

broadcast of speech Shishikli made to graduates of Syrian staff college. He is reported to have said Syria has "enormous reserves" of trained manpower and modern arms to be used "as soon as the hour strikes. Our eyes are turned toward the great Arab fatherland and we shall no longer stand idle regarding that part which has been stolen by fon thieves". At same time the foregoing appeared there was a further item in press reporting that two of 12 Brit meteor jet fighters sold to Syria had passed through Cyprus enroute to Damascus and that Syrian pilots had been trained in Great Brit to fly the planes in question while more were to receive training in air force bases in ME.

Emb comment: As indicated Embtel 420 and other reports, believe jet deal to be inconsistent with policy laid down in tripartite declaration of May 1950 to avoid inducing an arms race in ME. The selling of jet planes and other arms to Arab countries apparently without any undertaking on their part to liquidate the regional dispute cannot but induce an arms race which Israel and possibly other countries concerned cannot afford. Whether others think so or not, this country convinced its existence is in jeopardy, and despite its extremely difficult econ situation it will strain to utmost to keep itself prepared to meet any combination of its neighbors in present circumstances. While US is earnestly advising Israel to effect economies, adopt realistic fon currency budget and live within its means, it seems quite inconsistent for USG to approve arms sales which we know will have seriously adverse and possibly disastrous effect on Israel economy. Assurances that arms will be utilized exclusively for self-defense have little value without prior area settlement. It is believed that Western nations have endangering [*endangered?*] regional plans for polit stability, econ improvement and arms defense by actions of kind in question.

DAVIS

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683.84A/11-1252: Telegram

*The Ambassador in Syria (Moose) to the Department of State*¹

SECRET

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354. Embtel 345, Nov 6. Pursuing Shishikli suggestion reported in ref tel I have discussed with Taxis possibility division Syro-Israeli

¹ Repeated to Tel Aviv, Amman, Ankara, Baghdad, Beirut, Cairo, Jerusalem, Jidda, Rome (for Unger), London, Moscow, and Tripoli.