

Widespread Riots in Jordan.

Mass demonstrations began in the area of Jordan west of the River Jordan shortly after the attack on Samu, and developed into serious rioting which continued at intervals until Dec. 6, 1966. Little information was available about the early stages of the disorders, as the Press and radio were strictly censored and foreign journalists were refused permission to visit the areas affected. *The Times* correspondent reported on Nov. 16, however, that the demonstrators were demanding arms with which to defend themselves, and that a U.N. installation at Hebron was said to have been attacked and American cars burned.

On Nov. 19 clashes took place at Nablus, and casualties occurred on the following day in disorders at the funerals of the first victims. On Nov. 21 rioters at Nablus looted and set fire to several shops before being forcibly dispersed; a 24-hour curfew was imposed on the town, which was completely cut off by the Army, whereupon the inhabitants were reported to have barricaded themselves in their houses and fired at the troops and police. Demonstrations by students demanding arms to fight Israel led to disorders in the Arab sector of Jerusalem on Nov. 23, whilst Ramallah was placed under a curfew on the following day after 5,000 Palestinian refugees demonstrating for arms and in support of Mr. Shukairy had fought a five-hour battle with troops and police.

The disorders reached their height on Nov. 25, when most of the towns in the area were paralysed by a general strike. In the Old City of Jerusalem demonstrations began in response to a call by the P.L.O. for a show of force against King Hussein and the Government, after special prayers had been said in the mosques for those killed at Saran; the troops opened fire on the demonstrators, killing two youths and wounding over 40 other people. Later the same day thousands of people joined in the funeral procession for the two youths, but were dispersed by the police. At Ramallah the curfew was lifted, but was reimposed after new demonstrations during which the Arab Legion fired over the heads of the crowd. Firing at riotous crowds also took place at Nablus, Hebron, Jericho, and Jenin, and according to unconfirmed reports at several refugee camps. Jerusalem, Nablus, Hebron, Ramallah, and a number of smaller towns were completely surrounded by troops and sealed off from the outside world; the airport at Jerusalem was closed to both internal and international traffic; and U.N. staff and foreign diplomats evacuated their families from the Arab part of the city. The mayors and municipal councillors of the towns on the west bank of

the Jordan presented a petition to King Hussein on the same day demanding the arming of the civilian population.

The next three days were comparatively peaceful, and on Nov. 28 the curfew in the towns was limited to the period from dawn to dusk. On Nov. 29, however, new disorders occurred on the anniversary of the U.N. decision of 1947 on the partition of Palestine. There was a general strike in Jerusalem, and after demonstrations at Nablus, Jenin, Bethlehem, and Tulkarm troops completely sealed off the four towns and carried out house-to-house searches for arms. Two soldiers were killed in the refugee camp at Jelazone, which was placed under a curfew for six days and searched for arms, 2,000 of the 5,000 refugees being removed from the camp. King Hussein stated on Nov. 29 that eight people had been killed in all the disturbances and 25 wounded.

A national conference of Palestinian leaders, which was to have met in Jerusalem on Dec. 5 to draw up demands for presentation to King Hussein, was banned on Dec. 3 and 74 of the delegates placed under house arrest. Further rioting took place in consequence on Dec. 5 at Nablus and Hebron, where the curfew was reimposed.

In Cairo, Jordanian and Palestinian students demonstrated at Cairo University on Nov. 24 in protest against the Jordanian Government's allegedly repressive policy and in support of the Palestine Liberation Organization. Addressing the demonstrators, Mr. Shukairy declared that Palestinian commandos would "continue to strike day and night against Israel" and that "in order to liberate Tel-Aviv we must liberate Amman." In Algiers, the Jordanian Embassy was occupied on Nov. 28 by Palestinian students, who held the Charge d'Affaires prisoner for four hours and presented him with a petition demanding that the people of Jordan should be armed and that the Palestine Liberation Army should take over the defence of the country. Demonstrations by Arab students took place on the same day in Damascus and Beirut, and outside the Jordanian Embassy in Madrid.

In response to the demand for the arming of the civilian population, King Hussein announced in his speech at the opening of Parliament on Dec. 1, 1966, that compulsory military service would be introduced for all fit men between the ages of 18 and 40. In addition, the armed forces would be increased, civilians living near the Israeli border would be armed, and front-line villages would be fortified.

