

50. Editorial Note

On September 20, 1962, Israeli Acting Foreign Minister Abba Eban informed Ambassador Barbour of reactions to the Johnson Plan expressed at a meeting of the Israeli Cabinet on September 16. The consensus of the meeting, according to Eban, was that Johnson's plan was the worst of all plans dealing with the refugee question and gave the greatest support to repatriation. Eban also told Barbour that the plan lacked integrity and realism, because it offered contradictory things to each side, that is, free choice to Arabs and final say on acceptance to Israel. (Telegram 304 from Tel Aviv, September 21; Department of State, Central Files, 325.84/9-2162)

During the evening of September 20 in New York, Feldman met for dinner at the apartment of Abraham Feinberg, Chairman of the Bonds for Israel Committee in the United States, with Israeli Foreign Minister Meir, Ambassador Harman, and Philip Klutznick of the U.S. Delegation to the United Nations. Meir informed the gathering of Israel's unalterable opposition to the Johnson Plan, which she said challenged Israel's sovereignty and had a pro-Arab bias. She declared the plan to be non-negotiable. According to Feldman's account of the meeting, he urged her to discuss Israel's specific differences over the plan with Johnson. (Memorandum of conversation, September 20; *ibid.*, 325.84/2062)

During the afternoon of September 21 in New York, Foreign Minister Meir met with Joseph Johnson to deliver Israel's response to his proposals. Among other points, she said that the plan was shocking to Israel and that its whole basis was unacceptable. The U.S. Mission in New York transmitted an account of this conversation to the Department of State in telegram 857, September 21. (*Ibid.*, 325.84/9-2162) See the Supplement, the compilation on the Arab-Israeli dispute.

Later that day in Washington, Ambassador Harman officially informed Talbot that Meir had told Johnson that his proposals, given to Israel on August 31, were not negotiable. According to a memorandum recording the exchange with Harmon, "The Ambassador said he had also been asked to say that:

"1. The nature of Dr. Johnson's proposals came as a complete surprise since they were not compatible with the talks which took place between Dr. Johnson and Israel in the past.

"2. Dr. Johnson's proposals are incompatible, also, with past discussions between the United States and Israeli governments.

"3. In the light of the foregoing and U.S. assurances on this issue, Israel strongly hopes that the United States, as a PCC member, will reject the Johnson proposals, take all necessary steps to PCC rejection and preclude the PCC's giving further currency or circulation to them." (Memorandum, September 21, attached to memorandum from Talbot to Rusk, September 20; Department of State, Central Files, 325.84/9-2062)