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Kings, Queens, Rooks and Pawns: Deciphering Lebanon's Political Chessboard

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Author
Bordenkircher, Eric

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Kings, Queens, Rooks and Pawns:

Deciphering Lebanon's Political Chessboard

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction

Of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in Islamic Studies

by

Eric James Bordenkircher

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Kings, Queens, Rooks and Pawns: Deciphering Lebanon's Political Chessboard

By

Eric James Bordenkircher

Doctor of Philosophy in Islamic Studies

University of California, Los Angeles, 2015

Professor Steven Spiegel, Co-Chair

Professor Leonard Binder, Co-Chair

This dissertation analyzes a fundamental and ubiquitous facet of Lebanese politics that has been relatively absent from scholarship — the strategic interaction that occurs amongst and between domestic and regional/extra-regional actors. In Lebanon's complicated political landscape which individuals, political parties or countries are necessary for a political agreement, what makes these actors necessary for an agreement and how do they arrive at an agreement? To answer these questions and make sense of Lebanon's intricate political space, my work employs an innovative framework of analysis, an adaptation of George Tsebelis's veto players approach. Tsebelis's framework provides an ideal way to trace and interpret the agreement-making process because it allows one to incorporate domestic and international politics. The veto players framework is utilized to examine four instances of agreement in Lebanese history that incorporated external actors: 1) the transfer of the presidency from Camille Shamun to Fuad Shihab in

1958; 2) the Cairo Agreement of 1969; 3) the Taif Accord; and 4) the Doha Agreement in 2008.

An extensive analysis of these cases reveals two sets of findings. In regards to Lebanon, I argue that Lebanese politics fluctuates between a 2 and 3- veto player system. The oscillating of actors is attributable to the degree, acquisition and retention of veto power of an actor. Additionally, the foundation of Lebanon's political stability has historically been understood as a *modus vivendi* between the Maronite Catholics and Sunni Muslims. As these cases have demonstrated, political agreement has never truly been between the leadership of the Maronites and the Sunnis. From a broader perspective I argue that the intra-confessional politics, not inter-confessional politics are critical for the arrival at an agreement. Furthermore, the international factor is crucial to the enhancement of a domestic actor's power, so much so that we find only two exceptions. These findings are not only significant for comprehending Lebanon, but can provide insight into the political dynamics of other weak/failed states.

The dissertation of Eric James Bordenkircher is approved.

Richard Dekmejian

Ismail Poonawala

Leonard Binder, Committee Co-Chair

Steven Spiegel, Committee Co-Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

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VITA

EDUCATION

McGill University/Institute of Islamic Studies
Master of Arts in Islamic Studies

Boston College
Bachelor of Arts in History
Focus on Middle Eastern History

PUBLICATIONS

"Kings, Queens, Rooks and Pawns: Towards Deciphering the Lebanese Political Chessboard."
Review of Middle East Studies Winter 2013 (47:2), 202-9.

Invited Talks

Lebanon, Syria and Iraq: Roots of Current Conflict @ The Reagan Library	Simi Valley, CA Nov 1, 2014
Islamic Civilization & Societies Distinguished Lecture Series @ Boston College	Boston, MA March 24, 2014

Papers Delivered at National and International Conferences

"The Best Defense is a Good Offense: Hezbollah and the conflict in Syria" International Studies Association West (ISA West)	Pasadena, CA Sept 27, 2014
"Failure is Forbidden: The Road to the Taif Agreement" American Political Science Association (APSA)	Washington, DC August 30, 2014
"Reading the writing on the wall: Mapping Political Geography through graffiti and posters in Lebanon" Presented at the Association of American Geographers (AAG)	Los Angeles, CA April 12, 2013
"Agreeing to kick the can down the road – the future of domestic politics in the Middle East?" Presented at the Middle East Dialogue Third Annual Conference	Washington, DC Feb 21, 2013
"Between Scylla and Charybdis: Understanding the Dynamics of Lebanese Foreign Policy" Presented at the Association for the Study of the Middle East and Africa (ASMEA)	Washington, DC Oct 13, 2012
"'No Victor, No Vanquished' – Achieving Political Agreement in 1958 Lebanon" Presented at the Midwest Political Science Association (MPSA)	Chicago, IL April 13, 2012

"A state of perpetual paralysis? The Lebanese Political System after the Syrian withdrawal." Presented at the Middle East Studies Association (MESA)	San Diego, CA Nov 21, 2010
"Elections without losers? The Lebanese Political System after the Syrian withdrawal." Presented at the Association of American Geographers Annual Convention (AAG)	Washington, DC April 17, 2010
"Strategy plus Structure: Comprehending foreign intervention in the Lebanese milieu." Presented at the International Security and Arms Control/International Security Studies Section (ISAC/ISSS)	Monterey, CA October 16, 2009
"Understanding Foreign Intervention in Lebanon: A Cross Systems Model." Presented at the International Studies Association Annual Convention (ISA)	New York, NY February 18, 2009
"Understanding Lebanon in International Relations Theory: An Exception to the Rules?" Presented as part of American University of Beirut's Center for Arab and Middle East Studies Brown Bag Lunch Series	Beirut, Lebanon February 12, 2009
"Islamists and a Pluralist Society: Hezbollah and Jama'ah al-Islamiyyah's Consociational Experience in Lebanon." Presented at the 9th Annual Conference of the Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy	Washington, DC May 14, 2008

Fellowships

2011 Project on Middle East Political Science Travel Grant

2008-09, 09-10, 10-11, 12-13 Islamic Studies Fellowship

Summer 2008 - Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship for Arabic

2007 Graduate Summer Research Fellowship

2004-2005, 2005-2006 Academic Year and Summer 2005 - Foreign Language

and Area Studies

Chapter 1

Making the case for a Lebanese political chessboard

Introduction

On 30 July 2010, Syrian President Bashshar al-Al-As'ad and Saudi King 'Abdullah disembarked from the same plane at the Beirut International Airport. Their visit came at a critical time in Lebanese politics. Tensions were mounting between the Sunni-dominated March 14 political grouping and the Shia-dominated March 8 political grouping. The recent escalation in tension was attributable to the forthcoming indictments from the Special Tribunal for Lebanon. Created in 2005, the tribunal has been tasked with bringing to justice those responsible for the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik al-Hariri in February 2005. It was rumored that the imminent indictments targeted members of Lebanon's only remaining militia and the largest Shia political party, Hizbullah. Hizbullah and its allies perceived the Tribunal as an instrument of Israel and the United States to undermine the party and its militia. For supporters of Hariri, particularly the Sunni community, the failure to carry out the indictments would be a miscarriage of justice for Lebanon and their revered former leader.

The historic visit of the leaders of Syria and Saudi Arabia on 20 July would defuse the tensions and mark an attempt at reaching a *modus vivendi* between the competing forces in Lebanon. This *modus vivendi* endured for a little over four months. It began to unravel during a trip to the United States by Prime Minister Saad al-Hariri. Over the course of his stay he met with King Abdullah, French President Nicolas Sarkozy, and US Secretary of State Hilary Clinton. Shortly thereafter, on 13 January, the *modus vivendi* that had been engineered by the Saudis and Syrians fell apart when Shia

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government ministers resigned leading to the collapse of the Lebanese government. Immediately fingers were pointed at the suspected culprits for the sudden turn of events. They included Saudi Arabia, the United States and Hizbullah.[1] Various explanations to this dramatic turn of events remain to this day. But an explanation to this event is not the objective of this study; this episode elucidates a broader phenomenon and puzzle.

A political narrative of this nature is not unique but the norm for Lebanese politics. On almost any given day, one can scour the headlines of the Lebanese press and observe the presentation of Lebanese domestic politics in the context of regional/extra-regional developments or its literal interaction with external actors/states. For example, on 6 May 2010, two of the leading Lebanese dailies, *As-Safīr* and *Ad-Diyār*, carried distinct front page headlines which captured this reality. The leading *As-Safīr* headline proclaimed, "The return of Junblāṭ from Riyadh: Mutually confirms the importance of peace with Syria." The leading *Ad-Diyār* headline stated, "Municipal Elections move forward under the auspices of a Syrian-Saudi-French understanding."[2]

The narrative and headlines suggest that agreement/cooperation in the Lebanese milieu is contingent on a variety of actors that are domestic and external. This reality — the involvement of a large and diverse number of actors — leads to the questions: How is agreement/cooperation achieved in this convoluted political space? Is it a gradual process based on reciprocity? Are domestic actors "free" to reach agreement with their counterparts? Yet, why is there a high level of external involvement in Lebanese affairs? Are these external actors needed for achieving an agreement or cooperation? Or are they the source of the problems? Are external actors drawn into the fray by Lebanese

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[1] Nada Bakri, "Resignations Deepen Crisis For Lebanon" *The New York Times*, January 13, 2011, A1.
[2] *Ad-Diyār*: Al-intkhābāt al-baladiyyah tasīr fī ẓilli al-tafāhum As-Sūryī - As-Saʿūdī- al-Fransī. *As-Safīr:* Junblāṭ al-ʿāida min al-Riyāḍ: taʾkīd mutabādal liaḥmiyyati al-musālahah maʿ Sūriyā.

domestic players or do external actors perceive their involvement in Lebanon as integral to their country's foreign policy/security? Understanding these dynamics is essential for a deeper comprehension of the Lebanese political system and constructing a security architecture that will facilitate peace and stability in Lebanon and possibly in the Middle East.

The objective of this study is twofold: 1) propound a framework of analysis — the Veto Players — to grapple with the convoluted political space of Lebanon; and 2) apply the framework to indentify the conditions for agreement/cooperation in the Lebanese milieu, understand how those conditions are achieved that makes an agreement/cooperation attainable and recognize who are the necessary players needed for a sustainable agreement/cooperation? To successfully answer these questions I have chosen to analyze four instances of agreement/cooperation of varying success in the Lebanese milieu which entail the involvement of domestic and external actors: 1) the transfer of the presidency from Sham'ūnto Shihāb in 1958; 2) the Cairo Agreement of 1969; 3) the Taif Accord; 4) the Doha Agreement.

Studies have argued that political elites are central to agreement in religiously and ethnically divided societies. Most notably, Eric Nordlinger in *Conflict Regulation in Divided Societies* propounds the theory that predominant elites (elites who are capable of controlling their followers) are critical for regulating conflict. Nordlinger asserts: "They [predominant elites], and they alone, can make a direct and positive contribution."[3] In this context he specifically cites Lebanon's patron-client relationship

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[3] Eric Nordlinger, *Conflict Regulation in Divided Societies* (Cambridge: Center for International Affairs at Harvard University, 1972), 118.

in which the patrons (Lebanon's predominant elites) are the "guarantors of peace."[4] Nordlinger rightly attributes importance to Lebanese elites and their role in political agreement/cooperation but his conclusion expounds a narrow understanding of the dynamics of political agreement in Lebanon. Nordlinger's conclusion regarding conflict regulation in divided societies requires a revision. Nordlinger and others have ignored the critical role played by external actors in conflict regulation in Lebanon.

Through an analysis of four cases using the Veto Players framework, this study demonstrates that external actors impede and facilitate agreement among Lebanon's elites. Elite predominance has been overshadowed by external actors who have become part and parcel of the political process in Lebanon. With the support of an external actor or the belief that an external actor will eventually support them, a predominant elite can pursue interests to the detriment of the rest of Lebanon's communities. The pursuit of these interests by a predominant elite only ceases when the interests of external actors converge, thus forcing cooperation among Lebanon's predominant elites. The presence of external actors does impede conflict regulation in Lebanon, but not necessarily because external actors are directly interfering in Lebanese affairs. Rather predominant elites feel no need to concede with external backing or support. The establishment of common ground between external actors precedes any concessions or agreement between Lebanese domestic players. Without external agreement, these four cases demonstrate that Lebanese actors would not have reached a consensus.

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[4] Ibid., 81-2.

The significance of conceptualizing a political chessboard for Lebanon, the

Middle East and beyond

Academic studies have largely overlooked the interplay between domestic and international actors or have not systematically analyzed and successfully addressed the phenomenon. Studies on Lebanese politics have either largely focused on the challenges to the modernization of the political system, the individual interaction of Lebanon's various confessions or the interference/intervention of a specific external actor. This is a glaring deficiency in the literature for the following reasons:

a) A fundamental and ubiquitous facet of Lebanese politics — the bargaining or strategic interaction that occurs among and between domestic and regional/extra-regional actors — has been relatively absent from scholarship;

b) Lebanon remains an important component of a critical geo-strategic region and has been engulfed by civil wars. Its conflicts have involved multiple external actors, and Lebanon currently embodies many of the conflicts or perceived conflicts present in the region and the world (i.e. Arab/Israeli, Sunni/Shia, Muslim/Christian, US/Iran, Democracy/Autocracy and the war on terror);

c) The Arab Spring has revealed the deep ethnic, religious and tribal divisions throughout many of the countries of the region. It has also produced increasing amounts of political intransigence, instability and inevitably a growing number of weak/failed states in the Middle East.[5] As we have witnessed, elections, the transfer of power, the appointment of officials, the drafting of policy and the reforming of institutions have become hotly contested political issues that have erupted into violence and at times

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[5] A weak, failing or failed state entails the inability of the government to coerce its citizens to abide by laws in parts or throughout the state.

have been manipulated by external actors (i.e. France, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the United States). These developments starkly resemble the political dynamics of Lebanon for the past fifty years. And thus makes Lebanon suitable to act as a laboratory for analyzing and understanding these recent phenomena.

This void in the literature and relevance of the topic demands a more comprehensive understanding of the Lebanese political system and the international relations of the Middle East. Furthermore, the unusual dynamics of the Lebanese political milieu — the intense co-mingling of domestic and international actors — provides the opportunity to make a contribution to the analytical frameworks of political science.

