

ARAB REFUGEES: FACTS AND FIGURES

THE NUMBER OF ARAB REFUGEES

THE ARAB MASS FLIGHT: ORIGIN AND RESPONSIBILITY

WHAT HAVE THE ARAB STATES DONE FOR THE REFUGEES?

THE NUMBER OF ARABS IN ISRAEL

ARAB REFUGEES AS A PROSPECTIVE FIFTH COLUMN IN ISRAEL

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This survey is an attempt to summarize available
information pertinent to some of
the essential aspects of the Arab Refugee Problem.

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בבקשה לקבל את הלוסטה

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I. THE NUMBER OF ARAB REFUGEES

Contradictory and misleading figures on the number of Arab refugees from Israel and Israeli-occupied areas are being circulated in this country and abroad.

The first Progress Report of the United Nations Mediator on Palestine¹⁾ gave a total, as of September 10, 1948, of 360,000. The second Progress Report²⁾, published October 18, 1948, speaks of 472,000 and adds that the number of refugees "is likely shortly to reach a maximum of slightly over 500,000." Since then, the figures have risen constantly.

Inflated Figures

Last October, Msgr. George Hakim, Greek Catholic Archbishop of Galilee, put the number at 600,000.³⁾ In December, Sir Rafael Cilento, Director of the UN Disaster Relief Organization, spoke of 750,000 needy refugees who had to be fed by his organization.⁴⁾ Hector McNeil, British Minister of State, reported in the House of Commons on February 16, 1949 that there were 810,000 Arab refugees.⁵⁾ Finally, W. de St. Aubin, Director of Field Operations for the UN Disaster Relief Organization from June 1948 to January 1949, who had served under Count Bernadotte and who was later Dr. Bunche's Special Consultant on Humanitarian Affairs, stated⁶⁾ that "estimates of recent months, based on registration for relief distribution purposes, place the figure [of Palestine Arab refugees/ at approximately one million, distributed as follows:

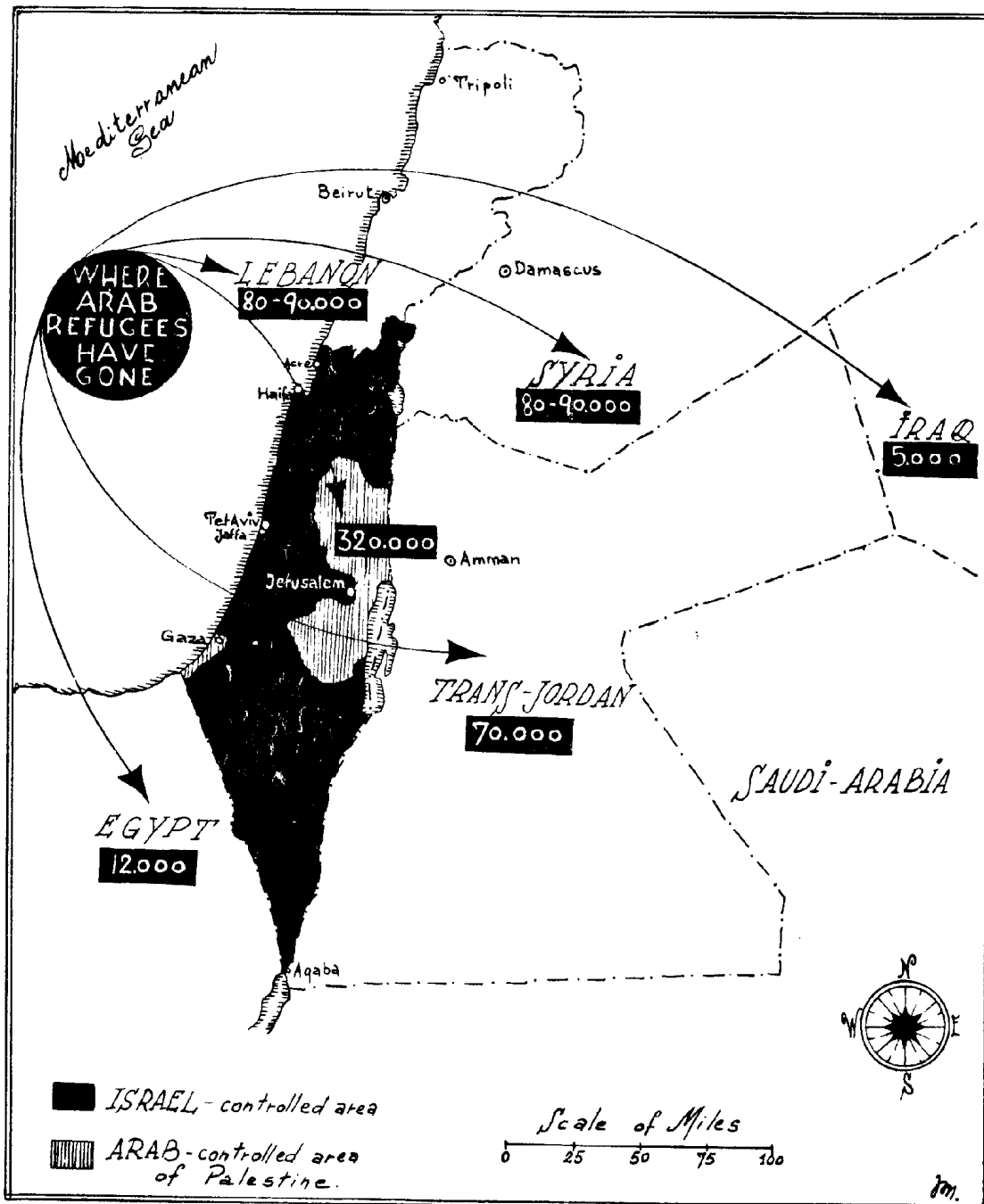
- 1) Progress Report of the United Nations Mediator on Palestine, A/648, Part Three, September 18, 1948.
- 2) Progress Report of the United Nations Acting Mediator for Palestine, A/689, Supplement to A/648 Part Three, October 18, 1948.
- 3) The New York Times, December 11, 1948.
- 4) Ibid., December 23, 1948.
- 5) Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, Official Report, February 16, 1949.
- 6) The Middle East Journal, July, 1949.

