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CH 4, Sec. F	The Persian Gulf <del>Open 4-15-97 NLJ 96-333</del> <del>Secret [SANITIZED, 2/5/85, NLJ 84-229] 18 pp</del>		A
CH 4, Sec. G	Yemen <del>Open 4-15-97 NLJ 96-333</del> <del>Secret [SANITIZED 1/15/85, NLJ 84-307] 25 pp</del>		A

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## E. THE CYPRUS CRISES

1. Background

One of the first major crises to face the Johnson Administration arose with the outbreak of fighting between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots in December 1963, and the consequent threat of war between Greece and Turkey. The origins of the Cyprus problem lay in the distant past, particularly in the Byzantine period, during which the island's present majority acquired its Greek character through religion, language and conviction of one-ness with Hellas. Turkish conquest in 1571, followed by some three centuries of Ottoman rule, established a Turkish community, but failed to extinguish Hellenism. Calls for enosis (union of Cyprus with Greece) began to be heard in 1831, when Greece obtained its independence from the Ottoman Empire. British rule from 1878 to 1960 saw enosis become an increasingly important issue, culminating in the EOKA rebellion of Greek Cypriots during the late 1950's. Throughout this period, Turkey and Turkish

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Cypriots resisted the Greek drive, asserting that if British control over Cyprus were to be relinquished, the island should revert to Turkey, or at least be partitioned between Turkey and Greece.

The London-Zurich Agreements of 1959, which followed the EOKA rebellion, established an independent Cyprus.<sup>1/</sup> Both enosis and partition of the island were forbidden.<sup>2/</sup> Great Britain, Greece and Turkey were made the guarantors of the Republic's independence with the right of collective or individual action to fulfill this obligation.<sup>3/</sup> Defense was made a tripartite responsibility of Cyprus, Greece and Turkey.<sup>4/</sup> A complex constitution establishing the rights of the Greek and Turkish Cypriots was incorporated into the

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<sup>1/</sup> The London-Zurich Agreements were embodied in a series of treaties and in the Constitution of the Republic of Cyprus which are available in Cyprus (British Blue Book) Cmnd. 1093, Her Majesty's Stationery Office London, 1960.

<sup>2/</sup> Treaty of Guarantee Article I, ibid. p. 86.

<sup>3/</sup> Ibid., Article II.

<sup>4/</sup> Treaty of Alliance, ibid pp. 88-90.



Agreements. <sup>5/</sup>

Independence was declared on August 16, 1960, with Archbishop Makarios III (Greek-Cypriot) as President and Dr. Fazil Kuchuk (Turkish-Cypriot) as Vice President. During the following three years the new Republic prospered economically, but the mutual suspicions of the two communities increasingly interfered with the orderly working of a very complex system of government.

In this period American strategy for Cyprus stressed continued access to American communications facilities, an economic aid program to facilitate development and to combat Communism, and reliance on the guarantor powers to maintain the constitutional order on the island.

## 2. The Johnson Years

### a. Collapse of the London-Zurich Agreements Structure

Amid growing friction, increasing distrust and occasional clashes, President Makarios on November 30, 1963, presented Vice President Kuchuk with a document containing thirteen

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<sup>5/</sup> Constitution of the Republic of Cyprus, ibid pp 91-173.

proposed revisions of the Constitution. The Turkish Cabinet rejected these proposals on December 6; later Dr. Kuchuk termed them "unacceptable" though he agreed to study them. As tensions mounted, fighting between the two communities broke out on December 21, 1963. At the request of the Cyprus Government, a special meeting of the Security Council was held on December 27, with the representatives of Cyprus, Greece and Turkey exchanging charges as to the origins of the crisis. Both Greece and Turkey quickly demonstrated support for their respective communities. A British peace-keeping force was assembled from troops available at the British bases on the island and succeeded partially in restoring order. However, the inter-communal governmental structure broke apart, with the Turkish Cypriots retiring into armed enclaves and the Greek Cypriots consolidating their control of the government. The system of Guarantor Powers, which was to have maintained the constitutional order, failed to function successfully because of the danger that Greek and Turkish forces would come into conflict.

b. Challenges for US Policy

In both Greece and Turkey national honor and prestige became involved in the controversy. Consequently, as sporadic fighting continued, there was increased danger that Turkey would intervene under the Treaty of Guarantee and would then become involved in war with its NATO ally, Greece. Such a war might easily have spread. At the least, it would have produced disastrous effects in both Turkey and Greece, damaged the United States' considerable strategic interests in those countries, weakened NATO, and presented opportunities for the Soviet Union to exploit. The likelihood of war was heightened by the Cypriots' obstinacy. Both Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots looked to a military solution, refused to compromise, miscalculated one another's strength and intentions, and believed they could succeed if more help from outside were available. Greece and Turkey became the primary sources of such help.

Prevention of war between Greece and Turkey became then, as it remained for the succeeding five years, the dominant consideration in US policy formulation. Although it immediately



expressed concern over the outbreak of fighting,<sup>6/</sup> the United States refrained from showing favor to either side. It made clear that it backed no particular formula (such as enosis or partition), while strongly urging the parties involved to agree on a solution.<sup>7/</sup> Nevertheless, it was irrationally accused by each side of supporting the other while at the same time both called upon it to produce a solution. Anti-American demonstrations flared in Turkey, Greece and Cyprus as public animosity was fanned by vicious newspaper attacks. On February 4, 1964, two bombs were exploded at the American Embassy in Nicosia and several Americans' automobiles were attacked, whereupon American dependents were evacuated and the functions and staff of US communications facilities on the island were reduced. Soviet influence, on the other hand, was rising, and the Cyprus Government began exploring the

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<sup>6/</sup> Messages on December 25, 1963 from President Johnson to President of Cyprus Makarios and Vice President of Cyprus Kuchuk and to President of Turkey Gursel  
~~(Docs. 1-2).~~

<sup>7/</sup> Department of State Press Statement of February 8, 1964.  
~~1964 (Doc. 3).~~



possibilities of increased Soviet political and military support.

c. British-NATO Efforts and US Support

It was not the US, but the British Government, as a Guarantor Power, which initially held the primary role in seeking to restore peace and order in Cyprus. After deploying the peacekeeping force mentioned above, the British Government called a conference in London on January 15 which was attended by representatives of the two Cypriot communities and of the Greek and Turkish Governments. In the conference, the Greek Cypriot and Greek representatives pressed for revision of the London-Zurich Treaties to prohibit outside intervention and to provide for a government based on majority Greek Cypriot rule with minority rights for the Turkish Cypriots. On the other hand, the Turkish Cypriot and Turkish representatives called for a partition of the island between Greece and Turkey and insisted on maintaining the Turkish right of intervention. No compromise could be found and the negotiations collapsed.

Subsequently, the British Government appealed to the United States for help on the grounds that it could no longer

carry the peacekeeping burden alone. The British proposed appointment of a mediator and assembly of a peacekeeping force including the Greek and Turkish Treaty contingents on Cyprus plus forces drawn from other NATO nations, though they made clear that this was not to be a NATO operation. American participation in these plans drew immediate Soviet objection.<sup>8/</sup> This was rejected<sup>9/</sup> and the President dispatched Under Secretary of State Ball to Athens, Nicosia and Ankara (February 8-16) in support of the proposal.<sup>10/</sup> President Makarios refused to accept insisting that the United Nations be given the prime role in settling the conflict in Cyprus.

d. US Support for UN Peacekeeping Force

With the failure of this attempt, the United States gave its support to an effort by the British Government to obtain

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<sup>8/</sup> Message, February 7, 1964, Chairman Khrushchev to President Johnson ~~(Doc. 4)~~.

<sup>9/</sup> Message, March 4, 1964, President Johnson to Chairman Khrushchev ~~(Doc. 5)~~.

<sup>10/</sup> Under Secretary Ball's report to the President on his Cyprus Peacekeeping Mission, Memorandum for the Record, February 17, 1964 ~~(Doc. 6)~~. See also Current Foreign Relations No. 7, February 12, 1964.

