

Mr. Byroade suggested that Syria might be more important now than heretofore in the Arab world, and inferred that Israel might profitably start peace feelers with Syria. Mr. Sharett replied that he attached importance to what Mr. Byroade said and that Israel would investigate and perhaps have an answer in the near future.

With regard to incidents along Israel's borders, Mr. Byroade said that he believed Israel's policy of retaliation was self-defeating, since it causes the Army to acquire an attitude of taking several lives for one. Mr. Sharett said that that was a situation common to all countries but that he personally had always counseled restraint. Mr. Byroade said he saw no evidence that any Arab state was doing anything to renew the war with Israel. Mr. Sharett asked whether Mr. Byroade had spoken to Prime Minister Ben-Gurion along these lines. Mr. Byroade said that he had and had also spoken of the future, particularly the effect on youth of the Iron Curtain atmosphere which prevails along Israel's borders. Mr. Sharett said he had spent two years of his life in an Arab village and he not only likes them but he knows them well. He regretted the present lack of normal relations with the Arab states.

Mr. Byroade said he enjoyed talking with Mr. Sharett and hoped that before Mr. Sharett returned to Israel he would have another opportunity to see him at a time when he was somewhat less occupied than at the moment.

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### No. 451

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*The Ambassador in Israel (Davis) to the Department of State*<sup>1</sup>

SECRET PRIORITY

TEL AVIV, June 27, 1952—8 p. m.

1426. Dept pass Army. In conv today Col Taxis expressed conviction real danger exists outbreak hostilities between Syria and Israel if latter resumes work on PLDC land east of Jordan and south of Lake Huleh without prior understanding with Syria (Embtel 1393).<sup>2</sup> He considers it most important mtg take place between parties soonest and that Israel refrain from further work east of Jordan pending outcome of conf. Altho Eytan confirms intention Israel Govt participate in meeting irrespective rank of reps, I propose because of imminence of danger to discuss matter with PriMin tomorrow, expressing gratification over Israel decision not permit minor considerations prevent mtg with Syrian reps, and

<sup>1</sup> Repeated to Jerusalem and Damascus (for Taxis).

<sup>2</sup> Document 448.