Lebanon	130,000
Syria	85,000
Transjordan	95,000
Palestine	
North and east	400,000
Gaza area	225,000
Israel	50,000
Iraq, Egypt, etc.	15,000 "

Demographic Realities

The demographic realities of Palestine dispute these figures. No authoritative census of the Arab refugees has ever been taken. (A census announced by the Arab League on September 1, 1948 never materialized, nor has anything been heard of the work of a committee of experts which the Palestine Conciliation Commission decided to dispatch on May 17, 1949 to establish on the spot the exact number of Arab refugees.) According to the Statistical Abstract of Palestine, 1944 - 45, however, there were on December 31, 1945, 1,035,012 Moslems and 139,285 Christians (mainly Arabs) in Palestine. Of this number, 736,000 lived in the area which now constitutes the territory of Israel. Since 170,000 Arabs now live in Israel (Moshe Sharett, August 4, 1949), this would leave 566,000 refugees beyond the borders, plus some 60,000, the natural increase for the period.

On the other hand, it is inconceivable that the number of Arab refugees could possibly rise from 472,000 in mid-October 1948 to 810,000 in February 1949, and to a million in the summer of 1949, an increase of 338,000 and 528,000 respectively. During this period two Jewish campaigns were waged: on October 29-31, 1948 in northern Galilee, and on December 22 in the Negev. The Moslem Arab population in northern Galilee did not exceed 50,000. Frederic Beard, Cairo representative of the UN Disaster Relief Organization, must have exaggerated when he stated at the end of November that an additional 130,000 Arabs had been made refugees as a result of the Israeli offensive, even if the



DISTRIBUTION OF PALESTINE ARAB REFUGEES IN ARAB COUNTRIES

Arabs who fled from the area south of Jerusalem and from the villages in the hills of Hebron were included. The Negev campaign could certainly not have added 210,000 (or 400,000) more refugees to the previous total.

According to official Israeli sources,⁷⁾ the number of Arab refugees was 567-587,000 at the most, distributed approximately as follows:

Arab parts of Palestine	320,000
Transjordan	70,000
Lebanon	80,000 - 90,000
Syria	80,000 - 90,000
Egypt	12,000
Iraq	5,000
	<hr/>
	567,000 - 587,000

The discrepancy between these figures and St. Aubin's figure can be explained in two ways:

"Resident Refugees"

The term "refugee" is used very loosely. Last December, Sir Rafael Cilento admitted that of the 750,000 needy refugees who had to be fed by the UN Disaster Relief Organization, some 100,000 were "not strictly refugees" but people "made indigent by warfare."

In May, the International Red Cross, which is responsible for the feeding and care of Arab refugees, urged the UN Palestine relief headquarters in Beirut to recognize a large part of the resident population in the sectors of Palestine held by the Arab Legion as "resident refugees." Some 100,000 persons in those areas were supposed to belong in this category. According to Red Cross representatives, a great proportion of the resident Arab population of the Hebron, Jerusalem and Nablus areas, which had been cut off from contact with the northern coastal plain and with the seaports had become completely destitute.

7) Bulletin 9149, Israeli Foreign Ministry, Middle East Division, February 25, 1949.

As long as the region was part of the total Palestine economy, the Arabs had some general means of livelihood, but now "large numbers of them are as badly off as the refugees except that they have their own roofs over their heads." The Red Cross maintained that it was "becoming increasingly difficult to differentiate, as far as destitution was concerned, between the refugees and the residents, as the Arab-occupied areas do not produce sufficient food or saleable goods to nourish more than a small percentage of the resident population." The organization asked for a change in United Nations' relief regulations to include these "resident refugees" on the ground that "it would be senseless to force destitute Palestinians to abandon their homes to be able to get food as refugees."

Similarly, the Quakers, who are responsible for the care of refugees in the Egyptian-held Gaza coastal strip (the resident Arab population of the Gaza subdistrict is 132,510) also reported that a great part of the resident population in their area was destitute.

Summarizing the situation, Albion Ross cabled to The New York Times on May 15 that "in general terms the Arab people of Palestine, whether within or outside the frontiers of Palestine, have become public charges with relatively rare exceptions. The problem, it is stated, therefore is becoming not relief but the issue of the rehabilitation of the entire community of Palestinian Arabs so that they can again fit in some place in society."

From a purely humanitarian point of view, this reasoning may be entirely justified. Destitute people must be helped whether they have remained in their homes or have left. The argument that when Arab-held areas are cut off from Israeli territory they cannot produce sufficient food to maintain themselves is also sound. From the political viewpoint, however, the term "resident refugees" is a striking contradictio in adjecto. Persons belonging to this cate-

gory cannot be included in the category of "refugees" - those who left Israeli territory as the result of the Arab-Jewish war.

Overlapping of Counts

The very nature of the situation makes it difficult to obtain exact figures. The refugees are constantly on the move from one camp to another and overlapping of counts is unavoidable.

Oriental Exaggeration

Furthermore, statistical methods are highly unreliable in Oriental countries where the tendency to exaggerate is ingrained. In his second Progress Report, the UN Mediator on Palestine, who estimated the number of Arab refugees at 472,000, stated:

"Estimates made by Arab authorities go much higher and reach totals of between 740,000 and 780,000; checks made by officers of the Disaster Relief Project, however, have failed to substantiate such figures. In the most northerly area, for example (North Syria), a figure of 30,000 refugees was quoted, distributed as follows: Lattakieh - 5,000; Aleppo - 10,000; Hama - 7,000; and Homs - 8,000. Actual investigation showed that in round figures the numbers at these places were 880; 8,000; 3,500; and 3,200 respectively, and the total was not 30,000 but only 15,580. Similar examples have been found elsewhere."

