

~~SECRET~~  
INFORMAL REPORT

CD NO.

COUNTRY Lebanon/Israel

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

DATE DISTR. 18 March 1949

SUBJECT Israeli Evacuation of Lebanese Villages

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SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.

1. Ilyas Harfush, publisher of the Beirut newspaper, al-Hadith, who is friendly with certain Israeli leaders, particularly with Maurice Fischer, Israeli Minister to France, Elias Sassoon, and Eliahu Elath (Epstein), Israeli Representative to the United States, claims to have learned from Israeli officials who attended the UN meeting in Paris that the Israelis are willing to evacuate Lebanese territory, only upon condition that
  - a) an armistice be signed between Lebanon and Israel;
  - b) the Syrian Army be withdrawn from Lebanese territory if an agreement is reached at the Rhodes conferences;
  - c) Lebanon pledge neutrality toward any new Zionist-Arab differences which might arise from the Rhodes talks.
2. Harfush said that he had conveyed this information to Lebanese President Bisharah Khuri and to the Prime Minister, Riyadh Sulh, and Harfush promised that, if the terms were accepted, he would go to Israel to negotiate for the withdrawal of the Israeli forces from Lebanese territory, within forty-eight hours after the acceptance.

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