

AMERICAN FRIENDS
of the
MIDDLE EAST

First Annual Report
of the Executive Vice President

to the Board of Directors and the National Council of the
American Friends of the Middle East, Inc.

May 15, 1951 to June 30, 1952

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AMERICAN FRIENDS OF THE MIDDLE EAST, INC.

139 East 57th Street
New York 22, N. Y.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

For a number of years Americans interested in the Middle East have been attempting a successful organized effort to get a hearing in the United States. Notable among these efforts have been the Committee for Justice and Peace in the Holy Land,¹ the Holyland Emergency Liaison Program, popularly known as HELP,² and the Near East Society.³ With the discontinuance of the efforts of both the Committee for Justice and Peace in the Holy Land and HELP, and the limited activities of the Near East Society, a spirit of discouragement and near hopelessness had settled on many American friends of the Middle East by the winter of 1949. Many had begun to wonder whether it was possible to bring the facts about the Middle East to the attention of the people of the United States. It is true that there were other organizations interested in some one or another phase of the life in the Middle East.⁴ None of these however had an active program attempting to interpret the problems of the whole area to the American people.

In the fall of 1949 the on-the-scene reports of one of America's best known columnists, Miss Dorothy Thompson, led many Americans to consider the situation more objectively. When Miss Thompson's reports were followed by columns written in a similar vein from the pens of George Weller and Stewart Alsop and by a considerably larger press coverage in American newspapers, a number of those who had been associated in the earlier organizations felt that the time had come to make another and major effort to get the truth about the Middle East before the American public. They

¹ The Committee for Justice and Peace in the Holy Land was organized on March 2, 1948, with Dean Virginia C. Gildersleeve, Chairman; Henry Sloan Coffin, Vice Chairman; Garland Evans Hopkins, Secretary; and Kermit Roosevelt, Executive Director. It discontinued its activities in February 1950.

² HELP attempted to coordinate the public relations activities of the several agencies organized to help the Palestine refugees. Its chairman was William Ernest Hocking. Other officers included Henry Sloane Coffin, Kermit Roosevelt, William A. Eddy and Garland Evans Hopkins.

³ The Near East Society, headed by Bayard Dodge, is the joint creation of the Near East Foundation and the Near East College Association. It continues to do a splendid job under the executive leadership of Alvah L. Miller, formerly secretary of the YMCA in Jerusalem.

⁴ e.g., Middle East Relief, American Christian Palestine Committee, Friends of Egypt.

also felt that a great need existed to get the truth about America before the Middle Eastern public. Miss Dorothy Thompson was approached and asked if she would undertake the leadership of such a new organization. Her enthusiasm for the undertaking was all that was needed to get it under way.

On May 15, 1951, twenty-four persons met at her home in New York and formally organized the American Friends of the Middle East. A seven-member steering committee⁵ was appointed to perfect the organization. Miss Dorothy Thompson very kindly put office space in her residence, 237 East 48th Street, New York City, at the disposal of the Committee until October, when office space was secured at 139 East 57th Street. During this period the work of the organization was largely carried on under the direction of Mr. Engert. Too high praise can not be given the self-sacrificing spirit and service exhibited by Mr. Engert through these difficult months of getting the organization under way. He laid a sound financial basis for future activities, instituted the necessary proceedings which resulted in the incorporation of the society in December, and began with such resources as were at hand to enlarge the membership and to implement the aims and purposes which had been adopted at the May meeting.

On November 2, the Steering Committee approached the present vice president of the organization and asked him if he would undertake the planning and direction of a large-scale program designed to create better relations between the people of America and the peoples of the Middle East. After consultation with his colleagues of the Christian Century Foundation, who generously offered him a two-year leave of absence from his position as associate editor of the *Christian Century*, he agreed to assume such responsibilities. From November 16 to December 12 he gave considerable time to drawing up plans for more effectively organizing the society, commuting from Chicago to spend two days each week in New York.