II. ARAB MASS FLIGHT: ORIGIN AND RESPONSIBILITY

The Arab Minority

Included in the Jewish State, as envisaged by the United Nations decision of November 29, 1947, was an Arab minority of 397,000 - 42.46 per cent of the total population. The Jews realized that this strongly nationalistic Arab community, embittered by decades of political Arab-Jewish friction, subjected to irredentist propaganda from outside, and counting on spiritual, financial and eventually military support from the neighboring Arab states, would not readily reconcile itself to a minority status and that the problem would be a considerable source of friction and conflict. Nevertheless, the Jewish leaders were determined to make every effort to bring about a peaceful co-habitation and co-operation of the two peoples in Israel.

Abortive Attempts at Conciliation

Although Arab attacks on the Jewish population began immediately after the passage of the November 29 resolution, responsible Jewish bodies did their utmost to maintain peaceful relations with the Arabs of Palestine. Early in December, Haganah distributed leaflets in all the Arab villages urging the Arabs to choose "peace and constructive work" and warning them not to listen to war-mongers and allow their villages to become bases of war operations, "so that we shall not have to harm you and your property in the course of our self-defence. You will understand that if attacks are made from these bases we shall have no alternative but to shoot back. We hope that you will heed this appeal and help us bring peace back to the country for the good of the inhabitants." Histadrut (General Labor Federation) sent out similar appeals to Arab workers.

The warnings went unheeded. Arab attacks began on November 30 when eight

Jews were killed in a bus near Nathanya. Violence, arson and murder mounted steadily in response to incitement by the Mufti and the Arab Higher Committee. Bands of Palestinian Arabs, reinforced by irregulars from the Arab states, harried the country, slaughtering and pillaging. Nevertheless, the Proclamation of the State of Israel, issued on May 14, 1948 by the Provisional Government, contained a special appeal to the Arab population:

"In the midst of wanton aggression, we yet call upon the Arab inhabitants of the State of Israel to return to the ways of peace and play their part in the development of the State, with full and equal citizenship and due representation in all its bodies and institutions, provisional or permanent."⁸⁾

This, too, went unheeded. The Arabs expected a quick and easy victory over the Jews whom they outnumbered. But the hope of such a victory proved illusory; the Jews not only stood their ground but scored considerable military successes. Over-confidence quickly changed to panic: Arabs in ever-increasing numbers began to flee and the exodus degenerated into a stampede.

Phases of the Exodus

The mass flight of the Palestine Arabs is a phenomenon for which no single explanation suffices. It is necessary to take into account several, and apparently contradictory, causes to obtain a clear picture of what happened.

The first phase started immediately after the partition decision. Well-to-do Arab families of Jerusalem, Haifa and Jaffa, anticipating trouble, began to leave, quietly and inconspicuously, for the neighboring Arab countries. Some 30,000 persons are estimated to have departed during this initial stage.

The second phase began in March - April 1948, after the citrus crop was harvested. Apparently following instructions from the Arab Higher Committee, tens of thousands of Arabs living in the Sharon coastal plain, between Tel Aviv

⁸⁾ Palestine Affairs, May, 1948.

and Hadera, started to move to the Arab-controlled hill regions. Many sold their poultry and flocks to Jewish neighbors. During the same period 6,000 Arabs suddenly left Tiberias (April 18); some 60,000 left Haifa (April 22); and 65 - 70,000 left Jaffa (April 25 - 29).

The third and most dramatic phase of the exodus started in May, following the proclamation of the State of Israel and the full-scale armed invasion by five Arab states.

The military successes of the Jewish armed forces during the period preceding the first truce (June 11, 1948) led to the occupation of practically all the Arab villages within the boundaries of Israel, as defined by the partition resolution. Fighting was resumed on July 9, and before a new truce was imposed by the United Nations ten days later, the Israeli Army had succeeded in capturing 494 additional square miles, including the Arab towns of Lydda, Ramleh, Jenin and Nazareth. Of the 219 Arab villages in Israeli territory, 201 were by that time occupied by Israeli forces; outside Israel's boundaries, 13 Arab towns and townlets and 112 villages had been captured, 70 of them during the last ten days of the fighting.

During this period, the flight of Arab civilians assumed unprecedented proportions. Late in May, the total number of Arabs who had left Jewish-occupied areas of Palestine was estimated by Faris el Khouri, Syria's representative in the Security Council, at a quarter of a million.⁹⁾ Two months later, W. de St. Aubin, field representative of the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, computed that the Palestine war had created about 300,000 refugees.¹⁰⁾

The second truce put a temporary stop to the refugee movement. In mid-October the fighting started again. On the 21st, Israeli forces occupied Beersheba;

9) The New York Times, May 23, 1948.

10) Ibid., July 24, 1948.

on the 29th, they opened a counter-offensive against Fawzi Kawukji's "Arab Liberation Army" in Galilee and by the 31st had gained control of all Galilee, up to the borders of Syria and Lebanon. The Moslem Arab population of northern Galilee, numbering some 50,000, fled into Lebanon, leaving only the Christian Arabs, approximately 3,000. Simultaneously, there was a mass flight from the whole Arab area south of Jerusalem towards Transjordan. This was prompted by the Arab feeling that Israel was planning to encircle Jerusalem from the north and the south and so complete its occupation. Reports from Arab quarters also indicated a flight from Bethlehem and from the villages in the hills of Hebron.

Finally, the Negev campaign, which started on December 22, caused a new wave of flight among the quarter of a million Arab refugees in Egyptian-held areas; many of these made their way almost to the Gulf of Aqaba, above the Red Sea.

