

No. 640

66181A/7-2153 Telegram

*The Chargé in Israel (Russell) to the Department of State*¹

SECRET

TEL AVIV, July 21, 1953—6 p. m.

93. Resumption relations between Israel and Soviet Union creates change in the context in which Israel's foreign relations will be conducted and in light of which our policies toward Israel must be evaluated:

1. The break in relations last February gave Israel a sharp sense of loss of maneuverability, and of forced dependence upon western powers, particularly the United States. Resumption of relations will create feeling she has gained bargaining power and has larger number of options which she will be tempted to utilize as means of influencing United States on matters of importance to Israeli Government.

2. Renewal of relations will reawaken hopes of Israelis in possibilities emigration of Jews from Eastern Europe. Prime Minister, other government officials and press have placed emphasis in recent months on need of state to build up its population and on importance of Jewish population behind iron curtain as source of immigration. (Despatch being pouched analyzing problem Israeli immigration.)² Strong bond Israel feels with Jews behind iron curtain provides Soviet with inexpensive partial counterbalance to interest which Israel has in aid from United States Government and United States Jewry and will give USSR leverage over Israeli policy.

3. There are limits, however, to which Soviet Union would go in any measures designed increase its influence with Israel as Soviet Union undoubtedly also concerned over its relations with Arab states. USSR primarily interested in promoting instability in area and likely, therefore, attempt to play one side against the other.

4. It would be unwise and unnecessary for United States to embark on policy of outbidding Soviet pressures against Israel. Israeli Government likely to make certain concessions to USSR in any event while its reliance upon western Jewry, its ideology and its interest in maintaining independence will be barrier to its yielding to Soviets pressures beyond certain point. There is an area

¹ Repeated to London, Paris, and Moscow; sent by pouch to the Arab capitals and Jerusalem.

² Despatch 212, Aug. 20, not printed, dealt with the subject of Israeli immigration. (884A.1800/8-2053)