

No. 835

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*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Deputy Director of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs (Dorsey)*¹

CONFIDENTIAL

[WASHINGTON,] June 17, 1954.

Subject: (1) Statements of U.S. Policy in the Near East, (2) The Tripartite Declaration, and (3) Israeli Purchase of Jets

Participants: Mr. Abba Eban, Ambassador of Israel
Mr. Reuven Shiloah, Minister of Israel
Mr. Meier Sherman, Director, Israel Government Economic Services in U.S.
NEA—Mr. Byroade
NE—Mr. Dorsey

I. Following his request that the present rate of aid be maintained during F. Y. 1955, Ambassador Eban asked that Mr. Byroade consider the grave implications of repeated statements to the effect that population pressures will bring about an expansion of Israeli territory. He said that it has been said that responsible Israeli leaders claim the population should increase to four million within the next several years. Although Mr. Byroade in his Philadelphia speech had mentioned Arab fears of an expansion of Israeli territory, he had also said that in his opinion this fear was not realistic. Too many others, he added, emphasized the Arab fears without Mr. Byroade's important qualification and referred specifically to Mr. Gardiner's testimony before the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

Ambassador Eban emphasized that these official statements implied a lack of trust in Israel's commitment to the "boundaries" set forth in the Armistice Agreement. This lack of trust is grotesque, he said, when Israel is willing to sign a peace treaty tomorrow and the Arabs are not. They, on the contrary, have a serious desire to reduce the size of Israel. The Ambassador went on to say that the claim that Israel cannot expand to two or three million persons within its present territory shows a lack of knowledge of the rudimentaries of economics. The extensive, empty regions of the country and potential greater per capita production make practical Israel's ability to support the larger population. Israel, after all, is in no way as densely populated as Denmark and Belgium. "To invite the Arabs to fear Israel is to invite them to hate Israel," he said.

¹ Drafted also by Assistant Secretary Byroade.