

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

Tel Aviv, September 5, 1955—noon.

225. 1. Available evidence points to conclusion basis decision yesterday's Cabinet meeting was in support policy restraint in dealing with Egyptian-Israel situation.

2. Foreign Ministry official said Sharett's personal message (Embtel 223²) was designed to make clear that official reply to Burns was not designed to permit GOI to abrogate cease-fire in response to minor infractions by Egypt. Prime Minister desires to emphasize unusual restraint which GOI would exercise to make cease-fire arrangement effective.

3. Colonel Harkabi, Chief IDF Intelligence, called Military Attaches together 5 p.m. yesterday and made following points.

(a) IDF Intelligence knows that Egyptians have transferred two divisions from Delta area to east of the Canal. One of these is moving to reinforce other Egyptian forces in north Sinai area.

(b) This fact, coupled with Nasser's instability, his precarious position, and his known habit of "pushing on" has made it necessary for Israel to undertake as limited and selective mobilization. Steps have also been taken to expedite further mobilization, if necessary, but the national economy must be considered.

(c) Israel hopes General Burns efforts to procure truce will be successful. She stands ready (and has so replied to him) to observe strictly such a truce, provided other side observes truce completely, including no feda'in (marauder) activities.

Lawson

¹ Source: Department of State, Central Files, 674.84A/9-555. Confidential; Priority. Received at 11:30 a.m. Repeated priority to Cairo, London, Paris, Amman, Damascus, Beirut, and Baghdad.

² Dated September 4, it reported that Israel had accepted Burns' cease-fire proposal but had reserved the right of self-defense, and it transmitted a personal message from Sharett assuring that the Israeli forces had "strict orders" to observe the cease-fire and that "no action whatsoever will be taken by Israel Defense Force which may exacerbate situation." (*Ibid.*, 674.84A/9-455)

262. Editorial Note

On September 5, the United Nations Security Council received a report from Major-General E.L.M. Burns, Chief of Staff of the