

Soviets were succeeding very well with their tactic. He noted that the refugee problem also lends itself to Communist utilization. He felt, furthermore, that the very creation of Israel had served Soviet policy because it has been used to incite the Arabs against the West. As long as the refugee situation is unsolved, he said, as long as Israel appropriates Arab properties unrightfully, as long as the boundaries and Jerusalem questions are not settled, the situation will get worse and worse and the Communists will exploit it. He felt that was dangerous for both the Arabs and the United States.

9. *United States Impartiality.* Expressing hope for a solution to the Palestine problem, the Secretary suspected that it would be gradual and not all at once. It was the strong desire of President Eisenhower, he said, to proceed with justice and equity vis-à-vis both parties in this controversy. The past could not be undone, the Secretary stated, but it is possible to proceed from here on with fairness and impartiality. There is a feeling that the past administration was dominated by Jewish influences, he said, but that is not the case with this administration. According to the Secretary, President Eisenhower has a tremendous regard for the Arab peoples and the Arab states. That is primarily the reason for the Secretary's visit to the Near East. They came to visit the Arab states, Israel was included simply because it was in the area. The Secretary said it is his hope to be helpful in the solution of some of these problems. Because of emotional bitterness, with which he could well sympathize, the Secretary realized the difficulty in finding solutions which both sides would consider fair and just. Nevertheless, it would be disastrous if the area were abandoned to strife and struggle, ultimately losing its independence. The Foreign Minister concluded the conversation by expressing his high hopes in the new American administration and stating his belief that it is still not too late to save the Near East.

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

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Subject: Lebanon

¹ This conversation took place at the Chamber of Deputies.