After confirming on Nov. 21 that a request for military equipment had been received from Jordan and was under study, the State Department announced on Dec. 22 that the U.S. Government was sending several million dollars' worth of arms to Jordan "to strengthen the defensive capabilities of the Jordanian armed forces"; this additional equipment was being provided "as a means of enabling Jordan to assure its security, and thus to contribute further to the stability of the area."

It was stated that the arms, most of which were sent by air, would consist largely of defensive equipment such as trucks and armoured personnel carriers designed to increase the strength and mobility of the Jordanian forces. In addition the U.S.A., at Jordan's request, would expedite delivery of 36 supersonic *F-104* jet fighters, which it had agreed to sell to Jordan in April 1966.

U.S. officials said that the Administration had decided that failure to act upon the Jordanian arms request "would increase the risk of turmoil within Jordan, which could lead to an outbreak of hostilities in the area"; furthermore, in the last few weeks King Hussein had been under strong pressure "to demonstrate that the United States in fact stands behind him," and this required "something more than just pious expressions of support." This remark referred to the fact that critics of the King had accused him of failure to prepare Jordan adequately for its defence through his close dependence on U.S. military and economic assistance, and that he had been pressed to accept Soviet arms and permit the stationing of P.L.O. units in the country. It was understood that the cost of the U.S. arms supplied was \$5,000,000, or roughly the annual amount of U.S. military assistance.

The immediate effect of the raid on Samu was to rally support for Jordan throughout the Arab world. the influential Cairo newspaper *Al Ahrām* said on Nov. 14, 1966, that the U.A.R. would support the Jordanian people and Army against "perfidious Israeli aggression" without any reservation. The Baghdad Press called for immediate military action against Israel; the Iraqi Government was reported to have offered to send troops to Jordan, and to have moved troops close to the Jordanian border. The Governments of Lebanon and Kuwait sent assurances of their full support to the Jordanian Government, the Lebanese Premier, Dr. Abdullah Yafi, declaring on Nov. 14 that the area would not have stability "unless Israel is eliminated." Mr. Shukairy said in Cairo on Nov. 13 that the P.L.O. stood ready to fight alongside Jordan against "criminal Israeli aggression." The Jordanian Radio appealed to the Arab countries on Nov. 14 to abandon "internecine propaganda and feuds" and concentrate on the "Zionist menace."

In a statement issued on Nov. 16, the heads of the Arab missions in London said that the Arab guerrilla movements were composed of displaced Palestinians who recognized no allegiance beyond that to their own cause of a lost homeland. Thus the Arab Governments had no control over them, though it would be more than human to expect the Arab peoples to withhold from them some measure of sympathy and support. This sympathy had been submerged, however, to such an extent that individual acts of sabotage had been "equated with the Israeli pattern of behaviour," which amounted to full-scale war complete with Jet aircraft and tanks.

The only exception to the general support for Jordan was the attitude of the Syrian Government. *Al Baath* declared on Nov. 14 that the Samu raid was “only a manoeuvre to divert attention from the major offensive Israel is planning to launch against Syria with the help of the U.S. imperialists,” and that part of its purpose was “to strengthen the position of the reactionary regime in Jordan.” As the disturbances spread in Jordan, Damascus Radio broadcast strong appeals to the Jordanian people to revolt.

While the authorities in Cairo continued to refrain from any attacks on King Hussein, the U.A.R. Press and radio, although more restrained than the Syrian, adopted an increasingly critical attitude towards the Jordanian regime, *Al Ahram* accusing King Hussein on Nov. 19 of “collusion” with Israel to prevent Arab raids on Israeli territory. Jordanian spokesmen retaliated by accusing Syria of sending agitators into Jordan to foment disorders, and the U.A.R. of failing to give Jordan air cover during the Samu raid. The Jordanian Prime Minister, Mr. Tell, alleged on Nov. 28 that many of those arrested during the demonstrations had been found to possess large sums of money, which they had admitted receiving from agents of “certain foreign and two Arab countries.”

It was announced in Amman on Nov. 23 that King Hussein had accepted an offer from King Faisal to place 20,000 Saudi Arabian troops at his disposal; these would be stationed permanently at Tabuk, near Jordan's southern frontier, and would enter the country immediately King Hussein so requested. Mr. Tell refused on Nov. 28 to comment on reports that Saudi Arabian troops had already entered Jordan.