Although the focus of this study is on Lebanon and its relationship with the Middle East and the international system, it also has a broader significance. As previously mentioned Lebanon's political characteristics and behavior are shared by other relatively weak, failing or failed states (i.e. Iraq, Somalia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, the former Yugoslavia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo). Similar to Lebanon, these states are ethnically and/or religiously diverse, have demonstrated a propensity for ethnic/religious conflict which can spread to neighboring states, provide justification for the intervention of other states, become arenas for external conflicts, and can offer safe havens for non-state actors (i.e. terrorists). The precarious reality of these states provides an impetus for developing a framework of analysis suitable for not only addressing the Lebanese paradigm, but these states as well. In addition, the absence of an ideal framework of analysis portends the relative lack of theory in regards to how Lebanon and other weak, failing, and failed states interact with the outside world and how the outside world interacts with them. This is a conspicuous void considering that Lebanon,

as indicated earlier, can be perceived as a microcosm of the region and these other states continue to be a central security concern of the international community.

Literature Review

Understanding how and why various parties come to an agreement has been a common theme of many studies in comparative politics and international relations. However, Lebanon does not fit neatly into the paradigms of these respective disciplines. Considering the propensity of foreign interference in Lebanese affairs and the relative independence of certain Lebanese domestic players, the line separating domestic politics and international relations is often obfuscated. This reality poses a quandary of sorts for political scientists because these respective fields have largely remained exclusive analytical domains in academic studies. If one wants to fully comprehend the Lebanese political milieu and its workings this divide must be bridged. The existing literature on the Lebanese political system, the numerous studies on foreign intervention in Lebanon, the relative dearth of international relations literature on Lebanon, and studies on ethnic conflict have clearly demonstrated that scholars have yet to properly crack this analytical conundrum and have only produced the most minimal of theory on the dynamics of agreement in Lebanon.

a) *Comparative Politics and its shortcomings*

Lebanon, a nation of roughly 4 million people but home to eighteen confessions, has been attracting the attention of political scientists for over fifty years.[6] This

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[6] As of July 2012, the CIA World Factbook estimates that Lebanon's population is about 4.1 million. It also estimates that 59% of the population is Muslim while 39% of the population is Christian. The eighteen

attention appears attributable to two reasons: 1) Lebanon's existence as the only democratic country in the Arab world; 2) its heterogeneity and how these confessions function together in a political system. As a result, Lebanon has been the focus of political modernization studies and typologies (i.e. consociationalism).

Much of the scholarship on the Lebanese political system prior to the Lebanese civil war focused on the stability of the system. Stability, in the notable works of Enver Khoury, Michael Hudson, and Leonard Binder, must be understood as the product of an ongoing process of adaptation to national, economic and institutional development, the broadening and deepening of political participation, and the centralization of authority.[7] A prominent theme of these works was whether the Lebanese political system would be able to continue to adapt or modernize into a modern liberal democracy. Each study approaches the topic from a slightly different perspective, but ultimately their concern is evaluating its democratic prospects.

Enver Khoury provides a more scientific and technical explanation of the political system's "stability." He presents Lebanon's politics as an "open system" which is thus affected by a multitude of variables, internal and external. However this scientific approach is confusing at times in regards to the numerous variables identified and its application to the empirical realities of Lebanon. Ultimately the analysis appears rather

confessions include: Sunni, Shia, Druze, Alawite, Ismaili, Maronite Catholic, Greek Orthodox, Melkite Catholic, Armenian Orthodox, Syrian Catholic, Armenian Catholic, Syrian Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Chaldean, Assyrian, Coptic, Protestant and Jewish confession is a group that adheres to a specific religious creed. See https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/le.html.

[7] There have been a myriad of studies on Lebanon and its political system. Some of the more notable studies include: Micheal Hudson, *The Precarious Republic: Political Modernization in Lebanon*.(New York: Random House, 1968). Enver Khoury, *The Operational Capability of the Lebanese Political System* (Beirut: Catholic Press, 1972). *Politcs in Lebanon*, ed. Leonard Binder (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1966). Elie Salem, *Modernization without Revolution: Lebanon's Experience* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973). Leila Meo, *Lebanon: Improbable Nation – A Study in Political Development* (Westport, Ct: Greenwood Press, 1965).

incomplete, disjointed and unclear. Khoury only loosely analyzes a limited period of time

which is not particularly useful for developing a theory, thus resulting in a more

hypothetical study. For example, the study concludes by stating:

> Will Lebanon be able to continue, as it has in the past, the process of
> practical reconciliation through the means of negotiation and
> compromise? Only time will tell![8]

Unlike Khoury, Michael Hudson's study of the modernization of the Lebanese

system largely avoids the technical language and diagrams and relies on a more empirical

analysis. His detailed account examines the variables (i.e. political players and

government institutions) that have the potential to stabilize or disrupt the system. This

analysis is lacking in one critical area — how do the relevant political players or

institutions reach an agreement? This shortcoming is particularly apparent in his

discussion of the Shihāb presidency and its successes. While Hudson notes the

considerable "successes" of the Shihāb presidency, the examination of how it was

accomplished is rather superficial. Much like the previous work, this deficiency

demonstrates that studies focus on the characteristics of the system and not necessarily on

how parties reach or fail to reach an agreement. Leonard Binder's chapter, "Political

Change in Lebanon," begins to address this void in the literature; however it can be

further developed.

Similar to the previous scholars, Binder is concerned with the stability of the

Lebanese system.[9] The article provides an understanding of how the various factions

reach an agreement. For example, he identifies certain political parties as "challengers" to

the Lebanese system, but it is unclear which cases he is talking about. Furthermore, he

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[8] Khoury, 441.
[9] Binder, "Political Change in Lebanon," 283-327.

does not consider the role of external parties in the process of reaching agreements. This study and the aforementioned studies are useful, particularly from a comparative standpoint, as well as a means for determining what made the system "succeed," but they do not provide an adequate understanding of how accommodation or compromises are reached and there is no insight into the "reformed" Lebanese system that emerged at the end of the civil war.

Scholarship following the civil war has been relatively sparse. A refinement of the aforementioned studies and critiques has been largely abandoned. The relative dearth of post-civil war literature appears to be attributable to two reasons: the Syrian intervention and its relative dominance of the system.[10] Where literature does exist on the Lebanese political system, particularly since the outbreak of the civil war, it emphasizes the problems and "precarious" nature of the system.[11] The trend in more recent literature is to not only identify the problems of power-sharing formula in Lebanon, but propose "solutions" or "reforms" to the system of governance.[12] These studies provide insight and are beneficial; however they fail to comprehensively articulate the workings of the

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[10] Regarding the issue of Syrian intervention and its relative dominance see: Tom Pierre Najem, "Lebanon and Europe: The Foreign Policy of a Penetrated State," In *Analyzing Foreign Policies and the Relationship with Europe*, ed. Gerd Nonneman (New York, Routledge, 2005), 100-122. For literature in general on the post-civil war period see: Michael Hudson, "Lebanon after Ta'if : another reform opportunity lost?" *Arab Studies Quarterly* 21 (1999): 27-38. Michael Hudson, "The Problem of Authoritative Power in Lebanese Politics: Why Consociationalism Failed." In *Lebanon: A History of Conflict and Consensus*, eds. Nadim Shehadi and Dana Haffar Mills, 224-39. London: The Center for Lebanese Studies, 1988. Michael Hudson, "Trying Again: Power-Sharing in Post-Civil War Lebanon." *International Negotiation* 2 (1997): 103-22. Volker Perthes, "Syrian Predominance in Lebanon: Not Immutable," in *Lebanon on Hold: Implications for Middle East Peace*, eds. Rosemary Hollis and Nadim Shehadi (London: The Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1996), 31-4. Farid el-Khazen, "The Postwar Political Process: Authoritarianism by Diffusion," in *Lebanon in Limbo: Postwar Society and State in an Uncertain Regional Environment*, eds. Theodor Hanf and Nawaf Sala>m (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgeschellschaft, 2003), 53-74.
[11] Hudson, "Lebanon after Ta'if : another reform opportunity lost?" 36.
[12] Joseph G. Jabbra and Nancy W. Jabbra, "Consociational Democracy in Lebanon," in *Governance and Developing Countries* ed. Jamil Jreisat (Leiden: Brill, 2002),71-89. Imad Sala>mey and Rhys Payne, "Parliamentary Consociationalism in Lebanon: Equal Citizenry vs. Quoted Confessionalism," *The Journal of Legistlative Studies* (2008), 451-473.

post-civil war Lebanese political system. For example, Joseph and Nancy Jabbra argue

that based on previous scholarship consociationalism was doomed to fail in Lebanon and

now has in fact failed. At no point do they attempt to generate a picture of the workings

of the system beyond saying that: "Lebanon's political elites are going through the

motions of consociational democracy…"[13] Focusing on and critiquing this paradigm

does not provide the necessary picture or understanding of the bargaining environment

that currently exists in the Lebanese political system. The failure or dysfunction of

power-sharing does not mean that politics, namely political maneuvering, ceases to exist.

Furthermore, an important dynamic of Lebanese politics has yet to be addressed —

external interference.

Studies have often alluded to or addressed the regional environment and its

impact on Lebanon, however they have lacked significant analytical rigor.[14] For example,

Michael Hudson contends that the complete recovery of the Lebanese political system

after the civil war will be affected by external players. However his analysis does not

extend much beyond an empirical comment.[15] One recent study does explicitly look at

the role of the regional environment in Lebanon. Brenda Seaver argues that regional

instability affects Lebanon's politics, and she highlights many of the regional

developments that have had repercussions on it.[16] However, her analysis does not provide

adequate theoretical explanations as to how these developments impinge on the Lebanese

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[13] Jabbra, 84.

[14] Surprisingly there is not much on the role of regional politics and their relationship to Lebanese politics. For example Hudson mentions it on several occasions but does not suggest how this impacts the bargaining environment. Hudson, *The Precarious Republic*, 34-46.

[15] This is hinted at in Hudson, "Lebanon after the Ta'if: another reform opportunity lost?" 36. He elaborates this point in another article by stating: "…the effective implementation depends on outsiders: Syria above all, but also Israel, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United States." Michael Hudson, "Recent Evidence in Lebanon," in *Ethnic Conflict and International Politics in the Middle East*, ed. Leonard Binder (Gainesville: University of Florida, 1999), 108.

[16] Seaver, 258-71.

bargaining environment. Is it simply an imbalance of power? Do extra-regional powers also have a role in these developments too?

This deficiency in her analysis is clearly demonstrated in her treatment of the Cairo Agreement.[17] The Cairo Agreement of 1969 was an obvious infringement on Lebanese sovereignty and an imposition on its system of governance, however the mere incidence of this interference tells one very little about how the domestic and external environments interact. Is Lebanon completely subservient to external powers? Furthermore, Seaver's study doesn't explain how something could be imposed unilaterally on the Lebanese state. Is it just the product of a divided Lebanese political environment or a unified regional environment?

The second dimension of studies on the Lebanese political system can be characterized as a classification and an analysis of the actor's "behavior" in the system. The comparativist Arend Lijphart has identified Lebanon's political system as a consociational democracy.[18] Consociational democracy is a classification applied to those countries with deep ethnic, class, religious, linguistic and/or ideological divides. While many countries in the world have diverse populations, most of them contain official and unofficial organizations that facilitate the "mixing" of their respective societies — people (i.e. the leadership of these organizations) become exposed to crosscutting divides which produces "moderation" or "middle of the road" perspectives.[19] A country with a consociational democracy is generally bereft of these organizations and

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[17] Ibid., 259. The Cairo Agreement of 1969 allowed the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) to create a "state within a state." The Lebanese government ceded all control of the Palestinian camps in Lebanon over to the PLO.
[18] Arend Lipjhart, *Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), 147-150, and 153. Lipjhart believes that consociational democracy performed "satisfactorily" for more than thirty years in Lebanon, thus making the designation apropos. He identifies Lebanon's political system as a normative model of consociationalism.
[19] Ibid., 10-11.

thus perpetuates these cleavages by creating and sustaining a fragmented society with distinct segments. Furthermore, the absence of mixing or the creation of a more homogenous society presumes the propensity for a more unstable political system because these distinct segments generally do not share common interests. Therefore it becomes the responsibility of the elected elites of these segments to maintain the stability of the system and thus their actions and decisions entail "high stakes."[20]

Consociationalism provides an ideal way to classify or begin to observe the Lebanese political system.[21] However it is severely lacking if one wants to use it as a basis for theorizing, particularly since the Lebanese system is so prone to intransigence and conflict. The idea of consociationalism as propounded by Lijphart is unable to give a complete picture of the workings of the political system. In Lijphart's study, he recognizes several different manifestations of consociationalism. The proportionality manifestation best represents Lebanon. In this example, Lijphart suggests there are two approaches to addressing outstanding issues: linking issues together with reciprocal concessions or delegating the decisions to the leaders of the segments.[22] This leadership must attempt to reach some formula or understanding to "accommodate" or "consociate" the interests of each other. However, Lijphart provides no indication about how these leaders reach an agreement/compromise, especially since the interests of the segments often supersede the interests of the state. Furthermore, how and when do they avoid intransigence and prevent the system from breaking down?

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[20] Ibid., 28.
[21] Richard Hrair Dekmejian, "Consociational Democracy in Crisis: The Case of Lebanon." *Comparative Politics* 10:2 (Jan 1978), 251-265. Dekmejian's study is particularly useful for understanding the components of the Lebanese system and its shortcomings. It also points out some issues very useful for this study (i.e. the role of outside actors). However the study is similar to previous studies since its objective is focused on the sustainability of the system in light of a new stage of modernity.
[22] Ibid., 39-40.

