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*The Ambassador in Lebanon (Hare) to the Department of State*<sup>1</sup>

CONFIDENTIAL

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171. At risk of seeming to underline the obvious, might I suggest that we are now at a critical point in the development of a policy designed to relieve tension between Israel and the Arab states and to re-establish a relationship with the states of the Near East which will contribute to our mutual security.

For reasons which need not be re-debated, the pendulum of American policy was originally drawn toward Israel, with a resultant deterioration of our relations with the Arab states. Now for a period of a year and a half we have been trying to get the pendulum back to center by an announced policy of impartiality. Step by step and by painstaking efforts this policy has been producing results. Final success is still in the future but we have been on the good road.

Now, just when this policy is beginning to show the desired results, vigorous protest is heard from Israel, whose officials do not hesitate to assert that our policy of impartiality is not that at all, but rather a policy of prejudice against Israel. We know that this is not true; quite to the contrary, we realize that any policy which would swing the pendulum too far the other way and give the Arabs the idea that they had the upper hand would be disastrous for all concerned.

The actual situation in which we find ourselves therefore is that we are being attacked because an honest and fair policy, which is actually in Israel's ultimate interest as well as that of the Arab states, is showing some signs of succeeding.

On the basis of reports from Embassy Tel Aviv and discussions at the Istanbul conference, it is clear that, aside from political maneuvering, there is a certain element of sensitivity and "aloneness" in Israel of which account should be taken. The hope which I would venture to express, however, and which is the basis for this gratuitous message, is that, in endeavoring to meet this situation, we should take care to act within the scope of our established and hitherto successful policy of impartiality and in so doing avoid any acts or statements which would seem to indicate that the motion of the pendulum was again being reversed. The problem is one of confidence as regards both Arabs and Israelis. It would be a tragedy if,

<sup>1</sup> Repeated to Tel Aviv, Amman, Baghdad, Cairo, Damascus, and Jidda.