situation in the Arab camp was more conducive to a solution of the Palestine problem than had been the case in the early days of the Arab League.

I could guess from some of Mr. Satterthwaite's remarks that Nokrashy Pasha's presentation of the Egyptian case in the Security Council had made a rather poor impression. The Egyptian position had been weakened by the mere fact that most of their delegation were admitting in private conversations that they had no case against the British while making contrary statements in public. Everyone was well aware that it was the internal troubles of the present Egyptian Government that had driven them to Lake Success rather than convictions or a desire to bring their relations with the British to a head at this moment.

Mr. Satterthwaite asked me to explain several parts of UNSCOP's report regarding the Jewish-Arab frontiers proposed by both the majority and the minority. This gave me an opportunity to stress the injustice done to the Jewish State even in the majority report by the exclusion of Western Galilee and the Jewish part of Jerusalem.

Mr. Satterthwaite will apparently remain temporarily in charge of the Office after the return of Mr. Henderson as the latter will be spending most of his time at the United Nations General Assembly. Mr. Henderson will be assisted there by the same members of his staff, including Mr. Wilkins, the head of the Palestine Desk.

CONFIDENTIAL #64

September 11, 1947

Members of the Executive of the Jewish Agency for Palestine

Eliahu Epstein

SUBJECT: Conversation with Lord Inverchapel, British Ambassador Washington, DC

On September 5th Justice Felix Frankfurter telephoned me from his country home in Massachusetts and suggested that I see Lord Inverchapel to ask his personal assistance in preventing the deportation of the EXODUS refugees to Germany. Although he did not believe that there was any real chance of moving Bevin from his position in this matter, Justice Frankfurter thought it might be useful to try to use Lord Inverchapel's personal influence with the Foreign Office to do something before it was too late. I agreed that though the chances for success were slim, we had benefitted by Lord Inverchapel's cooperation on several occasions in the past and there was no risk in presenting this matter to him. I further informed Justice Frankfurter that, according to reliable information, the British Embassy here had cooperated with the State Department in trying to change the Foreign Office decision.

My interview with the Ambassador was arranged for the next morning, September 6th. When I brought up the question of the EXODUS, he interrupted me by saying that he was ready to discuss every possible subject with me except that one. "I have my own feelings on this subject and if you press me I might tell you, but I cannot say anything and I cannot do anything besides what you already know," he added rather sadly. There was nothing for me to do but to shift to another topic - the UNSCOP's report.

The Ambassador tried to avoid a detailed discussion of this subject as well saying that he had not yet received the full report and had not heard anything from London which would indicate that position H.M.G. would take at the coming session of the UN General Assembly. However, he asked a number of questions regarding the frontiers suggested by the two reports, inquiring what would happen to the Jewish institutions in Jerusalem, as this city would be outside the Jewish State, whether we should be able to develop the Negev without the prior implementation of the Jordan Valley Authority plan, etc.

He also inquired after Dr. Weismann and expressed his desire to see him when he arrived in the States.

Wishing to avoid political discussion, Lord Inverchapel turned to the subject of the Hebrew language and showed great interest in the manner in which modern education in Palestine was carried on through the medium of the Hebrew language. Feeling the necessity of saying something sympathetic, probably as an indication of his own feelings, he told me, while seeing me to the door, that he was taking care of things as much as he could, although it was very complicated for him and that "his boss didn't make them easier for him" - meaning, undoubtedly, the sensation which Mr. Bevin's speech on the Fort Knox gold had caused that morning in the American press.

The conversation lasted 30 minutes.

הסוכנות היהודית לארץ ישראל

The Jewish Agency for Palestine

MEMORANDUM

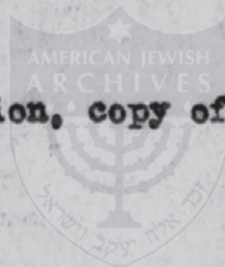
October 9, 1947

TO: Members of the American Section of the Executive

FROM: Eliahu Epstein

I attach, for your information, copy of a letter from
Mr. Sumner Welles, dated October 6, 1947.

EE:HF
Encl.



COPY

SUMNER WELLES

Oxon Hill Manor
Oxon Hill, Maryland

October 6, 1947

My dear Mr. Epstein:

Thank you very much indeed for your letter of September 26. I have been deeply interested in reading its contents and the information you have sent me has been most helpful.

At this moment I agree that the immediate cause for anxiety is the apparently still undecided position of the Government of the United States. It seems to me almost incredible, in view of the opportunity for constructive leadership that has been offered my Government and in view of the chance afforded for the exercise of American influence in behalf of a solution such as that recommended by the official body of the United Nations, that a positive position of the proper kind should not long since have already been assumed.

My own syndicated article to be published tomorrow represents the conclusions I have reached. I realize fully that many will say that one of the chief recommendations set forth in that article is not practical, but in my considered judgment, if the United States permits the Palestine solution to become involved in the present increasingly serious contest between Moscow and Washington, no solution will be found feasible. I most earnestly hope that a way may still be found within the United Nations by which prompt action can be taken and action of a character that means the realization of the ideal for which the Jewish Agency has so long and so valiantly contended.

