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THE UNITED STATES AND AN ARAB-ISRAELI  
PEACE SETTLEMENT, 1967 - 1972

CONGRESSIONAL  
RESEARCH  
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### Summary

During the period from the end of the war of June 1967 until the United Nations passed Resolution 242<sup>1/</sup> on November 22, 1967, the United States sought, through its diplomatic contacts, compromises that would contribute to the formation of an acceptable framework for peace. After the appointment of Ambassador Gunnar Jarring, the United States supported the Jarring mission and the Ambassador's attempts to find universal acceptance of United Nations Resolution 242. But Ambassador Jarring was not able to resolve the conflicts in interpretation which existed between the Arabs and the Israelis.

In early 1969, the United States, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, and France began a series of discussions intended to provide a framework or format for discussions among the parties involved in the conflict. The Soviet Union and the United States also engaged in two-power discussions to try and find compromise positions on the interpretation issues.

In the spring of 1970, Secretary of State William Rogers issued a proposal for a Suez cease-fire which was accepted. The cease-fire began on August 8, 1970, and as of mid-February 1973 was still in effect. Secretary Rogers tried to arrange an interim reopening of the Suez Canal in 1971, but to date these efforts have not been successful. Throughout the period from 1967 to 1972, the United States has sought an acceptable basis for peace which would not endanger the positions or policies of Israel and the other states in the Middle East.

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<sup>1/</sup> Many of the documents mentioned in the text may be found in Cutter, Melissa and Clyde Mark, compilers. *The Search for Peace in the Arab-Israeli Dispute, 1967-1972: Summary and Documentation.* Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, no. 72-118F, May 11, 1972. 97 p.

I. United States Policy Toward the Middle East from World War II  
Until the War of June 1967

Shortly after the end of World War II, President Harry S. Truman issued a statement which outlined fundamentals of United States foreign policy, including two points which had direct application to the Palestine problem in the Middle East: (1) the United States supported sovereignty and self-government for all peoples, and (2) the United States would not recognize territorial changes which did not reflect the wishes of the people concerned. <sup>1/</sup> Arab and Jewish nationalists had enlisted American support for their respective programs for the future of Palestine -- a Jewish Commonwealth for the Jews and a secular Palestinian state for the Arabs -- and both had received American promises of support. <sup>2/</sup> Given the impossible circumstances in Palestine where each of the national groups was trying to establish its national state to the exclusion of the other, the United States was unable to honor either its policy or its promises, and accepted and supported the compromise solution of partition. <sup>3/</sup>

After the first Palestine war of 1948-1949, and the implementation of a pragmatic solution based on the results of that war which in effect

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<sup>1/</sup> Documents of American History. Edited by Henry Steele Commager. New York, Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1963, p. 503-504. The statement was issued on October 27, 1945.

<sup>2/</sup> See President Roosevelt's statement of October 15, 1944, cited in: Fink, Reuben. America and Palestine. New York, Herald Square Press, 1945, p. 88; and the Presidential messages to Middle Eastern leaders in U.S. Department of State. Bureau of Public Affairs. Historical Division. Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers 1945, vol. VIII. Department of State Publication 8427. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1969. p. 697, 698, 703, 704, 707, 708.

<sup>3/</sup> United Nations Resolution 181 (II) of November 29, 1947.

amounted to partition but not as envisioned by the United Nations, the United States adopted a policy of supporting the status quo. Prospects for a peaceful change in the status quo by negotiated settlement were minimal, but the prospects for a military change, with all the inherent dangers, were high. The United States policy was to support peaceful status quo rather than the alternative of violent change. France, the United Kingdom, and the United States issued a policy statement in 1950 which said: "The three Governments, should they find that any of these states was preparing to violate frontiers or armistice lines, would, consistently with their obligations as members of the United Nations, immediately take action, both within and outside the United Nations, to prevent such violation."<sup>1/</sup>

In the 1956 Suez Crisis, the 1950 agreement did not prevent the violation of frontiers and armistice lines, as France and the United Kingdom, co-signers of the Tri-Partite Declaration of 1950, were parties to the invasion of Egypt, but the United States did actively seek the withdrawal of the invading forces and a restoration of the status quo. After the Suez crisis had ended, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles said that the Tri-Partite Declaration was still valid, despite the apparent abrogation by France and the United Kingdom, and that it was "an outstanding statement of United States policy."<sup>2/</sup>

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<sup>1/</sup> This policy statement, popularly called the Tri-Partite Declaration, was signed on May 25, 1950. Department of State Bulletin, June 5, 1950, p. 886; or U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Foreign Relations. A Select Chronology and Background Documents Relating to the Middle East. First revised edition. May 1969. 91st Cong., 1st sess. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1969, p. 131-132 (hereafter cited as Chronology and Documents)

<sup>2/</sup> See the Secretary's press conference of February 5, 1957: Chronology and Documents. op. cit., p. 154; or Department of State Bulletin, February 25, 1957, p. 300-306.

