

effect on other governments. It is U.S. practice to inform governments planning to establish missions in Israel of our position vis-à-vis Jerusalem and our determination to maintain our own offices in Tel Aviv.

Mr. Reid: I talked today to Ambassador Lawson who said that it was his practice to avoid official functions and, when obliged to go to Jerusalem, to attempt to see officials in their homes rather than in government buildings. He told me, however, that appearances at non-government functions in Jerusalem could be recorded as our policy.

Mr. Rountree: It is important to avoid actions in Jerusalem that will attract conspicuous public attention or publicity.

#### *Israel Defense Forces and Military Aid to Israel*

Mr. Rountree: The personal position of the Ambassador is very important regarding the above. The IDF is regarded with fear and respect and its activities or acquisition of new weapons are matters of great sensitivity to the Arabs. Here too public statements or appearances related to the armed forces should be scrupulously avoided.

Mr. Reid: How about visits to IDF establishments?

Mr. Rountree: Such should be avoided as well as any activity that can be interpreted as support or sympathetic interest in the IDF.

We are opposed as a matter of policy to supplying most categories of military equipment to Israel. Such assistance as we give them is on a reimbursable basis. This represents no hardship for the Israelis because they have traditional sources of supply from whom they obtain their major requirements.

#### *Eilat and the Straits of Tiran*

Mr. Rountree: U.S. supports Israel's use for maritime purposes of the Gulf of Aqaba and as expressed in our Memorandum of February 11, 1957,<sup>3</sup> support for Israel's peaceful transit of the Straits of Tiran. It is a subject of some sensitivity, however, in our relations with Saudi Arabia and appearances in Eilat should be avoided on occasions related to Israel's efforts to expand traffic via that route.

#### *Relations with Asia-Africa*

Mr. Reid: How do we feel about Israel's efforts to cultivate economic and political ties with Afro-Asian countries?

Mr. Rountree: We regard this enterprise with favor. We are pleased that Israel is able to assist newly emergent nations by supplying them with technical guidance. However, we have declined sugges-

<sup>3</sup> *Foreign Relations, 1955-1957*, vol. xvii, pp. 132-134