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SECRET

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C.M. (50)

25th Conclusions

CABINET 25 (50)

CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet held at 10 Downing Street, S.W. 1, on Tuesday, 25th April, 1950 at 11.15 a.m.

Present :

The Right. Hon. C. R. ATTLEE, M.P., Prime Minister (*in the Chair*)

The Right Hon. HERBERT MORRISON, M.P., Lord President of the Council.

The Right Hon. HUGH DALTON, M.P., Minister of Town and Country Planning.

The Right Hon. VISCOUNT ALEXANDER OF HILLSBOROUGH, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

The Right Hon. J. CHUTER EDE, M.P., Secretary of State for the Home Department.

The Right Hon. G. A. ISAACS, M.P., Minister of Labour and National Service.

The Right Hon. T. WILLIAMS, M.P., Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

The Right Hon. J. H. WILSON, M.P., President of the Board of Trade.

The Right Hon. HECTOR McNEIL, M.P., Secretary of State for Scotland.

The Right Hon. Sir STAFFORD CRIPPS, K.C., M.P., Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The Right Hon. VISCOUNT ADDISON, Lord Privy Seal.

The Right Hon. VISCOUNT JOWITT, Lord Chancellor.

The Right Hon. E. SHINWELL, M.P., Minister of Defence.

The Right Hon. ANEURIN BEVAN, M.P., Minister of Health.

The Right Hon. GEORGE TOMLINSON, M.P., Minister of Education.

The Right Hon. JAMES GRIFFITHS, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies.

The Right Hon. P. C. GORDON-WALKER, M.P., Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations.

The following were also present :

The Right Hon. ALFRED BARNES, M.P., Minister of Transport (*Item 4*).

The Right Hon. H. T. N. GAITSKELL, Minister of State for Economic Affairs (*Item 4*).

The Hon. K. G. YOUNGER, M.P., Minister of State (*Items 1-3*).

Secretariat :

Sir NORMAN BROOK.

Mr. A. JOHNSTON.

Jordan and
Israel.

(Previous
Reference:
C.M. (49) 6th
Conclusions,
Minute 2.)

2. The Cabinet had before them a memorandum by the Foreign Secretary (C.P. (50) 78) on the union of Arab Palestine with Jordan and the *de jure* recognition of Israel.

This stated that a union of Jordan and the part of Arab Palestine controlled by Jordan was likely to be voted shortly by the Assembly recently elected to represent both countries; and that, in the view of the Foreign Secretary, this union would make an

important contribution towards the stability of the area and would strengthen Israel against Arab expansionism. It was therefore recommended that, when the union was proclaimed, His Majesty's Government should at once announce their recognition of it and should declare that the provisions of the Anglo-Jordan Treaty would apply to the areas thus united to Jordan. This announcement should include appropriate reservations in respect of Jerusalem and the frontier between Arab Palestine and Israel, and should include a statement that the United Kingdom Government had no intention of establishing British military bases in time of peace in the portion of Arab Palestine to be united with Jordan. It was also recommended that His Majesty's Government should simultaneously accord *de jure* recognition to Israel, with similar reservations in respect of Jerusalem and the frontier between Israel and the neighbouring Arab States. Finally, it was recommended that these two acts of recognition should be accompanied by a general statement reaffirming the desire of the United Kingdom Government for peace in the Middle East and their opposition to any use of force between Middle Eastern States.

The Minister of State said that events had run ahead of the recommendations in this memorandum, since the new Assembly at Amman had, as its first act on 24th April, passed a resolution proclaiming the union of this part of Arab Palestine with Jordan. If, therefore, full benefit was to be reaped from the policy advocated in the memorandum, the United Kingdom Government should lose no time in making the declarations recommended by the Foreign Secretary. These were likely to command widespread public support, both in this country and in most other parts of the world. Protests would doubtless be lodged by the members of the Arab League; but these would have no effective backing and need not influence our policy.

