POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES WITH RESPECT TO JORDAN

Policy Statement Prepared in the Department of State

SECRET

WASHINGTON, April 17, 1950.

JORDAN

A. OBJECTIVES

The political and economic stability of Jordan, as well as that of the rest of the Near East, is of great importance to the security of the United States, and the economic opportunities of the people should be raised above the level at which social revolution is a recurring threat.

It is in the national interest of the United States to have the respect and, so far as possible, the good will of all the peoples of the Near East, Jews and Arabs alike, and their orientation toward the west and away from the Soviet Union.

We should seek to reconcile the differences between Israel on the one hand and Jordan and the other Arab states on the other and to promote economic arrangements such as the resumption of normal commercial intercourse within and through the area.

We should provide advice and guidance in the solution of the economic, social and political problems of the country contingent upon its willingness to apply the maximum of self-help.

There should be close United States–United Kingdom cooperation wherever possible to achieve these basic objectives.

B. POLICIES

Political. The Hashemite Kingdom of the Jordan was created by the United Kingdom out of the Syrian provinces of the Ottoman Empire. The country continues to depend upon the United Kingdom

1Department of State Policy (Information) Statements were concise documents summarizing the current United States policy toward, the relations of principal powers with, and the issues and trends in a particular country or region. The statements were intended to provide information and guidance for officers in missions abroad. They were generally prepared by ad hoc working groups in the responsible geographic offices of the Department of State and were referred to appropriate diplomatic missions abroad, under cover of formal instructions from the Secretary of State, for comment and criticism. The Policy Statements were periodically revised.
for economic assistance and political support. The United States regards the continuance of the special relationship existing between the United Kingdom and Jordan to be in its own interests as well as those of the two countries concerned.

The US at first withheld recognition of Jordan because we wished to be satisfied that the country was in fact sovereign and independent and fully able to discharge its international obligations. More recently recognition was delayed because of the political complications it would have injected into the Palestine question. On January 31, 1949, however, the United States extended de jure recognition simultaneously to the governments of Jordan and Israel. Legislations have been established in Amman and Washington, and Ministers Plenipotentiary have been exchanged.

The fact that Jordan has the longest military frontier with Israel of any of the Arab states, that it possesses the only efficient and highly trained Arab military force, that it shares the occupation of Jerusalem with Israel, and that many of its economic development problems can only be solved on the basis of cooperation with Israel, makes Jordan a highly important factor in any solution of the Palestine problem which may be reached. The major problems which confront Jordan today and which are of primary concern to the United States are the establishment of peaceful and friendly relations between Israel and Jordan and the successful absorption into the polity and economy of Jordan of Arab Palestine, its inhabitants, and the bulk of the refugees now located there.

Since the cessation of hostilities in Palestine, Jordan has consistently maintained a more favorable and realistic attitude than the other Arab states with regard to reaching an agreement with Israel and resolving the problem of the Palestine refugees. The United States has encouraged this attitude on the part of Jordan.

Beginning in November 1949 and continuing into March of 1950, Jordan and Israel have held direct talks on territorial questions in general and on the Jerusalem question. Difficulties centered for the most part around the width of a corridor to the Mediterranean desired by Jordan. In Jerusalem they turned on access for the Israelis to Mt. Scopus and the Old City and the return of the Arab quarters to Jordan. Finally on February 24 a special agreement was initialised by the emissaries of King Abdullah and representatives of the Israeli government with a number of provisions including a five year non-aggression pact, the resumption of trade, continuation of the armistice lines, and a free zone at Haifa for Jordan.

As the result of the failure of King Abdullah to consult his cabinet before initialing the agreement and the unwillingness of the Palestine Arabs in the Cabinet to approve, the Jordan government refused to ratify the terms of the agreement and a temporary cabinet crisis
ensued. The government agreed, however, to continue the talks with Israel after the Jordanian elections on April 11.²

Since February 1949 King Abdullah has taken successive steps to incorporate the area of Central Palestine into Jordan. Although he has not yet issued a formal decree of annexation, it is believed that this step will be taken in the near future.

