

No. 417

26284A1/3-552: Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Legation in Syria*¹

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359. Re Damascus tel 493 Mar 3 and Beirut tel 903 Mar 5 we hope this idea can be scotched promptly. Suggest missions take fol line in conversations as occasion arises and in answering notes re utilization indemnification from Ger for Arab refugees:

US as well as UK and Fr has on number occasions made clear to Israel Govt allied position on reparation demands against Ger. This position is based on agreements entered into among allies following termination hostilities, namely Potsdam Protocol and the Paris Reparation Agreement. It is pointed out that Israel was not a party to these agreements. Effect these agreements has been to preclude, pending definitive settlement with Ger in nature of peace treaty, the assertion by US Govt on its own behalf or on behalf of other states of further reparation demands on Ger.

On Sep 27, 1951, however, Chancellor Adenauer of the Ger FedRep introduced in the Bundestag a resolution, which was promptly and unanimously adopted, offering to negotiate a settlement with State of Israel and World Jewry of latter's claims for the indemnification of Jewish victims of Nazi persecution.² In reply to an Israel request for US intervention in support of Israel's claims, US informed Israel that US Govt had consistently been of opinion that a settlement of Israel claims against Germany should be effected through direct negotiations between Israel Govt and Ger FedRep.³

In urging Israel Govt to discharge its obligations to Arab refugees soon as possible, US has refused to accept Israel Govt assertion that Israel obligations to the Arab refugees should be balanced against property losses of Iraqi Jews who left Iraq for Israel. US has emphasized that in its view these two questions are in no way related. A similar situation obtains with regard to payments of indemnification to Israel by Ger FedRep and Israel's obligation to pay compensation to Palestine refugees, i.e. the two not related.

¹ Repeated to Beirut, Tel Aviv, London, Paris, and Bonn; sent by pouch to Cairo, Baghdad, Jidda, Amman, Ankara, and Jerusalem.

² *Verhandlungen des Deutschen Bundestages*, Bonn, Session 165, p. 6697.

³ The Israeli request, made in a note of Nov. 30, 1951, not printed (262.84A41/11-3051), was answered by the Department in a note of Jan. 24, 1952 (262.84A41/11-3051), the substantive portion of which is quoted in *Foreign Relations*, 1951, vol. v, p. 949, footnote 6.