United Nations assistance. After several meetings beginning February 18, 1964, in which Ambassador Adlai Stevenson took a leading role, the UN Security Council on March 4 unanimously and with the consent of Cyprus resolved to send a peacekeeping force to the island and to appoint a mediator to search for a political solution.<sup>11/</sup> By April, the United Nations Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) had been organized, its initial strength of some 6500 men being made possible by contributions of troops from the UK, Austria, Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, and Sweden. The United States Government, not wishing to contribute troops, pledged financial support (which subsequently amounted to some 40% of the UNFICYP budget). Sakari Tuomioja, a former Prime Minister of Finland, was appointed as the UN Mediator and served in that capacity until his death in September.

e. Initial US Diplomatic Efforts

Meanwhile, US diplomats were active in seeking to deter Turkey, Greece and Cyprus from aggravating the situation. As

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<sup>11/</sup> Security Council Document S/5575, March 4, 1964.



an example, when on March 13, 1964, the Turkish Government issued an ultimatum to the Cyprus Government warning of intervention "if the massacres are not stopped within 48 hours", the American Embassy at Ankara immediately counselled effectively against intervention, pointing out that the attacks referred to as "massacres" had ended three days before the ultimatum was issued.

Cyprus reacted by requesting an emergency session of the Security Council that same day, at which the Turkish representative denied that its warning to Cyprus was an ultimatum. The US supported a resolution reiterating the terms of the March 4 resolution, calling on all UN members "to refrain from any action or threat of action likely to worsen the situation in ... Cyprus."<sup>12/</sup>

The United States also used less conventional diplomatic resources to bring pressure on the parties. Thus, visits to Greece and Turkey were made on May 6-7 by Senator J. W. Fulbright, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee,

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<sup>12/</sup> Security Council Document S/5603, March 13, 1964.



for talks with civilian leaders, and General L. L. Lemnitzer (SACEUR) visited Turkey on June 5, to reason with his Turkish military colleagues.

f. The US Initiative for Peace: Summer, 1964

However, incidents on the island continued and Turkey's concern with lack of protection for the Turkish Cypriots grew daily. Additionally, during the spring of 1964, the Government of Greece began infiltrating officers and men of the Royal Hellenic Army, along with their equipment, into Cyprus. Greek Lt. Gen. George Grivas, the hero of the EOKA rebellion, arrived soon after to take command of the Greek and Greek Cypriot forces. These developments which appeared to threaten the safety of the Turkish Cypriots alarmed the Turkish Government. On June 5, the Prime Minister of Turkey, Ismet Inonu, informed Ambassador Hare that Turkey intended to intervene in Cyprus. The Prime Minister's statement was backed up by the readiness of the Turkish Army, Navy, and Air Force to land troops in Cyprus, an operation for which they had been preparing since December.<sup>13/</sup>

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<sup>13/</sup> Ankara's Secret Telegram 1628 to Department, June 8, 1964 (~~Dec. 7~~).

Faced with the likelihood of an unthinkable war between two NATO allies, President Johnson responded by a personal letter to Prime Minister Inonu.<sup>14/</sup> In this secret message, the President gave a forceful warning of the consequences of a Turkish invasion of Cyprus, including the termination of US aid to Turkey and the necessity for the United States to reconsider its obligation under the NATO Treaty in the event that a Turkish attack on Cyprus brought about a Soviet attack on Turkey. Prime Minister Inonu thereupon called off the<sup>15/</sup> intervention.

The President followed up his initiative of early June by inviting the Prime Ministers of Greece and Turkey to visit him in Washington during June 22-26, 1964. During their visits, which were made separately, the need for a Greek-Turkish resolution of the Cyprus issue was emphasized and US assistance in reaching a settlement was offered. It was further emphasized

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<sup>14/</sup> Message, June 5, 1964, President Johnson to Prime Minister of Turkey Inonu (~~Doc. 8~~).

<sup>15/</sup> Message, June 13, 1964, Prime Minister Inonu to President Johnson (~~Doc. 9~~).

that the US had no "magic formula", but that necessary elements of any settlement would include: (1) permanency; (2) contribution to stability of the Eastern Mediterranean; (3) no humiliation to either side; (4) recognition that a settlement can not be entirely satisfactory to either side; and (5) acceptability to the populations involved. Agreement was reached with both Prime Ministers for talks between representatives of Greece and Turkey in Geneva under the aegis of the UN Mediator, but with former Secretary of State Dean Acheson present as President Johnson's representative.

During the Geneva discussions <sup>16/</sup> two plans were considered. <sup>17/</sup> Both called for union of the island with Greece while providing compensation to Turkey. Under the first plan, the island would have been divided, with the Karpas Peninsula being ceded to Turkey as a military base. This plan was rejected by the Greek Government as involving loss of sovereignty. The second

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<sup>16/</sup> During the Geneva discussions (July 4 - September 3, 1964) various exchanges took place among President Johnson, King Constantine, Prime Minister Papandreou and Prime Minister Inonu (~~Docs. 10-18~~).

<sup>17/</sup> Airgram USDEL/A-1 from London, May 13, 1965, summarizing Acheson Plans I and II (~~Doc. 19~~).



plan provided that a smaller area would be leased to Turkey as a base for fifty years and specified self-government for the Turkish Cypriots in those areas of the island where they held a majority, as well as representation at a high level in the Government of Cyprus. The Turkish Government turned down this plan as failing to meet its requirement for a sovereign area. In late August, the talks were allowed to lapse after secret aspects of the talks were made public by President Makarios of Cyprus. In the meantime, negotiation had been made extremely difficult by a Greek Cypriot attack on August 6 against Turkish Cypriot positions which led, on August 8 and 9, to Turkish air strikes against Cyprus. These new incidents led both Cyprus and Turkey to request meetings of the UN Security Council, which took place on August 8-9. The Council <sup>18/</sup>unanimously called for an immediate cease-fire.

g. Renewed UN Efforts: Galo Plaza Mediation

The next attempt at a settlement was made by the former President of Ecuador, Galo Plaza Lasso, who became UN Mediator

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<sup>18/</sup> Security Council Document S/5868, August 9, 1964.



on September 17 following Tuomioja's death. During discussions throughout the fall and winter of 1964, held with the Cypriot communities as well as with the Greek and Turkish governments, Mr. Plaza found the positions of the parties basically unchanged. In late March 1965, Mr. Plaza submitted a report to the Secretary General of the United Nations which pointed out the areas of disagreement and set forth guidelines for possible discussions between the parties.<sup>19/</sup> In his report, Mr. Plaza envisioned an independent, demilitarized, neutral Cyprus with UN guarantees of the minority rights of the Turkish Cypriots. He suggested that the Greek Cypriot majority renounce its aim of uniting with Greece so long as conditions remained unchanged. The Governments of Greece and Cyprus gave the report qualified approval, but the Government of Turkey announced that it would no longer recognize Mr. Plaza as Mediator because he had exceeded his authority by making substantive recommendations.<sup>20/</sup>

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<sup>19/</sup> Security Council Document S/6253, March 26, 1965.

<sup>20/</sup> Letter, March 31, 1965, from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the Secretary General of the UN. See Council Document S/6267, April 2, 1965.

h. US Encouragement of Greek-Turkish Talks

In March, 1965, just prior to the submission of the Galo Plaza report, a new crisis developed over sporadic fighting in the Lefka-Ambelikou area of Cyprus and importation of arms under a secret Cypriot-Soviet Agreement of September 30, 1964.<sup>21/</sup> Importation of arms was denounced by the Turkish Government as a threat to the Turkish Cypriots. The Cypriot Government, on the other hand, justified the arms deal in terms of its necessity to prevent an imminent Turkish invasion. With Turkey asserting that cumulative provocations were already unbearable and blaming the Government of Greece for Greek Cypriot actions, the crisis quickly reached the stage where war between Greece and Turkey appeared likely. Throughout the crisis, American diplomacy sought to clarify the facts on alleged incidents, to counsel caution, to seek a "moratorium" on provocations, and to lead the two sides into direct negotiations. War was averted when the Cypriot Government desisted

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<sup>21/</sup> Cypriot-Soviet Agreement attached to Note from the Greek Embassy in Washington, dated March 22, 1965 ~~(Dec. 20)~~

from bringing in surface-to-air missiles which it had purchased.

