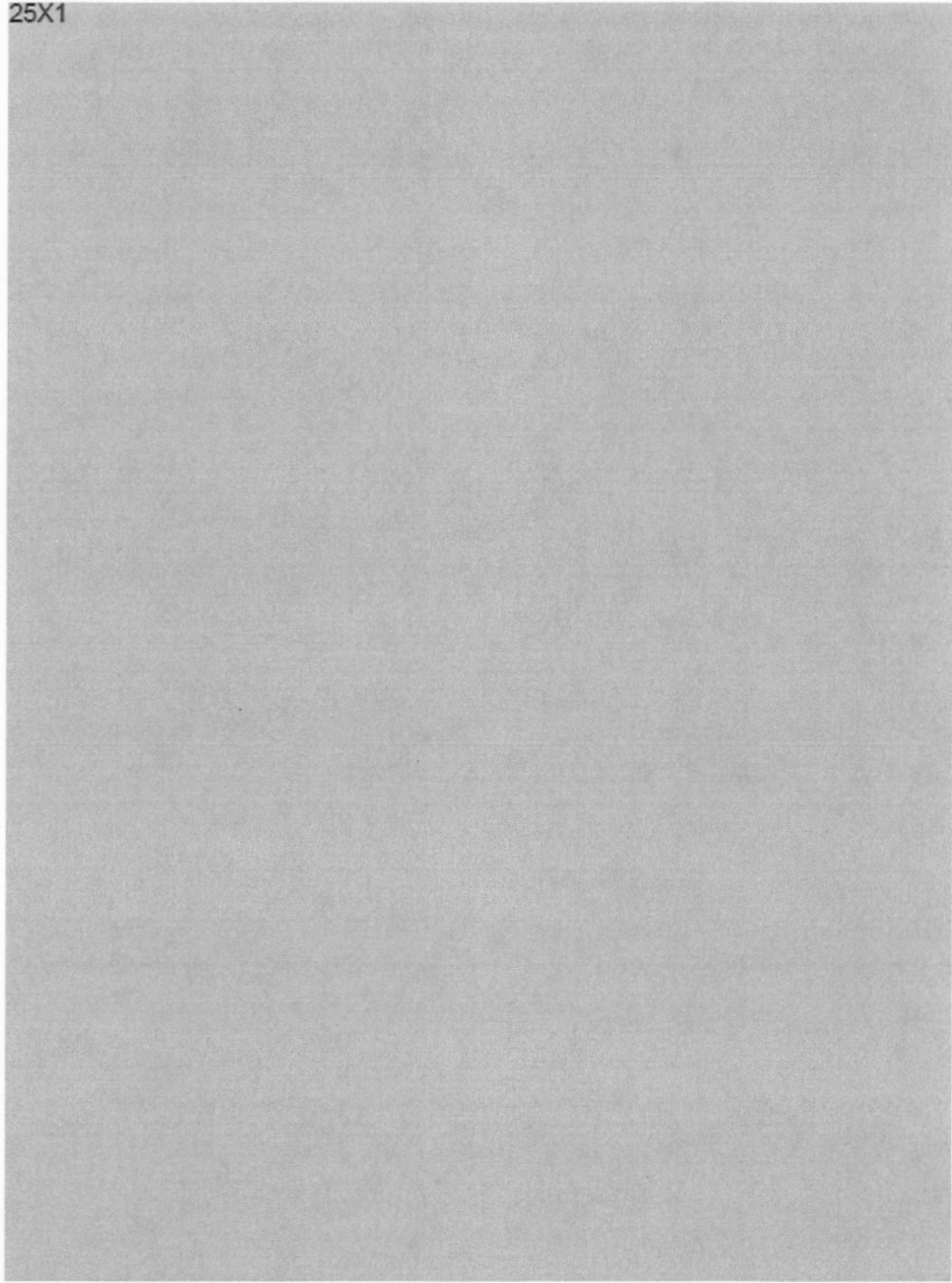


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An even more dangerous problem, 25x1  
was Hopkins's eagerness to comment on the Arab-Israeli dispute. His statements typically decried the favoritism that he perceived in media treatment of Israel, while applying a double standard of his own. For instance, Hopkins applauded the Department of State's proposal to sell arms to Iraq in 1955; the following year he opposed an arms sale to Israel. An admirer of Egyptian strongman Gamal Abdel Nasser, Hopkins