In a Cairo broadcast Mr. Shukairy called on King Hussein on Nov. 22 to allow the Palestine Liberation Army to defend Jordanian frontier villages, and gave an assurance that the P.L.O. did not intend to seize power in Jordan. This offer was rejected by King Hussein, who commented in an interview with *Le Monde* on Nov. 24: “I do not see why I should offer my head to the executioner.” On the following day Mr. Shukairy, in a speech broadcast by Cairo Radio, denounced King Hussein as a “murderer,” a “tool of imperialism,” an “atheist,” and an “enemy of Islam and Arabism”; prophesied that he would meet a violent end; and called on the Jordanian Army to stay in their barracks “in order to allow the popular revolution to liberate the usurped fatherland.” At the same time the P.L.O. began issuing communiques in which it called on the members of Mr. Tell's Government to resign immediately or face the consequences, and appealed to the Jordanian armed forces to support the anti-Government demonstrations.

At a press conference on Nov. 29 King Hussein criticized the U.A.R. for failing to support Jordan against Israel; accused the P.L.O. of subversive activities; and alleged that the Soviet Union was planning to take over the Middle East.

King Hussein declared that Jordan had always opposed commando operations against Israel, which gave Israel a pretext for attacking Jordan at a time chosen by itself, and asked: "Why are commandos sent into Israel from Jordan, and not from Syria or Egypt?" If terrorists crossed the frontier despite Jordan's preventive measures, he continued, Israel had an equal responsibility to seal its borders, and if it did not do so it would be to blame for whatever happened. After giving a warning that in the event of another Israeli attack Jordan would "strike back with all its force, whatever the consequences," King Hussein expressed the opinion that Israel might believe that it stood to gain by causing Jordan to collapse, even if the only people to benefit were the leftists, and that the attack on Samu might have been actuated by a desire to split the Middle East into two opposing Eastern and Western camps.

Criticizing the U.A.R.'s attitude, King Hussein recalled that Jordan had mobilized its forces when Egypt was attacked in 1956, whereas the U.A.R. had "failed in its duty to provide air cover for the Jordanian forces fighting at Samu. Egypt might at least have sent a squadron to bomb the Israeli air base," he added, "which to our knowledge is situated near Egyptian territory." Of the P.L.O. he said: "This organization has become a destructive factor, sowing dissension between the Arab States and stirring up subversion in this country. There is no longer any possibility of co-operation between us and this organization." King Hussein alleged that there was evidence of a Soviet plan to take over the Middle East, and said that if the area were overrun by Communism the consequences for the rest of the world would be "very, very serious."

Commenting on King Hussein's remarks, an editorial in *Pravda* said on Dec. 4 that "the Soviet Union seeks to reduce tension and ensure peace in the Middle East"; condemned "provocations in that area which serve the interests of aggressive external forces"; and maintained that "the imperialist forces which have intensified their activities in the Middle East are in fact responsible for the instability of the area." *Le Monde* commented that *Pravda's* condemnation of "provocations" was couched in general terms which could be applied to Arab terrorism as well as to Israeli reprisal raids.

At the request of General Ali Amer, C.-in-C. of the Unified Arab Command, an emergency meeting of the Arab Defence Council was held in Cairo on Dec. 7-10, 1966. According to Egyptian press reports, bitter exchanges took place during the meeting between Mr. Zuaiter (the Jordanian Foreign Minister) on the one hand and Dr. Makhous (the Syrian Foreign Minister) and Mr. Shukairy on the other. Mr. Shukairy told reporters on Dec. 9 that the Palestine Liberation Army would enter Jordan at the appropriate time "whether King Hussein wants us or not," and that when that time came King Hussein would have to leave the country. This statement was repudiated, however, by the Egyptian Foreign Minister, Dr. Fawzi, who said that Mr. Shukairy spoke only for himself.

The Council adopted a resolution recommending that the forces of other Arab countries should enter Jordan to help defend it against Israel; according to unofficial reports, Jordan was said to have agreed to the stationing of Iraqi and Saudi Arabian troops on its territory within two months, but refused to admit the Palestine Liberation Army. The Israeli Government was reported on Dec. 15 to have informed the leading Western countries that the entry of other Arab troops would constitute a violation of the political and military *status quo* in Jordan, respect for which was a fundamental element of Israel's policy, and that in that event Israel would reserve her freedom of action.