Several authors have critiqued the consociational model conceptualized by Lijphart.[23] For the purposes of this study, several of Brian Barry's and George Tsebelis's criticisms are particularly relevant. Firstly, Barry suggests that the model may not be ideal for an ethnically divided society because unlike some religious and class conflict, ethnic divides are not always defined by a conflict of organization(s).[24] A leader of an ethnic group can easily be challenged or replaced from within the group and therefore the group is not defined by the leadership. With an ethnic group, it is ultimately their collective interest(s) that supersedes all other considerations even to the point of repressing other ethnicities.[25] The inability to account for this internal dynamic is also noted by Tsebelis. He argues that Lijphart's model does not consider intra-elite strategies or competition from within the group that has the potential to affect their inter-elite strategies.[26]

A second significant criticism by Barry and Tsebelis is Lijphart's emphasis on the role of elite behavior in these environments. Barry believes that in a democratic environment, the masses have more of a constraint on the actions of the elites than Lijphart acknowledges.[27] Tsebelis goes further with this critique of the role of the followers by claiming that Lijphart has largely ignored them – a particularly glaring omission considering their potential relevance to the political survival of these elites.[28] These critiques correctly emphasize the importance of politics within respective groups

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[23] For a comprehensive review of the critiques of consociationalism see: Brenda Seaver, "Regional Sources of Power-Sharing Failure: The Case of Lebanon," *Political Science Quarterly* 115:2 (Summer 2000), 251-254.
[24] Brian Barry, "Political Accommodation and Consociational Democracy," *British Journal of Political Science* 5:4 (1975), 501-2.
[25] Ibid., 502.
[26] George Tsebelis, *Nested Games: Rational Choice in Comparative Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 163.
[27] Barry, 499.
[28] Tsebelis, *Nested Games*, 162.

and their influence on agreements between groups; however similar to Lijphart, it is a thoroughly domestic perspective. As with many domestic political studies, there is the perception of a closed system or at least one that identifies a distinction between domestic and international politics.[29] This perception marginalizes or cannot properly account for the role of external actors in domestic politics – an unavoidable reality of Lebanon and therefore cannot contribute to theoretical development. Considering the perceived prominence of external actors in Lebanese politics, can we look to International Relations for solutions?

b) *International Relations and its shortcomings*

If one analyzes Lebanon from an International Relations perspective, it is the other side of the same coin. Instead of encountering the dilemma of addressing external actors in a domestic political system, one is faced with the opposite problem— what to do with the domestic environment? As the few foreign policy studies on Lebanon have demonstrated, any understanding of Lebanon in the international sphere requires a profound knowledge of the workings of the Lebanese political system and the inclusion of numerous external and non-state actors.[30] Furthermore, as indicated in the narrative on the opening page, the headline of Junblatt's visit to Saudi Arabia, Lebanese confessions and political parties often operate independently of the state. The inclusion of these

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[29] Oran Young, *Systems of Political Science* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1968), 21.

[30] Paul Salem, "Reflections on Lebanon's Foreign Policy," in *Peace for Lebanon? From War to Reconstruction*, ed. Deirdre Collings (Boulder: Lynne Reinerr, 1994), 69-82. Especially see Salem, p. 81. Footnote #1.The difficulties of locating a "Lebanese Foreign Policy" is addressed in GHasan Sala>me, "Is a Lebanese Foreign Policy Possible?" In *Toward a Viable Lebanon*, Ed. Halim Barakat (Washington DC: Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, 1988), 347-60. Nassif H{itti>'s analysis demonstrates the complexity of Lebanon's domestic politics and its various ideologies. Nassif H{itti>, *Foreign Policy of Lebanon: Lessons and Prospects for the Forgotten Dimension* (Oxford: Centre for Lebanese Studies, 1989). Najem, "Lebanon and Europe: The Foreign Policy of a Penetrated State," 100-122.

subjects makes Lebanon an enigma for the various international relations theories and poses methodological problems for scholars.

Firstly, the dominance of the neo-realist paradigm in the field of international relations during the last 30 years which has largely precluded a reductionist approach (i.e. minimizing the realm of Lebanese domestic politics). Secondly, as mentioned earlier, the actions of certain Lebanese players are problematic for theorists because it obscures the role of the state. This is evident in the recent words of Lebanese President Michel Suleiman.

> …... that [states] cooperate with the Lebanese state specifically with the president of the state who is responsible for its relations with other states ……[31]

This reality constitutes a challenging predicament for traditional analysis in international relations. International Relations theories, whether they are realist or constructivist, have generally focused on the state as the unit of analysis.[32] Even the theories that advertise as being third-world friendly still tend to treat the state or regime as a unitary actor.[33] The unitary actor theme is also a feature of approaches that emphasize the relationship between the domestic and international spheres (i.e. two-level games). While this

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[31] *As-sharq al-Awsaṭ* (Jan 12, 2009) One could interpret Suleiman's comments as a means to strengthen the office of the Presidency, nevertheless it does demonstrate that Lebanese parties act independently of the state. The obvious example is Hizbullah, but other Lebanese parties are also guilty.

[32] See Hans Morgentheau, *Politics among Nations* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1985). Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is what States make of it," *International Organization* 46 (1992), 391-425.

[33] Although pluralism, omni-balancing, and subaltern realism emphasize the role of domestic factors in foreign policy decisions and behavior, I don't see a single policy in Lebanon. An obvious example is Hizbullah's attack on Israel in 2006. It was not supported by large segments of the Lebanese society. Although Hizbullah portrayed the operation as a Lebanese operation and in the interests of Lebanon, Sami>r Geagea, leader of the Lebanese Forces (a largely Christian political party), remarked shortly after the war began that this was not an operation approved by the Lebanese state. For omni-balancing see Stephen David, "Explaining Third World Alignment," *World Politics* 43 (January 1991), 233-56. For pluralism see *The Many Faces of National Security in the Arab World*, eds. Baghat Korany, Paul Noble, and Rex Brynen. (Houndsmill, Hampshire: Macmillan, 1993). For subaltern realism see Mohammad Ayoob "Subaltern Realism: International Relations Theory meets the 3rd World" in *International Relations Theory and the Third World*, ed. Stephanie Neuman (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998), 31-54.

approach does consider the role of domestic politics in international developments, the

understanding of a divide or filter between the domestic and international still exists.

Furthermore, these approaches have not adequately enough developed to properly

address the Lebanese context since as evinced by the previous pages it contains several

levels (i.e. domestic, regional, and extra-regional actors). [34]

Additionally, the numerous actors involved in Lebanon immediately bring the

level of analysis dilemma to the forefront.[35] This is problematic because there is the

potential to mix up sources of explanation or having to decide between a top-down or

bottom-up approach. This is particularly glaring when a non-state/sub-state actor like

Hizbullah can have systemic effects at the regional level and external actors (e.g. Syria,

Saudi Arabia or the United States) can have considerable influence on internal Lebanese

developments.[36] The issue of the numerous actors involved and their repercussions on the

Lebanese milieu is also a shortcoming of the literature on foreign intervention in

Lebanon.

Numerous foreign interventions have plagued Lebanon and it continues to be an

arena for multiple domestic, regional and extra-regional actor involvement. Scholarship

on foreign intervention has overwhelmingly addressed individual occurrences of

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[34] There is a variety of literature that attempts to explain the international behavior of states through an understanding of the interdependence between the domestic and international realms. Peter Gourevitch, "The Second Image Reversed: the international sources of domestic politics," *International Organization* 32 (1978), 881-911. James Rosenau, "Toward the Study of National-International Linkages," In *Linkage Politics*, Ed. James Rosenau (New York: The Free Press, 1969), 44-63. Robert Putnam, "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of two-level games," *International Organization* 42 (1988), 427-60. John Kurt Jacobson. Review: "Are all Politics Domestic? Perspectives on the Integration of Comparative Politics and International Relations Theory." *Comparative Politics* 29 (Oct 1996): 93-115.

[35] J. David Singer, "The Level–of-Analysis Problem in International Relations," *World Politics* 14:1 (1961), 77-92.

[36] Evidence of this is the arrest of "Hizbullah members" in Egypt in the spring of 2009 and the recent expulsion of Lebanese Shia from the United Arab Emirates.

intervention or a particular country's intervention(s) during specified periods of time.[37]

These studies are critical for the clarification of events and narratives in order to assess

the various motivations and rationale of individual actors or countries at a particular time;

however, they neglect to adequately explain the bargaining/strategic interaction between

the domestic, regional, and extra-regional actors. This is a significant oversight because

the reasons for and the effects of intervention are never completely isolated.

These studies fail to fully account for the complexity of the Lebanese

environment (i.e. the numerous domestic, regional, and global actors involved in

Lebanon at any given time) and/or omit any analysis of interventional behavior to

determine changes, patterns or reoccurring characteristics in the Lebanese context. For

example, John Devlin's review of Naomi Weinberger's study on Syrian intervention in

Lebanon from 1975-76 identifies her failure to account for the "Israeli factor" in Syrian

decision-making in 1975-76.[38] Other works clearly recognize the strategic interaction

occurring within Lebanon but fail to present a well developed theoretical understanding

of this interaction (i.e. how agreement/cooperation is achieved). In doing so they either

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[37] I have identified a few of these works: Yair Evron, *War and Intervention in Lebanon: The Israeli-Syrian Deterrence Dialogue* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987); Naomi Weinberger, *Syrian Intervention in Lebanon: The 1975-76 Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986); Shai Feldman, "Israel's Involvement in Lebanon: 1975-1985," in *Foreign Military Intervention: The Dynamics of Foreign Intervention*, Eds. Ariel Levite, Bruce Jentleson and Larry Berman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), 129-61; Ralph Hallenbeck, *Military Force as an Instrument of US Foreign Policy: Intervention in Lebanon, August 1982 – February 1984* (New York: Praeger, 1991); Irene Gendzier, *Notes from the Minefield: US intervention in Lebanon and the Middle East, 1945-58* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997); Michael Nehme, "Lebanon: Open Arena for Regional Feuds," *Journal of Third World Studies* 12:1 (1995), 120-50; Karen Rasler, "Internationalized Civil War: A Dynamic Analysis of the Syrian Intervention in Lebanon," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 27:3 (1983), 421-456; Agnes G. Korbani, *U.S. Intervention in Lebanon, 1958 and 1982: Presidential Decision making* (New York: Praeger, 1991).

[38] John Devlin, Review of *Syrian Intervention in Lebanon: The 1975-76 Civil War* by Naomi Weinberger, *Middle East Journal* 41:3 (Summer 1987), 452. See also Yossi Olmert's study on the Syrian presence in Lebanon from 1976-1991, does not consider the changing global political dynamics in the late 1980s. Yossi Olmert, "Syria in Lebanon," in *Foreign Military Intervention: The Dynamics of Foreign Intervention*, Eds. Ariel Levite, Bruce Jentleson and Larry Berman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), 95-128.

gloss over the complexity of Lebanese domestic politics, present the problems/failures of

previous interventions to facilitate future intervention(s) or only analyze a limited time

frame.[39]

c) *Ethnic Conflict and its shortcomings*

The heterogeneity of Lebanese society and the conflict among its confessions also

requires an evaluation of ethnic conflict studies and international relations.[40] This

literature has attempted to bridge the divide between domestic politics and international

relations. For example, Stephen Ryan's work highlights the influence of international

developments on consociational democracies, an insight lacking in most literature,

however the study is more of a "how to solve/stop ethnic conflict by the international

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[39] Nora Bayrakdarian Kabakian, *Liban entre stabilité intérieure et sécurité régionale* (Brussels: Bruylant, 2008).Kabakian's recent study provides some of the best insight but her treatment of the issues deserve further refinement. Walid E. Moubarak, *The Position of a Weak State in an Unstable Region: The Case of Lebanon* (Abu Dhabi: The Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research, 2003). Brenda Seaver, "Regional Sources of Power-Sharing Failure: The Case of Lebanon," *Political Science Quarterly* 115:2 (Summer 2000), 247-271. *L'Avenir Du Liban dans le Contexte Régional et International*, eds. Paul Balta and Georges Corm (Paris: EDI, 1990). Georges Corm, *Geopolitique du conflict libanais: Etude historique et sociologique* (Paris: Éditions La Découverte, 1986). Karim Pakradouni, *Le Piege de la malediction libanaise a la guerre ud Golfe* (Paris: B. Grasset, 1991). GHasan Tueni, *Une guerre pour les autres* (Beirut: Dar An-Nahar, 2006). Enver Koury, *The Crisis in the Lebanese System: Confessionalism and Chaos*. (Washington DC, The American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1976). Philip Windsor, "Lebanon: An International Perspective," In *Politics and the Economy in Lebanon*. Eds. Nadim Shehadi and Bridget Harney (Oxford: Centre for Lebanese Studies, 1989), 75-78. Hussein Sirriyeh, *Lebanon: Dimensions of Conflict*, (London: Brassey's for International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1989). Michael Hudson, "The Domestic Context and Perspectives in Lebanon," In *International Organizations and Ethnic Conflict*, Eds. Milton Esman and Shibley Telhami (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), 126-47. Naomi Weinberger, "How Peace Keeping Becomes Intervention: Lessons from the Lebanese Experience, In *International Organizations and Ethnic Conflict*, Eds. Milton Esman and Shibley Telhami (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), 148-75. Robert Rabil, *Embattled Neighbors: Syrian, Israel, and Lebanon* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2003). Elizabeth Picard, "Could Salvation come from Syria?" in *Politics and the Economy in Lebanon*, eds. Nadim Shehadi and Bridget Harney (Oxford: Centre for Lebanese Studies, 1989), 85-102.

[40] Stephen Ryan, *Ethnic Conflict and International Relations* (Aldershot: Dartmouth Publishing, 1990). *Ethnic Conflict in International Relations*, edited by Astri Suhrke and Lela Garner Noble (New York: Praeger, 1977). *The International Spread of Ethnic Conflict*, edited by David Lake and Donald Rothchild (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998). Donald Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985). *Civil War, Insecurity and Intervention*, edited by Barbara Walter and Jack Snyder (New York: Columbia Press, 1999).

community" than an analysis of how cooperation is reached by disputing parties. The study on the early years of the Lebanese civil war by Leila Meo in Astri Suhrke and Lela Garner Noble's *Ethnic Conflict in International Relations* also provides a well developed account of the internal and external political dimension of Lebanon. However its objective is to understand the escalation of conflict and the partition of the state.[41] The more recently edited volume by David Lake and Donald Rothchild, *The International Spread of Ethnic Conflict*, is useful for the purposes of this study for developing an understanding of strategic interaction in the Lebanese milieu. However, the notion of the spread or diffusion of ethnic conflict is not always embodied in Lebanon. Lebanon often appears to be the receiver, not the spreader of problems. For example, Iraqi support of Michel Aoun's forces during Aoun's War of Liberation against the Syrian army is the product of a Bathist dispute between the Iraqi and Syrian regimes. Therefore, it has nothing to do with ethnicity. The central problem with this genre of literature is that conflict in Lebanon is not necessarily always of an ethnic nature — the Cairo Agreement between the Lebanese government and the PLO and the May 1983 Agreement between the Lebanese government and Israel were not products of ethnic conflict. Therefore while these studies are constructive, they do not provide an adequate model to analyze cooperation/agreement in Lebanon.