On December 12, the Steering Committee called together the charter members who had met in May and presented the plan of organization which they had worked out in the interim. The charter members unanimously agreed to the proposals of the Steering Committee and constituted themselves the National Council of American Friends of the Middle East, Inc. A five-member board of directors was elected consisting of Dorothy Thompson, President of the corporation, Garland Evans Hopkins, Vice President of the cor-

⁵ This committee was composed of Dorothy Thompson, chairman, Cornelius Van H. Engert, secretary-treasurer, Garland Evans Hopkins, Harold Lamb, Bayard Dodge (with Robert Hardy as alternate), Philip Hitti (with Mitchel E. Hadad as alternate) and Elmer Berger.

poration, Cornelius Van H. Engert, Secretary-Treasurer of the corporation, Harold Lamb and George Britt. Miss Thompson, Mr. Hopkins and Mr. Engert were named as the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors. A National Council of not more than 100 members was authorized and the following were elected officers of that body: Dorothy Thompson, Chairman; William Ernest Hocking, Vice Chairman; Daniel Bliss, Vice-Chairman, Eastern Region; Ensworth Reisner, Vice-Chairman, Middle Western Region; Harold Lamb, Vice-Chairman, Western Region; W. F. Stinespring, Vice-Chairman, Southern Region; and William A. Aiken, Secretary. The plan of organization adopted aimed at uniting in a national headquarters in New York, policy direction which would be formulated by the Board of Directors, and grass-root opinion which would develop in local committees and branches, pass through state organizations and finally reach National Headquarters through the medium of the National Council.

On January 16, 1952, the vice president began his leave of absence from the *Christian Century* and his temporary full time direction of the program of the American Friends of the Middle East, Inc. He started immediately to implement the plan of organization which called for the organization and staffing of six departments: (1) Administration, (2) Intercultural Relations, (3) Public Relations, (4) Research and Publication, (5) Student Affairs, (6) Regional Offices. The most important job was to find persons capable of staffing these departments. This was not an easy task as in every instance the person chosen was already engaged in the work of some other important agency. However, the appeal of the work in AFME to the individuals selected as best equipped to do the task, and the cooperation of the agencies by whom they were at the time employed, made possible a fully staffed organization by April 1, 1952.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND REGIONAL OFFICES

The single most important staff selection was that of the Executive Secretary who would be the administrative officer of the organization, freeing the Vice President to deal with matters of policy and program. AFME was fortunate indeed to secure for this important task, John H. Shope⁶ who had previously served as director of the

⁶ John H. Shope obtained his M.A. in Education at Columbia University, his Ph.D. in the field of sociology at the University of Pittsburgh and received an ecumenical scholarship for further study at Yale. He is an ordained minister of the Evangelical and Reformed Church. Prior to accepting the position of director of the Bureau of Research and Planning in Chicago he had served as field director of Metropolitan Pittsburgh Church Study.

Bureau of Research and Planning of the Church Federation of Greater Chicago.

Miss Eva J. Graham⁷ was secured as personal secretary to the Vice President and serves also as assistant treasurer of the corporation. Miss Graham has proved of invaluable service in every phase of the organizational period. Nancy V. Evans⁸ served first as receptionist but after Dr. Shope assumed his duties on March 15 she became secretary to the Executive Secretary. Her services to the organization throughout the trying period of finding and renovating office space have been of exceptionally high caliber. Miss Evans was succeeded as receptionist by Miss Ethel King who later was promoted to production manager in the Department of Public Relations. She was succeeded as receptionist by Miss Margaret Lawrence⁹ who had previously served as secretary to the Director of Public Relations.

The Executive Secretary is responsible for the regional offices, and the local committees and branches which are in the process of being set up. An Eastern Regional Office has been established in New York under the part time direction of Mrs. Alice Whelen.¹⁰ Mrs. Whelen also serves as director of the AFME lecture and tourist programs. The Eastern Regional Office is under an Eastern Regional Committee composed of members of the National Council who reside in this area with Dr. Daniel Bliss serving as chairman of the committee. A branch has been organized in Philadelphia with Mrs. Brandon Barringer as chairman, and plans are under way for the organization of branches in Boston, New York, Washington and other eastern cities early next fall. Miss Phyllis Van Horn¹¹ serves as secretary to Mrs. Whelen.

A Middle Western office has been established in Chicago with Mrs. Ovid R. Sellers¹² as director. The Regional Committee for

⁷ Miss Eva J. Graham is a native of Michigan. She studied at the Davenport McLachlan Institute in Grand Rapids and at American University in Washington, D.C. She has held responsible government positions in this country and abroad and was secretary to the Committee for Justice and Peace in the Holy Land.

⁸ Miss Nancy V. Evans is a native of Pittsburgh and a graduate of Vassar College in 1951.

⁹ Miss Margaret Lawrence was educated in Lausanne, Switzerland, and Paris, France. She had previously served as assistant to the editor of *Egypt Magazine*.

