

Clark:

Please do not let anyone else
read this dynamite.



(Lowenthal)

PALESTINE

May 11, 1948

WHAT ARE THE ALTERNATIVES BEFORE THE PRESIDENT AT THIS MOMENT?

1. Secretary Marshall's attitude.

Last Saturday, May 8, at a conference in his office with Mr. Shertok, the Secretary was given a cable received by Mr. Shertok from Palestine, reporting an offer from an Arab Legion colonel representing King Abdullah; the offer was for an agreement between Abdullah and the Jewish State, to enable Abdullah, without Jewish interference, to take over the Arab portion of Palestine, while leaving the Jewish area to the Jews. Mr. Shertok's Washington representative privately reports that Secretary Marshall twice said: there is nothing I would like more than such an agreement between Abdullah and the Jews.



2. The contrary assumption, that the Jews will be swallowed by the Arabs two years from now, or at some future time.

That assumption whether it be regarded as a military judgment about the future or a simple prophecy, may be correct. But it may be incorrect.

the future or a simple prophecy, may be correct. But it may be incorrect. Who can say for sure? The best military judgment has at times been upset by actual events, as in the case of the prophecy about how long the Russians would be able to hold out against Hitler's armies. There may be facts not known about the Jews and Arabs, to wit:

(1) Arabs -- what will come of their internal rivalries, whether the Jews can play them off against each other, whether the Jews can scare off Arab troops and for how long, etc.

(2) Jews -- they are said to have heavy artillery and other equipment of such size that they have not dared to use it while the British troops are still there, lest the British try to seize this equipment.

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It is said that it will be brought into play immediately after May 15, or after August 1 (date of final British departure), unless the fighting does not require full disclosure of the equipment available for use. Do we know the facts on this point fully, and in detail and accurately?

It is said that the Jews have youths of military age in Italy, North Africa, Germany, Yemen, France, Cyprus, all picked for prior immigration. It is said that there has been preliminary military education of many of these youths. Do we know how many of them there are, how soon they will get to Palestine; and, important for this inquiry, whether any of them can get in, and if so how many, despite a naval blockade that may be set up by American ships of war?

Do we know what are the facilities available in Palestine for arms manufacture, what new facilities are being built, what military supplies

are waiting in South America and European countries?

Have we accurately gauged the Palestinian Jews' know-how and speed?

This morning's New York Times dispatch reports that though the experienced British had estimated that it would take the Jews a week to clear the roadblocks on the TEL Aviv-Jerusalem road, Haganah did the job in a few hours.

Can we be sure of the British? Are they going to try for peaceful conditions in Jewish Palestine, to protect the investments by large British capital, already made and now in process of being greatly increased, in the chemical works, the electric power works, the fruit growing and shipping companies, etc? This morning's dispatch from London is to the effect that the Foreign Office recognizes that a Jewish State will be announced, and

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that it cannot be stopped. It is privately reported that when Creech^h Jones called on Dr. Weizmann the other day to say goodbye, he talked about meeting soon in other circumstances, when the British and the Jewish State could sit down to arrange things together. There have been other such uses of language, in recent days, between high British officials and high Jewish representatives.

3. Are we trying to advise the Palestinian Jews as their friends, or are we seeking to embark on a course of opposition? Is our policy toward them simply one of friendship, or of neutrality or of force?

Our government has told the representatives of the Palestinian Jews that some time in the future the Arabs will overrun them, and that the Jews are being misled by their military successes to date; this advice was given privately.

Suppose the Jews in Palestine do not agree with this view. Suppose

they base their action on their opinion, and contrary to the advice we give them. Are we then going to engage on a policy of threat, of pressure, and of effectuation of threats? Such threats were already made by Lovett to Nahum Goldmann, though the threats were only of the issuance of a White Paper attacking Jewish leaders.

It is important to analyze where the policy of threats may take us, assuming that the Jews do not accept our advice, proclaim a Jewish state, and do business with British, with Abdullah, and others, as equals.

4. Where will the policy of hostility or force lead us?

Our people at Lake Success, according to the news dispatches and to authenticated private reports as well, are frantically trying to line up the UN Asembly against (1) the possibility of a Jewish State, (2) partition,

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(3) the resolution of the Assembly setting up partition, and (4) anything else, so as to cast some kind of illegality over the proclamation of a Jewish State.

How much further do we intend to go? Do we intend (a) to issue public denunciations of the Jewish Agency, or the Jewish State, or the Jewish leaders, and if so, will it be in the form of a formal White Paper, or informal press statements, or what?

(b) to threaten the imposition of economic sanctions on the Jewish State, if proclaimed? If so, what kind of sanctions? Denial of trade between the U. S. and Palestine? Incidentally, news dispatches say that the British are planning to save their present trade with Jewish Palestine, and increase it, at the same time that they increase their investments there. What are we to do about British business now in the chemical works at the Dead Sea, in the railways, in the electric works, in the banks, all of which will be vitally affected by economic sanctions imposed by our country?

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(c) to send warships to blockade Jewish Palestine?

What will we do if ships seek to bring goods into Palestine?

Or foodstuffs? A few weeks ago the Jewish Agency placed a contract for foodstuffs for three-months supply, in the amount of [£]1,500,000, with British interests, through Steele Brothers, the long-established factors for British Government interests in Palestine, Burma and elsewhere. What do we do with ships bringing in any of that food?

What do we do about immigrants being brought into Palestine while we blockade? If we stop the passenger ships from unloading, where do we put the passengers? On Cyprus? Will the British agree?

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Who will guard the immigrants behind the barbed wire? American marines? Have we enough of them available? Who will feed the immigrants? With what?

What do we do about heavy machinery brought to Palestine, useful to Arabs as well as Jews, both for giving them jobs, and for giving them such useful things as additional horsepower, etc.

What do we do about ammunition and armament coming in ships? If we say this cannot come in, but other things can, do we search the ships?

What do we do about airplane freight coming into Jewish Palestine? Will we set up an air blockade? Have we the facilities there?

(d) to send troops to unseat the Jewish State? How long will we keep troops there? If any are killed, will it be by Jews or by Arab agents provocateurs? How will we know?

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(e) to go to still further limits? How far, and of what nature?



Will we deem it advisable or inadvisable to ask Congressional approval of any of these steps, before we embark on them?

When President Truman said, at a press conference a few weeks ago that the President has power to send troops to Palestine (UN police duty to enforce a trusteeship was then under discussion), various newspapers said he had the power, but wisdom would dictate his first consulting Congress and getting its approval by vote.

How far are ^{we} going to become involved with UN, with other countries, with Congress, with the churches and other peace groups in this country?