Additionally, literature exists on the cessation of conflict or agreement in the Lebanese milieu. However, once again it lacks theoretical development. For example, Nawaf Salam's reason for why the Taif accord emerged in 1989 and was implemented in 1990, amounts to a "the stars were aligned" explanation. Sala>m writes:

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[41] Meo, 122.

> The agreement was, indeed, predicated on the readiness of the Lebanese adversaries……But Taif was also made possible by the concurrence of a series of favorable external changes.[42]

While this explanation correctly identifies the empirical reality of the accord's emergence and implementation, it only provides the mere suggestion that domestic developments coincide with regional developments. Does this speak true in other cases? Is this the case with all agreements in Lebanon? Must external change precede domestic change? Is one change ultimately more important than another? Elizabeth Picard's explanation is even less developed. She only states that the "diversion of the Gulf War" provided Syria with the opportunity to defeat Aoun.[43] The most theoretically developed argument in regards to the cessation of violence in Lebanon comes from Birthe Hansen. Hansen propounds that the end of the civil war was a product of the end of the bipolar global environment.[44]Although as F. Gregory Gause has pointed out, Hansen's theory is imprecise. [45]

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[42] Nawaf Salam, "Taif Revisited," in *Lebanon in Limbo: Postwar Society and State in an Uncertain Regional Environment*, eds. Theodor Hanf and Nawaf Salam (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgeschellschaft, 2003), 40. Some other examples of the minimal theoretical development include Hani Faris's explanation. Faris says, "Prior to Ta'if, various combinations of international, regional, and Lebanese domestic circumstances had contributed to the failure of every peacemaking effort." Hani A. Faris, "The Failure of Peacemaking in Lebanon, 1975-1989," in *Peace for Lebanon? From War to Reconstruction*, ed. Deirdre Collings (Boulder: Lynne Reinerr, 1994), 27.

[43] Elizabeth Picard, *Lebanon: A shattered country, Myths and Realities of the Wars in Lebanon*, translated from the French by Franklin Philip (New York: Holmes and Meier, 2002), 139.

[44] Birthe Hansen, *Unipolarity and the Middle East* (Richmond Surrey: Curzon, 2000), 147-8.

[45] While Hansen argues that change in the global system will have repercussions elsewhere, he does not necessarily tell us how things will change. F. Gregory Gause III, "Theory and System in Understanding Middle East Politics: Rereading Paul Noble's 'The Arab System: Pressures, Constraints, and Opportunities'" in *Persistent Permeability: Regionalism, Localism and Globalization in the Middle East*. eds. Bassel Salloukh and Rex Brynen (Hants, Surrey: Ashgate, 2004), 26. See footnote 23.

Conceptualizing and framing the Lebanese political chessboard:

Simultaneously grappling with Lebanon and other actors

As demonstrated by this literature review, the studies on Lebanon have a tendency to be superficial and those that are not, have a tendency to be exclusive rather than inclusive analyses. If one wants to properly analyze Lebanon, one is faced with several daunting tasks. Lebanon stretches across two disciplines and encompasses several tiers of what appears to be an enormous game that involves a multitude of actors. If one thinks purely as a student of comparative politics or international relations, these issues will never be adequately addressed. In order to properly grapple with Lebanon and determine how an agreement is reached, one must largely ignore the issue of disparate analytical domains and levels. Rather, one must perceive the Lebanese political system as overlapping with the regional and international system and focus on identifying only those actors in these various systems that have the capability to block a change in the status quo of Lebanese political matters.[46] Secondly, one must also understand how and why actors in the Lebanese milieu are willing or capable of blocking a change in the status quo at certain times but not at other times. I believe the ideal method for addressing the fragmented political body of Lebanon and the external interference is through the adaptation and application of the analytical framework and theory from George Tsebelis's *Veto Players: How Political Institutions Work* and *Nested Games*.

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[46] I have chosen to avoid characterizing Lebanon as a *penetrated system*. It can be perceived negatively and propounds the idea that Lebanese actors have no agency. I would like to avoid presuming this. Furthermore, while the notion of a *penetrated system* has been used in other works, it seems to have only superficial applicability and is poorly defined. Similar to many social science concepts, the idea of a *penetrated system* is somewhat vague. The concept of *penetrated* appears to infer the action of intervention. In this context, intervention is defined as the means to use "force" to initiate change or maintain the status quo which can be manifested politically, economically and/or militarily. See L. Carl Brown, *International Politics and the Middle East: Old Rules, Dangerous Game* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1984), 5. Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Raymond Hinnebusch. *Syria and Iran: Middle Powers in a Penetrated Regional System.* (London: Routledge, 1997), 9-10.

George Tsebelis advances several ideas and theories that are particularly useful for analyzing the Lebanese political system. His *Veto Players* framework and theory is constructive for analyzing the overall picture of the Lebanese milieu. The crux of Tsebelis's *Veto Players* approach is that a political system — presidential, parliamentarian or authoritarian — is best understood by tracing a policy backwards to determine where alternative policies were defeated.[47] Tsebelis believes this can be achieved by identifying those institutions and actors who are necessary for an agreement on the implementation of a policy — a departure from the status quo.[48] Through the identification of the various institutions and actors (veto players), one is able to recognize if and where the "common ground" exists between the relevant players.[49] The identification of the "common ground" and the size of the "common ground" among the relevant veto players is the determining factor in the stability of the system.

Tsebelis propounds the theory that a significant departure from the status quo becomes increasingly more difficult when there is a growing number of veto players whose ideological differences are distinct.[50] The greater the number of veto players portends a smaller "common ground" or lack thereof. According to Tsebelis, ultimately this results in the failure of a government to implement its policies — adjust the status quo—which will eventually lead to its downfall and produce political instability. This approach and theory provides great potential for analyzing how agreements are reached

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[47] George Tsebelis, *Veto Players: How Political Institutions Work* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2002), 6.
[48] Tsebelis believes that veto players are either individual or collective actors whose veto powers are designated by the constitution — institutional veto players — or are a product of the political game — partisan veto players. Tsebelis, *Veto Players*, 19.
[49] Tsebelis identifies this as the winset.
[50] Tsebelis, *Veto Players*, 19.

in the Lebanese milieu; however Tsebelis's framework falls short in two critical areas and therefore must be tailored to fit Lebanon.

Firstly, it appears that Tsebelis intended to apply this framework and theory to a thoroughly domestic context. This is problematic when analyzing Lebanon with its considerable external interference; however I believe the framework and theory is flexible enough that through some adaptations, one is able to incorporate this variable/aspect of the Lebanese political milieu. As demonstrated by David E. Cunningham, who utilizes the framework theory in the context of civil wars, Cunningham contends that civil wars are generally not two-player phenomena but rather multi-player phenomena often with external interveners.[51] While one cannot contend that Lebanon has been in a perpetual state of civil war, Cunningham's study supports the idea that the application of veto players can be extended beyond domestic actors to a bargaining environment that includes external actors who I will identify as *extra-territorial veto players*. The *extra-territorial veto player* is a non-Lebanese (i.e state or non-state actor) with an apparent vested interest in certain aspects of Lebanese politics. The inclusion of *extra-territorial veto players* only addresses one-half of the shortcomings of Tsebelis's *Veto Player* framework.

The second aspect/variable of the Lebanese political system that is not adequately addressed by Tsebelis's initial framework is the political competition present within a respective confession. As noted earlier, actors from each confession do not politically compete for authority with other confessions; rather their competition comes from within the confession. This is a critical aspect of the Lebanese system because while a party or

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[51] David Cunningham, "Veto Players and Civil War Duration," *American Journal of Political Science* 50:4 (October 2006), 875-892.

figure may reside in a particular institution, in Lebanon, one's ability to effectively wager a veto is contingent on his/her popularity within the confession. This aspect/variable of Lebanese politics is readily demonstrated by Kirsten Schulze in her work, *Israel's Covert Diplomacy in Lebanon*. Schulze argues that the failure of Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon can be partly attributed to the Israeli misperception of Bashir Jemayyel's power within the Maronite community at the time of the invasion.[52]

Ironically, Tsebelis elaborates on this point in his work *Nested Games*, however he looks at the internal or domestic game(s) played by elites in consociationalism. According to Tsebelis's *Nested Games*, the degree of constraint on elites is determined by information costs and the ability of the elite to monopolize his/her respective community.[53] If an elite/party has a monopoly in his/her respective community or the information costs are low, he/she is able to be more intransigent or play a game of chicken with elites/players of other confessions.[54] If the elite/party does not have a monopoly within the community because of competition from rivals, he/she cannot be intransigent and must embark on a game of prisoner's dilemma or deadlock.[55] These elements, the number of veto players and the constraints on Lebanese elites/parties, are crucial when considering the dynamics of the Lebanese bargaining environment. Now that an analytical framework has been presented, what can this tell us about agreement/cooperation in the Lebanese political milieu?

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[52] Kirsten Schulze, *Israel's Covert Diplomacy in Lebanon* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998), 134. Schulze also remarks that the Maronite community was perceived by the Israelis as a unitary actor represented by either the Maronite Church, the *Kata>'ib* , or the Lebanese Forces of Bashir Jemayyel. Ibid., 149.
[53] Tsebelis, *Nested Games*, 168.
[54] Ibid., 171.
[55] Ibid., 168-9.

Constructing and defining the parameters and methods of the study:

Although the veto players approach significantly reduces the number of actors involved when addressing agreement in Lebanon, difficulty remains as to where the line is drawn regarding the scope of the study. Specifically, what period(s) of time and issues should be analyzed since Lebanon's history has been rife with intervention and turmoil? These questions need to be properly considered in order to not fall into the same traps as previous scholarship and reproduce similar conclusions.

The first step is to identify the specific variable under examination. While this study is concerned with comprehending agreement in the Lebanese milieu, what types of agreement should be analyzed? Inevitably a certain issue will reveal a certain set of veto players. For example, the veto players involved in the issue of civil marriage in Lebanon will be considerably different than the issue of Lebanon's foreign policy.[56] Ultimately if we want to incorporate the issue of external interference in Lebanese politics, analyzing the matters of power-sharing, foreign policy, and sovereignty appear to be the most fruitful topics. I believe one can place these matters (power-sharing, foreign policy, and sovereignty) under the umbrella of security-related issues. That is because these matters warrant the characterization of "security-related" because of the disparity of the actors involved. The interaction of domestic, regional, and extra-regional players demands that security is defined in the broadest of terms because it has a different significance to different actors.[57] Furthermore, these matters appear to be inextricably linked in the

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[56] See Sofia Saadeh, *The Quest for Citizenship in Post Taef Lebanon* (Lebanon: Sade Publishers, 2007), 59-78. As demonstrated by this study, Syria and Iran have no interest in decisions regarding civil marriage. However, religious leadership of the various Lebanese communities has a profound interest in maintaining the status quo. They stand to suffer financially if there is a change and it will also infringe upon their juridical monopoly in these matters.

[57] Although we cannot say that Lebanon is in a perpetual state of civil war, the relative weakness of the state suggests that the idea of a security dilemma exists among its domestic actors. Security dilemma entails

Lebanese milieu.[58] For example, the Taif accord addresses power-sharing and sovereignty.[59]

Therefore analyzing a number of cases of agreement on "security-related" issues provides one with the basis to begin theorizing on when and how cooperation/agreement is achieved regarding these matters in the Lebanese milieu.[60] Firstly, who are the required players for this cooperation/agreement to be attained? What is the common ground, circumstance(s) or how is the common ground created for this objective to be achieved? Why is a veto exerted by a particular actor at a certain time and not at another time?[61] Because of the relative uniqueness of the Lebanese milieu must one also consider whether domestic actors are coerced into resolutions? Or are external actors an

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that anarchy prevails within the confines of the "state" and that groups within that "state" will resort to various means to ensure their security. It may be achieved through power-sharing, Lebanese foreign policy and/or sovereignty. It is basically the application of realist theory amongst the actors within a state. See Barry Posen, "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict," *Survival* 35:1 (1993), 27-47. Secondly, an *extra-territorial veto player* may associate their security-related interests through Lebanese foreign policy or their literal occupation of Lebanese territory.

[58] For example, the character of Lebanon's foreign policy, particularly whether today it will remain a confrontation state in the Arab/Israeli conflict, has been and remains a hotly contested issue in the Lebanese political milieu. Although the establishment of Lebanon's foreign policy is significant from the perspective of security and the state's autonomy, it also signifies the identity to the state (e.g. pro-Syria or pro-Saudi) and who is in charge. Foreign policy is a disputed subject in most countries; however in Lebanon it carries additional significance. I am not adopting a constructivist approach here, but the nature of Lebanon's foreign policy suggests which parties are "calling the shots" within the power-sharing arrangements of the government. Ultimately a decision on Lebanon's foreign policy leads to whether Lebanon is identified as a "Christian," "Shia" or "Sunni" state. Furthermore, these identities suggest a loyalty or dependency on either the West, Saudi Arabia or Iran. While this is not necessarily an issue of defining the norms of identity as in other studies (i.e. Barnett, *Dialogues in Arab Politics*) parties are often synonymous with religious identity, thus religious identity inevitably plays an integral role in this matter.

[59] Joseph Maila, *The Document of National Understanding: A Commentary* (Oxford: The Centre for Lebanese Studies, 1992),42-48 and 83-88.

[60] Robert Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation* (USA: Basic Books, 1984). Thomas Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard College, 1980). Arthur Stein, *Why Nations Cooperate: Circumstance and Choice in International Relations* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990). *Strategic Choice and International Relations*, edited by David A. Lake and Robert Powell (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999). Robert Jervis, "Cooperation under the Security Dilemma," *World Politics* 30:2 (1978), 167-214. Robert Jervis, "Realism, Game Theory, and Cooperation," *World Politics* 40:3 (1988), 317-349.

