

No. 788

684A.85/4-954

Memorandum by the Secretary of State to the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Affairs (Byroade)

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] April 10, 1954.

Re: The Attached Memorandum on Representation to Israel ¹

I am not following the recommendations you make at the present time because I feel that to read the riot act to the Israeli Ambassador at this stage would produce no useful results. I agree with your premise that the Israelis have embarked on a deliberate policy of making things worse in the hope that by so doing they may force us to force peace on the Arabs. But until we are in a position of offering them some better alternative than that, I do not feel that merely to upbraid them is going to be very productive. We may and should protest. But not deliver any ultimatum.

The basic fact of the matter is that the Arabs do not want peace and will not negotiate in any way for any sort of a settlement, even when obligated by the Armistice. The only argument which we have to make when we ask the Israelis to remain calm and peaceful is that in some way which has never been clear to me we may in the course of a few years win sufficient confidence from the Arabs to persuade them to negotiate for peace. I can scarcely blame the Israeli for thinking this is wishful thinking.

I feel that it is now essential for us to develop some new approach in this area. I am afraid that this is not a matter which I can give much personal attention to until after I have returned from Geneva, but I think it is a matter which should be given urgent attention by our Policy Planning Staff and very possibly by the NSC itself, and there should be private talks with the UK and perhaps France.

Rod O'Connor tells me that Churchill has sent Sharett a personal message urging upon him restraint and asking that they rejoin the Mixed Armistice Commission. I would have no objection to having a similar message sent from me, or possibly even from the

¹ Attached to the source text is a memorandum by Jernegan to Dulles, dated Apr. 9 (684A.86/4-954), which stated that "in accordance with your instructions, there is attached a note to Israel embodying the points covered in Mr. Byroade's memorandum of Apr. 7, 1954, Subject: Representation to Israel on Arab-Israel Border Incidents. The note expresses grave concern over the deterioration of the Arab-Israel border situation, and counsels Israel to re-evaluate her present policies, abandon resort to retaliation, and cooperate with the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization." Jernegan recommended that Secretary Dulles sign the accompanying draft first-person note to Ambassador Eban. The draft note is not printed.