British Responsibility

The flight of Arabs from Israel on a large-scale started while the British were still in control of the country and long before the State of Israel was proclaimed. Elias N. Koussa, a well-known Haifa lawyer and an independent Arab, who recently outspokenly criticized the Israeli Government's policy toward the Arabs remaining in Israel, categorically declared that "the primary responsibility for the panicky flight of the Arabs is the British Government's." In a letter published in The Palestine Post on February 2, 1949, he wrote that the British administration of the country "was laboring to create an atmosphere permeated with fear and alarm...The idea that the Arabs should quit their homes was advanced, sponsored and propagated by the British."

"The Government of Palestine granted its officers three months' pay in advance, and facilitated the departure on leave of Arab officers to adjacent territories. British companies, such as the Iraq Petroleum Company, and Steel Bros. and Company, unnecessarily transferred a part of their offices and the majority of their Arab employees to the Lebanon. And generally, the attitude of the responsible British authorities was

such as to infuse into the minds and hearts of the Arab population a feeling of consternation and the belief that their departure was a logical necessity, or, at least, a prudent precaution.

"It was the British, and not the Jews, who first put into effect the dislodgment and deportation of the Arab population. When conditions in Tiberias, where the friendly relations between Arabs and Jews formed a bright illustration of the possibility of the two communities cooperating became acute, the British authorities forcibly transported the Arab inhabitants en masse to Trans-Jordan."

The role played by the British authorities in the Arab mass flight is also stressed by Monsignor George Hakim, Archbishop of the Greek Catholic Church (a Uniate Church which is in fellowship with the Vatican and counts 20,864 adherents in Palestine). An Arab himself and a former supporter of the Mufti, Archbishop Hakim told Karl Baehr, Executive Secretary of the American Christian Palestine Committee, that an important element in precipitating the flight, particularly in the Haifa area (where Monsignor lives) was "the fact that the British informed the Arabs that they would not protect them. Since most of the Arab leaders had already fled, the people were thrown into a panic so that they fled by sea to Lebanon. They fled in spite of the fact that the Jewish authorities guaranteed their safety and rights as citizens of Israel."¹¹⁾

Arab Responsibility

Official Palestine Arab spokesmen have repeatedly announced that the Palestine Arabs had fled of their own accord.

At a meeting of the UN Security Council on April 23, 1948, Jamal Bey Husseini, speaking for the Arab Higher Committee, said: "The Arabs would not submit to a truce...but they rather preferred to leave their homes in the town /Haifa/... and leave the town, which they did."

Again, in an interview with a correspondent of the Beirut Arabic newspaper Telegraph on September 6, 1948, Emil Ghory, representative of the Arab Higher Committee at the meetings of the UN General Assembly, stated: "The problem of

¹¹⁾ Letter of Karl Baehr in The New York Herald Tribune, June 30, 1949.

the refugees is the direct result of the policy of resistance to partition and to the establishment of the Israeli State. This policy was unanimously adopted by the Arab Governments, and it is they who have to bear responsibility for the solution of the refugee problem."

Perhaps the clearest illustration of Arab evacuation by command is the Arab exodus from Haifa. The London Economist (October 2, 1948) quotes a British eye-witness to what happened. Despite the fact that the Jewish authorities "urged all Arabs to remain in Haifa and guaranteed them protection and security...of the 62,000 Arabs who formerly lived in Haifa, not more than 4,000 or 6,000 remained."

"Various factors influenced their decision to seek safety in flight. There is but little doubt that far the most potent of these factors were the announcements made over the air by the Arab Higher Executive, urging all Arabs in Haifa to quit. The reason given was that upon the final withdrawal of the British the combined armies of the Arab States would invade Palestine and drive the Jews into the sea, and it was clearly intimated that those Arabs who remained in Haifa and accepted Israeli protection would be regarded as renegades. At that time the Palestinian Arabs still had some confidence in the ability of the Arab League to implement the promises of its spokesmen."

All evidence seems to point to the fact that the mass exodus of the Arab population was deliberately stimulated to serve the political ends of the Arab leadership. The Arab masses were subjected to a heavy barrage of "atrocious propaganda" predicting their wholesale extermination by the advancing Jewish forces. They were exhorted to flee for their lives even though they were not immediately threatened.

This propaganda met with an unexpected measure of success. Panic seized one community after the other and the Arabs began to flee in numbers far exceeding the original intention of their leaders. In an article in the London Daily Mail (August 12, 1948), Glubb Pasha, the British commander of the Arab Legion, said: "The Arab civil population panicked and fled ignominiously." Villages were frequently abandoned even before they were threatened by the pro-

gress of war.

So deeply was the reluctance to stay under Jewish rule implanted in the Arab population that the feeling has survived the war period. It largely determined the Arabs' conduct even at a time when they knew they had nothing to fear under an Israeli regime and when Arab leaders were clamoring for the return of the refugees to Israeli territory. According to the Israeli-Egyptian armistice agreement (February 24, 1949), the Egyptian brigade which was trapped in the Faluja pocket was permitted to withdraw. The civilian population of Faluja, numbering 3,000, had the option of remaining on Israeli territory or of being transferred to Egyptian-held Gaza or to Transjordan-held Hebron or Bethlehem. The New York Times correspondent, Gene Currivan, in a dispatch which appeared on March 4, 1949, expressed considerable surprise that of the 3,000 Faluja Arabs who were under no compulsion or threat and who certainly had all the benefits of protection by the United Nations authorities, 2,500 opted for evacuation and only some 500 decided to stay.

