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while pretending so [*sic*] friendship with Abdullah, had actually lowered his prestige to point where he could no longer help them in peace making. He said feeling was shared by all Abdullah's advisers and even by King himself and was responsible for failure of mixed committee at Jerusalem and for King's refusal to approve separate meetings between Mulki and Sasoon at Lausanne. Mulki says Transjordan is determined that unless Jews make some concessions by which Transjordan can rescue some of her prestige he doubted whether any peace could come and he personally would not sign such peace. "All the King can do is dismiss me," he said, "I will not face wrath of people of Transjordan and Arab world by signing away more than we have already given. The Jews have been too clever." Fawzi Mulki said he would continue to try here and would discuss with Arab Delegates question of asking commission to make proposals before breaking up.

Fawzi Mulki said there would, of course, be no trouble in getting commitments from Arab Governments on accepting refugees providing Israel made satisfactory commitment. He says Arabs have already agreed among themselves they will have to accept refugees and even Iraq has given some encouragement.

ETHRIDGE

501.BB Palestine/5-2849 : Telegram

The Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in Israel

TOP SECRET PRIORITY WASHINGTON, May 28, 1949—11 a. m.
 NIACT

322. Pres desires you deliver following note classified secret immediately to Ben-Gurion.¹

"Excellency: I have the honor to inform Your Excellency that the Pres of the US has instructed me to inform the Govt of Israel as follows:

The Govt of the US is seriously disturbed by the attitude of Israel with respect to a territorial settlement in Palestine and to the question of Palestinian refugees, as set forth by the representatives of Israel at Lausanne in public and private meetings. According to Dr. Eytan, the Israeli Govt will do nothing further about Palestinian refugees at the present time, although it has under consideration certain urgent measures of limited character. In connection with territorial matters, the position taken by Dr. Eytan apparently contemplates not only the retention of all territory now held under military occupation by Israel, which is clearly in excess of the partition boundaries of Nov 29, 1947, but possibly an additional acquisition of further territory within Palestine.

As a mem of the UN PCC and as a nation which has consistently striven to give practical effect to the principles of the UN, the US

¹ At 7 p. m., May 27, the Department sent a telegram to Secretary Acheson at Paris, numbered Telac 23. The editors have been unable to locate a copy in the files of the Department but presume it transmitted the text of the note to be delivered to the Israeli Prime Minister. The Secretary replied the following day, stating "Agree with text and dispatch." (Actel 20, 501.BB Palestine/5-2849) Actel 20 was received in the Department at 10:17 a. m., May 28.

Govt has recently made a number of representations to the Israeli Govt, concerning the repatriation of refugees who fled from the conflict in Palestine. These representations were in conformity with the principles set forth in the resolution of the GA of Dec 11, 1948, and urged the acceptance of the principle of substantial repatriation and the immediate beginnings of repatriation on a reasonable scale which would be well within the numbers to be agreed in a final settlement. The US Govt conceded that a final settlement of the refugee problem must await a definitive peace settlement. These representations, as well as those made concurrently to the Arab States concerning the resettlement outside of Palestine of a substantial portion of Palestine refugees, were made in the firm conviction that they pointed the way to a lasting peace in that area.

In the interests of a just and equitable solution of territorial questions the US Govt, in the UN and as a mem of the PCC, has supported the position that Israel should be expected to offer territorial compensation for any territorial acquisition which it expects to effect beyond the boundaries set forth in the res of the GA of Nov 29, 1947. The Govt of Israel has been well aware of this position and of the view of the US Govt that it is based upon elementary principles of fairness and equity.

The US Govt is deeply concerned to learn from Dr. Eytan's statements that the suggestions both on refugees and on territorial questions which have been made by it for the sole purpose of advancing prospects of peace have made so little impression upon the Govt of Israel.

The US attitude of sympathy and support for Israel has arisen out of broad American interest and principles, particularly out of its support for the UN and its desire to achieve peace and security in the Near East on a realistic basis. The US Govt and people have given generous support to the creation of Israel because they have been convinced of the justice of this aspiration. The US Govt does not, however, regard the present attitude of the Israeli Govt as being consistent with the principles upon which US support has been based. The US Govt is gravely concerned lest Israel now endanger the possibility of arriving at a solution of the Palestine problem in such a way as to contribute to the establishment of sound and friendly relations between Israel and its neighbors.

The Govt of Israel should entertain no doubt whatever that the US Govt relies upon it to take responsible and positive action concerning Palestine refugees and that, far from supporting excessive Israeli claims to further territory within Palestine, the US Govt believes that it is necessary for Israel to offer territorial compensation for territory which it expects to acquire beyond the boundaries of the Nov 29, 1947 res of the GA.