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Egypt's strongman Gamel Abdel Nasser. (U) ©

also told the *New York Times* that it was cynical to criticize Nasser's purchase of Eastern-Bloc weapons while ignoring Israel's alleged shopping behind the Iron Curtain. Inevitably, AFME's own statements became difficult to distinguish from the personal views of its executive vice president.<sup>56</sup> (U)

<sup>56</sup>I.L. Kenen, "Arab Propaganda: Line and Apparatus," *Near East Report*, October 1964, pp. 15-19. "US Unit Aiding Kibya," *New York Times*, 25 February 1954, p. 8. (U)

The last straw came in May 1956. Responding to an attack on the Dearborn Foundation by the newspaper *Israel Speaks*, Hopkins wrote a letter to AFME's [REDACTED] National Council that served only to draw attention to the criticism and render Dearborn more vulnerable to scrutiny. Even though Dearborn's directors had recently decided to end their relationship with AFME, Hopkins' indiscretion angered them and heightened their concerns. 25X1

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The 1956 Suez crisis taxed Hopkins's limited self-restraint. Growing tension between Israel and its neighbors had prompted him to press the board of directors 25X1 to let AFME take a public stand on the dispute. 25X1 the board feared the potential repercussions of such a declaration. Nevertheless, early in 1956 they approved the publication of a conspicuous advertisement in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* that accused Israel of seeking American arms to preserve its military superiority and urged citizens to tell their elected officials not to take sides in the region's conflict (Aramco paid for the ad). Hopkins made the same points in a mailing sent under AFME's letterhead [REDACTED] to members of Congress.<sup>39</sup> He acted on his own again the following September, ignoring the board's wish that he keep silent on aspects of US policy and calling Washington's pullout from the Aswan High Dam project "a mistake

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equaling, if not surpassing, the decision to support the partition of Palestine." If not for America's short-sighted policies, Hopkins declared to an audience at AFME's Middle East House, Nasser and most Arabs "might now be full partners with the West in the fight to save the world from Communist domination."<sup>60</sup> (S)

Not until Israel attacked Egypt in October 1956 did AFME's board formally support Hopkins; a statement signed by Dorothy Thompson and issued in the name of the directors denounced the invasion and urged the Eisenhower administration to fulfill its "clear duty" and "do everything in its power to support" Nasser's Egypt.<sup>61</sup> Thompson soon left on a tour of the Middle East that only did more harm to AFME's reputation in the United States. She interviewed Nasser and pronounced him the handsomest man she had ever met, then dropped in on the Saudi royal family for a few days. Her critics at home took notice.<sup>62</sup> (S)

Hopkins finally left his post at the end of the year. Finding a successor proved difficult.<sup>63</sup> In December 1956, Dorothy Thompson, with her health declining and her editors at Bell Syndicate pushing her to stop being a "propagandist for the Arabs," decided to resign as well.<sup>64</sup> Now AFME also needed a new president. [REDACTED] the board retained continuity by electing director Harold Minor chairman of the board in April 1957. Minor, formerly the US Ambassador in Beirut, also served as acting president while he led a frustrating search for someone to take the latter position.<sup>65</sup> [REDACTED] Charles Hulac stepped in as executive secretary (later executive director), doing Hopkins' old job without holding the same title.<sup>66</sup> Hopkins himself kept a loose connection to AFME for another year, continuing to serve on its board of directors. In addition, as

<sup>60</sup>"US Snub to Egypt Decried as Error," *New York Times*, 27 September 1956, p. 11; 25X1

<sup>61</sup>"Israel Called Violator," *New York Times*, 1 November 1956, p. 11. (U)

<sup>62</sup>Sanders, *Dorothy Thompson*, p. 340. Kurth, *American Cassandra*, p. 446. (U)

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<sup>63</sup>Kurth, *American Cassandra*, pp. 422, 446, 545. (U)

