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SUBJECT : Evolution of Syrian Foreign Policy

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During the course of a call June 23, 1971, on the Foreign Office's Secretary General, Najib Sadaga, the Chargé asked the Secretary General how the deliberations of the Lebanese-Syrian Permanent Commission were progressing. Sadaga is the chairman of the Lebanese Delegation and had met with the Syrians on June 21.

Sadaga said that the Syrians had become considerably more flexible and there were good prospects for progress on a number of outstanding issues such as nationalized property of Lebanese citizens. This more conciliatory attitude had led to some optimism for progress on other, more important matters such as sharing of the headwaters of the Orontes. However, Sadaga added, one could never count on stability in Syrian attitudes and there might at any time be a reversion to previous rigid positions.

In talks with the Syrian Foreign Minister, 'Abd al Halim Khaddam, Sadaga said that it was clear how far Syrian foreign policy had evolved. (He added that Khaddam's own attitude had softened considerably.)

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