

No. 550

684A.85/1-2753; Telegram

*The Ambassador in Israel (Davis) to the Department of State*¹

SECRET PRIORITY - TEL AVIV, January 27, 1953—6 p. m.

1200. Deptel 702,² Embtel 1184.³ In conversation with Foreign Minister yesterday afternoon I referred to press story his report to Cabinet on deterioration relations with Jordan and inquired whether he had anything he wished to tell me. He replied he had informed Cabinet that he intended speak to both the American and British Ambassadors on subject. He made point that he does not regard Israeli Government as having denounced local commander's agreement asserted it had become "inoperative" because of failures to act in accordance with its stipulations. He said that circumstances which had "added fuel to fire" had now been cleared up by the return of members Israel Armed Forces.

Sharett said Israeli Government representative saw Vigier of UNTSO Saturday night⁴ and expressed desire for meeting to endeavor normalize border situation. Foreign Minister commented on worsening border relations, which he attributed to several factors including what he described as "deterioration in watchfulness of Legion", utilization on frontier of national guard which tends to get out of hand and participate in raids or profits from them, and indifference of "Palestine element" among higher officials. He contrasted latter with Jordanians, who he said had shown greater sense of responsibility.

He stressed seriousness of infiltration problem saying reported cases of theft actually perpetrated in Jordan sector of frontier during calendar year 1952 numbered 952 cases as compared with 415 in Egyptian sector and 17 and 11 on Lebanon and Syrian frontiers respectively. He added that 13 persons had been murdered in the Jordan sector as compared with none in the other three sectors. These did not include guards and military personnel of whom 53 were killed and 56 wounded in clashes with infiltrators. He said that despite fact Jordan frontier longer he still thought figures disproportionate. He estimated loss due to damage and theft at about 1 million pounds, of which the principal items were cattle to the value of 400,000 pounds, some 2,000 meters of irrigation pipe and

¹ Passed to the Departments of the Army and Air Force.

² Document 546.

³ Telegram 1184 from Tel Aviv, Jan. 25, requested further particulars concerning telegram 702, *ibid.* (684A.85/1-2553)

⁴ Jan. 24.