

No. 872

NSA 867-2534 Telegram

*The Ambassador in Jordan (Mallory) to the Department of State*¹

TOP SECRET

AMMAN, August 25, 1954—2 p. m.

70. Department circular telegram 108.² The possibility of creating strength for area security is still a tender shoot and cannot withstand the chill of what might be interpreted as switchback to pro-Israel policy. We adhere in this connection to the lines of Ambassador Hare's excellent telegram Beirut 171.³

As with so many problems here this generally returns to the tensions of the Arab-Israeli borders. If Israel will adopt a policy permitting conditions of peace on the border and come forth with even a minor portion of her obligation to the refugees this would be more effective than a note or even a treaty by US. It is not in US interest to insulate Israel from the necessity of working positively for peaceful border.

In considering assurances to Israel to deter her from rash action it is relevant that Israel uses the big stick method with Arabs. In quieting fears stated by Israeli Government and spokesmen we are not necessarily limited to the carrot approach. It is to be noted that while Israel appeals for assurances she is producing considerable fears among Jordans at present time (Embtel 67).⁴

A basic consideration in the present is not who receives what amounts of arms but whether in reality the existence of Israel is threatened. As the Department points out, it is Israel which now talks of preventive war. Militarily, it appears that the Arabs are not in a position to attack Israel successfully nor foreseeably would they be for years.

With respect to imbalance, arms aid to Israel need not balance aid to Arab states. US needs to preserve its freedom of action in regard to future arms aid to Arab states or Israel. To give a pledge that we will consider arms aid to Israel if military build up by Arabs jeopardizes Israel's security raises the question of who is to judge the jeopardy. The Israelis claim they are jeopardized before we start. US has held that impartiality does not require equality of economic aid and the same is true now of arms aid.

¹ Repeated to Tel Aviv, Beirut, and London. Sent by pouch to Tripoli, Karachi, Cairo, Athens, Ankara, Kabul, Tehran, Baghdad, Jidda, and Damascus.

² Document 867.

³ Document 866.

⁴ Not printed.