With my best wishes, believe me,

Yours very sincerely,

/s/ Sumner Welles

Mr. Eliahu Epstein,
The Jewish Agency for Palestine,
16 East 66th Street,
New York, New York.

December 9, 1947

Mr. Eliahu Epstein
Hotel Fourteen
14 E. Sixtieth Street
New York, N.Y.

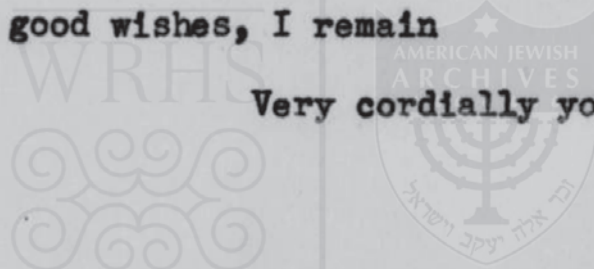
My dear Mr. Epstein:

Thank you for sending me a copy of the letter which
you received from Mr. Henderson in reply to your telegram.
I should be interested to see a copy of the telegram which you
send him.

With all good wishes, I remain

Very cordially yours,

AHS:BK



CABLE ADDRESS
JEWAGENCY

הסוכנות היהודית לארץ ישראל

The Jewish Agency for Palestine

AMS.

2210 Massachusetts Ave., N. W.
WASHINGTON 8, D. C.
ADAMS 5411

December 17, 1947

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver
The Jewish Agency for Palestine
16 East 66th Street
New York 21, New York

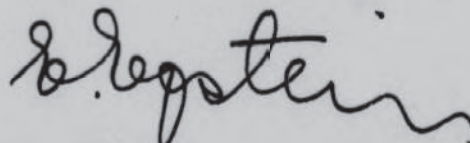
My dear Dr. Silver:

I have received your letter of December 9 and as you requested I am enclosing copy of the telegram which I sent to Mr. Henderson.

I have gladly accepted the invitation to attend the dinner being given in your honor on Monday, December 29, and I am looking forward with pleasure to seeing you on that occasion before your departure for Palestine.

Kind personal regards.

Very sincerely yours,



Eliahu Epstein

ee/mf
encl

Charge to the account of _____ \$

CLASS OF SERVICE DESIRED	
DOMESTIC	CABLE
TELEGRAM	ORDINARY
DAY LETTER	URGENT RATE
SERIAL	DEFERRED
NIGHT LETTER	NIGHT LETTER

Patrons should check class of service desired; otherwise the message will be transmitted as a telegram or ordinary cablegram.

WESTERN UNION

1206

JOSEPH L. EGAN
PRESIDENT

CHECK
ACCOUNTING INFORMATION
TIME FILED

Send the following telegram, subject to the terms on back hereof, which are hereby agreed to

C O P Y

WASHINGTON, D. C.

LOY W. HENDERSON
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

AT THIS HISTORIC HOUR OF UN DECISION ON PALESTINE AM CONVEYING TO YOU
MY APPRECIATION AND THANKS FOR ASSISTANCE AND COURTESIES EXTENDED ME
BY YOU PERSONALLY AND YOUR DEPARTMENT STOP LOOK FORWARD TO FUTURE
COOPERATION. SINCERELY

ELIAHU EPSTEIN



February 19, 1948

To: Members of the Executive of the Jewish Agency for Palestine

From: Eliahu Epstein

Please find enclosed for your information copies of letters received from the
State Department.



C O P Y .

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

Feb. 18, 1948

In reply refer to

NE

My dear Mr. Epstein:-

I have received your letter of Feb. 4, 1948 with regard to recent press reports to the effect that the United States Government has received information from the British Government concerning the passengers on the Pan York and the Pan Crescent.

The Department has thus far received only preliminary reports from the British Government with regard to the Jewish refugees on the Pan York and the Pan Crescent. It is understood these refugees are now on Cyprus; that most of them are Rumanian Jews; and that about one thousand of these refugees speak Russian. The incomplete character of these reports does not warrant further comment at this time.

It may be noted, in this connection that the reports to which you refer were made available by the British Government. It is, accordingly, suggested that further information with regard to these refugees might more appropriately be obtained from the British Government.

Sincerely yours,

For the Secretary of State:

Michael J. McDermott
Special Assistant to the Secretary
For Press Relations

Mr. Eliahu Epstein, Director
The Jewish Agency for Palestine
2210 Massachusetts Ave. N.W.
Washington, D.C.

C O P Y

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

WASHINGTON

In reply refer to
NE

Feb. 18, 1948

My dear Mr. Epstein:-

Acknowledgment is made of your letter of February 14, 1948 in which you quoted the text of a cablegram from the Chairman of the Executive of the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem.

The Department appreciates your making available this expression of Mr. Ben Gurion's views with regard to current developments in Palestine.

Sincerely yours,

For the Secretary of State

Gordon P. Merriam (signed)
Chief

Division of Near Eastern Affairs

Mr. Eliahu Epstein
Directoro Washington Office
The Jewish Agency for Palestine
2210 Massachusetts Ave. N.W.
Washington, DC

