

No. 572

684A.86/2-2053: Telegram

*The Ambassador in Jordan (Green) to the Department of State*¹

SECRET

AMMAN, February 20, 1953—8 a. m.

701. Anwar Nuseibeh, Minister of Defense, discussed with me very informally at my home February 18 desirability of peace with Israel and prospect of bringing about a peace on reasonably satisfactory terms.

He emphasized unity of Arab States on this issue, said that if Israel had any hope of dividing Arab States by making separate peace with either Syria or Egypt, Israeli Government was deceiving itself; clearly implied that he made this statement on basis authoritative information. Said that Arab States would not make peace as they had made war—that is, each on its own, and that peace negotiations would have to be through Arab League channels.

Nuseibeh said Arab leaders have become reluctantly convinced that Israel is there to stay and that best policy is to make peace with a neighbor, however much disliked that neighbor may be. Without going into great detail he indicated that to him a reasonable peace meant a peace along the lines indicated in Embassy despatch 215, January 19² and Embtel 643 of Feb 6.

Problem which seemed to assume great importance in his mind was: "Who is to take initiative." I suggested Arab States might well take initiative. He said that would seem too much like the vanquished begging peace of the victor. With him it was a question of "face." I replied that I saw no reason why Arab States should not take initiative, on the premise that even though Israel had been victorious in war Israel's present precarious economic situation, due in large part to Arab blockade, would enable parties to deal more or less as equals.

It was clear from what Nuseibeh said that the ideas he expressed were not only the result of discussions with his colleagues in the Cabinet but also the result of conversations between Jordanians and representatives of other Arab States.

GREEN

¹ Repeated to Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Beirut, Damascus, Baghdad, Cairo, Paris, London, and Jidda.

² Not printed.