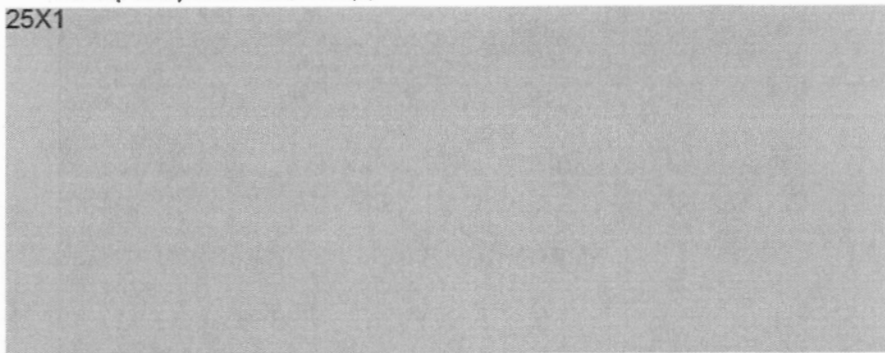
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*Dorothy Thompson in Cairo, 1952. (U)*

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**The Board's Growing Power (U)**

With Hopkins and Thompson gone, 25X1

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25X1 The Suez crisis and the 1956 war made the United States suddenly and somewhat unexpectedly an even-more-important actor in the Middle East's complex, hair-trigger diplomacy. With no imperial past of its own in the region and comparatively few business and cultural ties, Washington needed to improve its access and influence in the Arab world. 25x1

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Indeed, at that time, AFME was perhaps the only American regional organization with broad contacts and a fair reputation among Muslims.

(S)

The lack of an alternative for reaching beyond the usual contacts of American diplomats and attaches helped AFME to survive bureaucratic scrutiny in Washington. Despite its modest achievements as a political action tool and cover mechanism, the project weathered all criticism and grew rapidly in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Between 1957 and 1960, it opened five new foreign offices, and its budget allotment almost doubled—to slightly over \$1 million.<sup>10</sup> In addition, [REDACTED]

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<sup>10</sup>AFME's 1959-60 Annual Report lists overseas offices in Cairo (opened 1956), Amman, East Jerusalem, Tehran (1953), Baghdad (1955), Damascus (1954), Lahore (moved from Karachi and originally opened in 1957), and Tunis. (U)

