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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP

INTELLIGENCE REPORT

COUNTRY Lebanon/Trans-Jordan

SUBJECT Greater Syria Plan

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ORIGIN [redacted]

This document is hereby regraded CONFIDENTIAL in accordance with the letter of 15 October 1978 from the Director of Central Intelligence to the Archivist of the United States.
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SUPPLEMENT

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15 December 1946

1. Afif Tibi*, who has just returned to Beirut from Damascus, is said to have stated:

(a) That the Syrian authorities had reached a decision to strengthen the opposition to King Abdallah within his own state of Trans-Jordan;

(b) Funds have already been marked for this purpose, and Dr. Subhi Abu Ghanimah** has been chosen to handle these funds and to stir up trouble within Trans-Jordan;

(c) Dr. Abu Ghanimah will start with the question of the constitution of Trans-Jordan and the powers of the King.

*Former collaborator of the Grand Mufti in Berlin; anti-communist; publisher of al-Yawm in Beirut.

**Another of the Grand Mufti's men of trust.

3 January 1947

2. Farhan Shubaylat, 1st Secretary of the Trans-Jordanian Legation in Beirut, is said to have made the following statements on the question of Greater Syria:

(a) The decisions recently taken by the Trans-Jordanian Chamber were essentially a formal reply to decisions taken by the Syrian and Lebanese Chambers. The Trans-Jordanian Chamber had to take a stand on the subject, and King Abdallah drew up these decisions with his own hand;

(b) The whole question had been handled too hastily, largely because of the temperament of the King;

(c) During his recent visit to Amman, Shubaylat was more than ever convinced that the British authorities in Trans-Jordan had not said or done anything to instigate King Abdallah to assume his recent aggressive attitude. Great Britain was working for this goal inside Syria, but not in Trans-Jordan;

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(d) King 'Abd-al-Aziz (Ibn Saúd) of Saudi Arabia is certainly opposed to the project. Certain tribal leaders could easily be bought over by Ibn Sa'ud, and King Abdallah would have to devote part of his energy to internal dissensions. The most dangerous element in Trans-Jordan, from the standpoint of the King, is the intelligentsia of the kingdom. All the educated classes are disappointed with King Abdallah's conception of the monarchy and particularly with his dictatorial manner. These classes had already been forced to join Dr. Abu Ghanimah's Camp, and they would ultimately take a stand for a republic.

17 December 1946

3. The associates and partisans of Emile Edde of Lebanon state that Edde favors the Greater Syria plan for the following reasons:

(a) The Moslem enclaves of North Lebanon (Tripoli) and South Lebanon (Shi'as) would be joined to Syria, leaving the historical Lebanon with a solid Christian majority;

(b) Edde could argue that events since November 1943 had vindicated him: that he had foreseen the creation of a British-dominated Arab Moslem state, hostile to Christians;

(c) The need of the Christians in Lebanon for protection and for a defender (Edde himself) would aid in Edde's return to power, in the face of the realization of the Greater Syria plan.

4. Source stated that the Lebanese Government has been trying to smoke out Emile Edde on the subject of the Greater Syria plan, and the newspaper Nida al-Watan of 10 December 1946 published an anonymous charge that Edde was dealing with a Greater Syria agent. The article ended with the words: "In view of all this, it would be proper for Mr. Edde to announce his views on the subject of Greater Syria."

5. Kamal Jumblat, Lebanese Minister of Economy and Agriculture, is also reported to have said, after calling on Emile Edde, that the latter is very happy at the prospect of the realization of this plan.

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