

Syrians who presented new demands such as for unlimited irrigation rights from upper Jordan waters. Taxis endeavoring obtain appointments see Shishikli ascertain whether Syrians changing position on zone settlement and to urge constructive attitude. Date next MAC meeting not yet fixed.

Taxis scheduled sail for US April 6. Apparently not yet decided who will replace him on Syro-Israel MAC.

Moose

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No. 586

683.84A/3-1953: Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Embassy in Syria*<sup>1</sup>

SECRET PRIORITY WASHINGTON, March 21, 1953—1:52 p. m.

535. Department disturbed at reported trend of events re Israel-Syrian border discussions (re Tel Aviv 1470 Mar 18 and Damascus 601 Mar 19). Reference cables present first indication "uncompromising" attitude on part Syrian Government. This indication is particularly disturbing since Department in its formulation of policy towards Middle East has noted and has been placing emphasis on Syrian progressive leadership with respect such outstanding Arab-Israel problems as refugee resettlement and border settlement.

While Department hesitates speculate cause apparent Syrian change of attitude Department hopeful this does not reflect Syrian over-confidence based on anticipation "new approach" by present Administration towards Middle East. If so, Syrians should be made realize intransigence will not attract US support but likely instead be interpreted here as confirmation warnings such as have been repeated by Israeli Government that any change of U.S. attitude towards Arab states would make settlement of outstanding issues more distant.

Department considers urgent that your fullest influence be appropriately used to urge border settlement which seemed so near. (Reference Damascus 574 Feb 28<sup>2</sup> and Tel Aviv 1370 Feb 26,<sup>3</sup> 1380<sup>4</sup> and 1383 Feb 27).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Repeated priority to Tel Aviv as telegram 856 and by air to Amman, Baghdad, Beirut, Cairo, Jidda, London, Moscow, Paris, and Jerusalem.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed, but see footnote 3, Document 575.

<sup>3</sup> Document 574.

<sup>4</sup> Document 575.