

retary Byroade was determined to pursue these efforts to a successful conclusion.²

The Syrian Ambassador stated that he appreciated the position of the United States Government in this problem and was promised the earliest possible official reply to his representations.

² The following notation in the Secretary's handwriting appears in the margin of the source text opposite this paragraph: "OK J[ohn] F[oster] D[ulles]."

No. 592

974.5901/4-853

Memorandum of Conversation by the Officer in Charge of Palestine-Israel-Jordan Affairs (Waller)

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] April 8, 1953.

Subject: 1. Future status of the Suez Canal
 2. Military aid to Israel
 3. Prospects for Peace in the Near East
 4. Transfer of Israel Foreign Ministry to Jerusalem

Participants: NEA—Mr. Byroade
 Israel Foreign Minister Moshe Sharett
 Israel Ambassador Abba Eban
 NE—Mr. Waller

After an exchange of courtesies Foreign Minister Sharett said that his Government would shortly send to the Department a written communication regarding the Suez Canal problem which would make two main points. These would concern Israel's interest in (1) the Suez Canal as an international waterway and (2) defense arrangements. The Foreign Minister said that Israel is an interested party since any changes in the present status of the Canal would directly affect Israel. He pointed out that it is one thing to have an important Western power exercising a moderating influence on Egypt's control in the Canal Zone but quite another matter to give the Egyptians control without any precautionary measures being taken to satisfy the rights of other states. He said that the removal of Egyptian restrictions and prohibitions on Canal traffic to and from Israel is no longer considered by the Israel Government as an act of grace on the part of Egypt but a matter of right.

Mr. Byroade said that on this matter he could reassure the Foreign Minister because we also are of the opinion that the restrictions and prohibitions should be removed. He said that for us the Suez question is one of defense of the area and of the assurance to