In May, 1965, the Greek and Turkish Governments initiated a dialogue, but dropped it after no real progress was made. (Such talks were resumed in June, 1966, and continued until the fall of the Stephanopoulos Government in Greece in December, 1966. Talks were again begun in the summer of 1967, but collapsed after an unsuccessful meeting of the Greek and Turkish Prime Ministers at the Evros-Meric River on September 9-10, 1967.) The Security Council met several times between August 3-10 with Cypriot and Turkish representatives exchanging charges of culpability. US Ambassador Yost urged both sides to reach a negotiated solution. On November 5 the Council met again, and again unanimously asked the parties to "refrain from any action likely to worsen the situation in Cyprus."

i. Cypriot Counter-Moves

The Cypriot Government, in an effort to broaden its appeal to the UN membership as a whole, also took its case to the General Assembly. A resolution of December 18, 1965, recognizing



Cyprus as an equal member of the UN, stated that Cyprus "should enjoy full sovereignty and complete independence without any foreign intervention or interference" and called on all states to "respect the sovereignty, unity, independence and territorial integrity---of Cyprus and to refrain from any intervention directed against it."<sup>22/</sup> However, the resolution had little practical effect. Another near crisis was precipitated when the Cypriot Government negotiated an arms agreement with Czechoslovakia under which Czech arms arrived in Cyprus on November 30, 1966. The crisis was averted when the UN Secretary General, with strong US support, reached an agreement with President Makarios for indefinite storage and periodic UN inspection of the Czech arms.

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<sup>22/</sup> The vote was 45 in favor to 5 opposed with 54 abstentions. The US, Turkey, Pakistan, Iran and Albania opposed. The US vote was consistent with its position that a substantive resolution favoring one side or the other, rather than a procedural resolution, would prejudice possibilities for a negotiated settlement.



j. The November-December 1967 Crisis: Cyrus Vance as the President's Envoy: Success

On November 15, 1967, the Greek Cypriots attacked two Turkish Cypriot villages. The United States Government immediately appealed (as did other governments and the UN Secretary General) to the Cyprus Government and to the Greek Government, which controlled the troops involved, asking that all possible steps be taken to stop the fighting without delay.<sup>23/</sup> The two Governments complied, but sentiment against Cyprus mounted in Turkey and its forces were moved into position to attack both Cyprus and Greece. Repeated diplomatic representations by the American Ambassadors in Athens, Ankara and Nicosia several times staved off the beginning of war.<sup>24/</sup> On November 22, when confirmed intelligence reports indicated that Turkey would initiate military action within 24 hours, President Johnson asked the Turkish

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<sup>23/</sup> For example President Johnson appealed directly to President Makarios; see Message of November 17, 1967 (~~Doc. 21~~).

<sup>24/</sup> These Ambassadors, who played key roles in the success of the Vance Mission, were Parker T. Hart, Ankara; Phillips Talbot, Athens; and Taylor G. Belcher, Nicosia.

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Government (on the recommendation of Secretary Rusk, telephoned to Texas) to accept Mr. Cyrus Vance as his Personal Representative, and he dispatched Mr. Vance by presidential aircraft to Ankara,<sup>25/</sup> where he began a dramatic tour de force of personal diplomacy. After persuading the Turkish Government, which he found literally poised for war, not to launch an attack while his mission was in the area, Mr. Vance began shuttling back and forth between Ankara and Athens, hammering out the terms of a face-saving agreement to avert war. Upon winning Greek and Turkish agreement on November 28, Mr. Vance went to Nicosia on November 29 to negotiate with the most formidable personality in the Eastern Mediterranean,<sup>26/</sup> President Makarios.

Throughout the twelve day period, Mr. Vance labored around the clock, occasionally able to take snatches of sleep averaging less than three hours per day. Following

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<sup>25/</sup> For general instructions to Mr. Cyrus Vance see Department's telegram TOVAN 4 of November 23, 1967 ~~(Doc. 22)~~.

<sup>26/</sup> Message, November 29, 1967, President Johnson to President Makarios and President Makarios' reply ~~(Docs. 23 and 24)~~.

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periods of terse consultations with US Embassy officials and negotiations with Government leaders in one capital, he sped to an airport and flew to the next, regardless of the hour. Although fitted with bunks, the aircraft was an airborne office. With a staff of two experts from the Department of State, one from Defense, and a single Foreign Service secretary, Mr. Vance used periods of flight for taking stock and considering his next moves.

During the climactic last days of the Vance Mission, the stage broadened. Jose Rolz-Bennett, whom the Secretary General had sent to the Eastern Mediterranean simultaneously with Mr. Vance, returned to New York to assist in devising a UN cover for the hoped-for "Vance Agreement." Ambassador Goldberg and members of his staff, as well as Department officials in Washington, participated in the strenuous round-the-clock effort for several days. During one lengthy interchange with Makarios, Mr. Vance was able to consult with Washington and New York without leaving the negotiating table seven thousand miles away. Officers of the US Mission in



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Nicosia went to and fro between the conference room at Makarios' palace and the Embassy communications center, where Mr. Vance's aides used newly created facilities for three-way teletype exchanges with Under Secretary Katzenbach in the State Department and Ambassador Goldberg at the UN.

Under the terms worked out, the three Governments with which Vance had been negotiating were to respond favorably to an appeal to be issued by the UN Secretary General, calling for the withdrawal of Greek and Turkish forces in Cyprus in excess of contingents permitted by the Treaty of Guarantee, the return of Turkish forces on the mainland to normal conditions, and the provision of the good offices of the UN Secretary General in supervising disarmament and devising arrangements to safeguard the internal security of the Cypriots. This appeal was issued on December 3 and was immediately accepted by Greece and Turkey and welcomed by Cyprus.<sup>27/</sup> Withdrawal of the excess mainland troops began in December and was considered complete as of January.

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27/ Final Report of the Vance Mission (~~Doc. 25~~).

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k. Aftermath of the Crisis: A New Atmosphere

US policy decisions in the aftermath of the crisis envisioned utilization of the good offices of the UN Secretary General to find solutions to the problems of Cyprus, while at the same time recognizing that it might become necessary for the United States to step in should the Secretary General's efforts fail.<sup>28/</sup> Planning therefore focused upon how the US could best facilitate the Secretary General's efforts, how a US initiative could be activated in case of need and what to do in various contingencies which might arise.

During the spring of 1968, conditions on the island improved. Restrictions on the Turkish Cypriots' freedom of movement and on their commerce were removed and a more peaceful atmosphere was created. President Makarios announced that a settlement must be "sought within the limits of what is feasible which do not always coincide with the limits of

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<sup>28/</sup> See the Yost Study, December 20, 1967 ~~(Doc. 26)~~

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of what is desirable" and he stood for reelection to obtain a popular mandate for such a settlement. With the assistance of the representative of the UN Secretary General in Cyprus, Bibiano Osorio-Tafall, preliminary discussions were held between the Greek and Turkish Cypriots regarding the form of negotiations toward a settlement. On June 24, exploratory talks began between Glafcos Clerides, President of the House of Representatives, representing the Greek Cypriots, and Rauf Denktash, President of the Turkish Cypriot Communal Chamber, representing the Turkish Cypriots. These talks, with recesses, continued throughout the summer and autumn of 1968.

In the improved atmosphere surrounding successful conclusion of the Vance Mission the status of the US communications facilities was finally regularized by an exchange of letters on January 22, 1968.

1. Summary and Prospects

In summary, at the beginning of the Johnson Administration, the US was relatively uncommitted in Cyprus affairs; this was reflected in neutrality during the disturbances that began

in December, 1963, and in support for British and later United Nations efforts at peacekeeping. American interest expanded due to the danger of war between NATO allies, and efforts were made to prevent the outbreak of hostilities based on rumors and exaggerations. Growing US concern became evident in the major role played by President Johnson in averting war in June, 1964. This was followed by active efforts to find a solution to the Cyprus problem within the context of some type of compensation for Turkey in return for enosis of Cyprus with Greece; these efforts relied primarily on Greek-Turkish agreement with hopes for subsequent Cypriot acquiescence. When this method failed, US policy turned to support of UN mediation efforts, bilateral talks between Greeks and Turks and contingency planning against all possibilities of failure. The US was reinjected into the Cyprus situation during November and December 1967, playing the major role in defusing that crisis. Subsequently, US efforts were designed to encourage talks at the Greek-Cypriot level, while avoiding any imposition of a solution from outside



the island.

