

No. 790

64A.5574-1054. Telegram

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

SECRET PRIORITY

TEL AVIV, April 10, 1954—3 p. m.

1040. British Ambassador here told me this morning that United Kingdom Ambassador Amman had recommended to London that efforts should be made, as means of reducing Israel-Jordan tensions, to obtain reinstatement operations under local commanders agreements, which are still legally in existence, but which have been nullified by withdrawal Israelis.

British Ambassador here subsequently received instructions authorizing him to approach Israeli Government in his discretion and after consultation with his American and French colleagues. He has replied to Foreign Office that he concurred desirability reinstatement agreements, but that little purpose would be served by approach here which would have to be limited to formal note delivered liaison office, Tel Aviv. He has suggested alternatively that representations could be made most effectively by Foreign Office calling in Israel Ambassador in London.

I told British Ambassador that at my home Wednesday evening, Hart had made to Eytan and Dayan (as well as to Raphael, Louri, Herzog, Shiloah in Jerusalem Thursday) an impressive case for reinstatement local commanders operations based on his survey border trouble spots and conversations Jordanian and Arab Legion officers. Dayan had reported that Israel had been disappointed results local commander approach, in part because Jordanians never informed Israel of action taken or punishment given in specific infiltration cases. Dayan also mentioned Israel willingness negotiate some border rectification in Jordan's favor in return for concessions to Israel, such as (1) solution to Scopus problem, (2) availability Jordan sweetwater for Israel Dead Sea Potash Works.

Shiloah last night expressed to us his view that local commanders arrangements useful only in implementation of basic understandings which, in initial instance, would have to be reached at higher level and on broader basis.

The comments of Dayan and Shiloah, coupled with recent governmental statements and press commentaries, lead us to conclusion that Israeli Government is hopeful that current border tensions and incidents will lead to a series of bilateral talks with neighboring countries which, while falling short of full peace nego-

¹ Repeated priority to Amman, Jerusalem, London, and Paris.