

37. Telegram From the Embassy in Israel to the Department of State¹

Tel Aviv, March 1, 1955—10 p.m.

743. Prime Minister has invited me to "private luncheon" his residence Thursday March 3. I assume this is one of "informal personal talks" which we recently agreed to hold from time to time. There has been no indication of subject to be discussed but from timing I anticipate he will raise subject combat action at Gaza Strip night February 28 (Embassy telegrams 737, 739, 740, 741²) explaining Israel's side. It seems likely he will also raise subject of Israel's foreign relations situation and conditions which make moderation extremely difficult if not impossible to follow unless there is a more definite basis for relief of Israel's feeling of insecurity due to recent developments in area.

It is too early to definitely assess Gaza Strip action in terms Israel's foreign policy but in view that action Department may wish send me guidance prior my talk with Sharett.³

Lawson

¹ Source: Department of State, Central Files, 674.84A/3-155. Confidential, Priority. Received at 7:32 a.m., March 2. Also sent to Cairo and Jerusalem. Repeated to Amman, Beirut, Damascus, Baghdad, and Jidda.

² These telegrams, all dated March 1, concerned the military action in the Gaza Strip the previous night. For telegrams 737 and 740, see Document 33 and footnote 2 thereto. Telegram 739 transmitted the text of a U.N. communique of that date and a report on the IDF briefing the night before. Telegram 741 reported information received from the Chairman of the Israel-Egypt Mixed Armistice Commission. Both are in Department of State, Central Files, 674.84A/3-155.

³ On March 2, Ambassador Lawson received the following instructions from the Department of State: "Since Department has not yet received news EIMAC decision Gaza strip incident, suggest you confine your comments this incident to communicating impression Department gravely concerned over preliminary reports. Case coming before Security Council March 4. FYI US attitude will be governed by MAC findings." (Telegram 486 to Tel Aviv, *ibid.*)

38. Editorial Note

On March 3, at the 239th meeting of the National Security Council, Allen Dulles, Director of Central Intelligence, discussed the Gaza incident during his briefing on significant world developments