On at least seven occasions there were major threats of Turkish military intervention in Cyprus and of a Greek-Turkish war;<sup>29/</sup> in addition there were numerous minor crises which might easily have escalated into serious proportions. Public involvement in Turkey, Greece and Cyprus throughout the period had entangled the issues with national prestige and national honor, rendering rational solutions impossible. In this atmosphere, the averting of war on so many occasions without seriously alienating any of the three nations was a remarkable achievement.

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<sup>29/</sup> December 1963, February 1964, March 1964, June 1964, August 1964, March 1965 and November 1967.

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F. THE PERSIAN GULF

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1. The Issue of British Withdrawal

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a. US Interest in the Gulf

Among its postwar concerns as a world power, the United States has had a strong interest in the maintenance of peace and stability in the strategically important Persian Gulf. Our general desire to see the Arab world get its house in order, and to see Soviet opportunities for expanding in that direction blocked, lay behind this interest in the Gulf. Until recently, we could rely on Great Britain to provide the keystone to this stability. Our ability to count on Britain here was, however, coming into question by the beginning of the Johnson years. During this Administration the issue came to a head.

b. The British Decision to Withdraw

While Kuwait had become fully independent in 1961, and it was recognized that termination of the special British position in the rest of the Gulf was only a question of time, it was felt as the Johnson Administration took office, in November 1963, that the British could still exercise their



historic role for a considerable period. Even in 1967, when the British withdrew from Aden, they made plans to reinforce their troops in the Gulf and spoke of remaining there in strength until the mid-1970's. Despite this situation, US concern regarding the durability of the British position in the Gulf increased as it became clear that their withdrawal from Aden was contemplated. A paper by the Department's Policy Planning Council in late 1965<sup>1/</sup> called attention to the strategic alternatives which would face us when the British left.

Closure of the Suez Canal in June 1967, the sterling devaluation in November of the same year, and the deepening conviction of the Labor Party that such special British positions as that in the Gulf constituted an outmoded legacy from an imperial era, combined in the winter of 1967-68 to produce a sudden British decision to accelerate the UK withdrawal from the Gulf. The first clear information that the

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<sup>1/</sup> Memorandum from S/P - W.W. Rostow to  
G/PM - Jeffrey C. Kitchen, October 4, 1965.

British forces might be withdrawn by mid-1972 was received in early January.<sup>2/</sup> The Department informally expressed our concern to the British Embassy on January 5.<sup>3/</sup> Later that day, Secretary Rusk sent a personal message to Foreign Secretary Brown stressing the very high importance that the United States continued to attach to the maintenance of the British position in the Gulf for the indefinite future.<sup>4/</sup> The British Foreign Secretary replied on January 6 that the Gulf issue was one of the problems he hoped to discuss with Mr. Rusk at a previously scheduled meeting in Washington on January 11.<sup>5/</sup>

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<sup>2/</sup> From London, Telegram 5228, January 4, 1968 (Secret).

<sup>3/</sup> To London, Telegram 93645, January 5, 1968 (Secret).

<sup>4/</sup> To London, Telegram 94043, January 5, 1968 (Secret/LIMDIS).

<sup>5/</sup> British Ambassador's note to Secretary Rusk, January 6, 1968, enclosing a message of the same date from Foreign Secretary Brown.

In preparation for the Rusk-Brown meeting, Assistant Secretary Battle strongly recommended to the Secretary on January 9 that we express to the British our hope that they would retain a military presence in the Gulf and that, in any case, no specific date for British departure would be announced.<sup>6/</sup> Meanwhile, our Embassies in interested capitals were authorized to take the line with host governments that recent developments increased the need for regional states in the Gulf area to collaborate more closely and that, while the United States was prepared to do what it could to help, the initiative obviously had to be indigenous.<sup>7/</sup>

Brown told Rusk on January 11 that the British had decided to withdraw from the Persian Gulf by the end of 1971. In an eloquent presentation, Secretary Rusk stressed the dismay that this prospect would cause the United States. He noted that we were facing a difficult period in world

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<sup>6/</sup> Assistant Secretary Battle's Memorandum to the Secretary, January 9, 1968 (Secret).

<sup>7/</sup> State Telegram 96090, January 10, 1968 (Secret).



affairs and Britain was saying it would not be there. Brown said that he would report the Secretary's views to the Cabinet but gave no indication that the UK decision would be modified. <sup>8/</sup>

The British decision was announced by Brown to the House of Commons on January 16. In commenting on the British announcement, the State Department press spokesman expressed the deep US regret and noted that we hoped the UK would continue to be interested in these areas and be prepared, should the need arise, to contribute to their security.

c. Attitude of Other Powers

The attitude of Iran, among the powers most immediately interested in the emerging situation, was recognized early as important for the peaceful resolution of Gulf questions. At an audience on January 15 the Shah stated to our Ambassador his interest in maintaining cooperation with his Arab neighbors in accordance with his wish that the future of the Gulf should be in the hands of indigenous states. At the same

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<sup>8/</sup> Department of State Memorandum of Rusk-Brown Conversation, January 11, 1968 (Secret/EXDIS).

time he stated his own objectives in the Gulf, largely revolving about five mid-Gulf islands disputed between Iran and the British-protected shiekhdoms.<sup>9/</sup> On February 1, at a time when the Shah was threatening to cancel his state visit to Saudi Arabia, scheduled to begin on February 3, 1968, due to disputes with the Saudis over Bahrain and oil, President Johnson wrote to him urging broad cooperation in the Gulf and suggesting that failure on this score might invite other powers to assert themselves in ways detrimental to indigenous shaping of the future of the Gulf.<sup>10/</sup> In his reply to the President the Shah reiterated his considerations regarding the importance of indigenous initiative, but the tone of his letter (as well as his subsequent attitudes and actions) indicated that Iran would take seriously its assessment of Iranian interests.<sup>11/</sup>

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<sup>9/</sup> From Tehran, Telegram 2886, January 15, 1968 (Secret/LIMDIS).

<sup>10/</sup> Department of State Telegram 108214, February 1, 1968 (Secret/EXDIS).

<sup>11/</sup> The Shah's message to the President was repeated for Tehran as Department of State Telegram 108773, February 2, 1968.

Reactions to the British decision were not long in coming from other sources. In the Soviet Union, Pravda criticized a "British-backed Persian Gulf defense scheme." Saudi Arabia's King Faisal expressed deep concern to our Ambassador on January 13 at the prospective disengagement of "friends" from the area, acknowledging that mutual suspicions would create major problems in organizing any subsequent Arab Gulf grouping.<sup>12/</sup>

Even before the British announcement, Under Secretary Rostow requested Assistant Secretary Battle on January 10 to consider what measures we might take to fill in behind the British.<sup>13/</sup> Coincidentally, Battle on the same day had requested Philip J. Farley, head of the Politico-Military Affairs Section of the Department, to undertake an urgent study of the naval defense problem in the Arabian Sea in the light, among other things, of the coming British military withdrawal from the Gulf.<sup>14/</sup>

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<sup>12/</sup> From Dhahran, Telegram 462, January 14, 1968 (Secret/EXDIS).

<sup>13/</sup> Rostow-Battle Memorandum, January 10, 1968 (Secret).

<sup>14/</sup> Battle-Farley Memorandum, January 10, 1968 (Secret).