¹⁰ Mrs. Alice B. Whelen is a graduate of Smith College and did graduate work at the University of Pennsylvania. She has lived for several years in South America and Europe. During World War II she worked for the Office of Strategic Services in the psychological warfare field in connection with the Italian and North African campaign.

¹¹ Miss Phyllis Van Horn was graduated from Brown University in 1951.

this area has Dr. Ensworth Reisner of Milwaukee as its chairman. Miss Ivis B. Repke¹³ serves as secretary to Mrs. Sellers. The office has become a center for information and a constant reminder to the public of the importance of the Middle East. A number of social affairs, teas, evening parties, luncheons and dinners have been held to acquaint different types of audiences concerning life in the Middle East. With the encouragement of Mrs. Sellers, the Arab students, of whom there are about 100 in the Chicago area, formed an organization that makes frequent use of the office. Books and leaflets are providing material for school themes and programs for local organizations with frequent requests for films and speakers. The University of Chicago has requested AFME's cooperation in setting up a series of six weekly meetings in the fall for their adult education program. Local committees have been established in Urbana, Illinois, and Ann Arbor, Michigan and preliminary plans have been laid for committees in a number of other communities.

Our Secretary-Treasurer, Mr. Engert made a two week visit to the West Coast, June 2-17, and laid the groundwork for establishing a regional office in that area. A branch has been organized in Los Angeles with Robert Waring as chairman. A branch for the San Francisco area is in process of organization.

During the coming year it is hoped that regional offices may be established on the west coast, in Texas, and possibly in the south.

Americans living in the Middle East communities have also been invited to associate themselves with committees or branches of AFME. A branch is in process of being organized in Cairo under the direction of a chairman, Dr. Helen Martin, president of the American Girls College, Cairo. Others are being organized in Beirut under the chairmanship of George Britt, a well-known author and member of AFME's Board of Directors; in Aleppo under the chairmanship of Alford Carleton, president of Aleppo College; in Damascus under the chairmanship of Huntington Bliss, president of Damascus College; in Jerusalem, Jordan, under the chairmanship of Mrs. Frederick Vester, author of *Our Jerusalem*, and head of the American Colony; in Baghdad under the chairmanship of Father Joseph Connell, S.J., dean of Baghdad College.

In addition to his administrative responsibilities, the Executive

¹² Mrs. Ovid R. Sellers is a graduate of Vassar College. Her contact with the Near East countries has been close, especially during 1948-49. She has taught at the Beirut College for Women and was hostess of the American School of Oriental Research, Jerusalem while her husband Dr. Sellers served as Director.

¹³ Miss Ivis Repke is a graduate of DePauw University, Greencastle, Indiana, and has had special training at the Art Institute, Chicago, and at the Twin City Business College, Benton Harbor, Michigan.

Secretary is at present engaged in plans for an annual conference of AFME's membership late in the fall of 1952. It is hoped that at this time there may simultaneously be held a conference of all agencies in the United States which are interested in American-Middle East relationships.

DEPARTMENT OF INTERCULTURAL RELATIONS

The Executive Secretary is also the director of the Department of Intercultural Relations. This department includes three major activities: (1) the intercultural exchange program; (2) a lecture bureau; and (3) a tourist program.

One of the chief purposes of American Friends of the Middle East, Inc., is to arrange for intercultural exchanges between America and the Middle East.

One of the first of AFME's activities was to assist an Egyptian labor leader, Mr. Mohammed Ibrahim Zein-ed-Din, to spend three months in the United States. He had come over as a member of the Egyptian Town Meeting of the Air, and when the latter concluded its tour he expressed a desire to remain a little longer in order to learn more about the United States. AFME made it possible for him to spend July, August and September 1951 addressing annual meetings of labor unions from coast to coast and explaining the Arab point of view to exceptionally large American audiences. Due to his genial personality and good command of English he was given a very cordial reception and was urged to visit the United States again.

The second project in this field was the dispatching of Arthur Raper, one of America's foremost sociologists, to study and report on the Arab Development Society's Jordan Valley reclamation project. Dr. Raper visited the project and conferred at length with Musa Bey Alami, the founder and director of the project. He also visited other sections of Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. His report and recommendations have proved highly helpful in working out AFME's program in the Middle East.

