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Memorandum of Conversation, Prepared in the Embassy in Syria

SECRET

DAMASCUS, May 15, 1951—evening.

ST D-4

Subject: Syria

Participants:

*United States**Syria*

The Secretary

General Shishakli

Mr. Stassen

Mr. Byroade

The principal points covered in a small evening meeting May 15, 1953 between Shishakli and the Secretary, in which Messrs. Stassen and Byroade also were present, were as follows:

General Shishakli presented to the Secretary in a brief manner the familiar representation of the changing feeling about the Arab world for the United States and the reasons therefor. He traced the earlier feeling of friendship for the United States back through their desire to see the United States become the mandatory power rather than France or Britain in the Arab area. The theme ended with the statement that feeling of confidence among Arab peoples for the United States was now nearly lost because of our past support for Israel.

At the end of the above speech, Shishakli specifically made the point that the United States should not attempt to "impose" a settlement. While he wished for energetic action on the part of the United States, he did not want it to be without prior consultation and agreement with Arab leaders.

The Secretary outlined the general purpose of his trip, the philosophy of the new Eisenhower Administration which included a comparison of the United States and Soviet policies including those in the economic field.

Referring to a remark the Secretary had made about imperialism Shishakli stated his concern at what might be the motive of the Turkish Government in creating troubles along his northern frontier. The Secretary told Shishakli we would check into this when we arrive in Turkey.

In commenting upon the Secretary's remarks about the overriding danger of Soviet Russia, Shishakli developed the theme that the communist menace and the menace of Israel both tied together in the end. His line of logic was that since Syria has to devote about fifty percent of its budget to military expenditures because of