

R64211/9-1253: Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Embassy in Israel*<sup>1</sup>

SECRET

WASHINGTON, September 12, 1953—1:39 p. m.

207. Recent cables on Banat Yaacov diversion incident suggest more positive line action necessary on Jordan water allocation than proposed Depcirtel 316 to Beirut, rpt Amman 102 Damascus 73 Tel Aviv 190.<sup>2</sup>

Dept inferred Israel motivation along lines analysis paragraph 13 Tel Aviv 309.<sup>3</sup> U.S. interest in TVA study and necessity revise Hays Lowdermilk plan was brought out in open testimony before Congress. Fact that IG has revamped development budget to provide funds diversion upper Jordan after advising Mikesell and Patterson in July water development funds were to be largely concentrated in south lends credence Tel Aviv interpretation.

Dept fears Arab refusal to consider water problem on its merits in any forum, with or without Israelis present, will prejudice Arab case in U.S. and world opinion. While reasonable suspend operations Banat Yaacov pending examination project it will be difficult if not impossible insist on continued suspension, or exert U.S. moral or other sanctions on Israel to prevent any development on upper Jordan, if Arabs refuse discuss issues on technical and political level.

Dept believes TVA study furnishes sound basis on which hoped-for discussions could be based.

For reasons well known and understood, UNRWA cannot provide mechanism for discussion or mediation of issue of disputed waters; neither UNTSO nor PCC believed appropriate or desirable mechanism for such purpose. Following idea therefore submitted for field comment as possible line procedure:

On receipt TVA study UNRWA submit it to Hammarskjold for consideration, in view likelihood that UNRWA's plans for project development will be frustrated unless equitable division waters somehow determined and steps taken to permit their most rapid and economic development, which apparently impossible in present political framework. Hammarskjold then might draw issue posed to attention both Arabs and Israelis, and to public, setting forth UN dilemma in precise terms, and appoint representative to discuss

<sup>1</sup> Repeated to Damascus as telegram 98, to Amman as 123, and to Beirut as 348; sent by pouch to Jidda, Cairo, Baghdad, London, and New York.

<sup>2</sup> Document 656.

<sup>3</sup> Document 661.