[61] There is also an issue here of what constitutes a veto in matters related to security. Unlike issues that are determined by a vote, in matters related to security an unconventional veto can be utilized (i.e. military attack or occupation). This is particularly the case with *extraterritorial veto players* because they do not have to abide by a constitution and international law is often violated with impunity.

obstacle to achieving these resolutions? Lastly, one must ask whether the pie can always

be fairly divided amongst the relevant players in Lebanon or is the gain or loss in

Lebanon reflected elsewhere? Answers to these questions are important for not only

understanding how cooperation/stability is achieved but can also contribute to

maintaining it.

To elicit a more profound understanding of this bargaining environment and its

dynamics regarding the strategic interests/preferences of the various parties, particularly

for theoretical development, I have identified four cases for analysis:

1) The 1958 civil war, the subsequent US invasion and the transfer of the

presidency from Sham'ūn to Shihāb.

2) The escalating conflict between the PLO and the Lebanese army which led to

the Cairo Agreement of 1969.

3) Michel Aoun's War of Liberation against the Syrian Army and the

implementation of the Taif Accord of 1990

4) The May 2008 clashes between "Hizbullah" and the "Future Movement" which

led to the Doha agreement.

I selected these cases on the basis of several shared characteristics. Firstly, they

demonstrate a turbulent period of time in the Lebanese milieu which involved an

outbreak of violence that was eventually followed by an "agreement."[62] The agreement

was reached among several parties that required the involvement of domestic and

regional/extra-regional actors.[63] Secondly, these cases and the number of them provide a

spectrum of issues (albeit "security-related") and players necessary for theoretical

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[62] I would like to make the distinction between a ceasefire and an agreement.
[63] I have chosen to characterize it this way to avoid periods of the civil war.

development. It is pertinent to be able to provide a theoretical explanation that is more developed than to conclude that regional developments will impact Lebanon or the "stars were aligned." The question is how is agreement achieved? And in what direction?[64] Critiquing these cases in this manner provides one with the opportunity to identify when vetoes are exerted and how common ground is achieved at various periods of time. By analyzing these cases through secondary sources, periodicals and interviews with political personalities and analysts, I will be able to determine if a pattern for stability and instability exists in Lebanon. And what is the cause? If a pattern exists, does this make Lebanon a potential source of stability in the region? Lastly, can understanding these dynamics provide a basis for cooperation in Lebanon and the region?

To extract answers to these questions, a variety of sources will be consulted. These sources include: English, French and Arabic newspapers and periodicals, private memoirs, US government archives and interviews with politicians present at these events.

The remainder of the study is divided into six chapters. Chapter Two provides the necessary background to the structure and dynamics of the various analyzed agreements. It looks at the origins of external intervention in Lebanon, the formation of confessional identities, the relationship between confessions and external actors, the emergence of the Lebanese state and the workings of the Lebanese political system. Chapters 3-6 focus on the respective agreements:

Chapter 3 — 1958 civil war and transition of power from the Sham'ūn presidency to

the Shihāb presidency

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[64] Structure is an important aspect of this study but I would not suggest that it is determinative.

Chapter 4 — The Cairo Agreement of 1969

Chapter 5 — The Taif Agreement of 1990

Chapter 6 — The Doha Agreement of 2008

The formats of chapters 3-6 slightly differ, but each chapter consists of three parts. Part I provides background to the principle actors and context prior to the change in the status quo. Part I is particularly important because it affords an understanding of the standing of the principal   Part 2 is an account of the narrative which leads to a change in the status quo – the agreement. And Part 3 deconstructs this narrative to determine who were the veto players and how they arrived at the agreement.

Each case addresses these questions:

- What was the agreement and its terms? Who were the signatories? What other parties were involved? — i.e. Under the auspices/sponsorship of who was the agreement done?

- How did they reach this agreement? — i.e. Who/what were the obstacles to agreement? What alternatives were defeated? And how?

- How and why was the agreement proposed? And who is doing the proposing?

- An analysis of the answers to these questions that will help to determine the dynamics for agreement in the Lebanese milieu.[65]

The final chapter or conclusion has a micro and macro objective. It elucidates the individual findings of each case and determines what general conclusions can be drawn from the analysis of these five cases.

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[65] I am loosely applying the questions utilized by George Tsebelis in *Veto Players*. Tsebelis, *Veto Players: How Political Institutions Work*, 283.

Chapter 2

<u>Creating the Kings, Queens, Rooks and Pawns</u>
<u>and</u>
<u>Constructing the Lebanese political chessboard</u>

In 1943 when the Lebanese declared their independence from France, it was a

country unlike any other country in the world. Measuring only 10,452 square kilometers;

Lebanon was home to eighteen religious confessions. This religious diversity included

various neighborhoods and villages being inhabited by more than one confession. The

assortment and close proximity of confessions would be a blessing and a curse. When

everything ran smoothly Lebanon was identified as a model of co-existence.[1] When

turmoil erupted, Lebanon became synonymous with kidnappings and car bombings –

manifestations of religious and ethnic violence at its worst. Only fifteen years after

achieving independence, Lebanon would be in the throes of a civil war and on the brink

of being ripped apart. This scenario would be repeated periodically over the next fifty

plus years. How does one account for these scenarios? Are they merely the product of

diverse communities living in close proximity of each other? Or can they be attributed to

other factors?

The objective of this chapter is to provide historical perspective and background

to the conflicts and agreements analyzed in the subsequent chapters. This chapter

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[1] Lebanese and international leaders will often remark about Lebanon being a model of religious co-existence for the world. Witness the words of Pope John Paul II during his trip to Lebanon in 1997. "At this assembly we wish to declare before the world the importance of Lebanon….A country of many religious faiths, Lebanon has shown that these different faiths can live together in peace, brotherhood and cooperation." Celestine Bohlen, "Pope Call on Lebanon to Resume Special Role for Peace." *The New York Times* (May 12, 1997) <http://www.nytimes.com/1997/05/12/world/pope-calls-on-lebanon-to-resume-special-role-for-peace.html>.

addresses the historical roots and development of six fundamental aspects of Lebanese politics: 1) the phenomenon of external intervention in Lebanese affairs; 2) the relationship between religious communities and external actors; 3) sectarianism and nationalisms in the Lebanese milieu; 4) the emergence of the Lebanese state; 5) the identification of its political actors; and 6) the functions of the Lebanese political system. An understanding of these aspects will provide the foundation for recognizing the veto players of the Lebanese political milieu, identifying the strategic interaction by political actors and communities, and facilitating the analysis of the agreements presented in the forthcoming chapters. In other words, this chapter defines the contours of the chessboard, identifies the pieces and sides on the chessboard and explains the rules of the game.

Part I:

Putting the first pieces on the chessboard – opening the door to external actors in the Levant and establishing the precedent of intervention

In 1535, the King of France, Françios I, and the Ottoman Sultan, Suleiman the Magnificent, created the first of what would be many alliances between the Ottoman Empire and various European states. Although the stipulations of the alliance were not formally written down until 1569, the two powers also discussed the creation of commercial relations. [2] Even prior to the Ottoman Empire the formation of certain laws was fundamental to the establishment of any commercial relationship between a Muslim and non-Muslim entity. It was particularly necessary for determining what rights the non-

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[2] Philip Mansell, *Levant: splendour and catastrophe on the Mediterranean* (London: John Murray, 2010), 7-8.

Muslim non-*dhimmī* trader had in Muslim territory.[3] If a certain crime was committed, whose jurisdiction did he fall under? Ottoman? French? British? Historically, a document was drafted by the Muslim entity that bestowed certain privileges and granted security (*amān*) to the non-Muslim non-*dhimmī*. During Ottoman times, these documents were known as *ahdnames*, or to the European as capitulations.[4]

One of the earliest capitulations (1569) between the Ottomans and a European entity contained eighteen articles.[5] Among the terms of this capitulation was providing French subjects with the liberty to practice their religion in Ottoman territory.[6] Over time, the number and nature of capitulatory terms increased. For example, in 1603 France was given the right to protect all religious missionaries in Ottoman territory.[7] By 1740, the number of articles in a single capitulation had grown to eighty-five articles.[8] Not only did capitulatory rights expand, the number of capitulations also increased. This exponential growth can be attributed to several developments.

From the Ottoman point of view, a capitulation was strategically, militarily and economically beneficial. The alliance of 1535 served the immediate strategic interests of the Ottomans in their struggle against the Hapsburgs. The Ottomans would also extend capitulations to other opponents of the Hapsburgs: England (1582) and the Netherlands

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[3] A *dhimnī* is a non-Muslim living in Muslim ruled territory who pays the poll-tax (*jizya*). Typically a *dhimnī* is a person of the book (i.e. Christian or Jew) and is allowed to practice their beliefs provided they pay the poll-tax.
[4] Capitulation comes from the Latin term *caput* or *capitulum* which means heading, chapter or title. Each of the documents signed between the Ottomans and Europeans had a title or heading and thus the term capitulation. They are also referred to as "priviledges" or *imtiyāzāt* in Arabic. See Linda Darling, "Capitulations," in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World*, ed. John Esposito (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 257. See also Z.Y. Hershlag, *Introduction to Economic History of the Middle East* (Leiden: Brill, 1964), 43.
[5] Mansell, *Levant: splendour and catastrophe on the Mediterranean*, 8.
[6] William Shorrock, *France in Syria and Lebanon 1901-1914* (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1972), 16.
[7] Ibid., 16.
[8] Mansell, *Levant: splendour and catastrophe on the Mediterranean*, 16.

(1612). However ties with the British and the Dutch appear to have fulfilled an additional purpose. Firstly, as Protestant nations they did not have to abide by the Pope's embargo on the Ottomans which gave the Ottomans access to tin, lead and steel for munitions.[9] Secondly, the increase in the number of capitulations and capitulatory rights ensured that the Ottomans were not entirely dependent on a particular European nation and could ultimately utilize the ongoing rivalries on the European continent to their advantage. [10]

European participation in the capitulatory agreements was motivated by similar considerations. The French and the British initially perceived relations with the Ottomans as integral to their survival vis-à-vis the Hapsburgs.[11] Furthermore, the competitive nature of the European nation-state system produced envy throughout the European continent. European nation-states were driven by prestige and financial gain which bolstered their image and the extent of their power in relation to their European neighbors. This financial gain would grow increasingly more important as the global market expanded and integrated more countries in the forthcoming centuries.

The acquisition of a capitulation by a European power provided access to Ottoman goods, affected the custom rates they paid, and effectively symbolized a position of status. For example, until the Ottomans granted a capitulation to the British, British ships were required to fly the French flag if they wanted to conduct commerce in Ottoman territory. This not only demonstrated English subservience to France in this matter, but the English were also not able to reap all the financial benefits that the French

[9] Bulent Ari, "Early Ottoman Diplomacy: Ad Hoc Period," in *Ottoman Diplomacy: Conventional or Unconventional?* (New York: Palgrave, 2004), 38.
[10] Arnold Horniker, "Anglo-French Rivalry in the Levant from 1583 to 1612" *The Journal of Modern History* 18:4 (Dec 1946).
[11] A. Nuri Yurdusev, "The Ottoman Attitude toward Diplomacy" in *Ottoman Diplomacy: Conventional or Unconventional?* (New York: Palgrave, 2004), 23.

had accrued. As a result, flying the French flag on a British ship came with a financial price.[12] According to Arthur Horniker, the "French monopoly" on Levantine trade was one of the reasons Queen Elizabeth was motivated to negotiate capitulations with the Ottomans.[13] This British/French rivalry even extended to both nations courting the Dutch in order to determine whose flag would fly on Dutch merchant ships.[14]

Initially, the Ottomans were in the driver's seat when granting capitulatory rights. The capitulations were not binding on the Sultan's successor and therefore had to be renewed by each Sultan. Additionally, no individual European nation or empire had the military might or leverage to dictate terms of the capitulations to the Ottomans during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. One must remember that Ottoman forces were repelled at the gates of Vienna in 1529 and again in 1683.[15] This position of prominence vis-à-vis Europe clearly began to shift in the eighteenth century. The Ottoman's growing reliance on various European countries as well as a shift in military strength between the Ottomans and the Europeans ultimately made the Ottomans more vulnerable to European demands and developments. In other words, the dynamics of the relationship between the Europeans and Ottomans began to transform and the Ottomans began to resemble a "pawn" in European politics.

It is not the objective of this study to pinpoint the exact reasons for this shift, but it became readily apparent that the Ottomans began to act defensively during the dawn of

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[12] Hershlag, 43. Limited duties were placed on imports from a country with a capitulation.
[13] Horniker, 292.
[14] Ibid., 293-303. See also *Friends and Rivals in the East: Studies in Anglo-Dutch Relations in the Levant from the seventeenth to the early nineteenth century*, eds. Alastair Hamilton, Alexander H. de Groot and Maurits H. van den Boogert (Leiden: Brill, 2000).
[15] It should be noted that the Ottoman navy was defeated by the Venetians in 1656. But the Venetians do not appear to have been a central player in the race for capitulations by the end of the century.

the eighteenth century, an indication that their power was waning. [16] This was obvious in

the treaties of Carlowitz in 1699 and Kucuk Kaynarca in 1774.[17] In an attempt to offset

their declining fortunes, the Ottomans became increasingly dependent upon European

powers to counter other European powers. One measure that was taken included the

granting of more capitulatory rights as an "unveiled gesture of reciprocity for political

assistance."[18] The increase in the number and nature of capitulations was not the sole

reason for the growing European presence in Ottoman territory and the intensification of

European interference in Ottoman affairs.[19] By the nineteenth century it was coupled with

a rapidly expanding global market which integrated and deepened the links between the

Empire and the European continent both politically and economically.

The nineteenth century marked a remarkable expansion in international trade.

Between 1830 and 1870, yearly growth in trade between Europe and the Ottoman Empire

occurred at a rate of 3.5%.[20] The dramatic increase in trade included a surge in European

demand for raw materials from the Middle East. In Beirut, just between 1830 and 1840

the number of customs receipts quadrupled and the number of ships entering the port

more than doubled between 1835 and 1838.[21] The area of Mount Lebanon became a

mecca for sericulture (silk production) in the nineteenth century. In the 1840s the area

produced roughly 300 metric tons of raw silk.[22] With their presence already established

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[16] Philip Mansel, *Constantinople: City of the World's Desire 1453-1924* (London: John Murray, 1995), 145. William Cleveland, *A History of the Modern Middle East* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994), 51.

