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By WJ NARA Date 12-12-07

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Memorandum of Conversation

1873-10-15, Protest  
 Saudi, Israel, Protest

DATE: October 15, 1973

SUBJECT: Saudi Protest Over U.S. Resupply to Israel

## PARTICIPANTS:

H. E. Ibrahim al Sawayyel, Ambassador of Saudi Arabia  
 Joseph J. Sisco, Assistant Secretary of State, NEA  
 Francois M. Dickman, Director, Arabian Peninsula Affairs

Distribution: S, D, P, NEA, NSC, Embassies Jidda, Tel Aviv, Kuwait  
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OCT 19 PM 1  
 WHITE HOUSE  
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Ambassador Sawayyel said his Government had information since yesterday that the US had begun to resupply Israel with arms. This information had been confirmed this afternoon by the Department's spokesman. He regretted having to convey bad news but his government had asked him to protest officially against this action. Speaking personally, the Ambassador said he could not understand why the US had decided to help Israel to allow it to continue to hold on to occupied Arab lands. If the USSR was supplying arms for the Arabs to clear their country from foreign invaders, he did not see why the US did not then press Israel to return to its pre-June 1967 boundaries.

Mr. Sisco said he would bring the Saudi oral protest immediately to the attention of the Secretary. However, he wanted to inform the Ambassador that the Secretary had sent a personal message to His Majesty yesterday informing him of the reasons why the US was undertaking a resupply operation to Israel. His Majesty and one other Chief of State were the only ones to have been informed in advance of the decision by the US to initiate this action.

NEA Task Force/FMDickman:pd

(Drafting Office and Officer)

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Mr. Sisco pointed out that the US had done nothing in the past week to start a supply effort; instead it had made a major effort to try and stop the hostilities. As the Ambassador might recall, the US had set forth three principles in its statement before the UN Security Council: a) to stop the war; b) to return to conditions existing before the fighting began; and c) getting a negotiation process started. Mr. Sisco noted that since expressing these ideas, we had in the past three or four days explored the possibilities of having a ceasefire in place. But there had been no consensus or desire expressed either for our principles or for our proposal for a ceasefire in place. There had been no response from Egypt or the Soviet Union to the latter.

Since last Wednesday, Mr. Sisco said the Soviets had started a large airlift operation to Syria and Egypt. By the time the Secretary had sent his message to His Majesty, the Soviets had already sent 200 transport aircraft with military supplies. As of today, the number of Soviet flights totals 280. In view of the lack of Soviet cooperation and the fact that the Soviet airlift operation is continuing, the US had no alternative but to start a resupply operation for Israel if it is going to maintain conditions conducive to diplomacy and not allow Soviet adventurism to be rewarded. Mr. Sisco reiterated that the resupply operation was not to support Israel's occupation. The US wanted the war to end and it wanted to be in a position to play a role to achieve a fundamental settlement and get a negotiating process started.

In response to the Ambassador's question if His Majesty had reacted to the Secretary's letter, Mr. Sisco said it had been presented to Prince Nawaf who could be expected to transmit it to the King. The reaction we had received so far from Riyadh was that the US should not give any resupply operation wide publicity. The Ambassador asked if he could be informed when the Department receives His Majesty's reaction. Mr. Sisco said this would be done.

In concluding the meeting, Mr. Sisco said he was receiving the Saudi protest in the spirit of the close relations

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