

No. 854

794A.5/8-754: Telegram

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

SECRET

WASHINGTON, August 7, 1954—3:45 p. m.

72. Resumed conversation between Secretary and Israeli Ambassador today (re Deptel 61)² covered following ground:

1. Secretary said he had been impressed by Ambassador's statements regarding Israel's isolation. He wondered if it would be any advantage to Israel to have an exchange of notes with US in which we would reiterate our policy, which had been approved by NSC, of being prepared cut off all military or economic assistance to any country in Near East area undertaking aggression and would say that if any military imbalance should develop endangering Israel we would be prepared at least to consider military aid program for her and to seek funds from Congress for that purpose. Eban said he would have to think about this and would wish consult his Government during his forthcoming consultations in Israel. Offhand, he thought such exchange would be helpful provided it contained some concrete assurance that military aid to Arabs would be balanced by military aid to Israel. Ideally, Israel would like have promise aid negotiations would begin simultaneously or nearly so with Egyptian negotiations. Such promise need not be made publicly.

Secretary said he did not exclude possibility asking next Congress for military aid funds for Israel provided by that time we convinced military imbalance was developing. Emphasized he had not had time discuss suggested exchange of notes with President, or military or Congressional leaders. Thought it might be possible include something more than mere restatement generalities regarding our policy.

2. Eban said he had communicated with Sharett and was authorized say it incorrect assume Israel presently equal to Arabs in military equipment. Israel had been very careful avoid letting this be known since it was obviously to its advantage have Arabs believe in Israeli military superiority, and he asked that we keep this information very confidential. Asserted that in aircraft, artillery and tanks, Israel was inferior to Egypt alone. If all Arab States taken together, disparity much greater. For example, Arabs had three times as much artillery. Anything at all given to Egypt would add

¹ Sent by pouch to London, Cairo, Jidda, Amman, Beirut, Damascus, and Baghdad.

² Document 851.