

(3) Offer suggestion that if there wld be any value in drawing on IG experience in developing agricultural settlements govt wld be glad cooperate on technical level or in any way that might seem useful.

Sharett seemed entirely realistic with reference practical difficulties in way of *rapprochement* with Egypt and he viewed present development with much reserve. He pointed out, however, that the two personalities which had been regarded as most obstructive to any step toward regional peace, namely Farouk and Assan, had now been eliminated from their influential positions.

DAVIS

No. 489

733A.00/9-1952: Telegram

*The Chargé in Lebanon (Lobenstine) to the Department of State*¹

SECRET PRIORITY

BEIRUT, September 19, 1962—12 a. m.

580. Various Leb polit reps are asking our view as to successor for Pres Khouri. They note that Brit are more or less openly backing Camille Chamoun and that French are believed to be supporting Hamid Frangie. Whether we will it or not, all Lebs assume we, like they, must have a candidate and must be working for his election.

We believe that all candidates thus far seriously considered—Chamoun, Frangie, Gen Cyehab, Alfred Naccache, Dr. Yousef Hitti, Jawad Boulos, Dr. Charles Malik, etc—are men of high calibre and without exception friendly to America. Since none of those is an outstanding favorite for election and since our only personal preference Dr. Malik is receiving scarcely any attention we believe we shld officially and unofficially show no favoritism lest by doing so we alienate affections of Pres eventually elected.

Subject Depts and Min Minor's approval, therefore we are keeping out of picture as much as possible. All Amer members of staff have been instructed not to comment on situation in public. When asked for official or unofficial statement our views, we stick to principles not to personalities, indicating views: (1) day of imperialism is over; we respect Lebanon's independence and her right select Pres in accordance her own constitutional processes; (2) we hope for a Pres who has universal respect entire citizenry, who will decidedly steer Lebanon on course of progress its people so obvious-

¹ Sent by pouch to the Arab capitals, Paris, London, and Tel Aviv.