[17] The treaty of Carlowitz in 1699 ceded most of the territory of Hungary to Hapsburgs. The Treaty of Kuchuk Kaynarja in 1774 granted major concessions to the Russians.

[18] "Imtiyāzāt."*Encyclopedia of Islam, Second Edition*, 12.

[19] Hershlag argues that capitulations alone were not the reason for the weakening of the Empire. Hershlag, 42.

[20] Charles Issawi, *An Economic History of the Middle East and North Africa* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 24.

[21] Mansell, *Levant: splendour and catastrophe on the Mediterranean,* 93.

[22] Issawi., 124.

through relations with missionaries and the Maronite Church, sericulture slowly became a

target for investment by the French. In 1852, the French owned five of the nine silk

reeling factories in Lebanon; by 1870 it had increased to ten.[23]

To protect their interests and investments in an increasingly competitive global

market, the French and Europeans in other parts of the Empire began to test the limits of

Ottoman jurisdiction and extracted increasing amounts of leverage over the Ottomans.

One aspect in which European leverage manifested itself was through the abuse and

exploitation of capitulations. This precipitated an increasing infringement of Ottoman

sovereignty and was blatantly demonstrated in the extension of rights to Ottoman

dhimmīs. As previously noted, Europeans traveling in the Ottoman Empire were

subjected to European judicial authority. Beginning in the eighteenth century, this

authority was extended to those *dhimmīs* who worked for Europeans while conducting

business in the Empire. As a result, an increasing numbers of *dhimmīs* were being

associated with Europe and falling under European jurisdiction.

Additionally, certain terms of a capitulation began to be interpreted rather

liberally. For example, the French began to interpret a provision of the 1740 capitulation

as acknowledging French protection not only over Catholics and Christian holy places in

the Levant but to also Ottoman Catholics as well.[24] Evidence of the true extent of

European leverage over the Ottomans in these matters was first revealed in the nineteenth

century when the Ottomans requested that all capitulations be abolished. This proved to

be a futile request as the Ottomans could not get every European country with

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[23] Carolyn L. Gates. *The Merchant Republic of Lebanon: Rise of an Open Economy* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1998), 14.
[24] Mansell, *Levant : splendour and catastrophe on the Mediterranean* , 8-9.

capitulations to agree.[25] The changing balance of power in regards to capitulations is succinctly noted by Caesar Farah who says: "What the Ottomans had granted as a privilege was now being construed as a right."[26]

European governments were not the only entities averse to witnessing the annulment of the capitulations. Some Ottomans had become proponents of the capitulations too. The burgeoning relationship between European states and Ottoman religious minorities contributed to this perspective. The next section will demonstrate why some Ottoman Christians, particularly in the Levant began to perceive the European presence and interference in Ottoman affairs as necessary and advantageous. This intervention would contribute to the disruption and complication of Ottoman governance which led to a variety of Ottoman responses domestically and the widening of divisions in the Ottoman social fabric.

Part II:

Adding more pieces to the chessboard and creating sides: Linking the "Patrons" to the "Clients"

European intervention was felt throughout the Ottoman Empire, directly and indirectly. It was particularly profound and obvious in the Levant. The Levant's multi-confessional demographics, especially in the area of present-day Lebanon, allowed European intervention and its repercussions to clearly manifest. The Lebanon and anti-Lebanon mountain ranges have been described as a place of refuge for persecuted

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[25] "Imtiyāzāt."*Encyclopedia of Islam, Second Edition*, 18.
[26] Caesar Farah, *The Politics of Interventionism* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2000), 19.

minorities. While it remains a contested point in the literature regarding who was responsible for the persecution and the extent of persecution, nonetheless a considerable number of confessions were found in the Mount Lebanon area or came to reside there.[27] Motivated by religious, economic, and political factors, many of these confessions would be approached by various European states while some confessions actually approached the Europeans.

Europe's initial rationale for intervening in the Levant was "religious." As the site of Christian holy places, the Levant held a particular religious importance in the imaginations of many Europeans and resulted in the launching of numerous Crusades in the Levant and the occupation of its lands by Crusaders. During the Crusade of Saint Louis (1147-9), a "fraternal link" was established between the two continents. The Maronites of the Levant were honored with the title of "Frenchmen" in recognition of the services they provided to the Crusaders during this Crusade.[28] Shortly thereafter, the Maronites were recognized as "Catholic" and thus became affiliated with the Vatican in 1180.[29] With the termination of the Crusades and the virtual absence of travel and communication between the Levant and mainland Europe, it is reasonable to conclude that for the next several centuries, this "link" was of little significance or importance. It is with the issuance of capitulations beginning in the sixteenth century that this "religious link" evolved and facilitated French presence and interference in the region.

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[27] Kamal Salibi, *A House of Many Mansions: The History of Lebanon Reconsidered* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 130-150. Based on Maronite historical accounts, Salibi suggests that the Maronites were not persecuted by the Muslims, rather the Byzantine Orthodox. Furthermore, the Druze did not arrive in Lebanon as a persecuted minority; instead they were converted to the Druze faith while residing in Mount Lebanon.

[28] Farah 17. Salibi argues that from the beginning, relations between the Maronites and the Crusaders were not always rosy. And there is evidence that the Maronites did not always side with the Crusaders. Salibi, *A House of Many Mansions: The History of Lebanon Reconsidered*, 92-4.

[29] Salibi, *A House of Many Mansions: The History of Lebanon Reconsidered*, 96.

The official establishment of capitulations in 1569 between the French and the Ottomans provided the opening to deepen this religious link between France and its "Catholic brothers" of the Levant. The capitulations stipulated that the French could deploy clergy in Ottoman lands so French traders and diplomats had the opportunity to attend religious services. However the attention of clergy quickly turned towards the non-Catholic Christians of the region.[30] The Church in Rome appears to have been interested in uniting the Christians of the Levant under their authority. Members of Rome's different religious orders (i.e. the Jesuits and the Capuchins) began to "reform" or "bring in line" the smaller Christian communities of the Levant (i.e. Jacobites, Melkites, Armenians and Maronites) with the doctrines and practices of Rome through the establishment of schools and ecclesiastical influence.[31] These developments coincided with proclamations like that of King Louis XIII of France in 1639 who offered to assist any Maronite in the area of Mt. Lebanon to come to Europe to study or pursue other interests.[32] And the French consul, François Piquet declared in Aleppo in 1652 that any Christian of the Levant who acknowledged Rome's religious authority would receive protection from the King of France.[33]

Identifying with the Church in Rome was not the only method for acquiring protection and/or support from France. The increasing integration of the Ottoman Empire

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[30] At this time, it appears missionaries shied away from converting Muslims. At least in Istanbul in the 16th century there was an unwritten rule to not attempt to convert the Muslim community. See Charles Frazee, *Catholics and Sultans: The church and the Ottoman Empire, 1453-1923* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 29. Conversion of Christians in the Ottoman Empire was not limited to the Jesuits and the Capuchins. Protestant missionaries from Great Britain and the United States also attempted to convert Christians to Protestantism. However, these missionaries were largely unsuccessful. Maronite, Greek Catholic and Greek Orthodox authorities forbid their followers from attending Protestant schools and accepting their assistance. Kama>l Salibi, *The Modern History of Lebanon*, (Caravan Books: Delmar, New York, 1977), 56-7.

[31] Frazee, 134-5. The conversion of Christians to Catholicism was equated to becoming a Frank in the eyes of many Ottomans. See Frazee, 141.

[32] Mansell, *Levant: splendour and catastrophe on the Mediterranean*, 92.

[33] Frazee, 134. It is not clear what this "protection" entailed.

into the global market presented a growing demand for middlemen to facilitate trade and relations with European countries. The French would enlist native Christians for assistance in trade and diplomatic services to fulfill this need. Native Christians were used as interpreters, translators and guides by traders and diplomatic staff. A Christian's employment by a trader, consul or Embassy, meant they were held accountable to French legal codes. Legally these Ottoman Christians effectively ceased being Ottoman and became French because they were not only subject to French legal jurisdiction, but they were also exempt from Ottoman taxes.[34] These types of individuals became known as *berāt* holders and included dragomen, clerks and guards.[35] Initially this was a relatively exclusive club, but with the continuing expansion of trade and the growing inability of the Ottomans to protect and enforce the Empire's sovereignty, a proliferation of *berāt*s occurred. The owner of a *berāt* was able to pass on the privileges to his children, but the real abuse occurred when unrelated individuals simply purchased these privileges.[36] In the city of Aleppo alone, by 1787, 1,500 dragomen were employed by European powers, when only six actually performed the duties of a dragoman.[37] Caesar Farah describes the phenomenon as the creation of a "state within a state."[38]

This "state within a state" and the deepening relationship between some Ottoman Christians and the French did not go unnoticed by other European powers, the Ottomans or other confessions. The rivalry that existed between the nation-states of Europe partially manifested in the Levant as a competition to extend protection to other

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[34] Farah, 20.
[35] A *berāt* was the appointment of a specific title (e.g. dragoman).
[36] Ambassadors and consuls began selling the rights to a *berāt* to *dhimmī*s for large amounts of money. The *berāt* was also attractive to *dhimmī*s because it also allowed them to pay lower custom rates on certain goods. "Imtiyāzāt," *Encyclopedia of Islam, Second Edition*, 15.
[37] Bulent An, "Early Ottoman Diplomacy" in *Ottoman Diplomacy: Conventional or Unconventional?*, 43.
[38] Farah, 20.

confessions.[39] For example, the treaty of Kuchuk Kaynarja (1774) enabled Russia to speak on behalf of the Ottoman's Greek Orthodox subjects. This privilege was extended to the Armenian churches by the Treaty of Adrionople (1829).[40] And the Austrians became the "protectors" of the Greek Catholics.[41] Without native Protestant adherents in the region, the British could not lay claim to a religious community. However in 1839, the Druze approached the British in search of prosperity.[42] And in the midst of the Druze/Christian violence in 1841 members of the Junblāṭ family pledged their allegiance to the British in return for protection.[43] They perceived British protection as a means to defend against the French and the Maronites.[44] The Ottomans did not remain idle in the face of these challenges either. To compete with the abuse of privileges granted to Ottoman Christians in the service of Europeans, the Ottomans began granting *berāt*s to non-Christian Ottomans.[45]

From the late eighteenth and particularly throughout the nineteenth century this patronage was not just in title, in reality the relationship became increasingly political as confessions became reliant on European states to represent their views in Istanbul. The

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[39] The rivalry between European states becomes particularly intense in the late nineteenth century. See W.I. Shorrock, *France in Syria and Lebanon 1901-1914 pre-war Origins of the Mandate*, 25-8.

[40] For further information on Russian actions in the Levant see Theofanis Stavrou, "Russian Interest in the Levant 1843-1848: Porfirii Uspenskii and Establishment of the First Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem," *Middle East Journal* 17: 1/2 (Winter-Spring 1963), 91-103. And W.E Mosse, Russia and the Levant, 1856-1862: Grand Duke Constantine Nicolaevich and the Russian Steam Navigation Company," *The Journal of Modern History* 26:1 (1954), 39-48. Derek Hopwood, *Russian Presence in Syria and Palestine, 1843-1914: Church and Politics in the Near East* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969).

[41] By the early twentieth century, various religious orders in the Catholic Church were represented by different European countries. For example Germany and Italy were given the right by the Ottomans to intervene on behalf of their monks. Shorrock, 52.

[42] Mansell, *Levant*, 94. Initially the Druze had favorable relations with the French, but this changed over time. The Druze believed a relationship with Great Britain could achieve them commercial prominence similar to what they observed in India.

[43] Salibi, *The Modern History of Lebanon*, 58.

[44] It was believed that the French would mount an invasion of Druze territory on behalf of the Maronites. Ibid., 58.

[45] Farah, 20.

Maronite Patriarch was quoted as saying: "We have in the East no protection, refuge or safety outside the throne of France and its representatives in the Levant."[46] More specifically, in 1840, the support and assistance of France was sought by the Maronite Church to ensure the establishment of authority in Mt. Lebanon that was favorable to the Maronite Church and its adherents.[47] French support and assistance of the Maronite Church continued in theory until the First World War. European powers saw it to be in their interest as well. As one French official stated:

> The Maronite nation makes up more than three fifths of the Lebanese population. We have an interest in seeing that it has a strong leader. If he were, the Consulate of France could, with his agreement, dictate its wishes to the governor of Lebanon.[48]

However France had its limitations and its interests waned. International developments, namely French military defeats in Europe, and domestic issues saw French influence diminish at times.[49] When this occurred or confessions did not feel their patron had done enough, they often sought out the aid of an alternative European power. For example in 1841, the Maronite Patriarch pleaded with Great Britain to intervene on behalf of his community with Ottoman authorities in the midst of Druze/Christian violence.[50] Furthermore, the interests of a European power often superseded its relationship with a

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[46] Mansell, *Levant* p.92 The Patriarch is the head of the Maronite Catholic Church. In the eyes of the Pope, the Patriarch is the equivalent of a bishop and is usually given the rank of a Cardinal. The Patriarch is elected by Maronite bishops and this election is recognized by the Pope. The reliance on external powers is cited throughout Caesar Farah's comprehensive study, *The Politics of Interventionism*.

[47] Engin Akarli, *The Long Peace: Ottoman Lebanon, 1861-1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 27.

[48] Carole Hakim, *The Origins of the Lebanese National Idea: 1840-1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013, 124.

[49] Carole Hakim notes that the French defeat in the Franco-Prussian War and the Fall of the Second Empire negatively affected French influence in the Levant. Ibid., 121-2. Also see Shorrock, 27. The French did not pursue interests in the Levant from 1893 to 1897 to avoid provoking the Russians. John Spagnolo, *France and Ottoman Lebanon, 1861-1914* (London : Ithaca Press for the Middle East Centre, St. Antony's College Oxford, 1977).

[50] Farah, 110-11.

particular confession.[51] Not surprisingly, this patronage did not make these confessions immune to regional and international problems.

