

al of the Arab nations, she would unquestionably choose the latter. However, he felt that there was room for further discussion on an interpretation of the Convention of 1888 and of the Egyptian Armistice Agreement with Israel. He believed that Egypt had good grounds for asserting that Israel flag vessels could not enter her territorial waters. They might carry cargoes of explosives or otherwise endanger Egypt's security. If Egypt were to search such vessels, this would also be protested as interference. How, therefore, was Egypt to protect herself except by exclusion? He wanted my views regarding cargoes of weapons and munitions.

I replied that we were now getting into technicalities which I would have to investigate further before I could reply. However, I wished to reassert my belief that the United States would have to continue its strong stand for freedom of transit if the *Bat Galim* case became an issue of principle in the Security Council. We would not feel that because Egypt disliked the flag a vessel was flying, she was entitled to forbid her to transit.

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The President's Special Representative (Johnston) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Affairs (Byroade)

SECRET

WASHINGTON, October 15, 1954.

DEAR MR. BYROADE: Barring unforeseen developments, I am planning to resume negotiations on the Jordan Valley project in the Near East in January and February.

In doing so, it will be essential for me to know how far I may go in making commitments to the four interested states with respect to possible U.S. aid for other development projects outside of the Jordan Valley program itself.

As you will recall, we have on several occasions agreed that in the final stage of negotiation, the persuasive effect of an offer to assist in certain undertakings, not necessarily related to the Jordan Valley, might be decisive.

To be in a position to make any such offer, however, I shall need firm prior assurances of the assent and support of the Executive Branch, not only in terms of policy but in terms of the amounts which might be involved.

In other words, assuming that achievement of our political objectives is sufficiently important to warrant some measure of addition-