

and are not seeking to give them away. We are anxious to see the creation of adequate security arrangements in the Near East but have rather given up the idea of MEDO as previously conceived. A defense arrangement here needs a hard core of Arab strength and Arab willingness to join the free world in defense against communism. The Arab League, he said, seems to have been an organization without serious purpose, confined to passing resolutions and denouncing. If it could turn into something real for the purpose of composing differences, we would be happy. President Chamoun said that the interests of the West are very great in this part of the world and therefore the United States should help in every way possible to bring strength and stability here. It should be possible, he said, to devise a scheme of defense agreeable to the Arabs and to the Western world.

Secretary Dulles reiterated our desire to give help and bring stability. He declared, however, that we must express real concern when we hear Arabs say there is no communist threat, merely the threat of Israel and the imperialist powers.

President Chamoun said that while this view may be expressed by some persons, it is certainly not the general case. People here are well aware of the communist danger and are willing to play their part if the immediate pressing problems of Egypt and Palestine can be solved.

As the meeting broke up, Mr. Stassen urged upon President Chamoun the need for endeavoring to understand our situation and to use moderation and patience. President Chamoun replied that this was indeed his policy and that he had been somewhat successful at this in his conversations and visits in the Arab world.

No. 25

Conference files, lot 59 96, CF 156

*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Second Secretary of Embassy
in Lebanon (Meyer)*¹

CONFIDENTIAL
ST D-5/1

BEIRUT, May 16, 1953.

Participants: H. E. Saeb Bey Salaam, Prime Minister of Lebanon
Honorable John Foster Dulles, Secretary of State
Honorable Harold E. Stassen, Mutual Security
Director

¹ This conversation took place at the home of the Prime Minister.