

No. 787

684A.85/4-954: Telegram

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

CONFIDENTIAL PRIORITY TEL AVIV, April 9, 1954—11 p. m.

1038. Re Embassy telegram 1037.² Hart and I in conversation with Shiloah this evening urged upon him in strongest terms importance of Israel Government taking necessary measures to prevent ambushes by both sides past two weeks from growing into full-scale hostilities; and said we would urge upon Department desirability of calling upon Egypt to engage in discussions with IG on local commander or at other appropriate military level. Shiloah urged that senior Egyptian officer such as Col. Riad be designated. Riad seems to Hart, who met him in Cairo, to be appropriate as he could proceed Gaza ostensibly in connection refugee matters.

Shiloah suggests such military meeting be held entirely without publicity.³

RUSSELL

¹ Repeated to Cairo and Jerusalem; passed to the Department of Defense and the Commander in Chief, Europe.

² Telegram 1037 from Tel Aviv, Apr. 9, reported on a visit to the scene of four recent border incidents in the Negev by the Military Attaché, Hart, and Lieutenant Colonel Shalev. (684A.85/4-954)

³ The Department responded on Apr. 10 as follows:

"Department endorses suggestion Tel Aviv's 1038. Cairo should discuss with appropriate officials urging Colonel Riad attend meetings.

"Cairo and Tel Aviv both requested emphasize our concern sudden eruption incidents Egyptian border and necessity avoiding retaliatory actions. Judging from effectiveness local commanders agreements on Jordan border when both parties cooperated, similar arrangements should prove useful Egyptian border." (Telegram 1261 to Cairo, 2:34 p. m., repeated as 708 to Tel Aviv, both priority; 684A.85/4-954)

Chargé Russell reported on Apr. 14 that the Israeli Foreign Ministry had that day stated that it had considered and agreed with the suggestion reported to it by Shiloah. The Foreign Ministry also expressed its gratitude for the good offices of the United States. (Telegram 1053 from Tel Aviv Apr. 14, 3 p. m.; 684A.85/4-1454)