III. WHAT HAVE THE ARAB STATES DONE FOR THE REFUGEES?

At the meeting of the United Nations Third Committee in Paris on October 30, 1948, Mr. Baghdadi, the representative of Egypt, referring to the Mediator's report, said that the report "constituted the most striking evidence to the generosity of the Arab countries" toward the Palestine Arab refugees.¹²⁾ However, in February 1949, the Amman newspaper an-Nasr, in a leading article entitled "To those who collect the dollars," sharply accused the Arab rulers of neglecting the Palestine refugees. Addressing itself to the Arab kings, the article asked: "Where is your Islamic feeling and Arab pride? You must come to the rescue of these poor refugees before the catastrophe reaches your countries. All of you who collect millions of dollars from your oil wells and enjoy the luxury of your palaces, remember that you claim to be Arabs. Yet Arabs are dying by the thousands of starvation and cold."¹³⁾

According to Dr. Bayard Dodge, former President of the American University of Beirut who is now special adviser to the United Nations Relief for Palestine Refugees, the total amount of funds raised by the Arab states, by government appropriation and public subscription, during the summer and autumn of 1948 before United Nations relief activities started, was "over ten million dollars."¹⁴⁾

The scope and character of the help given by single Arab states is described in the following subchapters.

1. Egypt and the Palestine Refugees

Only 11,163 Refugees Admitted

At a meeting of Sub-Committee 2 of the Third Committee of the United Na-

12) A/C. 3/SR 118, p.12.

13) Quoted in The Jewish Agency's Digest of Press and Events, February 25, 1949.

14) United Nations Bulletin, March 1, 1949.

tions, Egypt's representative declared that

Egypt and some other countries, without waiting to be asked, had already opened their frontiers to a large number of Arabs who had been rendered homeless...Egypt is an overpopulated country with a very poor subsoil, but it nevertheless intended to continue to offer asylum to the refugees, while fully realizing that this could not represent a permanent solution.¹⁵⁾

This magnanimous statement does not conform to the actual facts. The number of Arab refugees who found asylum in Egypt is very small. On June 21, 1948 the Egyptian Minister of Justice, Mursi Badr, stated in the Senate that 9,142 Palestine Arab refugees were in camps under the Egyptian Government's care.¹⁶⁾ The United Nations Mediator's report stated that as of September 10, 1948, a total of about 12,000 refugees was in Egypt. On December 20, however, it was reported in Parliament that there were only 11,163 refugees in Egypt. Most of these were in Ismailia, in the Suez Canal area, where Egypt had formerly maintained a camp for German war prisoners.

Additional Influx

The number increased somewhat when 2,500 of the 3,000 Arabs in Faluja chose to be transferred to Egypt rather than remain in Israel. Some additional Arabs infiltrated from the Egyptian-held Gaza area, where about 260,000 Arabs, local inhabitants and refugees, live under Egyptian administration. Many Bedouins who could find no grazing grounds in the Sinai Desert wandered into the Canal area; it was impossible for the authorities to drive them out and they also became Egyptian charges. In August 1949, the total number of Palestine Arabs in Egypt was estimated at from 38 - 48,000.¹⁷⁾

Poor Financial Contribution

Speaking at the meeting of the Third Committee on October 10, 1948, the

15) Doc. A/c 3/Sc. 2/SR, 8, p.7

16) The New York Times, June 22, 1948.

17) Ibid., August 21, 1949.

Egyptian delegate, Mr. Baghdadi, stated that "the official contribution of Egypt to the refugees amounted to L150,000(\$600,000) and the contribution of private organizations amounted to L25,000 (\$100,000)."¹⁸⁾

The Government's contribution is strikingly insignificant in view of the L103,000,000 government expenditure in 1947-48. Even more insignificant is the amount collected by "private organizations." In fact, much larger sums were extorted from Egypt's 75,000 Jews. According to The New York Times of June 6, 1948, the Jews of Egypt were donating large sums for the war chest, while the Egyptian press reported that the Jews of Cairo alone contributed \$160,000 in June, and those of Alexandria, \$80,000. Bourse Egyptienne (July 2) announced a gift of 41,000 Egyptian pounds, while Journal d'Egypte (June 26) reported a donation of 1,000 Egyptian pounds by the small Jewish community of Port Said.

2. Iraq and the Palestine Refugees

Only 3,000 to 4,500 Refugees Admitted

Figures on the number of Palestine Arab refugees admitted by Iraq differ greatly, and most of them, particularly those originating from Arab sources, are highly inflated. An Arab League memorandum (al-Ahram, August 30, 1948) speaks of 23,000. The British-controlled Near East Arabic Radio mentioned on August 8, 1948 "a maximum of 20,000." Mr. Kaijali, Syria's representative on the Third Committee, spoke of 15,000 on October 30.¹⁹⁾ Al-Misr gave the

18) AC 3/SR 118, p.12

Egypt's contribution in natura amounted to fifty tons of medical supplies sent by the Egyptian Red Cross to the Egyptian-held south Palestine, and 40,000 doses of anti-typhoid vaccine, as well as further quantities of cholera vaccines, sulphur drugs and atabrine sent to Amman by the Egyptian Government. (A/689/ Add. 1, Appendix F).

19) AC. 3/SR 118, p.5.

number on August 16 as 7,000. In actual fact, not more than between 3,000 (UN Mediator's report, September 10, 1948) and 4,500 (Zut al-Ahrar, Beirut, December 22, 1948) found asylum in Iraq. The influx of new refugees was barred by the Iraqi Government.

Shelter at the Expense of Iraqi Jews

At the Third Committee meeting of October 29, 1948, the Iraqi representative, Mr. Abadi, speaking of the aid given to Arab refugees, stated that:

"The Arab States had done their part and would continue to do so. The Iraqi Government had evacuated schools, mosques, and municipal buildings in order to shelter these unfortunate people. Despite its limited financial resources, it had provided clothing, food, and medical care."²⁰⁾

It is difficult to understand why such drastic measures were necessary to shelter less than 5,000 refugees. Richard Moverer, Middle East correspondent of the Chicago Times, who made an extensive tour of Middle Eastern countries, reported in the Palestine Post (July 20, 1949) that "some of the Palestine refugees are housed in a Jewish school in Baghdad, and in various Jewish houses which the Government has requisitioned."