In April 1952, Miss Dorothy Thompson and your Vice President were sent to the Middle East as AFME representatives. They met in Rome on April 14 and proceeded to Malta, Libya, Egypt, the Sudan, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Israel and Iraq. Your Vice-President returned to America on May 21. Miss Thompson also visited Iran, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia before returning to America, June 7, 1952. Throughout the Middle East, this trip has been hailed as a significant landmark in American-Middle Eastern relationships.

Dr. Charles Clayton Morrison of Chicago, Illinois, an outstanding editor, lecturer and theologian, has been selected to visit the Middle East in the fall of 1952 to lecture in a number of colleges and other centers. Plans for his itinerary are currently being made and considerable interest in his coming has been expressed by Middle Eastern editors.

Two outstanding Middle Eastern women have been invited to visit America this fall as guests of AFME: Mrs. Ahmed Hussein Pasha, wife of the former Minister of Social Affairs in Egypt who is presently a member of a UNESCO mission to Mexico, and Mrs. Wadi'a Khoury Makdissi, daughter of Fadel Hourani and the widow of a member of one of the most prominent Lebanese families. They will lecture before church groups, women's clubs and other civic groups. An itinerary is also being planned for lectures in Middle Eastern countries upon their return on the subject: "America as I Saw It."

Plans are under way to bring to America in the spring of 1953 several other representative Middle Easterners, and to send to the Middle East a number of Americans. Dr. Shope will visit the Middle East in August as a representative of the organization.

The department's lecture bureau, known as "Phoenix Lectures," is under the direction of Mrs. Alice B. Whelen. A list of qualified speakers for clubs and organizations desiring addresses on American-Middle Eastern relationships from an objective point of view has been prepared and a folder has been mailed to a large number of colleges, civic groups, and community forums. A number of lectures have already been given under the auspices of the American Friends of the Middle East.

Mrs. Whelen also directs the department's tourist program which is known as the "Afme Tourist Program." Excellent liaison has been established with leading tourist organizations and with Middle Eastern consulates. A card has been prepared to be inserted in passports by the consulates to each American applying for a visa to enter a Middle Eastern country. This card invites the traveller to contact American Friends of the Middle East if he desires to see more than the shrines and the ruins of the countries he is to visit. When tourists write for assistance in meeting people in Middle Eastern countries, a questionnaire is sent them to ascertain their itinerary and their special interests. Tourist representatives have already been secured in six Middle Eastern capitals: Cairo, Dr. Helen Martin, president of the American College for Girls; Beirut, Mrs. Wadi'a Khoury Makdissi; Damascus, Dr. George Haddad,

professor in the Syrian University; Amman, Miss Emily Bisharat, an outstanding woman leader; Jerusalem, Mrs. Katie Antonius, founder of Al Awlad Orphanage; Bagdad, Munir Fattir, a leading young business man. These representatives will see that each tourist introduced by AFME meets at least one person well qualified to describe the current situation in his country, one person of the same profession or interest as that of the tourist, and a representative of the government's information office. These tourist representatives are allowed modest amounts for the expenses they incur in carrying out this program.

Afme Tourist Program is also organizing a special tour of the Middle East for August 1952 under the direction of Mrs. Ovid R. Sellers, director of the Chicago Regional Office. This tour is being planned in connection with the Reddy Travel Agency of Kansas City, Missouri. It is hoped that as many as fifteen persons can be secured to take advantage of this tour under the guidance of one of America's authorities on the Middle East.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

The Department of Public Relations is in charge of one of the important phases of AFME's work. Its director, William Z. Cline,¹⁴ joined the staff of the American Friends of the Middle East on April 1 and in three months has been unusually successful in presenting the Middle East to America and America to the Middle East. His task is so large a one that it has been necessary to add an additional person to his staff to take care of the demands which are constantly being made on this department. Mrs. Florence Byron¹⁵ joined AFME's staff as assistant director of Public Relations on June 10. Serving as secretary and production manager for the department is Miss Ethel King¹⁶ who had formerly served as receptionist. Prior to Mrs. Byron's coming to the department, Miss Margaret Lawrence had served as departmental secretary.

The Department of Public Relations has issued a continuing stream of news releases about AFME activities which have secured

¹⁴ Mr. William Z. Cline is a graduate of Bridgewater College, Virginia, with two years of graduate study at Bethany Biblical Seminary, Chicago. He served as the Director of Church World Service of Greater Chicago, 1946-1947; as Field Director of CROP, 1948-1949; and as Public Relations Director of CROP, 1950-1952.

