

1957**Untitled report about meetings between Syrian officials and the Lebanese opposition****Citation:**

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Summary:

Lebanese opposition and Syrian officials meet in Damascus to plan the removal of the Lebanese government from power.

Credits:

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Several meetings were held in Damascus between representatives from the Lebanese opposition and Syrian officials to lay down plans for the removal of the present Lebanese Government from power; the last such meeting was held last week. Syria's boycott of official celebrations commemorating Lebanon's independence was considered as limited only to the Government, and not to its participation on the popular level.

The fact that Bkerke, headquarters of the Maronite Patriarch, was chosen as the popular gathering place during the celebrations, is seen as a reaffirmation of the existing enmity between the Patriarch and the President of the Republic.

The Syrian cortege, made up of 15 Syrian parliamentarians, including Mansour al-Atrache, Maarouf al-Dawalibi, Ali Bozo, Abdel-Qader Homed, Nawfal Elias, Fakher al-Kayyali, Dahham Dandal, and a number of other Syrian political figures, would be received in Bhamdoun by a delegation from the Lebanese opposition that includes parliamentarians. They will have lunch on Friday, 22 November 1957, at the Ambassador Hotel in Bhamdoun and from there the cortège will proceed to Bkerke to offer its good wishes to the Patriarch. Groups from all over the country will converge on Bkerke to take part in the festivities.

This plan has two objectives: the first is to increase the rift between HE the President of the Republic and the Patriarch, and the second to affect a rapprochement with the Maronites and win their support for the union between Egypt and Syria in preparation for Lebanon's future accession. Propagandists in favour of the union in Lebanon started collecting signatures from officials, intellectuals, and parliamentarians. Beirut's Islamic Judge began sending telegrams of support, Chouf representative Anouar al-Khativ sent his own telegram of support, and hundreds such telegrams are currently in the process of being signed.