The Baghdad Pact, a Western-oriented regional defense organization, was formed in 1955 as part of the worldwide policy of containing communism, but the Baghdad Pact and its successor the Central Treaty Organization were not accepted by most Middle Eastern states because they preferred nonalignment. Similarly the Eisenhower Doctrine, a plan for self-help through defense assistance agreements, and the Middle East Resolution, which implemented it, were not enthusiastically welcomed by most Middle Eastern nations.<sup>1/</sup> United States armed forces sent to Lebanon in 1958 to help avert a civil war were sent in response to a request by a friendly government and were not sent under the Eisenhower Doctrine. The general policy of opposing changes in the status quo was reaffirmed by President Lyndon Johnson on May 23, 1967, the eve of the June war:

"...the United States is firmly committed to the support of the political independence and territorial integrity of all nations of that area [the Middle East]."<sup>2/</sup>

United States policy toward the Middle East in the years between World War II and the war of June 1967 was primarily directed at maintaining the peaceful status quo; that is, discouraging changes which could affect the prevailing international situation. The United States recognition of the status quo after the first Palestine war and the opposition to the Israeli occupation of the Sinai in 1956 are examples of this policy.

<sup>1/</sup> Middle East Resolution, Public Law 85-7 of March 9, 1957, can be found in: Chronology and Documents, op. cit., p. 144-152; or U.S. Congress. House of Representatives and Senate. Committee on Foreign Affairs and Committee on Foreign Relations. Legislation on Foreign Relations. 92d Cong., 2nd sess. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., July 1972, p. 826-827.

<sup>2/</sup> Chronology and Documents, op. cit., p. 212.

There were exceptions to supporting the status quo -- the United States supported the Egyptian revolution of 1952.<sup>1/</sup> Western attempts to form an anti-Communist bloc in the Middle East failed because the countries rejected the prospects of dependence and alignment, but Western refusals to sell arms to Egypt were followed by an Egyptian decision to accept arms from, and hence dependence on, the Soviet Union in 1955.

II. Postwar Negotiations: From the War of June 1967 Until the Adoption of United Nations Resolution 242

The United States was faced with two policy problems in the crisis of June 1967. First, the United States attempted, with partial success, to maintain peace and avoid war. The abortive attempts to arrange a maritime nation conference on the international character of the Strait of Tiran, the invitations to Egyptian government officials to travel to Washington for talks aimed at averting a crisis, and the U.S. admonitions to Israel to be patient, were examples of U.S. actions taken to avoid the war that began on June 5, 1967. At the same time, there was a great deal of public and Congressional support for a firm U.S. commitment to the defense of Israel. Once the war began, the United States supported cease-fire resolutions in the United Nations, minimized the possibility of miscalculations through the "hot line" conversations with the

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1/ See the speech by Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Affairs Henry A. Byroade before the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations on December 5, 1952, Department of State Bulletin, December 15, 1952, p. 931-935.

Soviet Union, issued an official statement that the United States was "neutral in thought, word, and deed," and repeated assurances that the United States was not involved in the conflict -- in response to Arab charges that the United States was aiding Israeli air attacks against Arab installations. <sup>1/</sup> These actions also served to keep the war confined to as small an area as possible. A

The second U.S. policy problem arose after the war was over, and involved previous policy statements and positions. The United States had supported the maintenance of the status quo, but there was a new status quo after the war. Should the United States demand a complete Israeli withdrawal from the Arab territories and be accused of re-creating the Israeli vulnerability of pre-June 1967, or should the United States accept the new status quo and be accused of not adhering to its policy of supporting the "political independence and territorial integrity" of Jordan, Syria, and Egypt? Support for Israeli occupation and a recognition of the new status quo might also have been interpreted as a tacit American approval of gaining territory through armed force. U.S. policymakers have attempted to resolve the dilemma by continuing their efforts to induce both sides to compromise on the territorial boundary issue, while at the same time maintaining the military balance in the Middle East.

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<sup>1/</sup> State Department spokesman Robert J. McCloskey said on June 5, 1967, that the United States was "neutral in thought, word, and deed." Later that same day, Secretary of State Dean Rusk clarified the U.S. position in answer to a storm of protest following McCloskey's comment. See: Department of State Bulletin, June 26, 1967, p. 949-951.



After the war, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and the Soviet Union, in consultations with other interested states, began to formulate a United Nations resolution which would be acceptable to all concerned, avoid laying blame or guilt for the war, solve permanently some of the major explosive issues, and be so worded as to allow parochial interpretations and "face-saving." United Nations General Assembly Resolution 242 of November 22, 1967, primarily a British invention, accomplished most of these goals. In brief outline, Resolution 242:

established

- (1) "the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war,"
- (2) the need for a just and lasting peace, and
- (3) the right of every state "to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries";

sought

- (1) "withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict,"
- (2) an end of belligerency,
- (3) acknowledgment of "sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every state in the area,"
- (4) guarantees of "freedom of navigation through international waterways,"
- (5) a just settlement of the refugee problem,
- (6) guarantees of "territorial inviolability," and
- (7) freedom from "threats or acts of force";

and requested

- (1) that the Secretary-General designate a Special Representative to assist in the efforts "to achieve a peaceful and accepted settlement," and
- (2) that the Secretary-General report to the Security Council on the progress of the Special Representative.