The Govt of Israel must be aware that the attitude which it has thus far assumed at Lausanne must inevitably lead to a rupture in those conversations. The US Govt must state in candor that it considers that the Govt of Israel must provide a basis for a continuation of such talks under the auspices of the PCC and that a rupture arising out of the rigid attitude of the Govt of Israel would place a heavy responsibility upon that Govt and people.

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If the Govt of Israel continues to reject the basic principles set forth by the res of the GA of Dec 11, 1948 and the friendly advice offered by the US Govt for the sole purpose of facilitating a genuine peace in Palestine, the US Govt will regretfully be forced to the conclusion that a revision of its attitude toward Israel has become unavoidable."

Please report time of delivery niact in order that Department may furnish copy to Elath.²

WEBB

² A marginal notation states that this telegram was "cleared with the White House 5/27/49."

Mr. Satterthwaite, on May 30, handed to the Israeli Chargé Uriel Heyd, the text of the United States note to the Israeli Government. The latter made no comment after reading the note. Mr. Satterthwaite "made no comment other than to emphasize the fact that the note had been delivered under the instructions of the President." (Memorandum of conversation by Mr. Satterthwaite, 867N.01/5-3049)

Israeli Ambassador Elath called on Acting Secretary Webb on May 31 just prior to his departure for a visit to Israel. The prime subject of their discussion was the United States note. Mr. Webb records that "With strong emotion in his voice the Ambassador said he prayed to God that the United States Government would not underestimate Israeli determination to preserve the security of Israel at all costs. It would be a tragic thing, he said, if the friendly relations between our two countries should be altered because the United States Government insisted on a course of action which would threaten Israeli security. He expressed the fervent hope that this would not come to pass.

"I said that I was sure the Israeli Government realized that the United States Government would not send such a note without prior and careful consideration of all the aspects involved. I referred to the friendly relations between our two countries, and to the United States desire to see these relations continue, and I said that it was out of the deep friendship of the United States for Israel that we had made the recommendations which we believed would lead to a lasting peace in the Near East. I reiterated that what was necessary was a sincere desire by all the parties to bring about a genuine peace." (Memorandum of conversation, 501.BB Palestine/5-3149)

501.BB Palestine/5-2949: Telegram

The Ambassador in Israel (McDonald) to the Secretary of State

TOP SECRET NIACT

TEL AVIV, May 29, 1949—6 p. m.

PRIORITY

406. ReDeptel 322, May 28. During half hour conference (Ford also present) May 29 with Prime Minister and Foreign Minister at former's home they read slowly note from President. At end of reading Foreign Minister said "this grave note calls for considered answer which we shall prepare."

Prime Minister then expressed following: US is world power which helped us much before and after state set up. US has right to "have a say." But note ignores two fundamental facts:

ISRAEL

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1. November 29 resolution never carried out by UN, US or Middle East States. It contemplated two states, Israel and independent Arab Palestine, united by customs and other ties at peace with one another and neighbors. Prime Minister unable recall any strong action by US or UN to enforce November 29 or prevent aggression by Syria, Egypt, Lebanon and Iraq. Instead embargo encouraged aggressors against Israel whose very existence was in danger. Had Jews waited on US or UN they would have been exterminated. Israel was established not on basis November 29 but on that of successful war of defence. Hence note's suggestion is today unjust and unrealistic for it ignores war and continued Arab threats which make November 29 boundaries impossible.

2. Solution refugees can be considered only as part peace settlement. Arab States refuse make peace and on May 4, Israel's independence day, threatened renewal war. So long as this attitude persists refugees are potential enemies of Israel. If war were renewed could Israel appeal to US to send arms or troops for defence against refugees fighting on side of aggressors? Upon whom does US ask Israel to rely?

In impassioned conclusion "off the record" Prime Minister said: "US is powerful and we are weak; we could be destroyed; but we do not intend to commit suicide by accepting November 29 settlement in today's fundamentally changed conditions."

Comment: Manner of Prime Minister's response and unusual reticence of Foreign Minister indicated extreme seriousness their reception of President's note. When Prime Minister opined that this was strongest representation yet sent by US to Israel I agreed but otherwise made no comment. There is no grounds however, for confidence Israel will accept without substantial reservations fundamentals of US position. I anticipate Israel's formal reply soon. *End comment.*

MCDONALD

501BB Palestine/5-3149

Memorandum by the Acting Secretary of State

TOP SECRET

[WASHINGTON, May 31, 1949.]

MEETING WITH PRESIDENT, TUESDAY, MAY 31, 1949

NOTE TO THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT

I indicated to the President the substance of the reports we have received as to the reaction of the reaction of the Israeli Government to our recent note, and he expressed real interest. I feel very sure that he has no doubts as to the wisdom of the course being followed.

J[AMES E.] W[EBB]