

STATE DEPARTMENT (Continued)

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- A. Israeli Developments, Views of Congressman Ogden Reid on [without US reassurances, including military aid, Israel may strike against Arab diversion projects, which would deprive Israel of 200 million cubic meters of water and create salinity problems in Tiberias. Israel would like to acquire US Phantom aircraft; US stresses that it cannot support Israel while it engages in border operations. US relations with Egypt are described as hanging "by a spider web"]. Memorandum of Conversation [Dean Rusk, Secy of State; Ogden Reid, Rep., 26th District, NY; other US officials]. May 25, 1965. 3 p. SECRET. LIMIT DISTRIBUTION. SANITIZED copy. Released Jan. 20, 1978. Johnson Library, NSF, Countries, Israel, Vol. 4.
- B. Israel-Jordan [investigation of explosion alleged by Israel to have been set by Jordan; other cross-border raids]. Am Con Gen Jerusalem, Telegram No. 337, to Secy of State; No. 276, to Am Emb Tel Aviv; No. 156, to Am Emb Beirut, et al. May 28, 1965. 3 p. CONFIDENTIAL. Declassified Dec. 30, 1977. Johnson Library, NSF, Countries, Israel, Vol. 4.
- C. Israeli Military Raids on Jordan [Israel holds that raids were not attacks on Jordan but on Fatah bases; raids were in response to Fatah attacks on Israeli civilian installations. The US urges that Israel do everything possible to restore calm and considers that Jordan cannot be held responsible for the activities of individuals within its borders]. Memorandum of Conversation [Avraham Harman, Amb. to US, Israel; Dean Rusk, Secy of State, US; other US and Israeli officials]. May 28, 1965. 2 p. CONFIDENTIAL. Declassified Jan. 20, 1978. Johnson Library, NSF, Countries, Israel, Vol. 4.
- D. Israeli-Jordanian Border Incidents [discussion between Foreign Min. Golda Meir and US Amb. Barbour on Israeli raid on Jordan, US public statement deploring Israeli action, Israeli precautions against civilian casualties, and El Fatah acts of sabotage]. Am Emb Tel Aviv, Telegram No. 1552. May 30, 1965. 3 p. CONFIDENTIAL. Declassified Jan. 20, 1978. Johnson Library, NSF, Countries, Israel, Vol. 4.
- E. [Israel. Tel Aviv's rationale for raids into Jordan is a desire to pressure Jordanian officials into preventing Fatah raids and to reassure the Israeli populace; Israel is confident that raids on Fatah bases will not affect Hussein's position, US policy is that raids play into the hands of the Fatah, which desires to foment armed conflict between Israel and neighbors, increases sympathy of villagers for Fatah objectives, and increases pressure on Jordan for retaliation. The question of Israeli security has become a bitter campaign issue between Eshkol and Ben Gurion.] Am Emb Tel Aviv, Telegram No. 242. Sept. 8, 1965. 3 p. SECRET. EX DIS. SANITIZED copy. Released Jan. 20, 1978. Johnson Library, NSF, Countries, Israel, Vol. 4.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE FILES
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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Memorandum of Conversation (UNCLEARED)
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DATE: May 25, 1965

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SUBJECT: Views of Congressman Ogden Reid on Israeli Developments

PARTICIPANTS: The Secretary
Mr. Ogden Reid, Representative (R), 26th District, New York
H - Ambassador MacArthur, II
NEA; NE - Rodger P. Davies

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Congressman Reid had visited Israel May 6 to 11 and was anxious to impart his concern about recent developments in the area to the Secretary and, if the Secretary thought useful, to the President.

The thrust of Mr. Reid's presentation was that a political fight of the first order was shaping up in Israel in the context of which important foreign policy decisions will be made. In the absence of substantial reassurances from the United States, including provision of military equipment, chances for an Israeli strike against the Arab diversion projects were enhanced.