There was general support for the recommendations made in the memorandum. In discussion the following points were raised :—

(a) Should we not seek to secure the support of the United States Government for the policy which we were proposing to follow? The Cabinet were assured that the United States Government had been informed of the line which we proposed to take if and when King Abdullah proclaimed a union between Jordan and Arab Palestine. There was no reason to believe that they would take exception to our policy of welcoming this union, though they would probably be unwilling, for reasons of domestic politics, themselves to make a similar declaration. United States support would not commend our policy to the other Arab States; and, in the eyes of public opinion in other parts of the world, it needed nothing to commend it.

(b) Should not other Commonwealth Governments be informed and given an opportunity of making simultaneous declarations on similar lines? It was specially important that the Governments of Australia and New Zealand, who had at our request delayed their *de facto* recognition of Israel, should have advance notice of our intention to accord *de jure* recognition to Israel. The Cabinet agreed that other Commonwealth Governments should be informed at once of our intentions, and that the public announcement should be so timed as to give them reasonable opportunity to consider what corresponding action they should themselves take.

(c) The Chiefs of Staff had questioned the necessity for any public announcement that British military bases would not be established in the portion of Arab Palestine now united to Jordan and had asked that, if such an announcement had to be made, it should be explicitly confined to the establishment of such bases in time of peace. The Cabinet were informed that the Government of Israel had already been given an assurance that no such bases would

be established in peace-time. With a view to strengthening the position of that Government against their domestic critics, it was desirable that this assurance should now be given publicly.

(d) In paragraph 4 of C.P. (50) 78 it was stated that at a recent meeting of the Arab League Council King Abdullah's representative had acquiesced in a resolution to the effect that any member of the League signing a separate peace with Israel would be expelled and liable to sanctions. Was there any foundation for the rumour that it was on the advice of British officials in the Middle East that King Abdullah's representative had acquiesced in this resolution? *The Minister of State* said that no such advice had been given by or on the instructions of the Foreign Office, and he had no reason to believe that it had been given by any of His Majesty's diplomatic representatives in the area. He undertook, however, to make further enquiries on this point.

The Cabinet's conclusions were as follows:—

- (1) A public declaration should be made at an early date on behalf of the United Kingdom Government recognising the union of Arab Palestine and Jordan and declaring that the provisions of the Anglo-Jordan Treaty applied to the areas united to Jordan. This declaration should contain reservations, as stated in paragraph 11 of C.P. (50) 78, regarding Jerusalem and the frontier between Arab Palestine and Israel; and it should also include a statement that the United Kingdom Government had no intention of establishing British military bases in peace-time in the portion of Arab Palestine now to be united to Jordan.
- (2) The United Kingdom Government should accord *de jure* recognition to Israel, with similar provisos regarding Jerusalem and the frontier between Israel and the neighbouring Arab States.
- (3) A general statement should be made reaffirming the desire of the United Kingdom Government for peace in the Middle East and their opposition to any use of force between Middle Eastern States.
- (4) The Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations should at once inform other Commonwealth Governments of the intention to make the declarations summarised in Conclusions (1)–(3) above.
- (5) The Minister of State should arrange for the three declarations summarised in Conclusions (1)–(3) above to be made in a single statement in the House of Commons during the course of the current week. The timing of this statement should be concerted with the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations, with a view to giving other Commonwealth Governments a reasonable opportunity to consider whether they should take corresponding simultaneous action.

3. In connection with the discussion recorded in the preceding Minute reference was made to the continuing difficulties of securing the passage of sterling oil to the refinery at Haifa.

The Cabinet were informed that doubts had been expressed about the legality of the action taken by the Egyptian Government in preventing the passage through the Suez Canal of tankers bound for Haifa. This point had been raised in the debate on foreign affairs in the House of Commons on 28th March. It was suggested that the Cabinet should resume at an early date the preliminary discussion which they had held on this matter on 14th November, 1949. *The Minister of State* said that the legal issues involved were under consideration by the Law Officers.

Oil.

Supplies
for Haifa
Refinery.

(Previous
Reference:
C.M. (49) 66th
Conclusions,
Minute 1.)



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