¹⁵ Mrs. Florence Byron was formerly editor of the Women's Page of the *New York Herald Tribune*, an associate editor of *Parents Magazine*, and associated with J. Walter Thompson advertising agency.

¹⁶ Miss Ethel King is a graduate of St. Joseph's College for Women and prior to joining AFME's staff did social service in New York City.

far better than average coverage in the American press. This does not imply, by any means, that the coverage is as yet satisfactory. It does mean that under Mr. Cline's leadership it is being proved that news about activities of Middle Eastern organizations can be got into the American press. Exceptional coverage has been given AFME news releases by the Middle Eastern press. This type of publicity paved the way for the splendid press coverage given throughout the area to the recent trip of Miss Thompson and your vice president.

Plans are now under way to provide a specialized service, based on direct translation of Middle Eastern papers, to the metropolitan press, small town papers and religious weeklies. A bulletin is being planned for distribution to AFME members. This bulletin may be a joint project of the Near East Society and AFME depending upon the outcome of negotiations that are now in process. Mr. Cline has been able to get radio and television outlets which have hitherto been unavailable to agencies interested in the Middle East. Your vice president was given one hour and fifteen minutes on the George Hamilton Coombes radio program to discuss the Middle East and participated in a televised panel discussion (representing the Middle East) on "America's Town Meeting." The department serves as consultant to all other departments in preparing brochures and other publicity media.

An interesting adjunct of the department is the Phoenix Press which is issuing a weekly column written by your vice president and other feature articles to be contributed by members of our National Council. The Phoenix Press is designed especially to serve small town dailies and weekly papers.

DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH AND PUBLICATION

The Department of Research and Publication is under the direction of Erich W. Bethmann.¹⁷ Miss Ruth Thompson¹⁸ serves as secretary. This is the department to which are referred all the many questions about the Middle East which arise in connection with our program and the requests for information which come from students and others interested in the Middle East. The depart-

¹⁷ Erich W. Bethmann was educated at Berlin, Germany; London, England and American Univ., Cairo, Egypt, and served for twenty-one years in the Middle East as teacher and headmaster of schools in Egypt, Jordan and Iraq. He has had the longest service on AFME's staff, having been brought into the organization in June, 1951.

¹⁸ Miss Ruth Thompson graduated from Emerson College in Massachusetts and has previously served in other secretarial capacities.

ment has developed a lending library which contains both current and classic books about the Middle East. These books may be borrowed by mail and are available without charge to members of the organization. Non-members may use the library upon deposit of a returnable fee. This department has been charged to make a thorough study of the coverage of the Middle East in the curricula of American universities, colleges, and secondary schools. Dr. Bethmann has prepared a preliminary proposal for conducting this study which is at present under discussion by the staff. This department is also collecting material for two smaller publications: (1) a primer of the Middle East for Americans; (2) a primer of America for Middle Easterners in the Arabic language. A publication to introduce Americans particularly interested in the Middle East to be entitled "Meet Some American Friends of the Middle East" is planned for publication in the coming year.

The Department of Research and Publication works very closely with the Department of Public Relations in its press services. Most of the important newspapers of the Arabic language are subscribed to and articles about American-Middle Eastern relationships or about AFME are clipped by our representative in Beirut, Mrs. Wadi'a Khoury Makdissi. These clippings enable the Department of Public Relations to keep up to date on its coverage of the Middle Eastern press and to prepare a clip sheet service to the American press.

This department has distributed two pamphlets, widely differing in point of view, to AFME's membership to help them understand better the Arab refugee problem: *The Palestine Refugees*, by Dr. Fayez Sayegh and the Nation Associates publication, *The Arab Refugee Problem*.

One of the most interesting projects under the direction of Dr. Bethmann is the orientation of AFME's staff to the Middle East. This is primarily accomplished in a daily 4 o'clock coffee hour to which both Middle Eastern and American guests are invited. On Mondays and Fridays, Dr. Bethmann gives brief background lectures on some aspect of Middle Eastern life or history; on Wednesdays, he reviews the Middle Eastern news of the past week. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, guests from Middle Eastern countries or Americans who are acquainted with the Middle East are invited to talk on their particular country or interest. While the Coffee Hour was begun primarily for the benefit of the staff, it has become a popular feature of our program among diplomatic officials and other Middle Eastern visitors to New York.