Gunnar Jarring, Sweden's Ambassador to the Soviet Union, was designated the Special Representative on November 23, 1967.

The United States supported Resolution 242 in its formative stages and in the Security Council vote, and still supports the Resolution and the mission of Special Representative Jarring. President Johnson said that the United States "has fully supported the efforts of the United Nations representative, Gunnar Jarring," and Secretary of State Rogers said "that resolution will be the bedrock of our policy."<sup>1/</sup>

### III. The Jarring Mission: November 1967 - April 1969<sup>2/</sup>

Immediately after the passage of Resolution 242, Ambassador Jarring began his mission as the Special Representative to "establish and maintain contacts with the states concerned in order to promote agreement and assist efforts to achieve a peaceful and accepted settlement." Jarring traveled to Israel, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Egypt for consultations with government officials, established a headquarters on Cyprus where he met with

<sup>1/</sup> From President Johnson's speech before the B'nai B'rith in Washington, September 10, 1968, and Secretary Rogers' statement before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on March 27, 1969. Both may be found in: Chronology and Documents. Op. cit., p. 269, 285.

<sup>2/</sup> See the Secretary-General's reports, S/8259, S/8309, S/8309 Add. 1, S/8309 Add. 2, S/8309 Add. 3, S/8309 Add. 4, and S/10070, which describe the activities of the Special Representative.

Israeli and Arab representatives, and conducted more meetings and consultations at the United Nations headquarters in New York. Ambassador Jarring's first task was to get the states to accept Resolution 242 in a manner that would be accepted by the other states. For example, the Israeli acceptance of 242 was as a "promotion of agreement," a loose framework from which it was hoped there would emerge a directly negotiated settlement arranged by Jarring. The Arabs viewed Israel's acceptance as less than complete. The Arabs accepted Jarring's role as a mediator to "assist efforts to achieve a settlement" through indirect negotiations based directly on Resolution 242. Israel viewed the Arab acceptance as a misconstruing of the intention of the Resolution.

There were other problems of interpretation of the wording and intention of 242. For example, the phrase "withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied" was interpreted by the Arabs as withdrawal from all territory, and by the Israelis as withdrawal from some of the territory. The Israelis suggested that the withdrawal of their forces would follow the successful completion of negotiations, while the Arabs suggested that the withdrawal of Israeli forces would precede negotiations. These and other problems of interpretation of Resolution 242 are still to be settled.

After an initial round of seeking statements from the governments involved on their acceptance of Resolution 242, Ambassador Jarring tried to draft an acceptance letter which would be agreeable to the Israelis

and the Arabs. During March, April, and May 1968, Jarring circulated his draft acceptance, but without success. Jarring shifted the talks to New York from May to July 1968, but the deadlock over interpretations remained. From August to September 1968, he again traveled to the Middle East, but to no avail. Ambassador Jarring returned to New York for the opening of the United Nations General Assembly session and a round of informal meetings with the representatives of the Arab states and Israel. In late November, he tried to arrange another round of meetings to take place in January 1969, but his contacts with the parties on Cyprus and in Middle Eastern capitals in early December 1968 indicated that the parties were still deadlocked. Jarring traveled to the Middle East again in early March, circulating a list of questions concerning the positions of the parties. The answers to the questions, received by Ambassador Jarring in April, convinced him that no break in the interpretations deadlock was evident. Ambassador Jarring returned to his duties as the Swedish representative in Moscow in early April 1969.

#### IV. The Four-Power and Two-Power Talks: April 1969 - January 1970

President-elect Richard M. Nixon sent former Pennsylvania Governor William Scranton on a fact-finding mission to Iran, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Israel, Lebanon, and Jordan in early December 1968. Mr. Scranton said that the United States should follow a more "even-handed" policy and that the United States would introduce a new peace plan for the Arab-Israeli

<sup>1/</sup> dispute. Apparently, some observers interpreted Mr. Scranton's remarks as indications that American policy would become "anti-Israeli" and "pro-Arab," and that the United States would change its policy from supporting a negotiated settlement to one of supporting an imposed settlement. A spokesman for Mr. Nixon said Mr. Scranton spoke only for himself and not for Mr. Nixon.<sup>2/</sup>

President Nixon said in a press conference on January 27, 1969, that "new initiatives" were needed in the search for an Arab-Israeli peace.<sup>3/</sup> On February 6, 1969, the President said a "new policy" would be pursued on five fronts; the Jarring mission, bilateral talks, four-power talks, talks with the Middle Eastern states, and long-range plans.<sup>4/</sup> At another press conference on March 4, 1969, the President described the role of the four-power talks as finding areas for discussion and offering

