

Foreign Relations, 1961-1963, Volume XVII, Near East, 1961-1962

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302. Memorandum of Conversation/1/

Washington, June 20, 1962.

/1/Source: Department of State, NEA/NE Files: Lot 65 D 5, Israel, 1962. U.S. Milit. Asst.--Gen. 2-As. Secret. Drafted by Strong.

SUBJECT

Possible Sale of Hawks to Israel

PARTICIPANTS

Mr. Denis Speares, British Embassy
NE--Mr. Robert C. Strong

Referring to Mr. Strong's remarks on this subject on June 6,/2/ Mr. Speares said his Embassy had instructions to state the following:

/2/The memorandum of conversation between Strong and Speares on June 6 is *ibid.*, Central Files, 784A.56/6-662.

1. The Foreign Office was disturbed the USG was even thinking of providing missiles to Israel. The UK had earlier agreed with the US not to supply such weapons to Israel in advance of their supply to the Arabs by the Soviets. In any case, the UK cannot be put in the position of blocking its own firms from making such weapons while leaving the commercial advantage to the US. On June 13 the Israel Ambassador in London asked for basic information and advice regarding missiles. There are growing signs of Soviet intentions to sell missiles to Arab states. Thus the UK cannot now turn down the Israel request out of hand.

2. The Foreign Office would be glad to have assurances that the UK will receive as much advance information as possible of US intentions. Otherwise it cannot bind its own firms.

3. The Foreign Office agrees the Israeli case for ground-to-air missiles is becoming stronger but there is no need for action until there is firm evidence the Soviets are selling to the UAR. The UK has in mind giving a limited amount of basic information and advice to Israel but without commitment of future supply. The UK must consider the nature and extent of the information and advice to be provided and will inform the US when the decision is taken.

4. Otherwise the UK policy on the sale of guided missiles in the Near East is unchanged. The UK will keep in touch with the US.

Mr. Speares added that he had read Mr. Strong his instructions, which were stated rather boldly, in order to be sure that nothing was lost in the recital. In his opinion, the intentions of the Foreign Office are to try to assure that the two governments remain in step both with regard to information to be provided Israel and in any commitment to supply missiles. Mr. Speares was most anxious to have an early reply.

Mr. Strong promised to inform his superiors promptly and would pass a reply as soon as possible; however, he could not predict when a reply would be forthcoming as the whole spectrum of US policy in the Near East had come under review in Athens and a good deal of work remained to be done.

