

raeli Government formula designed to enable governments to proceed with discussion Syrian proposal.

By way of background he explained that in saying lands given in compensation need not lie within DZ, Israel left open to discussion area suggested by Syria but provided a much more palatable formulation for domestic political purposes. He stated this formulation had further advantage avoiding mention name of area (Derbashiya) which has no precise limitations. He assured me it is Israeli Government intent to try to reach agreement within framework present offer and reply. He stated that although Israel would much prefer to pay compensation in money for the property of Arabs wishing to abandon their property on Israel side of demarcation line, letter clearly indicates readiness to negotiate compensation in form of lands outside demilitarization zones.

DAVIS

No. 575

683.84A/2-2753: Telegram

*The Ambassador in Israel (Davis) to the Department of State*¹

SECRET PRIORITY TEL AVIV, February 27, 1953—6 p. m.

1380. Embtel 1370.² Embassy informed by Consulate General Jerusalem that true text of letter sent from Lt. Col. Gaon to Vigier of UNTSO reads as follows:

"In view of the fact that it has been agreed to confine the present Israeli-Syrian talks to changes of the demarcation line within the demilitarized zones only, the Israeli delegation is expecting to be notified of a date, settled by you, for the resumption of the discussions.

"I have also been authorized to state that whenever an inhabitant of the demilitarized zone elects to leave his present abode because of changes effected in this zone, he shall be suitably compensated. If this compensation is made in form of lands, such lands need not necessarily lie within the demilitarized zone."³

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¹ Repeated to Damascus, Jerusalem, London, Paris, and Rome.

² *Supra*.

³ In telegram 1383, Feb. 27, Ambassador Davis stated that Sharett reported that Vigier had informed an Israeli government representative that Syria was prepared to resume negotiations on the basis of the Gaon letter quoted in telegram 1380. (683.84A/2-2753)

Ambassador Moos reported from Damascus on Feb. 28 that the U.N. Truce Supervision Organization stated that the initial Syrian reaction to the Israeli reply was favorable. (Telegram 574; 683.84A/2-2853)