

Please have statement re-typed this alternate form and look at it carefully. In this form I think it can be sold to Arabs; in yours I fear it will be but last of long line ineffective palliatives.

WADSWORTH

No. 892

674.84A/9-1054: Telegram

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

CONFIDENTIAL

TEL AVIV, September 10, 1954—5 p. m.

260. I called today, at his request, on Prime Minister at Hakiryia, Tel Aviv. He referred to last three incidents along Israeli-Egyptian border which he said were particularly grave. In first, tractor driver killed, but he attached more importance to the succeeding two incidents of sabotage: First, destruction of bridge; second, dynamiting of water pipe, which had every appearance of military planning (though possibly not of military execution). In case of bridge, no civilians in area and it, therefore, appears to be "naked provocation". In addition, number of infiltrators recently captured who admitted to being spies, which strengthens appearance of military preparation on part of Egypt. Prime Minister said special care is being taken to prevent any immediate and direct reaction to above incidents insofar as lies within power of organized authority. Prime Minister said "Now that US is connected with Egypt," what we say should carry more weight than before. Aid extended to Cairo behaving is one thing, to Cairo not behaving is another.

Prime Minister said he would like to make not a request but a query: Would USG call attention of Egyptian Government to this highly disturbing state of affairs, and publish the fact it has done so?

Prime Minister said theory is germinating in minds of some of people of Israel that recent developments are manifestations of plan to drive Israel into sharp and far-reaching action and thus have Israel appear to world as aggressor, nullifying all of its efforts over past six years to bring about peace. Prime Minister suggested Egyptian Government might be told that this is seen through and that it cannot get away with such a game.

I told Prime Minister I had no evidence that incidents on Egyptian border related to Beit Liqya but I felt area situation had deteriorated as result of it. We had feeling IG had given little coopera-

¹ Repeated to Cairo; sent by pouch to Jerusalem, Amman, Damascus, and Beirut.