The flip side of this patron-client relationship was that it sometimes placed these various confessions in the midst of struggles between bigger powers which in turn aggravated relations between these confessions at the local level. This was particularly evident during the French-supported Egyptian Muhammad Ali's invasion, occupation and withdrawal from the Levant (1831-1840).[52] Ali used Christian troops to suppress the Druze who were identified as proponents of the Sultan at the time. By 1840, the British on behalf of the Ottomans, supported rebels (Druze, Maronite and Shi'ite notables) against Muhammad Ali.[53] This invasion and occupation would serve to aggravate the relations between the inhabitants of Mount Lebanon and accentuate European interference in Ottoman affairs in the Levant.

During the Egyptian occupation of the Levant, Ali's son, Ibrahim, attempted to reform and restructure the society. These attempts disrupted the dynamics of communal relations in the area. As a result, following the departure of the Egyptians, the Christian community gained control of previously Druze-owned land and occupied the governorship. The Druze refused to accept this change in the status quo. Fighting broke out in 1841.

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[51] Ibid., 122. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, the French-British rivalry intensified over influence in the Otto Empire. As a result, Maronite interests sometimes took a back seat to French interests throughout the Levant. Also see Spagnolo, *France and Ottoman Lebanon, 1861-1914.*

[52] Muhammad Ali ruled Ottoman Egypt as a governor beginning in 1805. In search of raw materials to develop Egypt, Ali began to extend his governorship beyond Egypt and challenge the authorities in Istanbul. This drive for raw materials eventually led his armies to take over areas of the Levant from the jurisdiction of Istanbul in 1831. His ultimate objective was to establish Egypt and the areas he conquered as an independent dynasty. For further detail see Cleveland, 65-73.

[53] Salibi, *The Modern History of Lebanon*, 38. Christians largely withdrew their support of the Egyptians by 1840.

After the sectarian massacres between the Druze and the Maronites of 1841 in Mount Lebanon, European interference deepened. The French, British, Russian, Austrian and Prussian ambassadors to Istanbul met with the Ottoman foreign minister in 1842 to resolve the bloodshed. They agreed that the mountain would be divided into two districts – one district under the governorship of the Druze and the other district under the governorship of the Maronites. These international powers would reconvene after the massacres of thousands of Christians in Mount Lebanon and Damascus in 1860. Unlike the meeting of 1842, the Europeans pressured the Ottomans to establish an "autonomous" administrative zone or *mutassarifiyyah* in Mount Lebanon. [54] Furthermore, the leader of the *mutassarifiyyah* had to meet the approval of the European Powers.

As will be demonstrated in the coming pages, some of these external powers would continue to be pivotal in the creation of the state of Lebanon and its political system. In a sense, various European countries over a period of two hundred years became big brothers for several confessions of the Levant. However, at this juncture, it is important to note that this emerging "patron-client" relationship – between confession and a greater power – provides only part of the explanation to comprehending the Lebanese chessboard. Furthermore, it would be inaccurate to suggest that these confessions were merely an extension of European interests or a proxy. Additionally, it would be erroneous to conclude that the religious divisions in Levantine society were primordial and waiting to explode. Other forces, namely nationalism and sectarianism, were also at work. The emergence and realization of national and sectarian identities is another dimension of the Lebanese chessboard.

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[54] The borders of the *mutassarifiyyah* will be identified in the following pages.

Part III:

Painting the chessboard black and white - The Ottomans, Europe and the Emergence of Sectarianism and Nationalisms in the Levant

As demonstrated in the previous pages, the Ottomans were faced with encroaching European power, waning military strength and its deepening integration into the global market, making the status quo of the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries increasingly untenable. In an attempt to cope with these developments, the Ottomans instituted what is referred to as "defensive developmentalism" in the nineteenth century.[55] The main objective of this project was to cull the deterioration of the Empire through reformation, centralization and unification. This objective was largely realized in two watershed edicts: the Hatt-i Sharif of Gulhane (1839) and the Islahat Fermani (1856). For the purposes of this study we will focus on one aspect of these edicts – the attempt to manipulate identity and its subsequent repercussions on the Empire and its people.

One aspect of European society that the Ottomans viewed favorably and necessary for the regeneration of their Empire was the notion of a secular national identity. The Ottomans tried to inculcate the notion of a secular national identity (*osmanlilik*) through the Hatt-i Sharif of Gulhane (1839) and the Islahat Fermani (1856) which were collectively part of a period known as the Tanzimat.[56] One of the objectives of these two decrees was to erase religious divisions that existed in Ottoman society and unify individuals around an identity that superseded their religious identity. When these edicts did not produce the desired results, the Ottomans altered their strategy and decided

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[55] For a further explanation see James Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East: A History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 73-88. See also Herschlag, 30-38.

[56] For a further explanation see Ibid., 73-88. The *Tanzimat* (reorganization) was an attempt by the Ottoman authorities to introduce administrative reforms to modernize and unify the Empire.

to advance a more Islamic Ottoman identity during the Hamadian period of 1878-1908. The revolt of 1908 brought the Young Turks to power and witnessed a further adjustment to the attributes of national identity in the Empire by emphasizing the importance of Turkish identity. In addition to these measures, they attempted to remove all remnants of "religious divides" in Ottoman society through the disbanding of the *millet* system (explained below). All of these conceptualizations of identity - *osmanlilik*, Islamic *osmanlilik* and Turkish *osmanlilik* - ultimately backfired. Instead of uniting the Empire or reducing tensions, they further aggravated Ottoman society, particularly in the Levant. Ottoman attempts to reform and unite would facilitate the emergence and proliferation of sectarian and national identities, ultimately complicating and further diversifying Levantine society and instigating violent conflict.

Sectarianism [57]

Traditionally, it has been understood that the Ottoman government dealt with its non-Muslim subjects through the *millet* system. This conceptualization entailed that non-Muslims were engaged by the Ottomans authorities as a community – through the community's religious leadership. It also suggests that these religious divisions and distinctions were created by the Ottomans. However more contemporary studies suggest otherwise, arguing that the *millet* system was a more recent development and that sectarian divisions were largely triggered by the application of aspects of the European notion of the nation-state.[58]

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[57] Sectarianism refers to the conceptualization of identity based on a religious group or sect.
[58] Benjamin Braude , "Foundation Myths of the Millet System," in *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire* edited by Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis (New York : Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1982), 83. Ussama Makdisi, *The Culture of Sectarianism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

With the Ottoman desire to modernize and compete with Europe, it adopted the notion of a secular identity which transcended religious identity. This was promulgated by the Ottoman reforms in 1839 and 1856 with the attempt to establish a common national identity between Christians and Muslims. The establishment of a common identity entailed that all Ottoman subjects, including *dhimmī*s, were now required to serve in the army. Furthermore, this equality entailed the elimination of the poll tax (*jizya*) on *dhimmī*s. Unfortunately for the Ottoman authorities, these measures were not entirely welcomed by the religious minorities (i.e. Jews and Christians) of the Empire. The payment of the poll tax and their status as a *dhimmī* had prevented them from performing military service. It appears that most minorities continued to have no interest in performing this duty. Therefore minorities who still wanted to escape service paid the *bedel* tax.[59] Furthermore, these reforms did not entirely please the Muslim community either. The position of "hierarchy" held by the Muslims in the Empire had disappeared through the creation of "equality" between religious communities, yet the instituting of the *bedel* tax meant that Muslims were the ones still obliged to serve in the army. Reforms such as these made the distinctions between a Muslim and Christian more obvious and further contributed to a sectarian society. The Ottomans were not the only culpable party in the emergence of sectarian identities in the Levant. Europe's historical perception of the Levant, which was reflected in the attitudes and work of its missionaries and consuls, also had a role in these developments.

European and American missionaries arrived in the Levant with a preconceived notion of the area. They believed the Levant was composed of religious tribes who were suffering under the yoke of Islam. Upon their arrival they quickly realized that this

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[59] Frazee, 226.

conceptualization was largely false. Ussama Makdisi succinctly describes the reality

these missionaries encountered.

> Mishaqa, ….noted that 'at that time the members of the [Shihab]
> family married amongst themselves and were unconcerned
> with a difference in religion.' It is not surprising, then, that the
> Christian and Druze notables took an oath of allegiance at the shrine
> of the Virgin Mary, that one loyal Shi'a emir was buried in the Sunni
> Shihab family cemetery and that a Christian merchant funded the
> construction of a mosque.[60]

According to Makdisi, rank, not religion, had been the most prominent marker among

Mount Lebanon's elites.[61]

Nevertheless the missionaries worked to undermine this reality. They

promulgated the notion that the domain of Islam subjugated its minorities (i.e.

Christians). And they instilled their conceptualization of the Levant in the elites and

religious leaders of the religious minorities.[62] A particularly opportunistic time for the

realization of this perception was the power vacuum created by the withdrawal of

Ibrahim Pasha from the Levant in 1840.[63] With the support of European powers and the

European conceptualizations of the Levant instilled in their minds, Maronite and Druze

communities saw the power vacuum as an opportune time to begin to assert their

sectarian identity by relying on a real and/or imagined past. For example, the Maronite

Church in 1840 asked to be treated as a distinct community, demanding protection for all

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[60] Makdisi, 35.
[61] Ibid. 35.
[62] Ibid., 75-95.
[63] Ibrahim Pasha, the son of Muhammad Ali in Egypt, invaded parts of the Levant in 1831 and occupied it until 1840 when a joint British-Ottoman force landed in Beirut and forced him to retreat to Egypt. Pasha's occupation was to extract raw materials from the Levant for the development of the Egyptian industry. Furthermore, Pasha introduced domestic programs that were largely unpopular among the inhabitants of the Levant. Cleveland, 72.

of its adherents wherever they may be.[64] With the continued presence and interaction

with Europeans this sectarian perception intensified contributing to the 1860 massacre of

thousands of Christians in Mount Lebanon.[65] It was also aggravated by the emphasis on a

more Islamic Ottoman identity during the Hamadian period (1878-1908). While sectarian

identity emerged as a result of Ottoman policies and European interference, these

dynamics also engendered national identities.

Nationalisms

The withdrawal of Ibrahim Pasha and his troops from the Levant in 1840

contributed greatly to the initial manifestations of nationalism in the area that would

become Lebanon. In October 1840, the Maronite Patriarch espoused the notion of a

Lebanese entity or Lebanism.[66] The Patriarch expressed the belief that the Maronites,

particularly clerical authorities, were entitled to rule the area of Mount Lebanon. He

based this belief on a reinterpretation of history and the preponderance of Maronites in

the area.[67] While supported by the French, the Patriarch's objective was thwarted. Its

failure is attributed to the Ottoman and Druze opposition and the inability to unite the

Maronite community around a common political idea.[68] Dissimilar to Lebanism which

drew from the Christian heritage of Mount Lebanon, pagan elements began to appear in

the narrative of the Mountain.

Roughly two decades later, the notion of Phoenicianism manifested in the Levant.

Western-educated non-clerical Maronites challenged the hegemony of the Maronite

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[64] Makdisi, 61-2.

[65] The violence against the Christian communities extended to Damascus. European consulates were also attacked and destroyed. After the violence dissipated, 15,000 Christians were killed and tens of thousands had been uprooted from their homes. Akarli, 30.

[66] Hakim, 29-30.

[67] Until the reign of Bashir II, the leader of Mt. Lebanon had always been a Sunni. Ibid., 29.

[68] Ibid., 31-32.

church by tracing the history of Mount Lebanon to before Christianity and the pagan past

of the Phoenicians. While glimpses of Phoenicianism appeared in the latter half of the

nineteenth century, it did not become particularly popular until during and after World

War I.[69]

A similar argument can be constructed for Arab or Syrian nationalism. By the

final decades of the 19th century, glimpses of Arab or Syrian nationalism began to appear

in the Levant, but they would not catch fire among the masses until the first decades of

the twentieth century.[70] The attractiveness of Arab nationalism can be partially attributed

to the emphasis on Turkish identity following the empowerment of the Young Turks in

1908. Arab identity became particularly prominent in the Muslim communities of the

Levant.

The growth of Arab nationalism among the Muslim community triggered a

reaction from the Christians. The Christians became concerned that Arab nationalism

would become synonymous with Islam. They believed that Muslims could not

disassociate Arab nationalism from Islam and adhere to a truly secular form of Arab

nationalism. Thus, Lebanism or Phoenicianism began to gain traction in parts of Mount

Lebanon. However, it should be noted that there was not a strict Christian adherence to

either forms of Lebanism or Phoenicianism. Especially among those Christians who did

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[69] Asher Kaufman, *Reviving Phoenicia: In Search of Identity in Lebanon* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 55-108.

[70] The narrative is disputed as to when and who was responsible for the emergence of these nationalisms. For the role Christians played in the emergence of Arab and Syrian nationalism, see George Antonius, *The Arab Awakening: The Story of the Arab National Movement* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1938) and Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798-1939* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983). For the perspective that the Muslim religious establishment was responsible for its appearance see C. Ernest Dawn, *From Ottomanism to Arabism: Essays on the Origins of Arab Nationalism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1973). For a further refinement of the discussion and its details see Rashid Khalidi, "Ottomanism and Arabism in Syria before 1914: A Reassessment" in *The Origins of Arab Nationalism* ed. by Rashid Khalidi, Lisa Anderson, Muhammad Muslih and Reeva Simon (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 50-69.

not reside in the *mutasarrifiyyah*, these Christians not only feared Muslim rule, they also feared Maronite hegemony.[71] As a result, the idea of an Arab or Greater Syrian identity or nation also began to emerge among some Christians and Muslims. These contrasting notions of identity were retained by the inhabitants of what would become Lebanon and plagued its society for years.

These competing notions of identity – sectarian (e.g. Christian, Muslim, Druze) and national (e.g. Lebanism, Phoenicianism, Arab, and Syrian) – facilitated the creation of a fragmented society riddled with competition and distrust. The uniqueness and historical rights claimed by the various groups inhabiting Mount Lebanon and the surrounding areas produced a climate of contending notions of hegemony and fear. With recent and distant memories of massacres, the hegemony of a particularly community helped to ensure their safety, but the scenario put the security of another group at risk. For example, if the Maronites were in power, their fears of violence at the hands of the Sunni Muslims or the Druze were abated. For the Sunni Muslim and Druze, Christian hegemony entailed a deviation from their understanding of the historical precedents of the mountain and the greater region and therefore an act of injustice. In this anxiety-ridden and unjust environment it is not surprising that sects often relied or continued to rely on external entities for reassurances and security. Furthermore, these countervailing identities present in the Levant and external actors would impinge on the creation and resilience of the Lebanese state.

