

884A.00 TA/3-453: Telegram

*The Ambassador in Israel (Davis) to the Department of State*<sup>1</sup>

SECRET

TEL AVIV, March 4, 1953—7 p. m.

1404. Content Deptel 660<sup>2</sup> was conveyed to Foreign Ministry but feeling that Israel is being disregarded in matter of direct concern to her has increased (Embtel 1064<sup>3</sup> and 287<sup>4</sup>).

Tekoah, Assistant Legal Advisor Foreign Ministry, has outlined to Embassy legal position Israel as riparian state and called attention to right of Palestine Electric Corporation as holder concession under Palestine mandate in 1927 and "in Jordan by 1928 enactment". Director United States Division, Bendor, referred recently to call Fryer and I made on Sharett (Embtel 281),<sup>5</sup> saying Foreign Minister had been motivated in suggesting consultations at technical level by genuine interest in possibility of settling refugees, but in so doing Sharett had not waived principle Israel's riparian rights, which would have to be referred to Cabinet. It was naturally expected consultations would take place soon to provide basis for government consideration. Referring to reports Syria had authorized signing agreement with Jordan, Bendor suggested that if it is not too soon for considering agreement on matter between Syria and Jordan, it should not have been too soon for consultations suggested by Sharett.

Same source stated Israel officials feel genuine concern lest project, which requires international agreement, reach advance stage without Israel's being consulted. Said Israel has repeatedly expressed willingness settle matters this kind outside context general peace settlement and Yarmuk Plan presents "excellent opportunity for technical cooperation". He remarked plan apparently was suggested to Jordan authorities on unilateral basis by TCA en-

<sup>1</sup> Repeated to Amman, Beirut, and Damascus.

<sup>2</sup> Document 540.

<sup>3</sup> Document 537.

<sup>4</sup> In telegram 287 from Tel Aviv, Aug. 19, the Embassy stated its belief that consultation between American and Israeli engineers on Near Eastern water problems and Yarmuk water rights in particular would yield much useful information to the United States. The Israeli Government, assisted by American consultants, had already made extensive studies, and had frequently expressed the desire to consult with American engineers working on the Litani and Yarmuk projects. In view of the unlikelihood of direct discussions in the near future between Arab and Israeli engineers, the Embassy felt that something was to be gained by discussions between U.S. and Israeli engineers. (884A.2614/8-1952)

<sup>5</sup> Not printed, but see footnote 3, Document 537.