Mr. Wasfi Tell's Government resigned on Dec. 22, 1966, but King Hussein asked Mr. Tell to form a new Administration and, at Mr. Tell's request, dissolved the House of Representatives which had been elected in 1963 for a four-year term. The membership of Mr. Tell's new Government—which will be a caretaker Cabinet pending general elections to be held within four months—was announced later on Dec. 22 as follows:

Mr. Wasfi al-Tell	Prime Minister and Defence.
Mr. Abdullah Salah	Foreign Affairs.
Mr. Wasfi Mirza	Interior.
Mr. Hatem al-Zu'abi	Economic Affairs.
Mr. Saaman Daoud	Justice.
Mr. Said al- Dajani	Finance.
Mr. Abed al-Wahab al-Majali	Education and Transport.
Dr. Saleh Burgan	Health.
Mr. Ismail Hejazi	Agriculture.
Mr. Abdel Kader al- Saleh	Reconstruction, Development, and Public Works.
Sherif Abdul Hamid Sharaf	Information.
Mr. Thouqan al- Hindawi	Social Affairs and Labour.
Dr. Kassem Rimawi	Village and Municipal Affairs.

* No change.

† Took new portfolio.

Mr. Salah, a Palestinian, who took the Foreign Affairs portfolio from Mr. Akrum Zuaiter, is a former Ambassador to France, Mr. Mirza, the new Minister of the Interior

in the place of Mr. Majali, was described in the foreign Press as a supporter of the policy of firmly maintaining law and order. Mr. Majali succeeded Mr. Hindawi as Minister of Education and Mr. Mohammed Toukan as Minister of Transport, while Mr. Hindawi replaced Mr. Ahmed Abu Korah at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour. Mr. Said al- Dajani, the new Finance Minister, had previously held the Tourism portfolio.

In his directions to Mr. Tell King Hussein stated that the new Government's first and foremost goal would be the recovery of Palestine, for which it must strengthen the armed forces. Thanking the Prime Minister for "beating the bands of rabble-rousers," he instructed the new Cabinet to deal firmly with trouble-makers while giving maximum attention to the problems of Palestinians; to put up a firm front to Jordan's radical opponents in other Arab countries; and to hold "fair and honest elections."

From the beginning of December onwards the hostility between the Syrian and Jordanian Governments became increasingly open. Each called for the overthrow of the other, and the Jordanian Government accused Syria of sending agents into Jordan to commit acts of terrorism and sabotage.

A clash occurred on the Jordanian-Syrian border during the night of Nov. 30–Dec. 1 of which the two Governments gave entirely different accounts.

A Jordanian spokesman said that a group of saboteurs had fired on a Jordanian patrol while entering the country from Syria, four of them being taken prisoner. Damascus Radio, on the other hand, alleged that Jordanian troops had pursued a number of Jordanians who were attempting to escape into Syria across the border and opened fire, killing one of them. Three of the men who had been taken prisoner by the Jordanian troops were shown to correspondents on Dec. 2. They said that they were Palestinians and members of *El Asefa*, and had received training in sabotage and guerrilla warfare in Syria in preparation for operations against Israel; on Nov. 28, however, the Syrian officer in charge of their training had ordered them to enter Jordan, blow up bridges and water and electricity installations, and incite Jordanians to demonstrate against the regime.

Addressing a demonstration in Damascus on Dec. 7 in support of "the rebellion of the Jordanian people," President Atassi of Syria appealed to all revolutionary forces in Jordan to forget their differences "so that they may devote all their energies to the decisive battle against the traitor king," adding that Syria had "sufficient arms to give to whoever wants them." Describing the Jordanian Government as "the stumbling-block in the way of the liberation of Palestine," he declared that "today Jordan will be liberated and tomorrow Palestine." In reply Amman Radio called on the Syrian people to overthrow "the teenage Baathists running Syria."

Mr. Shukairy, who had recently visited Syria, announced on Dec. 27 that the executive council of the P.L.O. would be replaced by a "revolutionary council" drawn from persons living both inside and outside Jordan, and that the membership and resolutions of this body would remain secret. This statement was followed in the last few days of December and the first week of January 1967 by a series of bomb explosions at Government buildings and broadcasting stations in Amman and Jerusalem, which caused little damage and no casualties; in a broadcast from Cairo on Jan. 4 the P.L.O. claimed that a commando unit was organizing underground operations against King Hussein. All the P.L.O.'s offices in Jordan were closed on the same day and five of its senior officials arrested.

