

the question of furnishing Centurion tanks to Iraq. According to Dulles' memorandum of conversation, the following was said:

"We discussed the matter of Centurion tanks for Iraq. I said we were in somewhat of a dilemma on whether to let the British get the credit for these tanks or to seek credit ourselves, in which case we would get a corresponding debit from Israel. The President reaffirmed his often-expressed view that we should encourage the British to take the lead in the Middle East and not seek to compete with them in that respect. He said that he thought it was better for us to let the British deal in this tank matter directly with the Iraqi." (Eisenhower Library, Dulles Papers, Meetings with the President)

189. Telegram From the Consulate General at Jerusalem to the Department of State<sup>1</sup>

*Jerusalem, August 11, 1955—1 p.m.*

37. Further to my telegram 34,<sup>2</sup> General Burns today reviewed in detail with British Consul General and officer Consulate General present status Gaza talks:

According to Burns:

1. Israelis insist the "senior officer," who is to represent the parties for the purpose of the commander's agreement, be well defined term and want such officer to be the local commander or some one of direct relationship to that commander. Egyptians are unwilling that "senior officer" be local commander as they object to direct contact between parties at this level. Burns of opinion that Gohar contemplates Egyptian representative to be officer of lieutenant colonel rank who will be directly subordinate to War Ministry, and thus subject to Gohar, as well as to Egyptian General commanding Gaza sector. This arrangement would be satisfactory under circumstances and Burns has informed Israelis that he is willing to give his "personal guarantee" that Egyptian representative will have requisite authority. Gohar's objection to delineation of precise relationship of senior officer to Egyptian forces Gaza based on fear that he might be accused of promoting direct talks between Egypt and Israel.

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Central Files, 674.84A/8-1155. Confidential. Received at 1:08 p.m. Repeated to Amman, Beirut, Cairo, Damascus, London, Paris, and Tel Aviv.

<sup>2</sup> Telegram 34 reported in part that General Burns informed Cole on August 10 that there had been no progress in the Gaza talks on August 9 and 10, and that the next meeting was scheduled for August 19. (*Ibid.*, 674.84A/8-1055)