The United States with the United Kingdom has favored the annexation by Jordan of Arab Palestine. Although the UK would have preferred to permit King Abdullah to annex this territory at an earlier date, we opposed precipitate action on the ground that it would have been detrimental to the negotiations then in progress in the Palestine Conciliation Commission.³

Since 1948 Jordan has been in occupation of the old city of Jerusalem. At an earlier period, King Abdullah indicated that he was willing to accept internationalization of the entire city and, failing that, would prefer Jordan annexation of the Arab section of the City. As time has passed, however, Jordan has become increasingly unwilling to permit internationalization and would prefer to reach agreement with Israel on partition of the city. To a certain extent Jordan recognizes the special status of the city since it has not requested exequatur from our consular representatives in Jerusalem and permits them to travel freely in the Old City without visas.

The United States has favored the principle of the internationalization of Jerusalem to the degree necessary to achieve agreement among the main parties in interest, and has supported United Nations efforts to achieve this. Since the Jerusalem question is still sub judice in the

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² For documentation concerning the failure of the Jordan-Israeli negotiations and the ensuing Jordanian Cabinet crisis, see files 785 and 684.68. The Minister in Amman, Gerald A. Drew, doubted that negotiations would be resumed in the near future following the April crisis (Embattel 84, April 26, 684.68/4-2650). According to a despatch from Amman which reviewed the Department's Policy Statement, the Jordanian government did not agree to continue these negotiations after the elections of April 11 (despatch 163, January 9, 1951, 611.85/1-861).

³ On April 24 the Jordanian Parliament unanimously approved a resolution concerning the union of Central Palestine with Jordan. For documentation concerning this annexation, see files 784 and 684.88. The text of the resolution passed by Parliament is included in telegram 82 from Amman (April 25, 684.68/4-2550).

The policy of the Department, as stated in a paper on this subject prepared for the Foreign Ministers meetings in London in May was in favor of the Incorporation of Central Palestine into Jordan but desired that it be done gradually and not by sudden proclamation. Once the annexation took place, the Department approved of the action "in the sense that it represents a logical development of the situation which took place as a result of a free expression of the will of the people. . . . The United States continues to wish to avoid a public expression of approval of the union." (FM D D-10/1, p. 2, CPN files, lot M 88, box 149, May FM Meeting, C & D series) For documentation concerning these Foreign Ministers meetings in London, see Foreign Relations, 1950, vol. III, pp. 828 ff.

Lot M 88 is a consolidated master collection of the records of conferences of Heads of State, Council of Foreign Ministers and ancillary bodies, North Atlantic Council, other meetings of the Secretary of State with the Foreign Ministers of European powers, and materials on the Austrian and German peace settlements for the years 1945-1955 prepared by the Department of State Records Service Center.
United Nations, we do not recognize any claim to sovereignty on the part of Jordan or Israel in their respective zones of occupation in the Holy City.\footnote{For documentation concerning the internationalization of Jerusalem, see pp. 655 ff.}

Jordan is not yet a member of the United Nations. The United States continues to support its application.

\textit{Economic.} The economic situation with which Jordan is presently faced results primarily from two factors: first, the lack of productive resources, either agricultural or industrial, in Jordan itself and in Arab Palestine; second, the influx of refugees from western Palestine as a result of the Israel-Arab war. This increase in population amounted to 280,000 or more than 50\%, in Arab Palestine, and 70,000 or about 20\%, in Jordan itself. Jordan, which controls and is in the process of annexing Arab Palestine, is financially incapable of caring for this refugee population and of promoting its absorption into the economy of the country. The United Nations Relief for Palestine Refugees organization has been supporting the refugees at a subsistence level but is not equipped to do any more than that. To fill the resulting need, the United Nations General Assembly, by its resolution of December 8, 1949, established the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (PRA). The function of this Agency is two-fold, to provide relief and work for the refugees and to contribute to the economic development of the country, primarily through the use of the water resources of the Jordan and its tributaries for the irrigation of potentially arable land. The Agency plans to undertake a number of important development projects in Jordan which, it is hoped, will result in permanent settlement in the area of some of the refugees. The Jordan government has promised full cooperation.

There will be opportunity under the Point IV program to further the economic development undertaken by PRA and to facilitate complementary progress in other fields. In both programs the emphasis should be on creating a situation in which Jordan will be able to proceed more or less independently with her development after the initial PRA effort is concluded. To this end, an attempt should be made to stress the training of Jordan students and technicians so that they will be able to carry on the work themselves once it has been begun.\footnote{For documentation concerning technical assistance to Jordan, see file 885.00 TA.}

There are, of course, urgent political reasons for assisting Jordan in her economic development so that the large refugee population may be absorbed. These homeless and jobless people constitute an unstable element in the Near East wherever they have gathered, and there is
ample evidence that Communists have found fertile ground for their propaganda among them.\footnote{The Legation in Amman, in their review of this Policy Statement, denied that the propagandistic efforts of the Communists among the refugees have found "fertile ground" (Despatch 163 of January 9, 1951, 611.85/1-951).} In order to eliminate this danger to the stability and to the western orientation of the area, the refugees must be settled and provided with means of livelihood.