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- <sup>1/</sup> Washington Post, December 10, 1968, p. A1; New York Times, December 10, 1968, p. 1, 4; Christian Science Monitor, December 12, 1968, p. 1, 14, 17.
- <sup>2/</sup> Washington Post, December 13, 1968, A8; New York Times, December 12, 1968, p. 1, 3.
- <sup>3/</sup> Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents, February 3, 1969, p. 177.
- <sup>4/</sup> Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents, February 10, 1969, p. 227. Presumably, the bilateral talks would be with the Soviet Union, and the four-power talks would be among the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, the United States, and France. Mr. Nixon specifically mentioned the Eisenhower-Strauss plan for desalting sea water as one of the long-range plans for the Middle East. See: U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Foreign Relations. Construction of Nuclear Desalting Plants in the Middle East. Hearings, October 19, 20 and November 17, 1967. 90th Cong., 1st sess. Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1967; and Senate Resolution 155 of December 12, 1967, in Chronology and Documents, op. cit., p. 266-267.

guarantees for a final settlement.<sup>1/</sup> In his March 27, 1969, statement before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Secretary Rogers reiterated U.S. opposition to an imposed settlement and American support for the Jarring mission and Resolution 242.<sup>2/</sup> The United Nations Ambassadors of the Soviet Union, the United States, France, and the United Kingdom met in New York on April 3, 1969 for the first of the four-power discussions.

There may be several possible explanations for the shift in emphasis away from the Jarring mission and toward the four-power talks. Jarring's failure to break the interpretations deadlock may have left the interested nations with little recourse except to seek another approach, the four-power discussions. One or another of the other great powers, France, the United Kingdom, and/or the Soviet Union, may have changed their policies or decided that the Jarring mission was stalemated, and counseled a change in emphasis. Events in the Middle East in 1968 and early 1969 -- the arms race, airliner hijackings, the emergence of the Palestine guerrillas as a fighting force, Israeli retaliations, the intensification of the "limited" war along the Jordan and Suez frontiers -- may have dictated a change away from Jarring and toward some other forum, particularly one which could suggest to the Middle Eastern states that the great powers did not want another war. Or, the United States may have changed its policy, or at least the thrust or direction of its efforts, in the search for peace.

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<sup>1/</sup> Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents, March 10, 1969, p. 363-364, 366.

<sup>2/</sup> Chronology and Documents. op. cit., p. 284-285.

There may be several possible reasons for a change in U.S. policy, if one did occur. Mr. Nixon may have wanted a "clean break" with the preceding administration, which for the most part relied on the Jarring mission and quiet diplomacy in the United Nations. There may have been a realization among professionals in the State Department and among Mr. Nixon's policy advisors that the Jarring mission was stalemated and negotiations needed a change of venue and personnel. Such a realization may have come as early as the spring of 1968, or during the United Nations Session in the autumn of 1968, but surely by the time of the Jarring questionnaire in March-April 1969. Mr. Scranton's prediction of a new American peace plan may have been correct, with that new plan involving a more active and visible role for the United States. Or Mr. Scranton's admonition for an "even-handed" policy may have been accepted, since the Arabs favored the four-power talks and the Israelis rejected them.<sup>1/</sup> Mr. Nixon may have been convinced by European leaders during his February-March 1969 visit to Europe that the four-power approach should be implemented, or conversely, assuming the President had already decided to move to the four-power talks, the President may have convinced them. Events in the Middle East may have necessitated the change from Jarring to the four-power formula, and the United States was just following the natural course of events without consciously adopting new policies. Or it may be that no substantial change occurred, and that the four-power

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<sup>1/</sup> See the statement by Egyptian President Nasser and the Israeli government communique in: Chronology and Documents, op. cit., p. 285-287.

talks were a continuation of previous American policy.<sup>1/</sup>

Conditions for peace in the Middle East seemed to deteriorate in 1969, creating a bleak backdrop for the four-power talks that began in April. Reports of heavy arms shipments continued to circulate. Israel began a series of commando raids into Egypt, Jordan, and Lebanon. There were almost daily air and artillery battles over the Suez Canal. Palestinian guerrillas launched several attacks, including bombings in Haifa, Tel Aviv, and Jerusalem. The fire in Jerusalem's al-Aqsa Mosque in August created a wave of indignation through the Islamic world. There were more trials and more executions in Iraq, following those of early 1969, which elicited protests from several governments. In mid-July, the four-power meetings adjourned in favor of a series of American-Soviet discussions.

In October 1969 the United States offered two peace plans, one for Egypt-Israel, and one for Jordan-Israel.<sup>2/</sup> The four-power talks resumed in December, but it appeared as though the attempt to find areas for discussion had failed, just as the Jarring mission had failed. On December 9, 1969, Secretary Rogers made a public speech in which he outlined some specific proposals for an Israeli-Arab peace settlement: (1) clear statement of navigational rights through Suez and Tiran, (2) demilitarized zones between opposing forces, (3) Israeli withdrawal from occupied territory, (4) "insubstantial alterations" in boundaries that would not

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<sup>1/</sup> Arthur Goldberg, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, said on May 24, 1967, that the United States would join with the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union, and France "in a common effort to restore and maintain peace in the Middle East." See: Chronology and Documents. op. cit., p. 217.

