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Israel of PLO
Middle East: Sit
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Rhodaria Sit Pt. 3

THE ISRAELI AMBASSADOR'S FAREWELL CALL ON THE PRIME MINISTER IN
THE HOUSE OF COMMONS ON 24 JULY 1979 AT 1600

The Israeli Ambassador, Mr. Kidron, called on the Prime Minister in the House of Commons on 24 July to say goodbye.

Mr. Kidron told the Prime Minister that he was deeply concerned by current developments in Washington and hoped that the West would soon find strong leadership: the present situation, if prolonged, could seriously harm both the West and Israel. Mr. Kidron said that if oil prices were to run riot, the West might be confronted with political demands by the oil producers which could be very damaging to Israeli interests. He had been disturbed by the recent EEC Statement on the Middle East. The peace which had been achieved between Israel and Egypt was a delicate plant. The issue of the settlements should be viewed in proportion and the Western media were inclined to exaggerate it.

Mr. Kidron condemned Dr. Kreisky for inviting Yassar Arafat to meet him in Vienna. He warmly commended M. Mendes-France, who had refused to attend the meeting when Yassar Arafat declined to return affirmative answers to three questions: did Israel have the right to exist, would he accept Resolution 242 as the basis for negotiations and would he abandon the tactic of terrorism?

Mr. Kidron said that he very much hoped that the UK would not always blindly follow the French line; it had to be recalled that France had initially rejected President Sadat's initiative. If the UK would give a lead in Europe on Middle East matters, the Dutch and the Danes would certainly follow it.

The Prime Minister commented that President Sadat was now out on a limb. Mr. Kidron agreed and said that if the financial help from the West which Sadat was expecting were not forthcoming, he would be in a very dangerous situation. It was important that the Palestinians should be brought into the current round of negotiations but the PLO was exerting pressure on them to refrain from coming forward and they were scared.

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In a short discussion of Rhodesia, Mr. Kidron told the Prime Minister that Mr. Sithole had called on him on 20 July. He had said that he had refrained from joining Bishop Muzorewa's government because he wished to expose the falsification of the April election results. He nevertheless still supported the internal settlement and would join the government eventually; he had already been offered a choice between three Ministerial portfolios. His contacts with the Israeli Embassy had been in the context of an earlier Israeli offer to accept black Rhodesians for agricultural training.

The Prime Minister wished Mr. Kidron well in his next post, Canberra.

B.M.

Distribution

Private Secretary to Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary

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