In connection with these studies, the Department asked field posts to be alert to political, military and economic issues which the British departure raised, noting that the end of the British military presence in the Gulf need not necessarily involve termination of the overall British special position.<sup>15/</sup>

Remarks of Under Secretary Rostow over the Voice of America on January 19, designed to make clear that the United States had no intention of organizing new defense arrangements in the Persian Gulf, were widely interpreted in that area in a contrary sense. Most of the countries concerned issued denials that they were thinking in these terms. Soviet broadcasts stigmatized Rostow's comments as an imperialist plan to create a military alliance in the Gulf. The Department accordingly stressed to our Embassies that the United States was contemplating no direct role but hoped that the states in the area could take whatever measures

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<sup>15/</sup> Department of State Telegram 100608, January 18, 1968 (Secret).

might seem necessary to themselves to safeguard area stability.<sup>16/</sup>

Future US policy regarding the Persian Gulf was examined in detail at an Inter-Regional Group meeting chaired by Assistant Secretary Battle on February 3.<sup>17/</sup> The low-key policy which had been initiated was endorsed, and the IRG concluded that the key to the future of the Gulf region in the next few years would be developments within and among the various Gulf states themselves. It was agreed that US policy should be directed to (a) encouraging the British to maintain as much of their present special role as they can; (b) fostering greater political and economic cooperation generally among the Gulf states; and (c) seeking to avoid an undue military buildup there.<sup>18/</sup>

Meanwhile the Arab states in the lower Gulf became the scene of frenetic diplomatic activity. Abu Dhabi and Dubai

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<sup>16/</sup> Department of State Telegram 103449, January 24, 1968 (Confidential).

<sup>17/</sup> NEA paper, January 26, 1968 (Secret), and NIE estimate, February 1, 1968 (Secret).

<sup>18/</sup> IRG/NEA 68-8, February 3, 1968 (Secret).

signed an agreement calling for a close bilateral federation. This was promptly superseded, however, by a tentative agreement among all nine states of the lower Gulf to establish a Federation of Arab Emirates. The Department took the position that this FAA could have no international character as long as the British were still responsible for the foreign relations of its separate members. Accordingly, we planned to take no action to recognize the FAA on March 30 when it was scheduled to be inaugurated.<sup>19/</sup> (Actually, the inauguration did not occur.)

The need for continuing close US-UK liaison during the difficult transition period ahead was recognized on our side. On February 12, Assistant Secretaries Battle and Sisco stressed to a visiting British Foreign Office official our hope that a British political presence and ties with the Gulf states would remain. They noted that the United States desired to participate in British planning for the future.<sup>20/</sup>

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<sup>19/</sup> Department of State Telegram 133625, March 20, 1968 (Confidential).

<sup>20/</sup> Department of State Telegram 113711, February 12, 1968 (Secret).



The following day the British gave the Department details of the tentative British thinking on the evolution of their special position in the Gulf.<sup>21/</sup>

The Soviet Union continued to show increasing interest in the Gulf during the spring. On March 4, Tass issued a statement reiterating the usual Soviet anti-imperialist line but adding that alleged Western planning for the Gulf was directed at the security of the southern frontiers of the USSR.<sup>22/</sup> In response, the Department authorized selected field posts, at their discretion, to refute the Soviet position, noting that the Tass statement represented a re-assertion of a special Soviet interest in the Gulf region reminiscent of the Molotov-Ribbentrop negotiations of 1940.<sup>23/</sup> In late April, the Iraq Government announced that units of the Soviet fleet would visit Iraqi ports at the head of the Gulf on May 11.

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<sup>21/</sup> Department of State Telegram 114410, February 13, 1968 (Secret/NOFORN).

<sup>22/</sup> From Moscow, Telegram 3009, March 4, 1968 (Limited Official Use).

<sup>23/</sup> Department of State Telegram 125441, March 6, 1968 (Confidential).



Two Soviet vessels subsequently visited Iraqi and Iranian ports, the first Russian naval presence in the Gulf since 1903.

The Iranian interest in re-asserting historic claims to small islands in the Gulf increased during the spring, as did the Shah's determination not to surrender the long-standing Iranian claim to Bahrain without a suitable quid pro quo. In a long conversation with our Ambassador on March 14, <sup>24/</sup> the Shah restated his overall position on Gulf matters.

Iranian Foreign Minister Zahedi subsequently stressed to Secretary Rusk the seriousness of Iran's determination to protect its interest in the Gulf. The Secretary cautioned that it would be serious if Iranian actions were to inflame Arab opinion, causing the Arabs to look to the Soviets for assistance. He urged that Iran consider its actions in the <sup>25/</sup> context of the total dangerous world situation.

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<sup>24/</sup> From Tehran, Telegram 3767, March 14, 1968 (Secret/LIMDIS).

<sup>25/</sup> Department of State Telegram 131326, March 16, 1968 (Secret/LIMDIS).

d. US/UK Talks

On February 28, Under Secretary Rostow asked the British Ambassador whether the new problems in the Gulf might profitably be discussed between the two governments. The British replied on March 13 that they would be agreeable to such talks, and joint discussions took place in London, March 27-28. The State Department Country Directors for the Arabian Peninsula and Iran attended from Washington with general instructions to elicit as much detail as possible as to British plans and to outline US policies on specific points.<sup>26/</sup> In this meeting, the British confirmed their interest in retaining a considerable role on the Arab side of the Gulf after 1971 but were pessimistic about an early solution of the Iranian claims.<sup>27/</sup> However, Foreign Secretary Michael Stewart had just been appointed and there were indications that the British were in the process of considering a more flexible attitude with respect to Iran's claims. The American

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<sup>26/</sup> Department of State Telegram 134906, March 22, 1968 (Secret).

<sup>27/</sup> From London, Telegram 7654, March 29, 1968 (Secret/LIMDIS).

representatives encouraged this development and said that senior Department officials hoped to compare notes again on Gulf matters when British Minister of State Roberts came to Washington in mid-May. The British decision to give notice of termination of their specific treaty arrangements in the lower Gulf was subsequently communicated to the local Arab rulers.<sup>28/</sup>

Roberts had detailed discussions with Under Secretary Katzenbach and other senior officials in Washington on May 15-16. He explained that the British were now thinking in terms of discussing with the Shah possible elements of a "package" settlement of outstanding UK/Iran issues in the Gulf. While willing to consider a number of possibilities, the British felt that they could not oppose the inclusion of Bahrain in the FAA, despite the Iranian claim.<sup>29/</sup> At the same time, however, the British informed Iran of their support

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<sup>28/</sup> Department of State Telegram 144412, April 10, 1968 (Confidential).

<sup>29/</sup> Department of State Telegram 166660, May 17, 1968 (Secret/EXDIS).



for the FAA due to developments in the lower Gulf. The Department expressed concern that this had been necessary without also briefing the Iranians on British flexibility regarding a possible "package" settlement of the islands issue. The British subsequently explained to us that their decision had been a tactical move but noted that the UK was not in a position to deal with the Shah at the expense of the Arabs. <sup>30/</sup>

e. The Shah's Visit

The Shah paid a private visit to the US on June 10-16 during which he had two private meetings with the President. The Shah mentioned his concern about the security of the Persian Gulf following the British departure and both sides agreed on the importance of close Saudi-Iranian ties for the future stability of the region. <sup>31/</sup> The Shah requested military advice as to how best to defend the entrance to the

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<sup>30/</sup> Department of State Telegrams 167232 and 171269, May 20 and 25, 1968 (Secret/LIMDIS).

<sup>31/</sup> Department of State Telegram 184673, June 17, 1968 (Secret).

Persian Gulf. We subsequently informed the Shah that his idea of missile installations on Iranian islands would not be practicable but we offered him a more detailed study of the question should he so desire.<sup>32/</sup>

## 2. US Policies Confirmed

As the Iranians continued to press their territorial claims, the British sought to work out some compromise solutions prior to their scheduled 1971 departure, and the Arab sheikhdoms of the lower Gulf continued their halting efforts to form the FAA, US policies toward the region were confirmed. The Department was fully briefed on the various British "package" proposals on June 12.<sup>33/</sup> This information, together with the military paper requested in January (see above) which had recommended modest increases in our naval presence in the region, was considered at another IRG meeting on July 10.<sup>34/</sup> The IRG reaffirmed its view that the key to

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<sup>32/</sup> Department of State Telegram 209512, July 26, 1968 (Secret/LIMDIS).

<sup>33/</sup> Department of State Telegram 181835, June 12, 1968 (Secret/LIMDIS).