<sup>2/</sup> Neither peace plan was ever made public. Whether these peace plans were results of the two-power talks is not known. In January 1970, the Soviet Union rejected the proposals.



"reflect the weight of conquest," (5) security for all states in the area, and (6) justice for the Palestinian refugees. Concerning Jerusalem, the Secretary said that the United States opposed unilateral actions on Jerusalem, that the United States believed Jerusalem should be a unified city, that there should be open access to the city, and that the administration of Jerusalem should take into consideration the interests of Jews, Christians, Muslims, Israelis, and Jordanians. Secretary Rogers proposed that Egypt and Israel agree to meet under the Rhodes formula, that Egypt make a binding commitment to a peace agreement with Israel, and that Israel agree to withdraw to the international frontier, <sup>1/</sup> e.g., the pre-1967 Sinai border.

V. Breaking the Stalemate: January 1970 - June 1970

By January 1970, it appeared as though the diplomatic efforts to find an avenue to peace had reached another stalemate. The Jarring mission had faltered in the spring of 1969, and efforts to revive it had failed in September and October 1969. Four-power talks apparently provided no breakthroughs. Two-power talks produced no indications of a way out of the deadlock. The American proposals of October and December

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<sup>1/</sup> The Rhodes formula refers to the negotiations between Egypt and Israel in 1949 on the island of Rhodes, which began with U.N. Mediator Ralph Bunche's acting as a "go-between" for the delegates, progressed to informal meetings of the delegates and Bunche, and finally led to formal meetings of the Israeli and Egyptian representatives. The international frontier refers to the line drawn by the October 1, 1906 treaty between Turkey and Egypt. See: Hertslet's Map of Africa by Treaty. v. 3, pt. II. London, 1909, p. 1201-1203; or British and Foreign State Papers, 1905-1906. v. XCIX. London, H.M.S.O., 1910, p. 482-484.

were received with mixed reactions and no universal acceptance.<sup>1/</sup>

Beyond diplomacy, other events in January 1970 were working against peace. Rumors of a large-scale French arms sale to Libya were confirmed. President Nasser went secretly to Moscow to appeal for missiles to stop the Israeli air strikes. The Soviet Union warned that another upward spiral in the arms race would start if the United States agreed to the Israeli appeal for more F-4 Phantom fighter-bombers. At the end of January, President Nixon postponed the arms decision for 30 days.

By the end of March 1970, the pendulum seemed to swing hesitatingly toward peace. Ambassador Jarring tried again to arrange meetings in New York, but was again frustrated. The two-power talks resumed, and the representatives of the four powers agreed to draw up an account of their progress to date. There were reports of an Italian peace plan, and other reports that France and the United States had agreed on a peace proposal. On March 23, Secretary Rogers said the decision on arms for Israel would be "held in abeyance." But despite the hopeful signs of peace, there were also signs of war. In mid-March, there were reports of Soviet missiles in Egypt, and by mid-April reports of Soviet pilots flying from Egyptian air fields. Israeli deep-penetration raids against

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<sup>1/</sup> The Soviet Union called Secretary Rogers' December speech an "overdue step" on December 11, but on January 23, 1970, rejected the October plans. Jordan's King Hussein said on January 21 that the Rogers December statement was a "step forward." The Israeli Cabinet rejected the Rogers speech on December 10. An Egyptian newspaper called the Rogers speech an "American maneuver" to undermine peace.

Egypt increased. The Palestinian guerrilla conflict with "moderate" governments in Lebanon and Jordan heightened. Events in general seemed to be moving toward crisis and possibly war through April.

Assistant Secretary of State Joseph Sisco visited Egypt, Lebanon, and Israel in April, but canceled his trip to Jordan because of anti-American demonstrations in Amman. In his May Day speech, President Nasser asked President Nixon to use his influence to end the Arab-Israeli conflict. News reports from Israel suggested that informal and secret meetings between Israelis and Arabs had been taking place. In contrast to these signs of peace were other signs of war. Soviet pilots and missiles were in Egypt. Israeli raids reached the Nile Delta, the outskirts of Damascus and Mount Hermon in Lebanon. An Egyptian battalion crossed the Suez Canal to raid Israeli positions in late April, and Egyptian missile boats sank an Israeli fishing trawler in mid-May. Israel sank an Egyptian destroyer in retaliation.

The period from January to June 1970 was one of vacillation between threats of impending danger and hopes for a breakthrough toward peace. As the dangers mounted, the search for peace became more feverish and hectic. For every danger there appeared a countering hope followed by another and greater threat.