DEPARTMENT OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

The Department of Student Affairs is under the direction of William A. Wright, Jr.¹⁹, who joined the department on April 1. The assistant director of this department is Miss Myrtle Williams,²⁰ who joined the staff on February 16, 1952.

In November 1951 invitations were issued to representatives of each Middle Eastern country to attend a conference to plan a general conference of Middle Eastern students to be held later in the year. Unfortunately, the intensity of feeling between Israel and the Arab nations is so great that a conference organized on such a scale proved impossible. Instead of a general conference for all of the students of the area it was found that the only practical type of conference was one of national or regional groups. It was decided that the first conference to be held would be a conference of students from the Arab states as it was found that a number of Arab student leaders had already been making preliminary plans for such a conference. Twenty of these students were called together on March 8-9, 1952, to plan for an Arab Student Convention. A highly successful student convention was held at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, June 17-20, with more than 150 students and approximately 30 advisors, official speakers and observers in attendance. AFME was glad to cooperate with financial support and encouragement.

The conference program was as follows:

TUESDAY, JUNE 17

9:00-11:00 A.M.—Registration.

11:00 A.M.—12:30 P.M.—*Greetings*: Harlan Hatcher, President of Michigan.

Objectives of the Convention: Kamal Shair, Chairman, First Arab Student Convention.

Address: Garland Evans Hopkins, Executive Vice President, American Friends of the Middle East, Inc.

¹⁹ William Archer Wright, Jr., is a graduate of Randolph Macon College and of Union Theological Seminary, New York. He has gained quite a reputation as a result of numerous articles contributed to magazines such as the *Christian Century* and the *Christian Advocate*. He served for two years as associate editor of the *20th Century Quarterly* and is an ordained minister of the Methodist Church. Before joining AFME's staff he was pastor of Merrifield Methodist Church, Merrifield, Virginia.

²⁰ Miss Myrtle Williams graduated from Richmond Professional Institute of the College of William and Mary, Richmond, Va., and taught in the public schools of Virginia before joining the staff of the American Friends of the Middle East.

2:00 P.M.—4:30 P.M.—Ten Group Sessions

1. *The Population Problems in Arab Countries*: Mohammad Abbas, Presiding.
Advisors: Dr. Wendell Cleland, Office of Intelligence Research, Department of State; Mr. Hanna Rizk, Professor of Social Work, Princeton University; Mr. Joseph Sado, President, Syrian-Lebanese Federation of the Eastern States.
2. *Agricultural Developments by the Arab Countries*: Hikmat Nabulsi, Presiding.
Advisors: Dr. Paul Klat, International Monetary Fund; Dr. Abdulla Sedky, Professor, Farouk First University, Alexandria, Egypt.
3. *Industrial Development in the Arab Countries*: Tahseen Basheer, Presiding.
Advisors: Mr. Francis Boardman, Office of Near Eastern Affairs, Department of State; Mr. Edward Bayne, Economic Advisor, Technical Cooperative Administration, Department of State; Mr. James Ansara.
4. *The Role of the Arab World in the U.N.*: Ziad Shawwaf, Presiding.
Advisors: Dr. Omar Khadra, Educational Advisor, Saudi Arabian Embassy; Mr. James Batal, Executive Secretary, Syrian-Lebanese Federation of the Eastern States.
5. *Development of Mutual Understanding between the Arabs and the People of the United States*: Salah El-Dareer, Presiding.
Advisors: Dr. Bayard Dodge, Professor of Near Eastern Studies, Princeton University; Mrs. Mary Haddad, Foreign Advisor, Huntington, West Virginia.
6. *Social Advance in the Arab Countries*: Sadek Samaan, Presiding.
Advisors: Mrs. Mona Sedky, Dean, Alexandria Higher Institute of Social Service, Alexandria, Egypt; Dr. Abdul-Hemid Zaki, Former Dean, School of Social Studies, Cairo, Egypt; Mrs. Louis Nassif.
7. *Student Adjustment in Foreign Countries and upon Returning Home*: Mahmoud Shihata, Presiding.
Advisors: Miss Ruth Haines, Program Director, Committee

on Friendly Relations Among Foreign Students; Mrs. O. R. Sellers, Director, Midwest Regional Office, American Friends of the Middle East, Inc.; Mr. Wm. A. Wright, Director, Student Affairs, American Friends of the Middle East, Inc.

8. *Educational Advance in the Arab World*: El-Sayed Azzouz, Presiding.