<sup>34/</sup> IRG/NEA Memorandum 68-24, June 27, 1968 (Secret).

the future of the Gulf in the next few years would be developments among the various riparian states themselves, that the United States should continue to encourage greater cooperation among the Gulf states, notably Saudi Arabia and Iran, that our naval presence continued to serve a useful purpose and that we should avoid any impression that the United States was withdrawing from the region.<sup>35/</sup> While the special British position had brought considerable stability to the Gulf for many years, the British decision could not be reversed. Nor would it be feasible to consider any outside replacement. The United States would accordingly have to accommodate itself to current realities and seek to do what it could to strengthen indigenous forces for stability, at the same time remaining alert to any indications that other world powers might seek to exploit the British departure to the detriment of vital Western interests which the Gulf region still represents.

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35/ IRG/NEA Memorandum 68-27, July 15, 1968 (Secret).



Considering the importance of harmony between Saudi Arabia and Iran to the future stability of the Persian Gulf, the outlook brightened when on September 1, 1968, a new agreement for delineation of a median line between the two countries was initialed at Taif. In Tehran, Ambassador Meyer had attempted insofar as it was possible for an American official to do so to insure that the negotiations should go well,<sup>36/</sup> and other American officials also played a useful role.

Even so, Assistant Secretary Battle told a visiting British Foreign Office official, Sir Denis Allen, on September 13 that we still regarded the political situation in the Gulf as "fragile."<sup>37/</sup> At the September meeting the United States urged the British once again to exploit every possibility for insuring a stable future for the Gulf as they planned for their 1971 military withdrawal.

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<sup>36/</sup> From Tehran, Telegram 5857, July 28, 1968 (Secret/LIMDIS).

<sup>37/</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, September 13, 1968, "US-UK Middle East Talks -- Washington -- September 13, 1968" (Secret).

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## G. YEMEN

### 1. Background

One of the deep concerns of US policy, because of our interest in encouraging peace and stability in the volatile Near East, has been the efforts of both the United Arab Republic and the Communist powers to promote radicalism in the Arab Peninsula. At the same time, we have been on the side of forces for modernization and reform in the Arab world, as a means of maintaining an effective Western alternative to Communist assistance to the Arabs.

The case of Yemen has been a focal point of our concern. United States interest in this remote Arab country -- which in 1962 was still an isolated medieval kingdom in a mountainous corner of the Arabian Peninsula -- quickly burgeoned when Yemen subsequently developed into a hotbed of angry and dangerous confrontation between radical and conservative forces in the Arab world. Our involvement in seeking the solution of this crisis was to continue through the entire Johnson Administration.

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## 2. The Republican Coup of 1962

On September 26, 1962 army officers overthrew Yemen's newest Imam, Muhammad al-Badr, forcing him to flee, and proclaimed the Yemen Arab Republic. Almost immediately King Faisal of Saudi Arabia began assisting the ousted Royalists, while President Nasser of the UAR sent troops in response to an appeal for help from the Republic. Yemen's long, bloody, and inconclusive civil war had begun. The United States thereafter worked diligently to encourage any settlement of the problem which would resolve the Saudi-UAR conflict arising out of it.

After protracted contacts with the UAR and other governments concerned, the United States recognized the Yemeni republican regime on December 19, 1962, noting the US belief that the reaffirmation by the Republic of its intention to honor Yemen's international obligations, and the declared willingness of the UAR to undertake a reciprocal disengagement as soon as external support to the Royalists ceased, provided a basis for terminating the conflict.<sup>1/</sup>

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<sup>1/</sup> US Statement on Recognition of the YAR.

However, fighting continued, as did the threat that the UAR would strike at Saudi Arabia in order to stop the flow of arms and money to the Royalists. The United States was concerned lest a situation develop in which the Saudis might ask us to come to their aid militarily.

On February 27, 1963, President Kennedy approved sending a special emissary to King Faisal to reassure him of US interest in Saudi Arabia and to convince him of the importance of disengaging from Yemen. The memorandum authorized the emissary to tell the King that the United States would consider stationing an air defense squadron in Saudi Arabia temporarily to deter UAR air operations. It also authorized assistance to Saudi Arabia in building up its own air defense capabilities.<sup>2/</sup>

Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker was appointed as the US emissary to both King Faisal and President Nasser in an effort to move the Yemen confrontation toward solution. Ambassador Bunker was able to obtain agreement in April 1963

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<sup>2/</sup> National Security Action Memorandum #227, February 27, 1963 (SECRET).

on a withdrawal of most UAR troops and a cessation of Saudi Arabian aid to the Royalists. The two sides also agreed to the stationing of neutral troops on the Saudi side of the border and at Yemeni airports and at the port of Hodeida.<sup>3/</sup>

Unfortunately, neither the UAR nor Saudi Arabia implemented these understandings. Subsequently, the United Nations established a Yemen Observation Mission (UNYOM), financed by the Saudis and the UAR, which attempted to observe evidence of across-the-border assistance to the Royalists and of UAR military withdrawal until September 1964, when Saudi financial support was withdrawn. President Kennedy, on October 10, 1963, instructed the Department of State to continue to press for disengagement and to keep UNYOM as a buffer while working behind the scenes to promote some form of compromise regime.<sup>4/</sup>

Meanwhile, on July 15, 1963, the United States honored its commitment in the Bunker agreement by sending an air defense squadron of 8 F-100's to Saudi Arabia, where it

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<sup>3/</sup> From Jidda, Telegrams 814, April 5, 1963 (SECRET), and 819 and 820, April 7, 1963 (SECRET-LIMDIS).

<sup>4/</sup> National Security Action Memorandum #262, October 10, 1963 (SECRET).



remained until January 1, 1964. Its orders were to conduct a training exercise with the Saudi Air Force as part of our overall effort to improve Saudi defense forces and as evidence of continuing US interest in the security of the country. The squadron was also to provide a limited air defense capability.

3. US Efforts Following the Bunker Mission

Such was the situation when President Johnson took office. Subsequent to the Bunker mission, fighting continued and no evidence came to light that the UAR was withdrawing troops or that the Saudis were withholding aid. The Department of State instructed our Embassy at Cairo on May 25, 1964, to express US concern over the failure of the UAR to make even a token withdrawal, and to urge the UAR to do so.<sup>5/</sup>

Meanwhile, uprisings in the South Arabian Federation in the spring of 1964 caused the British to suspect that the

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<sup>5/</sup> To Cairo, Telegram 6034, May 25, 1964 (SECRET).

dissidents were being offered safehaven and supplies across the nearby Yemeni border. On May 28, the Department instructed our Chargé d'Affaires in Taiz to reiterate that the United States was motivated by the desire that Yemen be fully independent and able to control its own destiny.<sup>6/</sup> The Chargé was to urge the Yemenis to meet with British representatives under United Nations auspices for the purpose of considering creation of a demilitarized zone. He was also instructed to urge the Yemeni Government to make known directly to the Saudis its desires for peaceful relations.

On September 14, 1964, in Alexandria, King Faisal and President Nasser jointly pledged cooperation to settle the Yemen dispute. Then, on November 3, Royalists and Republicans met in the Sudan to discuss means for convening a reconciliation conference and forming an all-Yemen Government. However, by December 1 the conference had broken down

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<sup>6/</sup> To Taiz, Telegram 724, May 28, 1964 (CONFIDENTIAL).

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in disagreement over use of the term "Republic" and the future status of the royal family, the Hamid al-Din's. Fighting between Royalist tribesmen and Republican and Egyptian troops intensified. Early in March 1965, UAR planes bombed locations inside the Saudi border.

On March 9 the Department of State pointed out that if the UAR were to attack Saudi Arabia by air in reply to a Saudi announcement of aid to the Royalists, any move by the United States to use American aircraft would open us to charges of providing air cover for activities against a regime that we recognized. The Department instructed Embassy Jidda to make clear to King Faisal that, while we continued to be concerned with Saudi Arabia's integrity, this commitment did not extend to providing defense against UAR attacks within the framework of the Yemeni military campaign. In the same message the Department instructed Embassy Cairo to stress our disappointment over the breakdown of the cease-fire, and our support for the integrity and independence of Saudi Arabia. The UAR and

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Saudi Arabia were urged to resume discussions.<sup>7/</sup>

On April 2, having been informed by the Saudis of another UAR air strike, the Department again asked Embassy Cairo to express our concern over these reports of violation of Saudi integrity, and to note our commitment to Saudi security.<sup>8/</sup>

The appointment on April 25 of Ahmad Nu'man as Yemini Prime Minister appeared encouraging. The new Prime Minister informed us that he would work for better relations with Britain and Saudi Arabia; he sent a peace delegation for a tour of Arab countries; he made a public offer (which was refused) to hold informal talks with the Saudis; and he asked Kuwait to mediate. A conference of Yemeni Republicans met in May at the town of Khamr and backed Nu'man's efforts. But on July 1 the Nu'man Government resigned under UAR pressure; Nasser could not trust Nu'man, who was a strong

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<sup>7/</sup> To Cairo, Telegram 5335, March 9, 1965 (SECRET).