#### VI. The Cease-Fire: June 1970 - January 1971

On June 19, 1970, Secretary of State Rogers sent letters to the governments of Jordan, Egypt, and Israel, proposing, among other things,

that the three states would subscribe to a limited cease-fire; and that they would subscribe to a statement to be issued by Ambassador Jarring which would say that they accepted U.N. Resolution 242 and would resume discussions under Jarring's auspices for the purpose of establishing a peace based on (1) acknowledgments of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political independence, and (2) an Israeli withdrawal from territories occupied in June 1967.<sup>1/</sup> Egyptian Foreign Minister Mahmud Riyad notified Secretary Rogers of Egypt's acceptance of the letter on July 22.

Jordanian Prime Minister Munaym Rifai announced Jordan's acceptance of the letter on July 26. Israel accepted the letter on August 4. A 90-day cease-fire along the Suez Canal began at 1 a.m. (local time) on August 8, 1970.<sup>2/</sup>

A "standstill agreement" accompanied the cease-fire. According to this agreement, both sides would stop all shooting across the cease-fire line, agreed to refrain from changing the status quo in a 100-kilometer-wide standstill zone, were to rely on their own surveillance of the other's zone, and would cooperate with U.N. observers and the International Red Cross (for compliance with the Geneva Conventions on prisoners of war).<sup>3/</sup>

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<sup>1/</sup> Secretary Rogers said in a press conference on June 25 that the United States had offered a new initiative. The letters were not made public until July 22, 1970. See: Department of State Bulletin, August 10, 1970, p. 178-179.

<sup>2/</sup> Equivalent to 10 p.m. Greenwich Mean Time, August 7, or 6 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time, August 7. Jordan and Israel still maintained the cease-fire along their frontier; there was no new cease-fire between those two states.

<sup>3/</sup> A text of the standstill agreement, as "endorsed" by Egypt and "accepted" by Israel, was announced to the U.N. General Assembly on September 28, 1970, by Foreign Minister Abba Eban (A/PV.1851).

On August 12, 1970, Israel complained that the Egyptians were violating the standstill agreement by moving surface-to-air missiles into the 50-kilometer-wide zone on the Egyptian side of the Suez Canal. On August 24, 1970, Egypt complained that Israel was violating the standstill agreement by building new fortifications within the 50-kilometer-wide standstill zone on the Israeli side of the Suez Canal. On August 25, 1970, representatives of Jordan, Israel, and Egypt met separately with Ambassador Jarring in New York in the first of the new discussions called for in the Rogers letter. On August 26, the Israeli representative returned to Israel for new instructions, but the representatives of Jordan and Egypt continued to meet with Jarring.

The State Department confirmed the Israeli complaint of Egyptian violations on September 3. Three days later, Israel announced that it was withdrawing from the Jarring talks until the Egyptian violations were rectified: that is, until the new missiles were removed from the standstill zone. The State Department confirmed the Egyptian complaint of Israeli violations of the standstill agreement on September 16. On November 6, 1970, the Suez cease-fire was extended for an additional 90 days. The Israeli cabinet announced on December 28, 1970, that Israel would return to the Jarring talks, even though the missiles had not been removed from the Egyptian standstill zone.

The so-called missile crisis along the Suez Canal and the abortive mission of the United Nations Special Representative were partially overshadowed and no doubt affected by other events between June and December

1970. There were two outbreaks of fighting in Jordan between the Jordanian army and the Palestinian guerrillas, one in June and one in September. The September affair received worldwide interest because of the multiple hijackings of commercial airliners, what appeared to be a Syrian armored invasion of Jordan, the devastation of several Palestinian refugee camps, the assassination attempts on King Hussein, and the death of President Nasser one day after he had negotiated a Jordanian-Palestinian cease-fire. Nasser's death also caused realignment within the Egyptian government and some shiftings in inter-Arab power circles, but more important, it removed the foremost Arab negotiator from the Arab-Israeli scene.

VII. The Jarring Mission in 1971<sup>1/</sup>

Representatives from Jordan, Egypt, and Israel met separately with Ambassador Jarring in New York on January 5, 1971. The meetings continued through January and February 1971. At one stage, Israel presented to Ambassador Jarring a memorandum of "Essentials for Peace" and asked for responses from Jordan and Egypt. The responses indicated to Ambassador Jarring that the interpretations of Resolution 242 had not changed and that further clarification of positions was necessary. Ambassador Jarring addressed similar aides-memoire to the governments of Israel and Egypt on February 8, 1971, seeking commitments to several statements which if accepted, would clarify the Egyptian and Israeli interpretations of Resolution 242. The Israeli and Egyptian responses to Ambassador Jarring's

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<sup>1/</sup> S/10070/ Add. 1, S/10070/ Add. 2, and S/10403.

aides-memoire again demonstrated that the Israeli and Egyptian interpretations of the clauses of Resolution 242 were different.<sup>1/</sup>

Meanwhile, the cease-fire was extended on February 4, 1971, for an additional 30 days, and was extended indefinitely on March 7. On March 25, 1971, Ambassador Jarring returned to Moscow and his duties as the Swedish Ambassador. He came back to New York in May and again in September-October 1971, but his attempts to revive the mission failed. In late November, on the eve of a United Nations General Assembly debate on the Middle East situation, the Secretary-General issued another report of the progress, or lack of it, of the Special Representative. On December 13, 1971, the General Assembly passed Resolution 2799 (XXVI) by a vote of 79 in favor, 7 against, and 36 abstentions, which reaffirmed Resolution 242 and asked Israel for a favorable response to the Jarring aide-memoire of February 8, 1971.