Advisors: Dr. John A. Wilson, Professor of Egyptology, former Director, Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago; Dr. Roderic Matthews, Vice-Dean, Graduate School of Education, University of Pennsylvania.

9. *Islam and Arab Culture*: Muhsin Mahdi, Presiding.

Advisors: Dr. Erich Bethmann, Director of Research and Publication, American Friends of the Middle East, Inc.; Dr. S. R. Shafaq, Professor of Islamic Studies, Columbia University; Dr. Faris Malouf, Syrian-Lebanese Federation of the Eastern States.

10. *The Problem of the Palestinian Arab Refugees*: Riad Alami, Presiding.

Advisors: Dr. A. Willard Jones, Principal, Friends Boys School, Ramallah, Jordan; Dr. Fayez Sayegh, Division of Human Rights, United Nations; Mr. George Barakat, Executive Vice President, American Middle East Relief.

7:30 P.M.-9:30 P.M.—Evening Session *

The Causes of Restlessness in the Arab World: Honorable Abdulla Bakr, Minister of Iraq to the United States and Charge d'Affaires of the Iraqi Embassy.

The Question of Understanding America: Dr. Millar Burrows, Chairman of the Near Eastern Studies Department, Yale University.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 18.

9:00 A.M.-12:00 NOON—Group Sessions.

2:00 P.M.-5:00 P.M.—Group Sessions.

8:00 P.M.-9:30 P.M.—Evening Session *

Master of Ceremonies, Joseph Sado, President, Syrian-Lebanese American Federation of the Eastern States.

* Open to the public.

Address: Faris Malouf, Founder of the Syrian-Lebanese American Federation of the Eastern States.

Address: Mr. James Batal, Executive Secretary, Syrian-Lebanese American Federation of the Eastern States.

THURSDAY, JUNE 19

9:00 A.M.-12:00 NOON—Group Sessions.

2:00 P.M.-5:00 P.M.—Group Sessions.

7:30 P.M.-11:00 P.M.—General Session.*

Address: Rafik Asha, First Counselor, Syrian Legation.

Reports by Groups 1, 2, and 3.

Address: Sayed Ahmad Ali Zabarah, First Secretary, Yemen Legation.

Address: Kamil Abdul-Rahim Bey, Egyptian Ambassador to the United States (read by Prof. Ahmed Khaky Bey, Director of Egyptian Educational Bureau.)

FRIDAY, JUNE 20

9:00 A.M.-12:00 NOON—General Session.

Reports by Groups 4, 5, and 6.

2:00 P.M.-5:00 P.M.—General Session.

Reports by Groups 7, 8, 9, and 10.

8:00 P.M.-9:30 P.M.—Evening Session.*

Address: Miss Dorothy Thompson, President, American Friends of the Middle East, Inc.

9:30 P.M.-11:00 P.M.—Social Hour.

It is planned to publish the findings of the ten study groups in both English and Arabic. This conference was planned and directed by a student committee composed of Kamal A. Shair, Chairman; Inayat Chichakly, Vice-Chairman; Bahgat El-Tawil, Secretary-Treasurer; Ezzeldin Hilmy, Hikmat Nabulsi, Muhsin Mahdi and Ziad Shawwaf. Miss Williams was loaned by AFME to serve as Executive Secretary for the convention. Excellent cooperation was received from the several Arab embassies and legations. Through their representations, funds were made available to the students by the Arab League and by several of the Arab governments to assist in the travel expenses of those wishing to attend the conference and financially unable to do so without help.

* Open to the public.

The Department of Student Affairs is sponsoring an annual contest in the theological seminaries in America to promote an increasing understanding of Islam among Christian ministers. This year the subject on which the students wrote essays was the "Impact of Islam upon Christianity." The three winning essayists have been awarded a trip to the Holy Land and adjacent countries. This year's winners were: Kenneth Crandall, Methodist (Yale Divinity School); Hillary Thimmesh, Roman Catholic (St. John's Abbey); and Fred Ehle, Christian Adventist (Gordon Divinity School). Together with Mr. Wright, these winners will visit the Middle East in August.

Early in April, Dr. J. Benjamin Schmoker, secretary-treasurer of the National Association of Foreign Student Advisors, approached the American Friends of the Middle East with a suggestion that assistance should be given foreign student advisors in visiting the area. After consideration of the request, AFME decided to award a traveling fellowship to the foreign student advisor selected as most deserving of the award by a joint committee of NAFSA and AFME. Selected for this honor was Robert Blair, student advisor at the University of Denver, who will leave this country for a journey through the Middle East in November. This project has been widely approved by foreign student advisors and has resulted in much favorable publicity for AFME.

