

but to be mutually satis and produce good results it wld have to be in truth a step toward peace.

DAVIS

No. 517

786.56/11-1352: Telegram

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

SECRET PRIORITY TEL AVIV, November 13, 1952—7 p. m.

786. Embtels 776² and 409.³ FonMin requested me to call this morning and among other things expressed in strong terms his govt's increased concern over Brit offer to supply jetfighters to NE countries. He said the proposed action will worsen Israel's position. He pointed out that giving each Arab state opportunity to acquire an amount of arms equal to that made available to Israel would create "overwhelming superiority" on the part of the Arab nations who themselves declare they are at war with Israel and who in his opinion should get no arms so long as they refuse to make regional peace. He made points that the Arab states are as yet uncommitted to support democracy; that altho purchases of jets would be ostensible for regional defense, he is convinced they would in fact be for use or pressure against Israel; that the increase in Arab strength will decrease chances for peace as he believes it will lessen Arab willagness to negotiate.

The FonMin stated further that word had been received from the Brit that 14 was no longer the limit, which will multiply the disproportion of the original proposal and will impose an even greater burden on Israel's overstrained economy. In present circumstances IG would feel obliged at whatever sacrifice to meet combined Arab strength. Sharett concluded remarks by saying he understood tripartite powers made such offers on basis of prior consultation and agreement and inquired whether US Govt has given its agreement to the policy of supplying arms on the basis of the Brit offer. I told the FonMin that I would report the substance of his remarks and inquiry to the Dept. No mention was made of info in Depcirtel

¹ Repeated to London, Cairo, Baghdad, Beirut, and Damascus.

² Document 513.

³ Not printed.