Money from Jewish Sources

Nor did the Iraqi Government make any financial contribution, either in cash or in natura, to the overall United Nations relief program for Arab refugees. The more than modest expenses connected with "providing clothing, food, and medical care" for the few thousand refugees who found their way to Iraq were largely covered by the money extorted from Iraqi Jews. On August 27, 1948, the influential Cairo daily al-Ahram reported that the Iraqi Government intended to cover the expenses in connection with the Arab refugees from Palestine by requisitioning private Jewish property.

In the officially launched drive to raise funds for the Palestine Arabs,

²⁰⁾ A/C 3/SR 117, p.9.

the largest donors were the Iraqi Jews. Early in December 1947, Reuter reported that the Jews of Iraq, following Chief Rabbi Sassoon Khedour's appeal, had collected \$2,000,000. Every evening Radio Baghdad announced the names of Jews who had contributed to the drive.

Another considerable source of money was the confiscation of the property of Jews found guilty of "assistance to Zionism". According to al-Ahram this source brought into the coffers more than 6,000,000 dinars (\$24,000,000) by October 1948, and it was expected that the treasury would collect about 20,000,000 dinars (\$80,000,000) from further trials.

No Employment for Refugees

The Iraqi Government has made no effort to provide employment for the refugees. According to Richard Mowrer, the refugees in Baghdad were simply "permitted to go out and work in the city and take care of themselves." Sam Pope Brewer, who visited Iraq in April 1949, suggested that "the extra manpower might be used to advantage in carrying on the irrigation plans that are now being studied."²¹⁾ The Government, however, seems not to have had the slightest intention of employing the refugees in this way.

For a time, about 175 teachers among the refugees were employed in Government schools, but they were recently informed that they would be dismissed at the end of the academic year.²²⁾

3. Syria and the Palestine Refugees

At the Third Committee meeting in Paris on October 30, the Syrian representative, Mr. Kayyali, stated that Syria had been spending from one to one and a half million Syrian pounds on relief work for Palestine refugees, "and would spend more if necessary."²³⁾ As early as October 15, however,

21) The New York Times, May 1, 1949.

22) The Jewish Agency's Digest of Press and Events, July 15, 1949.

23) A/C 3/SR 118, p.5.

Syrian authorities declared that they were unable to meet the fortnightly payments previously made to refugees at the daily rate of 60 Syrian piastres (25¢ at the official rate) for adults and 40 piastres (16-17¢) for children under ten. Three days later, Fuad Bey Mutassen, Secretary General of the Ministry of the Interior and Chairman of the Syrian Refugee Committee, stated that the Government had exhausted its funds for the care of Arab refugees in Syria. The Government appealed to the Arab League for assistance, but received very little response.²⁴⁾

4. Lebanon and the Palestine Refugees

The Government's Contribution

At the same meeting of the Third Committee, Mr. Askoul, the Lebanese representative, stressed that his country

"had been invaded by a wave of refugees totalling one-tenth of its own population. It had been necessary to clothe them and give medical attention. Many of them had been hospitalized. Even the education of children had had to be considered and a place found for them in the schools. They had even been given the same food rations as Lebanese citizens. The total expenditure involved in taking care of the refugees amounted to, approximately, \$1,000,000 per month, which represented 20 per cent of the total budget of Lebanon. It should be noted that the assistance furnished voluntarily by the people of Lebanon had not been included in that estimate."²⁵⁾

"Voluntary Assistance"

There seems to be sufficient evidence that the Lebanese Government has made great sacrifices for the upkeep of the Palestine Arab refugees. However, as far as "voluntary assistance by the people of Lebanon" is concerned, Lebanese sources give quite a different picture.

In a series of articles published in one of the oldest and most influential Arabic newspapers in the United States, the daily al-Hoda (Guidance), Father Joseph E. Awad, rector of St. Joseph's Maronite Church in Waterville, Maine, and one of the foremost leaders of the Lebanese in this country who

24) The New York Times, October 19, 1948.

25) A/C 3/SR 118, p.11.

visited Lebanon in the spring of 1948, described the collecting of money for the Arab refugees as a highly organized and dangerous racket.²⁶⁾

"In Beirut there are four committees, each one singing a different tune and all collecting monies for Palestine. They use every means in their power to coerce the people and make them contribute to their funds. Their activities consist of visiting the shops and houses and the bureaus of the Government, asking them to help the refugees of Palestine. One committee comes today, the other tomorrow, the third and fourth later on. The shopkeeper, the family man and the poor civil servant have to contribute to all of them. If they have contributed to the first and second committees, as is usual, when the third and fourth committees arrive and these poor people state that they have no more money to contribute, they are insulted, threatened and called traitors to the Arab cause."

Father Awad cites several specific cases. One shopkeeper gave 300 Lebanese lira each to two committees, but refused to respond to a third appeal; the next morning he found his shop burned to the ground. A doctor who also owned a drugstore gave a substantial amount to each of the three committees but had no money to satisfy the fourth; his drugstore was bombed and blown to pieces. A well-known Lebanese industrialist was coerced into paying 75,000 Lebanese lira to the four committees; he feared that otherwise his factory would be burned. It is no wonder that the refugee committees were able to collect a million lira in two weeks.

5. Saudi Arabia and the Palestine Refugees

No Asylum, No Funds

In August 1948, when the Arab refugee situation had become very tense, King Ibn Saud was reported to have refused a request by the Arab League to permit refugees from Palestine to enter Saudi Arabia on the ground that his country was at the moment going through an economic crisis and that the acceptance of thousands of refugees would only aggravate the situation. The King maintained that he did not have sufficient money in his treasury to help

26) Father Joseph Awad, "In the Lebanon Today," al-Hoda, January 4-5, 1949.

the refugees, but declared himself willing to contribute to an Arab League fund for the prosecution of the war in Palestine.²⁷⁾ In June 1949, the UN Refugee Palestine Relief Committee reported that Saudi Arabia had contributed \$66,000 worth of petroleum.