At the end of 1971, it appeared as though the Jarring mission would be revived and that the discussions would follow the points raised by Jarring in his aides-memoire of February 8, 1971.

#### VIII. The Proposal for an Interim Opening of the Suez Canal, 1971

Since June 1967, there have been several suggestions that the Suez Canal be reopened to international maritime traffic after an Israeli

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<sup>1/</sup> The full texts of Jarring's aides memoire and the Egyptian and Israeli responses were made public on November 30, 1971, by the Secretary-General (S/10403). Versions appeared in the London Times of March 11, 1971, and in the Congressional Record (daily edition) of April 23, 1971, p. S5518-S5520.

withdrawal away from the Canal or an Egyptian commitment to direct negotiations. <sup>1/</sup> President Anwar al-Sadat said on February 4, 1971, that the Canal could be reopened if the Israelis would agree to a partial withdrawal of their forces from the Canal area. Secretary Rogers and Assistant Secretary Sisco traveled through the Middle East in May 1971, apparently to discuss with Middle Eastern leaders the possibility of an interim agreement on the Suez Canal: a reopening of the Canal, a partial Israeli withdrawal from the Canal area, the creation of a demilitarized zone between the two forces, the emplacement of a peacekeeping force in the demilitarized zone, and guarantees of free navigation through the Canal. The interim agreement was envisioned as a step toward a final settlement, and not as the final settlement itself.

During the summer months, there was a great deal of diplomatic activity, diplomats and envoys shuttling between capitals to discuss various plans for implementing the interim agreement and the demands of the various parties. But apparently, these efforts had resulted in no real progress by the end of summer and the beginning of the United Nations General Assembly meeting in September. The points in disagreement appeared to be:

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<sup>1/</sup> Egyptian statements that the Canal could be reopened were made in December 1967, April, June, July, August, and October 1968, and February 1969. Israeli statements that the Canal could be reopened were made in September, October, and November 1968, and November 1970. In July 1968, Egypt said the reopening would follow a partial Israeli withdrawal. In October 1968, Egypt said the reopening would follow an Israeli acceptance of Resolution 242. Israel rejected the 1968 Egyptian proposals because Egypt did not agree to direct negotiations, did not specify boundaries, and did not agree to a permanent peace treaty.



- (1) Egyptian troops on the east bank of the Canal -- Israel opposed any Egyptian movement across the Canal.
- (2) Israeli commitment for full withdrawal -- Egypt demanded an Israeli commitment to total withdrawal.
- (3) Israeli passage through the Canal -- Israel demanded an explicit Egyptian guarantee of free passage, but Egypt would only offer passage in accordance with "international law."
- (4) Withdrawal distance -- Israel would withdraw a short distance while the Egyptians wanted a withdrawal almost to the 1967 frontier.
- (5) Time limit -- Israel wanted an open-ended time limit with no fixed dates for further steps, while the Egyptians wanted definite dates for further withdrawals.
- (6) Peacekeeping force -- Israel and Egypt could not agree on the composition of the peacekeeping force or on the mandate to operate the force.

There were critics and supporters of the interim agreement. Critics said the reopened Canal would allow the Soviet Union access to the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. Supporters said the Soviet Union already had access to the southern seas. Critics said the reopened Canal would benefit the Arabs and the Soviet Union. Supporters said the reopened Canal would also benefit Israel, all European states, and the United States. Supporters said the interim agreement would be a step toward peace. Critics said the advantages were all on the side of the Arabs and that Israel would be surrendering a good defensive position in exchange for a weaker one.

Interest in the interim agreement proposal waned toward the end of 1971, and the Arabs and the Israelis took renewed interest in the resumption of the Jarring talks. The position of the United States as a primary broker

for peace, established in the cease-fire of 1970 and the interim discussions of 1971, remained firm.

IX. No Progress Toward Peace, 1972

The year 1972 began and ended on hopeful notes that a break in the deadlocked search for peace might be found. In January Ambassador Jarring visited Africa, to confer with the sponsors of the African initiative of 1971, and the Middle East to implement U.N. Resolution 2799 of December 13, 1971 (see above, p. 21). Neither of Jarring's attempts was fruitful: the deadlock persisted. Jarring's other meetings with Middle Eastern leaders in 1972 -- in March, May, August, and October -- were equally unsuccessful. U.N. General Assembly Resolution 2949 of December 15, 1972, reiterated the intentions of its predecessor of the year before, to seek Israeli compliance with the aide-memoire of February 8, 1971. Israel maintained its opposition to withdrawal from all the occupied territory, as called for in the aide-memoire and the U.N. resolutions, and ignored the appeals to renounce the acquisition of territory seized by force.

