

how it can be worked out. In the military sphere this would mean what kind of equipment could be provided, how the training would be organized, etc.

General Shishakli said that it would not be wise to get involved in a "vicious circle" where Syria cannot receive United States aid until it gives a specific undertaking or engagement, while on the other hand Syria cannot give an undertaking or engagement until it is assured of a program which meets its requirements.

Mr. Stassen said he believed this could be made by a step-by-step approach to the problem. General Shishakli said that the problem was really to find a point in the circle from which to start. Thereafter mutual confidence and cooperation would increase in a rising spiral. He could assure Mr. Dulles and Mr. Stassen that there was good will on the Syrian side.

The meeting concluded with the usual amenities and expressions of appreciation.

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#### *Memorandum of Conversation, Prepared in the Embassy in Lebanon<sup>1</sup>*

CONFIDENTIAL

BEIRUT, May 16, 1953.

ST D-5

Subject: Lebanon

Participants:

*United States*

*Lebanon*

The Honorable John Foster  
Dulles, Secretary of State

His Excellency Camille  
Chamoun,

The Honorable Harold Stassen,  
Director, Mutual Security  
Administration

President of the Republic  
of Lebanon

The Honorable Harold B.  
Minor, Ambassador to  
Lebanon

After the usual exchange of greetings, President Chamoun said he desired to make a statement. He declared that we are now at a crossroad in relations between the West and the Arab East. He feared that if no positive results are obtained from the Secretary's visit, the area will fall apart. It reveals elements of dangerous

<sup>1</sup> This conversation took place at the residence of the President in Beirut.