Ibn Saud's reference to the poor state of his treasury hardly accords with the real state of affairs. Ibn Saud's main source of revenue comes from oil royalties (he receives 21¢ per barrel) and Saudi Arabia's average daily oil production rose from 250,000 barrels in 1947 to 440,000 barrels in 1948.²⁸⁾

The King has now apparently decided to "pass the buck" to the American interests in his country. Early in August the Arab News Agency reported that Ibn Saud had asked the Dahrhan Oil Company to provide work for 1,000 Palestine Arab refugees now living in Syria and Lebanon, most of whom are skilled workers previously employed by the Iraq Petroleum Company and the Haifa Oil Refineries. A special employment office was opened in Beirut and Damascus to register candidates for employment in the Saudi Arabian oil fields.²⁹⁾ Simultaneously, the Associated Press announced that Aramco (Arabian-American Oil Company) in Saudi Arabia was reducing the number of its American employees, apparently on Ibn Saud's request, from 2,700 to about 1,350. An Aramco official said that this cut would affect construction workers principally and that a thousand Palestine Arab refugees would be hired to replace the Americans.³⁰⁾

6. Transjordan and the Palestine Refugees

Governmental Expenditure

In a message to Arab rulers on August 18, 1948, King Abdullah declared that his Government was spending nearly L250,000 (about \$1,000,000) a month

27) Palestine Post, August 25, 1948.

28) "The Middle East Economy in 1948," The Middle East Journal, April, 1949, p.206.

29) Jewish Agency's Digest of Press and Events, August 12, 1949.

30) The New York Times, August 9, 1949.

for the relief of Palestine refugees and he reminded them of "what you have promised" toward sharing the relief burden.³¹⁾ With the beginning of organized relief by United Nations bodies, the monthly expenditure was reduced to L40,000.³²⁾

Citizenship

On February 17, 1949, The Palestine Post reported that Transjordan had passed a law enabling Arab refugees from Palestine, wherever they might be, to obtain Transjordan passports. Nevertheless, the Amman paper al-Urdun, in July 1949, complained about discrimination against Palestine Arabs by Transjordan authorities. Despite the official policy of equality, Palestine Arabs are not entitled, according to al-Urdun, to have currency allocations for imports and are not given permits to operate taxi and bus companies.³³⁾

In August 1949, Ragheb Bey Nashashibi, leader of the Palestine Arab refugees, was appointed Minister for Refugees in the Transjordan Government. Hitherto relief activities had been conducted by The Higher Committee for Refugee Affairs, headed by Mussa Nasr, Minister of Communication, one of the three Palestinians in the Amman Government.

31) Ibid., August 19, 1948.

32) Davar, November 14, 1948.

33) Quoted in The Palestine Post, July 5, 1949.

IV. HOW MANY ARABS ARE THERE IN ISRAEL?

According to the first issue of the Statistical Bulletin of Israel, published on July 3, 1949, the census held on November 8, 1948 registered 69,000 Arabs in Israel. In January 1949 an additional 37,000 were counted in Western Galilee, the Nazareth and Acre regions, making a total of 106,000 Arabs. This figure did not include about 10,000 in the Najdal and Beersheba regions occupied in the Negev operation early in 1949, or the 25,000 in that part of the triangle area incorporated under the terms of the Transjordan armistice treaty.

In addition, about 25,000 Arabs have infiltrated into Israel without being registered, making a total Arab population of 165,000, according to Moshe Sharett in an address to the Knesset on June 15, 1949. The infiltration seems to have continued; on August 4, Mr. Sharett stated that there were 170,000 Arabs in Israel.³⁴⁾

³⁴⁾ The New York Times, August 5, 1949.

V. REFUGEES AS PROSPECTIVE FIFTH COLUMN IN ISRAEL

1. The Arab States Prepare for War

Kenneth Bilby of the New York Herald Tribune, who visited the Middle East in the spring of this year, declared in no uncertain terms that the Arab countries are hoping for revenge against Israel and are preparing for a "second round" of the Palestine war. After a tour of several Arab capitals, Albion Ross of The New York Times also observed (May 9, 1949):

"Opinion seems to be unanimous in Amman, Damascus and Beirut that the Arab nations have a moral obligation to fight again in Palestine as soon as they are able to. Government officials, businessmen, small shopkeepers, foreign workers, diplomatic and consular officials, journalists, taxi drivers and waiters all agree to an extent that seems to make discussion of the details of the Palestine situation almost pointless."

Egypt

The Egyptian Chamber of Deputies, after a heated debate on June 26, approved a military budget of approximately LE50,000,000 (\$200,000,000). This is an increase of 1,300 per cent over the annual military budget before the Palestine war, and one-quarter of the Government's total expenditure. Of the new military budget, LE1,700,000 (\$6,800,000) is to be used to maintain a permanent Egyptian garrison in the Gaza coastal strip. Brigadier General Mohammed A. Bey Khalifa, the Egyptian representative on the United Nations Commission for Conventional Armaments, did not deny the statement made by the Soviet representative, Semyon K. Tsarapkin, that "one-fourth of the Egyptian budget was being spent on armaments."

Syria

On June 27, 1949, Damascus Radio admitted that "the Arabs lost the first round of the Palestine war," but warned:

"In the second round, which will begin soon, we shall not be so foolish. We must ceaselessly increase our military strength and construct a large number of new arms factories; then we shall be success-

ful and the Jews will be thrown into the sea."

