

West which Nasir has clearly stated he desires and which is our avowed policy. USG hopes and believes it can work quietly and intimately with GOE to avoid all situations which embarrass our common effort to play down Arab-Israel issue and our mutual desire strengthen NE against Soviet danger.

Since drafting foregoing Israel Embassy has today notified Department Israel has submitted matter SC on instructions from Jerusalem. No explanation offered for this apparent shift in tactics. \*

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\* On Oct. 4, Israel requested that a meeting of the Security Council be called to consider the earlier Israeli complaint against Egypt concerning Egyptian restrictions on the passage through the Suez Canal of ships trading with Israel. (U.N. doc. S/3800)

The *Bat Galim* was discussed by the Security Council between its 682d and 686th meetings, from Oct. 14 to Dec. 7. (U.N. docs. S/PV.682-686)

### No. 904

984A.53/10-754: Telegram

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

CONFIDENTIAL

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464. Referring to Deptel 541 October 4, Egyptian Ministry Foreign Affairs told me that he appreciates sympathetic manner in which Department is endeavoring to find solution for troublesome *Bat Galim* case.

It is my impression that Egyptians will not be able to produce convincing evidence that Israel is responsible for death of Egyptian fishermen.

Department's suggestion is probably correct, that GOE seized on aggression story in attempt to justify seizure of ship and divert attention from issue of interference canal traffic.

As I have reported before, Egypt during past year has considerably relaxed controls over Israeli-bound shipping. Furthermore it is a fact that Egyptian authorities, contrary to position of Arab states, up to a few months ago, were talking about possibility of eventual agreement with Israel. However, what Egyptians consider to be recent Israeli aggressive tactics have changed all this. As matters now stand, if publicly pushed into corner Egyptians will, in face of Egyptian and Arab opinion, have no alternative but to reaffirm their previous position with respect to 1951 SC resolution.

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<sup>1</sup> Repeated to Tel Aviv, London, Paris, the Arab capitals, and Port Said.