During the year, the American proposal for an interim Suez settlement was not actively pursued, at least not publicly, although both American and Israeli spokesmen continued to mention the interim agreement as a possible answer to the static peace negotiations. Early in 1972, in an attempt to promote discussion, the United States suggested "proximity

talks," similar in concept to the Rhodes formula,<sup>1/</sup> but Egypt rejected the plan. There were few other public indications of any activity to move the negotiations off dead center.

While the diplomats unsuccessfully sought peace, militant elements threatened a renewal of war. An extremist Palestinian terror group called "Black September"<sup>2/</sup> was involved in several incidents: an explosion which destroyed a Trieste refinery processing oil for West Germany, but did not curtail German support for Israel; the kidnapping of Israeli Olympic team members in Munich, which failed to secure the release of some 230 Arabs imprisoned in Israel and finally ended in the deaths of 17 people; the hijacking of a Lufthansa airliner, which resulted in the exchange of 20 hostages for the three Arabs captured at Munich; and the seizure of the Israeli Embassy in Bangkok, which ended when both the hostages and the kidnappers were released unharmed. Arab guerrillas were linked to two incidents at Lydda airport in Israel, the unsuccessful hijacking of May 8 and the massacre of 25 people on May 30. The May 30 incident involved three Japanese nationals who were members of the "Red Army," supposedly associated with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. Extremist Arab guerrillas reject negotiations between Israel and more moderate Arabs; hence, their terrorist acts were intended to keep hostilities alive.

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<sup>1/</sup> See footnote on page 15, supra.

<sup>2/</sup> Named "Black September" after the events of September 1970 and the fighting between the Jordanian Government and the Arab guerrillas. "Black September" first became known for the assassination of Jordanian Prime Minister Wasfi al-Tall in Cairo in November 1971.

Israeli raids against Arab guerrilla bases in Lebanon and Syria apparently had little direct, negative effect on the Arab guerrillas, but had considerable effect on the overall tensions in the area. Israel was condemned three times by U.N. Security Council resolutions,<sup>1/</sup> but a fourth effort at censure failed when the United States vetoed a resolution in September because it did not include a condemnation of the terrorism which prompted the Israeli attack. There were several major clashes between Syrian and Israeli forces that renewed fears of another round of the "limited war" of 1969 and 1970. Other Arab states began military discussions concerning Syria's defense, and shipments of Soviet arms to Syria awakened the arms race syndrome which had been quiescent since 1971.

The United States and the Soviet Union made statements which appeared to support the Israelis and the Arabs, respectively. An Egyptian-Soviet communique issued in April said the Arabs had "every right to use other means" to regain the occupied territories, a phrase interpreted to mean Soviet approval of an Arab military adventure. On June 1, President Nixon "reiterated the American people's commitment to the survival of the State of Israel,"<sup>2/</sup> the strongest such statement yet made by an American President, and a pointed forestalling of any Soviet-Arab moves or plans toward renewal of hostilities.

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1/ Resolution 313 of February 28, Resolution 316 of June 26, and Resolution 317 of July 21, 1972.

2/ The President was reporting to the Congress after his return from Moscow.

But the Soviet-American balance shifted dramatically on July 18, 1972, when President al-Sadat announced the termination of the Soviet military mission. Opinions were divided on the significance of the Soviet-Egyptian rift. Some observers said the Soviet ouster increased the chances of war, either because Egypt was no longer restrained by the Soviet leash and could invade Sinai, or because Egypt, left without the Soviet protective presence, would become the target of an Israeli attack. Other observers said the Soviet-Egyptian divorce increased the chances for peace, because a weakened Egypt would be receptive to a peace overture inasmuch as Egypt was not able to defend itself against Israel and was not strong enough to launch an attack.

The United States appeared to have an opportunity to act as the peace mediator because it had negotiated the still-intact cease-fire of 1970, had initiated the interim agreement proposal of 1971, and had reestablished diplomatic contacts with three Arab nations in 1972 (Yemen, Sudan, and Iraq).<sup>1/</sup> It was generally understood that any U.S. move would have to wait until after the American elections on November 6, but on November 5, Secretary Rogers said in an interview that the United

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<sup>1/</sup> Diplomatic relations between the United States and Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Algeria, Yemen, Sudan, and Mauritania were broken in June 1967. The United States reestablished relations with Mauritania on December 22, 1969, with Yemen on July 1, 1972, and with Sudan on July 25, 1972. The U.S. maintained diplomatic contacts with Algeria and Egypt, but not with Syria and Iraq. On July 27, 1972, the U.S. and Iraq agreed to diplomatic contacts.

States would try to "get negotiations started" on a Suez interim agreement and would seek a "commitment" to a full implementation of U.N. Resolution 242.<sup>1/</sup> The Secretary said the United States would be "very active" in forthcoming peace discussions.

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<sup>1/</sup> Department of State Bulletin, Vol. LXVII, no. 1744, November 27, 1972, p. 622.

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