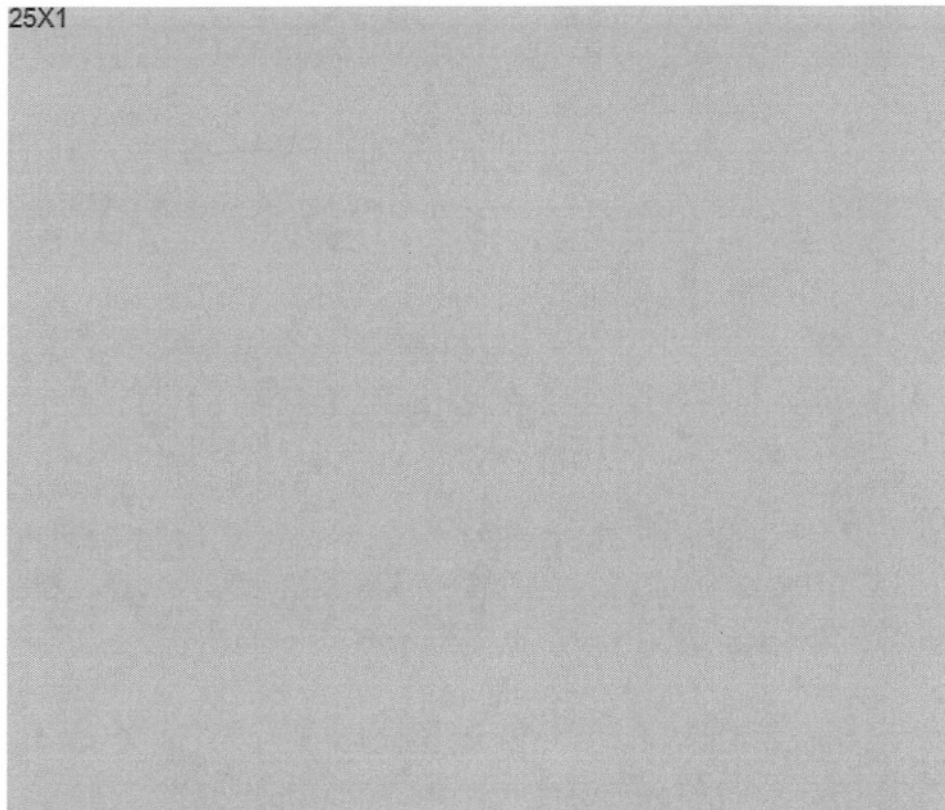


**Operational Accomplishments (U)**

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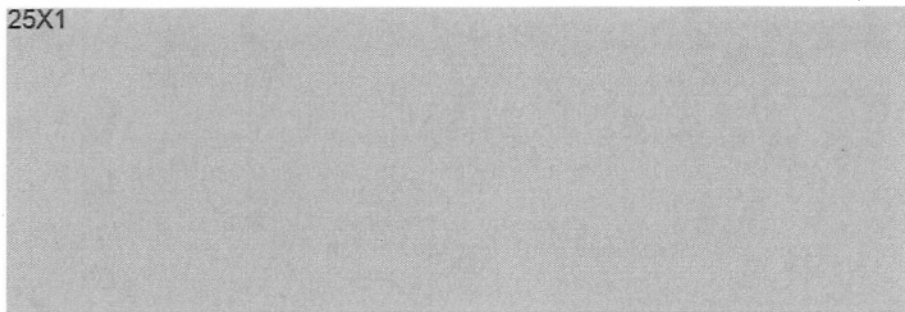


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AFME's board remained remarkably stable in its membership and outlook; several directors joined at the organization's founding and stayed on all the way to the end of the CIA-AFME relationship 16 years later. New members replacing those who had died or resigned tended to share

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their predecessors' views.<sup>73</sup> Kermit Roosevelt, for example, became a director after he resigned from the CIA in 1957. <sup>25X1</sup>

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Chairman Harold Minor tried, without much success, to improve AFME's reputation by steering the organization toward cultural activities and away from its earlier focus on the Arab-Israeli dispute. Nevertheless, public comments by AFME's directors occasionally gave new ammunition to the organization's critics. Garland Hopkins's departure <sup>25X1</sup> but did not end the controversy over AFME's bias against Israel. In 1958, the *Jewish Advocate* labeled AFME "the most extensive pro-Arab propaganda front in America."<sup>74</sup> Minor, like Hopkins before him, believed that Arab nationalism was a product of the West's mistakes and broken promises, among them "the creation of Israel and the exaggerated support of that state." America's own arrogance, Minor explained, had "virtually lost the heart and mind of Asia."<sup>75</sup> <sup>(S)</sup>

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<sup>73</sup>In mid-1967 AFME's Board of Directors comprised Earl Bunting (chairman), Harold B. Minor, Edward L. R. Elson, Elmer Berger, Alford Carleton, Cornelius Van H. Engert, Charles R. Hulac, Edward W. Overton, Jr., and Kermit Roosevelt. Of these nine men, seven had been directors for at least eight years. Roosevelt, Engert, and Berger had been associated with the project from its beginnings in 1951. (U)

<sup>74</sup>Milton Friedman, "Protestant Church Groups Pro-Arab," *Jewish Advocate*, February 1958. <sup>25X1</sup>

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<sup>75</sup>Harold B. Minor, letter to the editor, *New York Times*, 13 February 1958, p. 28. Minor explained to G. Lewis Jones, Assistant Secretary of State for the Near East and South Asia, that the early AFME had performed a useful service in making Americans aware of the Arab side of the Palestine dispute, but he then promised that the organization would try to refrain from future commentary on the conflict. Harold B. Minor, "HBM's Conversation with G. Lewis Jones, Assistant Secretary of State for the Near East and South Asia," 19 August 1959, <sup>25X1</sup>