Jordanian spokesmen, however, expressed some doubt whether the explosions were the work of the P.L.O. or of Syrian infiltrators. The security forces claimed on Jan. 4 to have arrested two men who had confessed to entering Jordan from Syria with orders to assassinate King Hussein and Mr. Tell; one of the men was said to have been working at the Amman radio station, inside which three explosions had occurred. It was subsequently reported on Jan. 8 that Jordanian border patrols had seized arms, including 60-mm. mortars and heavy machine-guns, which had been smuggled into the country from Syria for use against King Hussein's regime.

Exchanges of fire across the border between Syrian and Israeli troops multiplied in the areas north and south of the Sea of Galilee at the beginning of January, being reported on Jan. 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 10, and 11; each side claimed that the other was responsible. Although casualties were believed to have been light, each side claimed to have inflicted considerable material damage on the other; the Syrians claimed to have destroyed a number of Israeli military installations on Jan. 2 and 8, and to have destroyed an Israeli tank in a 15-minute battle on Jan. 9, whilst the Israelis claimed to have destroyed two Syrian tanks on Jan. 9 and damaged a third. In a letter to the president of the security Council, Mr. Joel Barromi (acting Israeli representative at the U.N.) complained on Jan. 9 of the "serious intensification of Syrian acts of aggression," which, he said, had created a "grave situation," but did not ask for a meeting of the Council.

The Syrian Minister of Information, Mr. Mohammed al Zohbi, said on Jan. 10 that the Egyptian-Syrian defence pact would be put into effect if Israel launched a large-scale attack on Syria. The Cairo Press emphasized that the U.A.R. would honour its commitments under the pact, and in Baghdad the Press and radio declared that the Iraqi Army was "fully prepared to stand by Syria in a final liberation battle for the Palestinian homeland."

General Odd Bull, head of the U.N. Truce Supervision Organization, flew to Damascus on Jan. 11 for talks with the Syrian Government on the rising tension

between the two countries. Mr. Eshkol said on the same day that his Government would give serious consideration to any U.N. proposals to end the border clashes.

U Thant informed the security Council in a Note issued on Jan. 15 that “in view of the disturbing reports received from the Chief of Staff of UNTSO” that morning he had cabled to the Governments of Israel and Syria through their Permanent Representatives to the U.N. the following “urgent appeal”:

“Reports received by me on the morning of Jan. 15 from General Odd Bull, Chief of Staff of UNTSO, are of such a disturbing nature as to impel me to communicate with you urgently. The reports tell of a large build-up of heavy arms, armoured vehicles and military personnel in the area of and within the demilitarized zones on both sides of the line. It is clear that the situation threatens to erupt at any moment into a large-scale clash of military forces in overt violation of the provisions of the security Council resolutions and of the Israel-Syria General Armistice Agreement.

“I appeal to you in the most urgent terms, and I am appealing to the other side in identical terms, to restrain your military forces from any action which might result in an armed clash. I also appeal to you to accept without delay or pre-conditions the proposal of the Chief of Staff for an immediate emergency or extraordinary meeting of the Israel-Syria Mixed Armistice Commission on an agreed agenda, with a view to reaching an understanding on the problems of cultivation in the areas which have given rise to the incidents of recent weeks.

“Because of the potential danger implicit in the present situation, I have advised the Chief of Staff to take every step within his authority, including a reinforcement of U.N. military observers on both sides of the line, to secure a halt to the build-up and to avoid a large-scale armed clash. I am also taking the unusual step of immediately informing members of the security Council and the Council itself of this message to you.

“I would hope and expect to receive from you a prompt and co-operative response to this appeal.”

U Thant stated that he had also informed members of the security Council individually of the action he had taken. (Israel Government Information Office - U.N. Information Centre, London - Times - Daily Telegraph - Guardian - Financial Times - Le Monde - New York Times) (**Prev. rep. Terrorist Activities, 21515 A; Security Council Debates, 21614 A; Inter-Arab Relations, 21661 A; Syrian-Jordanian Relations, 21655 A; Syrian-Egyptian Defence Agreement, 21710 C; Jordanian Cabinet, 21672 B; 21229 B; 20648 A; U.S. Defence Aid to Jordan, 21440 D.**)

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