

seen whether Jumblatt influence along socialistic lines will be altogether for good.

5. Chamoun will undoubtedly undertake significant reforms. Emphasis on non-sectarianism may well cause strong emotionalism particularly amongst Christian communities.

6. Chamoun who is not wealthy is extremely affable and enjoys great personal popularity. He does not have a powerful personality, however, and there is some danger that in trying to please everybody he may be imposed upon by stronger polit personalities.

7. Honeymoon obviously now exists. Show-down will come when polit barons, who still hold Parl seats and who voted Chamoun to presidency, seek to retain their vested interests in face of reform programs he and his opposition friend will introduce.

LOBENSTINE

No. 494

783.00/9-2552: Despatch

The Minister in Syria (Cannon) to the Department of State

SECRET

DAMASCUS, September 25, 1952.

No. 185.

Reference: Legtel 222, September 23, 1952¹

Subject: Transmittal Memorandum Minister's Conversation with Shishikli²

Summary

In my first substantive conversation with Colonel Shishikli, the latter set forth in some detail his ideas on recent events in Lebanon, his views on Near Eastern history since the departure of the Turks, and his opinions on specific current topics such as his interest in establishing a *modus vivendi* with Israel and belief that the Arab States should be included in MEDO plans from their inception. He indicated that further general and specific discussions would be required before the conclusion of any bilateral aid agreements with the United States.

In the course of my first lengthy substantive conversation with Colonel Shishikli, a two and one-half hour near-monologue at my Residence on the evening of September 22, he talked cordially and long about many past and present aspects of Near Eastern politics.

¹ Not printed.

² The memorandum of conversation sent as enclosure 1 to this despatch is not printed.