<sup>8/</sup> To Cairo, Telegram 6051, April 2, 1965 (SECRET).

Yemeni nationalist and on whom the UAR looked as being unreliable -- too friendly toward the West and toward conservative Arab states.

4. US Efforts Following the Jidda Agreement and the Haradh Conference

Nasser went to Saudi Arabia on August 21, 1965, and two days later the Jidda agreement between him and King Faisal was announced. Among other points it called for a ceasefire, to be policed by a joint Saudi-UAR Peace Committee; a plebiscite to be held in Yemen by November 1966; a conference of Republicans and Royalists to meet in Haradh in Yemen to agree on a provisional government and plebiscite; departure of UAR troops in 10 months beginning November 23, 1965; and cessation of Saudi Arabia military assistance in any form to Royalists as well as prevention of use of Saudi soil against Yemen.

By September 11, the first Saudi contingent of military officers appointed to the Committee had arrived. On November 23, the conference of Royalists and Republicans convened in Haradh with UAR and Saudi observers attending.

But by December 24, the Conference had failed to reach any agreement, and it adjourned, never to resume.

Meanwhile Saudi Arabia announced, December 21, that it had signed letters of intent (subsequently implemented) with US and British companies for a \$400 million air defense project which would include British "Lightning" interceptors, US Hawk missiles, ground radar and communications equipment. American participation was an outgrowth of the offer made by Ambassador Bunker.

Following the apparent failure of the Haradh Conference, King Faisal sent his brother, Minister of Defense Prince Sultan, to the United States in February 1966 to warn us of Saudi fears of UAR-Communist penetration into the Red Sea area. In his meetings with President Johnson and Secretary Rusk, Sultan claimed that Nasser had agreed with the Soviets during his August 1965 visit to Moscow that, despite the Jidda Agreement, the UAR would remain in Yemen.

Having spoken earlier the same day with the President of the UAR's National Assembly, Anwar Sadat, Secretary Rusk replied that he felt the Jidda Agreement was not dead, and he



urged further Saudi-Egyptian efforts to implement it. He thought that the consequences of the apparent alternatives might be so bad that it would be a tragedy not to exert all possible patient efforts to make it work.<sup>9/</sup>

These views were also conveyed in an exchange of letters between Faisal and President Johnson. The President in his letter indicated that he shared the King's concern, and he praised the Jidda Agreement as "an act of statesmanship which still affords the best approach for peaceful resolution of the Yemen conflict."<sup>10/</sup>

The President, Secretary Rusk and Assistant Secretary Hare, in their conversations with Anwar Sadat, raised the question whether the UAR and Saudi Arabia might meet to discuss their differences. We indicated our willingness to support any such efforts.<sup>11/</sup> On March 15, 1966, the

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9/ To Jidda, Telegram 481, February 24, 1966 (SECRET).

10/ To Jidda, Telegram 484, February 26, 1966  
(SECRET-LIMDIS).

11/ To Cairo, Telegram 4814, February 26, 1966 (SECRET).

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Department instructed Embassy Cairo to say that the United States was convinced that the Saudis sincerely wanted a settlement. The instruction added that the United States wished to avoid becoming a party to negotiations and did not espouse any particular formula for implementing the Agreement.<sup>12/</sup>

In June 1966, King Faisal himself made a state visit to the United States. President Johnson reaffirmed to the King our interest in Saudi Arabia and in Faisal's personal security. He added that, though we had difficulties with President Nasser, we believed it was prudent to leave room for dialogue and not force Nasser further toward the Communist countries. Concerning Yemen, the President urged Faisal to maintain self-restraint and said that he doubted Nasser would dare attack Saudi Arabia without provocation.<sup>13/</sup>

In the spring of 1966 the Government of Kuwait had initiated efforts to mediate the crisis. The Department of

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<sup>12/</sup> To Cairo, Telegram 5175, March 15, 1966 (SECRET).

<sup>13/</sup> To Jidda, Telegram 858, June 22, 1966 (SECRET).

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State asked our Embassies in Jidda, Cairo and Kuwait to encourage the Saudis and the Egyptians to make concessions in the interest of a peaceful settlement.<sup>14/</sup>

5. Severance of Diplomatic Relations

Dramatically, on August 12, 1966, Yemeni Republican President Sallal, who had been in semi-exile in Cairo, returned to Sanaa and was met with opposition from Prime Minister al-Amri, cabinet members and high ranking army officers. By the middle of September, in an extraordinary open takeover by the UAR, the Amri cabinet and approximately 40 army officers were rounded up by Egyptian military, put on a plane and flown into exile and detention in the UAR. On September 16, the Egyptian press announced the "resignation" of the al-Amri Government. Sallal appointed a cabinet made up largely of well-known supporters of the UAR.

On September 28, a US AID employee, Michal Harriz, an American citizen, was declared persona non grata. Efforts of the Embassy to obtain a reversal of the decision, or to

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<sup>14/</sup> Department of State Telegram 22681, August 5, 1966 (SECRET).



get the Yemeni Republican Government to drop the action if we agreed to transferring Harriz, met with failure.<sup>15/</sup> Less than a month later the Yemeni Republican Minister for Tribal Affairs, Muhammad al-Ruaini, and four other men were executed on fabricated charges of having plotted with Harriz to overthrow the Sallal Government. The executions were followed by anti-US demonstrations accompanied by increased press and radio clamor against the United States.

The Yemen Republic's Foreign Minister, Muhammad Sallam, visited Washington on October 11, 1966, in conjunction with his attendance at the UN General Assembly. He met with Assistant Secretary of State Raymond Hare and AID Assistant Administrator William B. Macomber, both of whom expressed the friendly attitude of the United States and the openness of its policy regarding Yemen.<sup>16/</sup> Ambassador Hare denied that

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<sup>15/</sup> From Taiz, Telegrams 472, September 28, 1966 (SECRET), 473, September 28, 1966 (SECRET), 477, September 29, 1966 (CONFIDENTIAL) and 537, October 6, 1966 (CONFIDENTIAL); Department of State Telegrams 55933, September 28, 1966 (CONFIDENTIAL) and 56325, September 29, 1966 (SECRET).

<sup>16/</sup> Department of State Telegram 64728, October 12, 1966 (SECRET).

we were involved in attempts in any way to manipulate the internal affairs of Yemen and stated that the United States desired nothing but self-determination for the Yemeni people. On October 31, 1966, the Department informed field posts of our firm intent to continue to maintain the US presence in Yemen in order not to leave the field open to Russian and Chinese Communist penetration, and to continue to provide a major Western alternative to Arab reliance on Communist powers.<sup>17/</sup>

Meanwhile, in implementation of commitments made during the Bunker mission, the first Hawk battery arrived in Saudi Arabia in November 1966. In mid-February 1967, following several UAR air attacks against the Saudi border village of Najran, the US-supplied unit was deployed to the nearby town of Jizan. A State Department spokesman on January 30 deplored the bombings and reiterated our deep concern over any threat to the territorial integrity of Saudi Arabia.<sup>18/</sup> On

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<sup>17/</sup> Department of State Telegram 75992, October 31, 1966 (SECRET).

<sup>18/</sup> Department of State Telegram 127786, January 30, 1967 (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE).

the following day, the US Military Training Mission was authorized to offer advisory assistance to Saudi air defense units in the border area and agreement in principle was given to providing the Saudis with Sidewinder air-to-air missiles.<sup>19/</sup> Meanwhile, Royalist reports of UAR gas bomb attacks in northern Yemen filtered out in January 1967. (See below.)