Mr. Engert and Miss Williams attended the NAFSA National Convention at East Lansing, Michigan, in April 1952, as representatives of American Friends of the Middle East, which applied for and was admitted to membership in the association.

In June 1952, AFME became so concerned about the serious situation confronting Iranian students in this country as a result of the financial crisis in Iran that it has asked Professor Charles Hulac of Lafayette University, a specialist on Iran and the advisor to recent Iranian student conferences, to go to Iran to study the situation. While the time of departure and details of this trip have not yet been fully completed it is anticipated that Professor Hulac will undertake this mission for AFME in early fall of 1952.

It is felt too that as a result of contacts with Professor Hulac and the contacts made by Mr. Wright who attended the recent Iranian student conference as an observer that a closer relationship between AFME and the Iranian students will be worked out in the future.

Plans are under-way for aiding new students in their initial orientation to America upon arrival in New York. In conference with Dr. Schmoker, General Secretary, Committee on Friendly Rela-

tions, we have arranged for that committee to act as our agent in meeting students from the Middle East. Through arrangements already made, we will cooperate with the Greater New York Council for Foreign Students in their general orientation program, supplementing it with a specific program of friendly and personalized helpfulness for Middle East students which from testimony of the students themselves, is what they most need and most often miss.

FINANCES

Equally as important as developing the program and securing the staff has been the development of necessary financial support. Before the program was worked out, interested foundations and some generous friends subscribed enough to assure a minimum program for the organization. However, it was realized from the beginning that it would be necessary to secure large additional amounts if American Friends of the Middle East were to have sufficient funds to meet the needs in the field. This year a friend of Miss Thompson, who has requested that he remain anonymous, contributed an initial gift of \$25,000 and pledged another \$25,000 contingent upon the organization's ability to raise that amount from other sources. Our Secretary-Treasurer, Cornelius Van H. Engert, more than met the challenge and almost single-handedly raised among his friends the \$25,000 required. As delighted as we are at the large donations which have been made by a few individuals, the Board of Directors feel that the success of AFME depends on winning the support of thousands of small contributors whose gifts will be tokens of their interest and whose membership will be translated into service to the organization and the cause it represents.

A full-page advertisement in the *New York Times* and *Herald Tribune* on June 27, 1951, brought hundreds of responses, together with contributions ranging from one dollar to one thousand dollars. Fortunately, we have obtained a ruling from the U. S. Treasury Department that contributions and donations to American Friends of the Middle East, Inc., are deductible as exemptions in Federal income tax returns. We hope that all members and well-wishers will continue to take the fullest advantage of this privilege and become active recruiters of new members for the organization.

We believe that, under the direction of Dr. John H. Shope, the 1953 membership campaign will witness a large increase in AFME's membership. What we must do is to hold the interest of the members we have and with their help secure many more new members.

OFFICES

We are very proud of both our New York and our Chicago offices. While in no sense elaborate, the taste with which Mrs. Whelen in New York and Mrs. Sellers in Chicago have decorated and furnished the offices make them pleasant gathering places for both Middle Easterners and American friends of the Middle East. In New York each room is being decorated to represent the art and culture of a given area of the Middle East, the idea being that the decorations in the room will be drawn from the county designated. Already a number of gifts of pictures and other objects from governments and individuals indicate that the rooms will be most interestingly decorated. There is already evidence of keen competition among the countries concerned to see that the room in which each is represented typifies the best in the life of their nation.

AND, FINALLY

It should be remembered that we are still just at the beginning of our activities. We are humbly thankful that much has been accomplished in the five months since our program was initiated. We believe that the months ahead will see much greater accomplishments. In overcoming the difficulties facing any new organization and in meeting the need immediately to produce a successful program as a means of winning financial support, AFME has functioned these first months under considerable pressure. The way every member of our staff has undertaken to do the job that had to be done has been a remarkable demonstration of both their sincerity of purpose and high caliber. Our major emphasis in the coming months inevitably will center in the process of rounding out our program, smoothing out our organization and settling down to the job that is ahead of us. To do this job will require the active interest and hard work, not only of the staff of our New York and Chicago offices, but of every member in the American Friends of the Middle East.

Respectfully submitted,

GARLAND EVANS HOPKINS,
Executive Vice President

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