Mr. Reid said Prime Minister Eshkol will welcome efforts by the United States to "reinforce previous assurances" that the Arab projects will not damage Israel's interests or that we will see that they do not do so. The efforts of President DeGaulle also have been welcomed. In the absence of some concrete reassurance, he thought Israel will be faced with decision sooner rather than later. The incidents of March 17 and May 13 in which Israel struck at Syrian activities seemed to set the pattern. Ben-Gurion, Eshkol, Peres and Mrs. Mair all indicated that action was possible within the year. They would not wait for actual diversion but would move when they concluded the Arabs could successfully divert sufficient water to be harmful. Mr. Reid said he had no basis on which to respond to the Secretary's query as to what support Israel believed she could count on if she attacked the Arabs.

Mr. Reid noted that the Lebanese had been working within 200 meters of the Israeli frontier and the Syrians 300 meters away when he visited Tel al-Qadi. He said the diversion project would deprive Israel of over 200 million cubic meters of water and create acute salinity problems in Tiberias where the water

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already had a salt content of around 300 parts per million. In answer to the Secretary's question, the Congressman said he thought the Israelis would not object to the Arabs taking a reasonable amount of water within the frame of the Unified Plan. If a massive diversion directed to depriving Israel of its share of water gets under way, the Israelis would move. They would object particularly to additional diversions in Lebanon when the Litani was wasting to the sea. This would be spite rather than development. The Israelis also were concerned at any "link-up" between the Lebanese and Syrian projects.

Mr. Davies noted that if the Arabs could do all they claimed, which was doubtful, something over 200 mcms could be diverted north of Israel's border. Israel, however, would then not have to deliver 100 mcms to the lower Jordan so the net loss would be closer to 100 mcms, roughly 5% of Israel's potential water resources. We understood from Mr. Wiener, Israel's water expert, that Israel's plans for capping the salt springs in and around Tiberias had been successful and promised to continue to be; thus the salinity problem would be substantially lower than alleged by the Foreign Ministry. He noted the source of this information must be protected.

Mr. Reid reiterated that at a certain point, unless reassurances were forthcoming, the Israelis would look to their own resources to protect what they deem a vital interest. He asked for the Secretary's estimate of what the United States could do.

The Secretary said we can continue to talk quietly with Israel's neighbors. It will not be helpful to Israel if this becomes known publicly. If the Arabs slow down on the project, it will be for Arab reasons, such as a weakening of solidarity among the states. We can work quietly with Jordan and Lebanon to encourage moderation. However, we must concentrate on Israel's share of water under the UDP and not bother about what happens to the Arab share.

In the military field, Mr. Reid said the Israelis were eager to acquire American "Phantom" supersonic aircraft. He thought the visit of IDF Air Force Chief Ezra Weizmann to the Sixth Fleet had been useful. Weizmann was eager to arrange briefings of IDF pilots by USAF pilots with Viet-Nam experience.

The Secretary noted that this would not be useful since our pilots were getting little if any interceptor experience.

Mr. Reid said the Israelis were satisfied they had their tank needs satisfied by arrangements worked out with the United States. They were anxious to move on to other requirements.

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Mr. Reid said he had talked at length with Bergmann (head of Israel's atomic research program) and found him primarily interested in the preservation of food by irradiation.

Mr. Reid asked as to the extent we can respond to Israel's arms requests. He thought that a favorable response would be the reassurance necessary to make the Israelis more responsible in their military actions.

The Secretary said we don't want to hold military talks while Israel is shooting up its borders. If Israel will eschew provocative attacks across frontiers, we'll talk.

In answer to the Secretary's question, Mr. Davies said he thought mid-June was now the Israeli target for talks.

The Secretary stressed that Israel must take us seriously when we say we cannot give them support if they engage in preemptive attacks. This is a decision they have to make for themselves.

Mr. Reid said this was a chicken and egg situation: if we give Israel assurances, we reduce the likelihood of deterrent attacks. He recalled the September, 1964, pact among the Arab states to work for diversion of the Jordan waters and for a build-up of military strength against Israel and said that if we go ahead with any more food shipments to Nasser, it must be with the clear understanding that this remains a propaganda rather than a substantive matter.

The Secretary said our ability to talk with Nasser will be destroyed if we cut our ties by terminating assistance and precipitate polarization.

Mr. Reid replied that he did not favor termination of the food program for the UAR, he just wished that we could take a "tougher" position with Nasser.

The Secretary noted that our relations with the UAR now hung by a strand of spider web. If we push any more than we have already done, we may not have an Embassy through which to talk.

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