In April 1967 the Department proposed and the President approved a US mission of mediation. Terms of reference for the Special Representative, who was to be the now-retired Ambassador Hare, were to prepare, on the basis of discussions with interested parties, general guidelines for settlement of the dispute.<sup>20/</sup> These guidelines would form the basis of subsequent detailed negotiations among the parties, using the good offices of the United States as desired. The Saudis and the Egyptians agreed to accept Ambassador Hare, but final agreement on terms of reference

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<sup>19/</sup> Department of State Telegram 128587, January 31, 1967 (SECRET).

<sup>20/</sup> Terms of Reference, Hare Mission April 3, 1967 (SECRET).



were never reached.

On April 25, following explosions on the outskirts of the city of Taiz, two US AID officials were arrested and held by the Yemeni authorities. Trumped-up charges were broadcast and printed in government information media, claiming a US plot to destroy the city. The American Embassy prevailed upon the authorities to allow an Embassy officer to remain with the detained men. Meanwhile, the Yemeni Government terminated our AID agreement and ordered AID personnel to depart the country. A demonstration was allowed to get out of hand, and AID offices were broken into and ransacked. The Secretary of State immediately ordered that all AID personnel and the dependents of all other US Government personnel depart at once, and that a reduction to a skeleton Embassy staff be accomplished immediately. By May 1 all but the nine persons designated to remain had been airlifted to Ethiopia.

Constant efforts by the Department of State vis-a-vis the Yemeni and UAR Embassies in Washington, and by our Embassies in Cairo and Sanaa with the respective Foreign

Offices, accomplished the release of the two officials into the custody of our Charge d'Affaires on May 16. On the following day they were allowed to depart the country. Throughout, despite virulent anti-American propaganda, accusations, threats to bring the two Americans to trial, and violation of our rights of legation, calm and determined diplomatic efforts kept the problem from becoming unmanageable.

In the sudden Israeli-Arab war on June 6, 1967, following the lead of the UAR, the Yemeni Government called in our Charge d'Affaires and delivered a memorandum charging US participation with Israel in attacks against the UAR, and severing Yemen's diplomatic relations with us. The Yemeni's asked the remaining staff of our Embassy to depart. By June 9, the last person had left, and the Italian Embassy in Yemen accepted responsibility for US affairs.

#### 6. Post-War Developments and Contacts

Following the Arab-Israeli war, the Arab heads of state met in August 1967 in Khartoum. During this meeting, King Faisal and President Nasser agreed to the formation of a

Tripartite Committee on Yemen. Included in the committee's mission was the preparation of plans to guarantee UAR troop withdrawal and the suspension of Saudi military aid. The three major Arab oil states (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Libya) pledged an annual total of 135 million pounds to help the UAR and Jordan recover from the economic losses of the war, while Nasser assured King Faisal that all UAR troops would be withdrawn. Saudi aid to the UAR (about \$98 million annually), plus Nasser's need to deploy all his available forces to face Israel, encouraged the UAR to speed its troop withdrawal, and all had left Yemen by early December. Moderate Republican leaders who had been detained in Cairo for over a year were released and returned to Yemen, where they soon deposed President Sallal and his UAR-picked government.

The UAR troop withdrawal was followed by increased Royalist military activity around Sanaa in preparation for a planned final assault on the capital. The Yemeni Government appealed to the Soviet Union for aircraft and other military supplies, at least some of which were covered in a



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Soviet agreement with Sallal in September 1967. The Soviets responded with a massive airlift from November 1967 to January 1968. On December 1 the Royalists claimed to have shot down a Russian-piloted MIG, and evidence published in the British press tended to confirm their claim, making clear direct Soviet military participation. Meanwhile the Royalist forces closed around Sanaa but were held off by Republican defenders. In the end, the Royalist investment was broken by Republican counter-attacks, and tenuous links between Sanaa and other Republican areas were reestablished.

In a press briefing on December 13, 1967, the Department of State spokesman, replying to questions about reports of Soviet deliveries of arms and participation of Soviet pilots, stated that these reports appeared to be substantially correct. We continued to believe that foreign military intervention in Yemen was only likely to increase the level of tension in the area.<sup>21/</sup> There were subsequent indications that this

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<sup>21/</sup> Department of State Telegrams 84166, December 13, 1967 and 84178, December 14, 1967 (SECRET).

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public airing of their exposed position may have embarrassed the USSR.

The Yemeni Republican representative at the United Nations, Yahya Jaghman, got in touch informally, late in November, with a State Department officer, and indicated his government's desire to discuss outstanding problems with the United States. On December 8 in New York the Italian Ambassador to the United Nations brought Jaghman into contact with Ambassador Goldberg and Department officers. Jaghman presented a letter to Secretary Rusk from Prime Minister al-Aini, former Yemeni Republican Ambassador to the United States. With reference to reports about the activity of Soviet pilots and to Jaghman's earlier remarks to the effect that "the Republic is not negotiable" nor would Republicans ever consent to meet with Royalists, a State Department officer pointed out that the Yemeni Republican Government offered the opposition no choice but to fight on.<sup>22/</sup>

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<sup>22/</sup> Department of State Telegram 82442, December 9, 1967 (CONFIDENTIAL).

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Another contact between US and Yemeni Republican representatives occurred in Rome in March 1968, the Italian Foreign Office having made the arrangements. At that meeting the Yemen Minister of Finance, Ahmad Said, suggested to the Department's Arabian Peninsula Country Director that the United States assign an officer to the Italian Embassy in Yemen, and asked us to communicate to the Saudi Arabian Government the interest of the Yemeni Government in ending the war. He stated that Yemeni Republican leaders were worried over the threat from leftist-radicals. The only condition insisted upon by the Yemeni Government was exclusion of the Hamid al-Din family from Yemen. The Department's representative assured the Minister of our basic friendly intentions and noted that our recognition of the YAR had not been withdrawn, but pointed out that the continuing civil war created a serious problem for the United States in considering any resumption of diplomatic ties. We did not, he affirmed, wish to become involved on either side of the Yemen conflict.<sup>23/</sup>

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<sup>23/</sup> From Rome, Telegram 5178, March 30, 1968  
(SECRET-LIMDIS).



The Saudis showed no interest when the foregoing meeting was described to them, pointing out that the Hamid al-Dins were Yemenis too. Nevertheless, from the late spring of 1968 there was increasing evidence of Saudi attempts to impress upon the Royalists that their problem must be solved in Yemen. Reports in July and August 1968 indicated increasing ferment within Royalist ranks and further readiness to compromise on the part of the Yemeni Republican Prime Minister, perhaps due to fear of the leftist radicals, even on the key question of the Hamid al-Dins.

#### 7. Gas Warfare in Yemen

On May 18, 1967, two doctor-delegates of the International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC) signed a statement in the Saudi Arabian town of Najran near the border of Yemen describing claims by inhabitants of a northern Yemeni village of gas attacks by airplanes on the morning of May 20, 1967, which had killed 75 persons. The doctors, after examination of the bodies, stated the cause of death to be pulmonary edema which "in all probability was caused by inhalation of toxic gas." Professor D. E. Lauppi, Director of the Bern,

Switzerland, Institute of Forensic Medicine, examined the two doctors' report and concluded in a subsequent statement that "all symptoms observed are explainable by the hypothesis of the use of mustard gas, lewisite or similar substance." The Yemeni Royalists had previously charged that the UAR was using gas in its air attacks against Yemeni villages.

The Department of State on July 27, 1967, said "this government condemns such action as inhuman and entirely contrary to the laws of nations," adding "the US Government would support international action to deal with this problem." Our UN Representative, Ambassador Goldberg, in reply to a letter from Congressman Lester L. Wolff of New York, expressed the Administration's "concern over the growing number of indications that gas once again is being used by the UAR Air Force against the local population in Yemen." A letter prepared in the Department for use in reply to correspondence on the subject stated, "Our own position on this matter is clear. The use of poison gas is against international law and the policies of governments throughout the world; this was reflected in a resolution approved by

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the United Nations General Assembly last fall by an overwhelming vote of 91 in favor, with four abstentions (UNGA Res. 2162B of 1966). The United States Government supports international action to deal with this problem."

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