On July 31, an additional 21 million Syrian pounds (\$7,000,000) was allotted to the Army and a Government decree was promulgated empowering the Ministry of Defense to requisition sections of the population for road building and other construction of importance to national defense.³⁵⁾

Lebanon

Lebanon decided to introduce universal compulsory military service. On July 20, when it announced this decision, the Government also reported an additional appropriation of \$4,000,000 for national defense. Military training will be introduced in all Lebanese schools; the army and the gendarmerie will be reinforced with new units and will be provided with new weapons.³⁶⁾

Iraq

A Baghdad radio broadcast on June 28, 1949 deplored the fact that

"The Arabs have been showing lamentable weakness lately, hinting that normal relations will be restored with the Jews as soon as Israel has allowed the refugees to return.

"The Jews are our enemies and no matter how conciliatory they may be, we shall never cease our preparation for the day of revenge and for the expulsion of the Jews from our soil."

Transjordan

On May 17, 1949, Abdullah el Tel, Transjordan military governor of the Old City of Jerusalem, declared over the Ramallah radio: "The time for revenge will come." On May 26, the radio announcer said: "There will be no freedom from fear in Israel. Forty-five million Arabs will see to that." On June 20, the same radio station reported that the Arab Legion

"is now being reorganized and its strength is being increased; every day it is better prepared for the second round against the Jews. And the second round will take place soon."

³⁵⁾ The New York Times, August 2, 1949.

³⁶⁾ Ibid.

Before each of Ramallah Radio's four daily news broadcasts, the announcer warns his listeners: "Guard your guns" - a slogan coined by Glubb Pasha, the British commander of the Arab Legion, who admonished Palestine Arab listeners not to sell arms to "strangers" who might infiltrate into their territory.

The Transjordan governor of occupied areas in Palestine has issued a directive making "all Jewish occupied territory...enemy territory." The directive also states that the present boundaries are only temporary and may be changed at any time, that the Jewish authorities are at all times to be regarded as enemies, that all Arabs living in Jewish territory are also to be regarded as enemies, and that anyone who trades with the Jews will be severely punished.

2. Refugees as Spearhead of Aggression

The organ of the Arab refugees in the Old City of Jerusalem, ad-Diva, on the occasion of Transjordan's Independence Day (May 24, 1949), said:

"The Arab nations and Arab history can foresee the day when the gallant Arab armies will celebrate this day in Tel Aviv. Nothing will be able to erase the shame from the Arabs and their history except the celebration of the Arab army there."

Sam Pope Brewer reported³⁷⁾ from "a highly reliable source," that personal representatives of the former Mufti of Jerusalem, Haj Amin el Husseini, had reached an agreement with General Zayim in Damascus providing that 2,000 picked Palestine Arabs, with previous military training, would be formed into a special unit attached to the Syrian Army. Among these men will be some 200 trained in Germany or under German-trained officers during World War II; the others will be mostly former soldiers of Fawzi el Kawukji's "Yarmuk Army." Some of the men were reported on good authority to be in Syria, living in camps under strict discipline and not appearing in the cities.

37) The New York Times, June 5, 1949.

A leading article in the Lebanese weekly el Seyad (February 17, 1949) frankly describes the demand for the return of Arab refugees to Israel as a device to introduce an Arab fifth column:

"In my opinion, our first urgent request must be the return of the refugees. We are unable to return them honorably. Let us therefore try to make them our fifth column in the struggle yet before us. Once and for all let us put the facts before Israel and say: 'We request the return of the refugees. What do you want for it?' I would like to know how these Jews will react to such a request, after they themselves have been crying for a 'shelter' for so long. Up to now they argued that there was a state of war between us and one could not ask them to accept soldiers, enemies, into their midst. But at present, if we shall appear in the disguise of peace-seekers, they will have no argument. After we shall have solved this problem and decided on the boundaries of Israel - at the same time doing our best to make them as narrow as possible - we shall turn to England, America, and other countries and shall resolve what kind of agreements we should conclude with them and what loans we should accept from them so as to gain strength, rise and take the safe and only path that leads to the destruction of Israel."

Azmi Nashashibi, the manager of the Ramallah radio station, in his English broadcast of May 19, 1949, said: "Thousands of boys are receiving military training and the girls are learning first aid." He asked for the return of all the refugees to their homes, and added: "We have been attacked, murdered, robbed, ruined - but we shall carry our burdens and when the time comes, we shall show what material we are made of. We, the Arabs of Palestine, shall neither forget nor forgive."

In June 1949, the Amman paper an-Nahda stated that a military training center for Palestine Arabs had been established at Beit Iba, a village near Nablus. Another Arab newspaper, Falastin, confirmed this and added that at Beit Iba was located "the largest training camp" where "hundreds are being trained under the supervision of senior British and Arab officers of the 2nd Arab Legion regiment," and "thousands of Palestine youths are now being trained by the Arab Legion and will soon be prepared for the resumption of the Palestine war."

At a conference of representatives of local Arab councils and village

mukhtars (elders) held in Ramallah early in July, it was decided that all Arab men between eighteen and forty-five in the sixty villages of the Ramallah subdistrict should undergo compulsory military training. It was also decided to reinforce the military forces in front-line villages near Latrun and Nebi Samwill, to buy and distribute arms to village committees, and to tax cigarettes and luxury goods to pay for the arms.

Compulsory training was also introduced in Hebron, on the decision of the municipality. Anyone who tries to escape service will be fined from LP.50 to LP.500, and a special tax is to be levied to buy arms and to defray the expenses of training.

On July 21, 1949, Albion Ross cabled from Beirut to The New York Times that, according to a report from Amman, the previously announced course of military training for all able-bodied men between eighteen and forty years old had been initiated in the Jordan-occupied part of Palestine. The first course was given in Tulkarm, which is in an exposed position on the armistice frontier line. Under the program, Palestinians will be required to buy their arms; these will be provided by the Arab Legion at low cost.