

JORDAN PRESSURE DENIED BY BRITAIN

Spokesman Says London Did Not Insist on Arab Nation's Joining Baghdad Pact

By **KENNETT LOVE**

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LONDON, Jan. 9—A British Foreign Office spokesman denied today that Britain had put pressure on Jordan to join the Baghdad Pact.

The spokesman said that Gen. Sir Gerald Templer, whose recent visit to Jordan touched off a riotous political crisis there, had not been sent by Britain. He explained that the chief of the Imperial General Staff had been invited by the Jordanian Government.

The rioting was fomented by "outside interests" inimical to the Baghdad Pact, the spokesman continued. The violence in the streets of Jerusalem, Amman, Nablus, Hebron and other localities was accompanied by charges that Britain was trying to force Jordan to join the pact for defense against the Soviet Union. The crisis brought down three Jordanian Cabinets in quick succession.

In Washington, United States officials had charged privately that Britain had "bungled" the job of trying to bring Jordan into the pact.

Here as well, the "bungling" charge is a major particular in the bill the Opposition is trying to bring against the Government of Sir Anthony Eden. Many Conservative sympathizers, too, feel General Templer's visit was somewhat clumsy.

The version given here is that General Templer was invited to Amman, Jordan's capital, to explain the military benefits that Jordan would gain by joining the pact. Iraq, Turkey, Iran, Pakistan and Britain are members.

If Jordan joined, Britain proposed to help her expand her army, the Arab Legion, and increase the present annual British military subsidy of £8,750,000 (\$24,500,000).

According to this version, the Jordanian Government became interested in the possibility of joining the Baghdad Pact last spring when Britain entered the alliance and turned over her bases in Iraq to the Baghdad Government under a new treaty arrangement. At the time, Britain and Jordan were discussing possible changes in the 1948 treaty under which Britain exercises military land and air rights in Jordan.

Jordan Initiative Cited

Jordan, it is said, wanted to study the new treaty arrangements between Iraq and Britain to see whether something similar would suit Jordan. General Templer was asked by the Government of Said el-Mufti to discuss the matter.

"We have always taken the line that it was a matter for Jordan alone to decide," the Foreign Office spokesman said, "but we would certainly welcome Jordan as a member of the pact."

In the political crisis Mr. el-Mufti was replaced by Hazza el-Majali as Premier. Three days of riots brought the downfall of Mr. el-Majali and the dissolution of Parliament on Dec. 19, five days after he had taken office. His successor, Ibrahim Hashim, lasted less than three weeks.

Renewed rioting last week followed a Jordanian Supreme Court ruling that King Hussein's dissolution of Parliament had been unconstitutional. The agitators apparently took this ruling as a maneuver to restore political supporters of the Baghdad Pact. Samir el-Rifai, who has a pro-Western background, was appointed Premier today.

Four countries are primarily opposed to the Baghdad Pact: Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Syria and the Soviet Union. The Foreign Office spokesman identified only "Communists" among the fomenters of the Jordanian riots

because it would be a delicate diplomatic matter to name others.

In official opinion here, Saudi Arabian oil money was used liberally to whip up the destitute Arab refugees from Israeli territory who are concentrated in western Jordan. Egypt is linked to both Syria and Saudi Arabia by defensive treaties hostile to the Baghdad Pact.

Premier Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt sees the Baghdad Pact as a Western attempt to build up Iraq as a rival to Egypt's Arab leadership. Syria fears a strengthened Iraq may seek to absorb her in a unification of the Arab "fertile crescent." The Saud dynasty dislikes any move that will strengthen the rival Hashemite dynasty that reigns in Baghdad and Amman.

The Palestinian Arab refugees, who control the three main Jordanian newspapers, fear that Western commitments will make the Arab Governments forget their claims to recover lost Arab land in Israeli territory.