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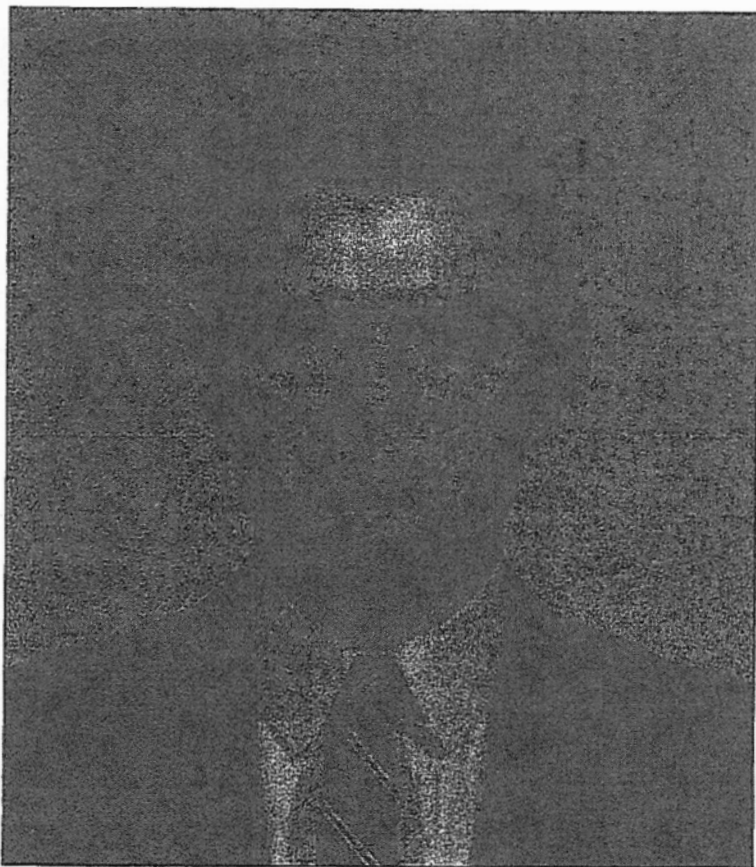
25X1 Edward W. Overton,<sup>31</sup> 25X1  
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25X1 improved AFME's morale 25X1  
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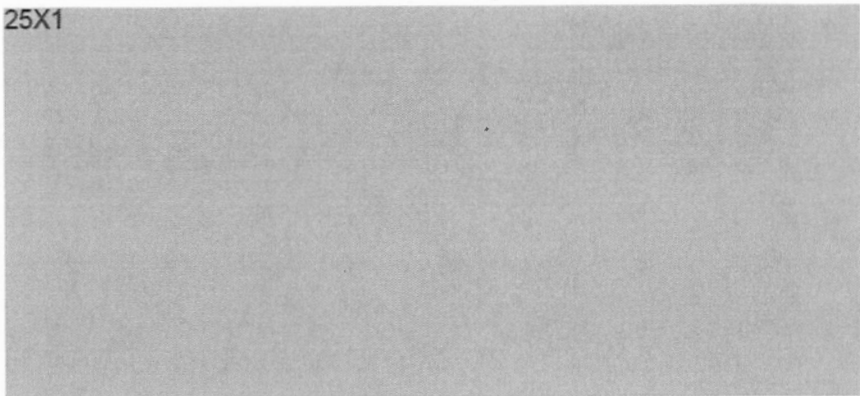
"Overton carefully distinguished Judaism from "the tremendous world-wide pressures that are applied by international Zionism in favor of the political interests of the State of Israel." Noting that Zionism was opposed by more than a few practicing Jews—some of whom served on AFME's Board—Overton also worried that too few American Jews had pondered their own "relationship" to the political aspirations of Zionism. The issue, he suggested, had become needlessly polarizing, with Zionists playing on the mixed emotions of their co-religionists, and Arabs reactive to Zionism by scapegoating all Jews. 25X1

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*James Critchfield, chief of CIA's Near East division: (6)*

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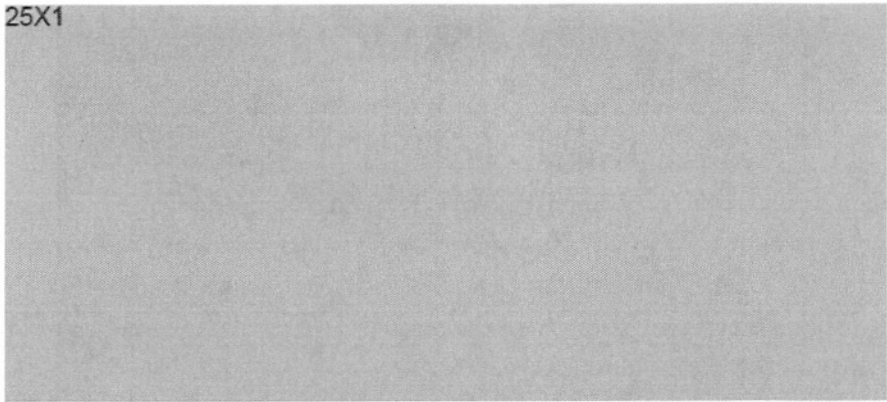
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*Alford Carleton, AFME's chairman of the board. (U)*

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