

No. 534

IST.AC/12-1952: Telegram

*The Ambassador in Lebanon (Minor) to the Department of State*¹

SECRET

BEIRUT, December 19, 1952.

1206. I have refrained from expressing my opinions re our UN attitude on Palestine because I have not wished compromise my reporting usefulness by overemphasis, for fear of being marked down as unreasonably pro-Arab (which I am not) and to avoid reputation of being a crank (which I hope I am not). But dream world aura of Dept's 671, Dec 15, 1952,² causes prudence to give way to candor. Please, therefore, bear with me while I play this last (tragic) movement of Near Eastern sonata.

I have long plugged for an area-wide, unbiased, truly Amer Near Eastern policy, free from Zionist pressures or Arab emotional intransigencies. We simply must reassure Arabs, set at rest their overweening fears, and give evidence of objectivity. If this is not done, it is quite possible Arab world will drift into chaos and ultimately go way of China. It is even possible that Russian game of anti-Semitic footsie will give Russians high position in Arab world which is already full of neutralism. Perhaps we have deceived ourselves into thinking Arab world in last four years was out of the battle. Arabs have indeed been punch drunk, but they are very much back in the ring for another go and have plenty of new-found energy and friends to see them through.

I have long also stressed the view that mechanisms of power in NE are inadequate to remedy situation until human, psychological, political atmosphere is improved. I have consistently advised against pushing MEDO until the general political framework in NE is right. I have pointed out hopelessness improving our position through Point 4 under these negative circumstances. I now suggest that economic aid to NE is unrealistic until we have psychological setting in which such efforts could be made effective. Gailani in Iraq told Sen Gillette that 15 billion dollars of Amer money under these circumstances wld not win Arab world and had just as well be poured into Mediterranean. This is bravado and exaggeration, but it contains generous germ of truth.

Specifically, if our action on Palestine at UN was designed to put Arabs on defensive or show Arab world exactly where we stand, it was successful. If, however, our eye was on ultimate objective of re-

¹ Sent by pouch to Amman, Baghdad, Cairo, Damascus, Jidda, and Tel Aviv.

² Reference is presumably to circular telegram 671 of Dec. 15; see footnote 2, Document 530