

curacies. This was done and the group agreed to delete several portions. It was made clear that this cooperation on the text of their statement did not imply that the Department of State agreed with the statements of opinion remaining in the statement.

No. 708

120.280/10-2533: Telegram

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

CONFIDENTIAL
PRIORITY

WASHINGTON, October 26, 1953—7:46 p. m.

328. At dinner with Malik October 24 Secretary had opportunity exchange personal views NE situation with guests including Hassouna, FonMin Bakr of Iraq, Amb Hussein of Egypt, and Chala and Boustani of Lebanon.

Arabs raised issue Johnston connection American Christian Palestine Committee, stating his selection most unfortunate. Malik said his mission hopeless and he should be recalled gracefully. Secretary's prompt rejoinder was to effect Johnston enjoyed complete confidence President and State Department; he is considered impartial and able man; and that Arabs would render position untenable in US of those seeking to help them if Johnston rebuffed on present mission. Reference was made to Iraq's statement that govt would not issue visa. (Bakr said he had made no recommendation this regard.) Egyptian injected note of moderation explaining Egypt's wish receive any envoy of President and stating Johnston already invited visit Fawzi.

Chala and Boustani stated they could not even publicly admit having read TVA report in light current political situation. When purposes and nature of desk study were explained their attitude changed.

Believe conversation generally helpful in producing better understanding on part those present.

During his talk with Hassouna today President spoke of his interest in Johnston Mission and importance cooperation for Jordan Valley Development.

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¹ Sent also priority to Amman, Damascus, Beirut, Cairo (for Johnston), Baghdad, Jidda, and New York.