

hope that nothing will be done to provide pretext for breach of peace before ordering mtg.

Comment: Emb considers fears expressed by Col Taxis entirely justified and feels any overt act by Syrian controvention armistice agreement and May 18 res wld play into hands of those elements here who are defeatist about effecting any settlement other than thru use of force (see Embtel 910).³ The failure of attempts to effect mutually advantageous local settlements within framework of armistice agreements has given rise to general feeling of frustration and if continued will increase danger of resort to arms.

While proposed mtg is considered wholly desirable as means of forestalling deterioration of sitn as result of apparent decision Syria to force showdown over work on east bank, fact must be faced that danger of deadlock in mtg is distinct possibility as result wide divergence in respective viewpoints. If Syria shld make "adjustment of demarcation line" to Jordon her basic and minimum demand, chances of success wld be prejudiced to say the least. On other hand it is believed chances of success will be enhanced if Israel carried out what is understood to be present intention to name General Moshe Dayan as principal Israel rep for purposes high level talks. FonOff advises he will probably be assisted by Tekoah, asst legal advisor of FonOff and expert on Huleh question, and that mtg is expected to take place June 30.

DAVIS

³ Dated Mar. 4, not printed.

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*The Ambassador in Israel (Davis) to the Department of State*¹

SECRET PRIORITY

TEL AVIV, June 29, 1952—3 p. m.

1431. Mytel 1426. ² Called yesterday on PriMin Ben Gurion, who confirmed Israel intention take part proposed mtg irrespective rank of Syrian rep. He deplored but readily understood reasons why Shishikli will not take part personally. He apparently had not been briefed on importance of question of work on east bank, and he evinced keen interest in our opinion that resumption of such work just now not only wld prejudice chance of successful mtg but might result in local outbreak hostilities such as occurred last year.

¹ Repeated to Jerusalem and Damascus (for Taxis).

² *Supra*.