

TOP SECRET

25 JAN 19

State Dept. declassification & release instructions on file

GENERAL

1. US stresses importance of Rhodes talks--The Department of State has informed the US Mission in Tel Aviv of recent conversations with the Israeli and Egyptian representatives in Washington. The Department advised the Israeli representative of its apprehension over reports indicating that Israel had postponed evacuation of Egyptian forces trapped at Faluja, despite a voluntary agreement entered into by Israeli and Egyptian delegates at Rhodes for the unconditional release of these forces. The Department also stressed to both the Egyptian and Israeli representatives the hope that neither government would take a position which would cause the armistice negotiations at Rhodes to break down, because the US very much desires a prompt and successful conclusion to the negotiations.

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2. Transjordan prepared to negotiate with Israelis--King Abdullah has informed US Representative Stabler that he is still awaiting from the UN Acting Mediator a formal invitation for Transjordan to send delegates to the Egyptian-Israeli armistice talks at Rhodes. Abdullah declared that if the invitation did not arrive by 20 January, he planned to instruct his government to enter into direct peace negotiations with Israel. Abdullah added that in this connection he had two worries: (a) possible Israeli trickery and intransigence; and (b) his own desire to retain his position in the Arab world. He expressed the hope that with regard to both points he would find "friendship and understanding" on the part of the US and the UK.

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3. Views on New Delhi Conference on Indonesia--US Ambassador Henderson in New Delhi reports that, despite the moderation exhibited at the New Delhi Conference, the Asian nations are determined to achieve what they consider to be justice for the peoples of Indonesia. Henderson believes that Asian opponents of moderation and of cooperation with the west will be strengthened if the Conference's recommendations have no effect on the Security Council's actions concerning Indonesia.

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Document No. 018

NO CHANGE in Class.

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Class. CONFIDENTIAL TS S (0)

Auth: 1/11/77

Date: 7 MAR 1978 By: 028

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NO. 028

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MIDDLE EAST-AFRICA

3. **PALESTINE: Bunche considers armistice still possible--**
According to US Charge Patterson in Cairo, UN Acting
Mediator Bunche has transmitted in a personal letter his
opinion that the failure to conclude an Israeli-Egyptian
armistice at Rhodes was not due to any lack of good faith
on the part of the Egyptian representatives. Bunche be-
lieves that an armistice can be concluded despite the
narrow and rigid approach taken by the Israelis with re-
gard to the withdrawal of their forces in the Negev. Bunche
declared, however, that if an armistice is to be achieved,
the Israelis must be persuaded to be more generous and
to cease their attempts to exclude the Arabs from the Negev.

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