Aside from direct assistance through the programs outlined above, the United States should seek to promote the economic betterment of Jordan through the removal of trade barriers and the resumption of normal commercial relations between Jordan and all the neighboring states. To the extent that relatively high prices prevailing in Israel might, if trade is resumed with that country, initially drain off food products from the local Jordan market, the Jordan government should take steps to import other cheaper and perhaps equally acceptable food from surrounding countries to prevent food shortages and resultant hardships. Such a trade pattern between Israel and Jordan should be encouraged as of mutual benefit to both countries.

The United States should encourage use of measures which will result in more productive employment of currently earned foreign exchange and also an increase in exchange earnings through production for export.\footnote{Although the United States initiated negotiations with Jordan concerning the possible signing of a Treaty of Friendship, Commerce, and Navigation during the last several months of 1950, talks were not begun in earnest until January 1951. For documentation concerning these discussions, see file 611.854.}

It should be emphasized that in our activity with regard to Jordan's economic situation, as with her political affairs, we should cooperate closely with the British government, which is in special relationship with the country.

C. RELATIONS WITH OTHER STATES

The relationships existing among the Arab states are, fundamentally, the relationships among personalities and families. Antagonisms have developed on two general levels: the Hashemites versus anti-Hashemites; and King Abdullah of Jordan versus all other ruling groups. The Hashemites rule Iraq and Jordan, and they are opposed particularly by Ibn Saud of Saudi Arabia, with whom a traditional feud has existed since the early 1920's, and by Egypt, who sees them as a potential threat to her position of leadership in the Arab world. Abdullah himself, because of his "Greater Syria" scheme, is feared even by Iraq. Iraq–Jordan antagonism has recently been augmented as a result of the agitation for Iraq-Syrian unity. Lebanese Christians fear a "Greater Syria" in which they would be subject to the domination of the Moslem majority. Syrian ruling families approve the scheme in principle but only if they can retain their power.
These animosities have been heightened as a result of the recent Palestine hostilities. Jordan and the other Arab League states differ in this regard on three basic points:

1. The disposal of Arab Palestine, which Jordan desires to annex and which the other states wish to see remain a separate entity.
2. The Jerusalem question. The Arab League has supported the internationalization of that city, while Jordan is anxious to retain control of it.
3. Peace with Israel. The Arab League desires to maintain a common front against Israel and to continue the economic blockade of that state. The League itself has reportedly threatened Jordan with expulsion if it comes to a separate peace agreement. Syria and Egypt have threatened to cut off supplies to Jordan in retaliation for any breach of the economic boycott of Israel, and Syria has gone further in threatening to close its frontier with Jordan as a retaliatory move.

Jordan has special treaty relations with Great Britain, under the terms of which Britain supports the Jordan Arab Legion. Although nominally independent, Jordan depends largely upon Great Britain for economic support. Jordan has no relations with the Soviet Union.

Jordan is a member of the Universal Postal Union, the International Civil Aviation Organization, and the World Health Organization, and it has applied for membership in the United Nations and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

D. POLICY EVALUATION

The policy which is being followed with regard to the Jordan-Israel negotiations involves a certain element of risk. It is possible, for example, that encouraging Jordan to make a separate peace with Israel may, if successful, result in open animosity between Jordan and the other Arab states which would have damaging effects upon the stability of the area. However, the chance of bringing to an end the uneasy situation which now exists appears to be well worth the risk, and our policy in this regard toward Jordan has been helpful in strengthening King Abdullah's determination to reach a peace settlement.

Another obstacle to a peace settlement, the intransigent attitude of Palestine Arabs, may become of greater importance following the election of representatives of Arab Palestine to the Jordan legislature.

With regard to Jerusalem, neither Israel nor Jordan has given any indication that it will be willing to accept internationalization as demanded by the General Assembly resolutions. It is the US hope that these two states can come to an agreed solution which will be acceptable to the Christian world. This problem will undoubtedly continue to give difficulty, and the means to its resolution are not clear at this time.