

under existing authority but it would not be possible to ask Congress for anything requiring additional legislation. He concluded by emphasizing again that he was indulging in a purely informal exchange of views on a number of subjects and that his thoughts were not necessarily firm on any of them; also that he had spoken much more frankly than with any other representative from the area and he hoped Ambassador Eban would bear this in mind in reporting the conversation to his Government.

No. 623

885.211/6-953: Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Embassy in Jordan*¹

SECRET

WASHINGTON, June 9, 1953—6:12 p. m.

976. From Secretary and Stassen. Following our visit to area we have given much thought question Jordan-Yarmuk development, which we recognize is of great importance. We are convinced this development is essential part any settlement refugee problem and that it should be carried forward as fast as possible. We are determined that its execution shall provide greatest good to greatest number and that decisions shall be based strictly on merits taking into account political well as economic and social realities in area concerned.

Much as we would like take some prompt dramatic action as concrete evidence US positive interest we have reluctantly come conclusion this not yet possible. We need more factual engineering data (which we expect TVA study to provide) before we can determine course action on riparian rights issue and it does not appear that commitments on major construction can be made until both TVA study and TCA engineering surveys on spot are further advanced. We believe we must take into account both physical facts of geography and interests of Israel and Arab States in determining best use limited water resources involved. Jordan obviously must carry out proposed agreement to assure reasonable refugee benefits, which agreement should make concessions by Israel on riparian rights easier to work out, particularly if Jordan also agrees to equitable division basin waters among riparian states.

For moment therefore believe probably only concrete action possible is to proceed with detailed surveys in Jordan as proposed by TCA making use of engineers to consider alternative water devel-

¹ Approved for transmission and signed personally by the Secretary. Repeated to Beirut and Tel Aviv, and by pouch to Cairo, Baghdad, and Damascus.