[71] Phares, 68.

Part IV:

Defining the contours of the chessboard — The creation of the state of Lebanon

Until 1861, the word "Lebanon" was used to identify a mountain – Mount Lebanon. Mount Lebanon denoted the northern ridge of mountains that runs parallel to the Mediterranean Sea from the Zahrani River in the South to the Barid River in the North.[72] With the establishment of an autonomous administrative zone and European support for it, the notion that Lebanon was more than just a geographic landmark but a nation with historical roots began to germinate and gain traction among some of the inhabitants. From 1861-1914, this idea was allowed to gain further credence through the semi-autonomous status of the *mutasarrifiyyah* and an administration led by a Christian and a parliament derived from the various sects of the mountain. However, even with this roughly half century of semi-autonomy and its perceived uniqueness, the establishment of a Lebanese state was not a foregone conclusion by the end of World War I. The emergence and maintenance of Lebanon would be a contested process among the people of the area and subjected to input from outside powers.

With the outbreak of World War I and the Ottoman alliance with Germany, the *mutassarifiyyah* was disbanded by the Ottomans and the capitulations were cancelled.[73] The defeat of the Ottomans in 1918 led to the raising of the Sharifan flag in Beirut. The Sharifan flag marked the jurisdiction of Sharif Husayn's son, Amir Faysal who became King of Damascus in 1918.[74] Beirut's recognition of the Sharifan flag and its government

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[72] Akarli, 6.

[73] Foreign consulates were closed and attempts were made to remove foreigners from Ottoman territory. Longrigg, 49.

[74] Husayn and his sons led a revolt with the support of the British against the Ottomans during World War I. While they were based in the Hejaz of the Arabian Peninsula, after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire

in Damascus was short-lived. Secret negotiations between the British and the French had

occurred during the war and produced the Sykes-Picot agreement.[75] The agreement

apportioned Ottoman territory between the two powers with the area formerly known as

the *mutassarifiyyah* being apportioned to the French. This agreement was largely realized

at the San Remo Conference of 1920. During the conference, France was awarded a

mandate over the future territories of Lebanon and Syria. The only thing that stood in the

way of France realizing the mandate after San Remo was Amir Faysal in Damascus. The

French ultimately marched on Damascus and defeated the Sharifan government at the

Maysalūn Pass (12 miles west of Damascus) in July of 1920. The French physically

remained in the region until 1946. Through the subsequent establishment of a mandate,

the French played a critical role in the delineation of Lebanon's future borders and its

separation from Syria.[76] However, unlike the arbitrary drawing of the borders of some

nations (i.e. Britain and the creation of Jordan's borders), the French were not alone in

this enterprise. France was accompanied by influential and willing domestic participants.

The *mutassarifiyyah* during the Ottoman Empire consisted largely of the area

historically known as Mount Lebanon. The semi-autonomous zone created in the second

half of the nineteenth century, extend to, but did not include the city of Tripoli in the

north, the Biqa Valley in the east and the city of Sidon in the south. Following the end of

World War I, there was no consensus among the inhabitants of this zone as to whether it

should remain, be eliminated or expanded. Different factors including insecurity, power

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they envisioned an Arab Kingdom that largely encompassed the Umayyad Dynasty of the 7th and 8th centuries. This became a reality from 1918-20.

[75] Several conflicting agreements were conducted during World War I to ensure support for the Allied Powers (i.e. Britain and France). They included the Sykes-Picot Agreement, the Husayn-McMahon Correspondence and the Balfour Declaration.

[76] A mandate could be interpreted as veiled colonialism. The mandate power was suppose to give up rule once the inhabitants could manage on their own.

and the competing notions of identity contributed to a variety of responses. Furthermore, no community was monolithic in its opinion about the future of the area. Some Maronite elites and the leadership of the Maronite Church pushed for an expansion of the zone.[77] The Greek Orthodox were caught between being a part of a Muslim or Maronite-dominated state while many Muslims did not perceive Lebanon as an entity distinct from Syria.[78]

In *A History of Modern Lebanon*, Fawaz Trablousi identifies four mindsets within the population at this time regarding the future status of the land: 1) The Arab Federalists who supported the kingdom in Damascus and believed Lebanon should be part of the kingdom; 2) Syrian federalists who conceived Lebanon as part of a federation with Syria; 3) Protectionists who believed that Lebanon was a state to be annexed by France, similar to colonial Algeria; 4) "Lebanese independentists" who supported the notion of an independent state free from France.[79] The protectionists prevailed and Lebanon came to fruition under French control. On August 31, 1920, a decree by French mandate authorities established the State of Lebanon. It incorporated Mount Lebanon plus the cities of Tripoli, Sidon and Tyre and the Biqa Valley to the east. Why did this Lebanon come to fruition and not a different manifestation or any manifestation at all? The answer largely resides in the big brother or patron-client relationship of France and the Maronite Church leadership.

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[77] Trablousi notes that the leadership did not represent a majority of the Maronite population. Fawaz Trablousi, *A History of Modern Lebanon* (London: Pluto Press, 2007), 81.
[78] In 1921, the population of Greater Lebanon totaled 609,069. Of that total, 55.12% were Christian and 44.87% were Muslim. Meir Zamir, *The Formation of Modern Lebanon* (Cornell University Press: Ithaca, 1985), 98.
[79] Trablousi, 82-84.

France, whose "centuries-old relationship" with the Maronite Catholic

community, perceived the establishment of the Lebanese state as part of its duty to

protect the Maronite community and support Lebanese nationalist aspirations.[80]

However, additional reasons must be considered. Firstly, the French continued to

conceptualize the region in terms of sects and supported many of these minorities.[81]

France's designation of Lebanon as a means to protect the Maronites was replicated in

Syria through its designation of the Alawite State along the Mediterranean coast and the

Jabal Druze State southeast of Damascus. These actions perpetuated the belief that

minorities were threatened by the despotic rule of Islam and needed their own place of

refuge. Secondly, the creation of the Lebanese state was also intended to strengthen

France's strategic and economic presence in the Middle East, compete with British

interests in the region and provide a means to counter the pan-Arab movement which

France viewed as potentially disruptive.[82] However France's inclusion of areas outside of

Mount Lebanon put the Maronites in a precarious position. If the French had wanted to

ensure a Christian majority, they would have delineated different borders.

The inclusion of cities such as Tripoli, Sidon and Tyre and the area of the Biqa

Valley endangered the existence of a "Christian state" because these areas were

predominantly inhabited by Muslims. Therefore, the delineation of Lebanon's borders

suggest the involvement of other issues. The idea of a clear Christian majority in Mount

Lebanon appears to have been trumped by the notion of an economically viable state,

business interests, the addition of agricultural lands to sustain the population, the

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[80] Salibi, *The Modern History of Lebanon*, 163. See also John Spagnolo, "Franco-British Rivalry in the Middle East and its Operation in the Lebanese Problem," in *Lebanon: A History of Conflict and Consensus*, eds. Nadim Shehadi and Dana Haffar Mills (London: Centre for Lebanese Studies and Tauris, 1988), 118.
[81] Trablousi, 76.
[82] Meo, 49-50. Zamir, 6.

inclusion of lands that were owned by the Maronite Church or all of the above.[83]

Regardless of the altered demographics by the incorporation of these areas, Christian

dominance was not initially threatened because of their relationship with the French

whose interests at the time largely prevailed through the establishment of the mandate.

Following the establishment of Lebanon's borders several realities of the

Lebanese political milieu emerged: 1) a state with only a slight majority of Christians but

a government dominated by Christians; 2) a Muslim population largely hostile to a

Lebanese state and a state under French control; and 3) an overriding French-British

rivalry. These issues would remain prevalent and a source of conflict.

Contesting and reifying the contours of the chessboard and its pieces

The creation of Lebanon and the mandate period (1920-1943) marked the

continued political ascendancy of Christians (especially the Maronites) in the fledging

state and the continued rejection of it by most Muslims. Gradually Lebanon would gain

acceptance by some of the Muslim leadership albeit under certain conditions. As

previously mentioned, Lebanon's establishment upset large segments of its Muslim

community who believed that Lebanon was historically part of Syria.[84] They perceived

Lebanon as an artificial construct that had been imposed by foreign powers and

ultimately foreign-dominated. It also resulted in an economic fissure between Lebanon

and Syria.[85] As a result, many Muslims refused to recognize the existence of a Lebanese

state and were unwilling to participate in its institutions. This rejection was particularly

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[83] Zamir, 67-96.

[84] I am not choosing to include the Shia because of the relative political weakness of the community before the civil war. See Kamal Salibi, *Crossroads to Civil War: Lebanon 1958-1976* (Delmar, New York: Caravan Press, 1976), 18.

[85] For example, the traditional trade route between Tripoli and Homs, which then feeds into Hama and Aleppo, was disrupted.

evident in the drafting of the Lebanese constitution from 1925-6 which further affirmed the Christian presence and the "unique" identity of the Lebanese state.

The French authorities circulated a questionnaire among the leadership of all Lebanon's confessions at the end of 1925. The questionnaire enquired about representation and its numbers, the nature of elections and type of government that should exist in Lebanon. Almost all of the Muslim leadership failed to return the questionnaire to the authorities. They refused to take part in a process that: a) reaffirmed Lebanon's existence – distinct from Syria; b) confirmed the existence of Lebanon's borders; and c) was sponsored by the French. It is important to note that the circulation of the questionnaire also occurred during the Syrian revolt against the French, and any kind of participation would have been perceived as an act of disloyalty to the greater Muslim community. Therefore the Lebanese constitution was largely authored by the Maronite Christians. Another indication of Muslim disregard for the state-building process was demonstrated by the Lebanese Muslim demands that Muslim districts be included in the drafting of the Syrian constitution of 1928.[86] These examples further demonstrate the continued vitality of ties or identity that transcended or opposed Lebanon's newly demarcated borders and its separation from Syria. It also demonstrates a Christian and French willingness to proceed without the consent of the Muslim population.

The theme of rejection and reaffirmation was further demonstrated in the 1932 presidential election that was cancelled by French mandate authorities shortly after the Sunni Muslim Sheikh Muhammad Jisr decided to declare himself a candidate for the presidency. From the Muslim perspective, it reemphasized an inclination towards French interests and Christian supremacy. Christian supremacy was reaffirmed through the

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[86] Salibi, *The Making of Modern Lebanon,* 170.

census of 1932 that acknowledged the Christian community as the largest community in Lebanon. However, continual Sunni antipathy towards the existence of a Lebanese state and governance would have made the viability and survival of a Lebanese state virtually impossible. Thus, ultimately co-operation was required between the Christian and Muslim communities. However, this *modus vivendi* was not the result of an acceptance of the status quo, rather it was the result of eventual joint disappointment with French authorities combined with regional and international developments.[87]

The final reification

With the German occupation of France beginning in 1940, the French Vichy government took control of Lebanon and refused to promise eventual independence to the Lebanese as implied by the mandate. Exploiting these desires to advance their own strategic interests, the British in 1941 condemned the Vichy government's actions and publicly supported Lebanese independence. The British pronouncement further complicated matters for the Free French who had no intention of ending their mandate over Lebanon at that time. But because of French weakness – the German occupation of Paris – the French had no choice but to support the British pronouncement. The French position would change, but the damage had already been done. These positions would accelerate the growing anti-French sentiment amongst both Lebanese Christians and Muslims (i.e. their elites) and facilitated the emergence of common ground between the two largest communities – the Maronite Catholics and the Sunni Muslims. This common ground produced what became known as the National Pact (*mithaq al-watan*) of 1943.

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[87] Claude Boueiz Kanaan, *Lebanon 1860-1960: A Century of Myth and Politics* (London: Saqi, 2005), 131, 139.

The National Pact was an unwritten agreement between the leadership of the

Maronite Catholic community (Beshara el-Khoury) and the Sunni Muslim Community

(Riad el-Solh}). To ensure the survival of the Lebanese entity, a solution to the

competing notions of identity between Christians and Muslims was necessary. For

Lebanon to be an independent state, Lebanon's Christians would become more "Arab"

while Muslims would become more "Lebanese."[88] Additionally during times of crisis, the

Christian community would not seek the assistance of France or the West and the Sunni

Muslim community would not seek the assistance of the Arab World (i.e. Syria).

Furthermore, the Pact cemented the significance of religious identity in governance by

recognizing a pecking order for confessions and the distribution of Parliamentary seats

along confessional lines. Buoyed by the 1932 census which indicated that the Maronite

and Sunni communities constituted the largest and second largest communities, these

confessions were, therefore, given the two top posts in the government.[89] The position of

the presidency was designated for the Maronites and the position of the Prime Minister

for the Sunnis. The 1932 census also validated the composition of the Parliament, which

was to be based on a six-to-five Christian/Muslim ratio. To demonstrate the weakness

and political irrelevance of the other communities , the third largest community at the

time, the Shia, were not a party to the agreement and were only designated a single

position in the government hierarchy, the Speaker of the Parliament, in 1947.

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[88] Farid el-Khazen, *The Communal Pact of National Identities: The Making and Politics of the 1943 National Pact*, (Centre for Lebanese Studies: Oxford, 1991), 35.
[89] In 1932 the Maronite population was 227,800 or 29.11% of the population. The Sunni Muslim community numbered 177,100 or 22.63% of the population. The Shia community was 155,035 or 19.81% of the population. The entire Christian population totaled 50.73% and the entire Muslim community was 49.26. Zamir, *The Formation of Modern Lebanon*, 98.

Furthermore, it was a position that had to be renewed yearly. The National Pact became the basis for the Lebanese political equation and the linchpin of the Lebanese state.

While the National Pact may be perceived as an accomplishment of sorts, several relevant points need to be identified for understanding Lebanon's bargaining environment. As Farid el-Khazen notes, it was achieved at an ideal time when two sides were able to rally around a common idea — ending French occupation. However as el-Khazen suggests, the Pact was the product of two assumptions: a) Elite consensus was based on popular support; and b) the regional balance of power would remain consistent.[90] Both assumptions were incorrect. He also points out that while their respective allegiances were supposedly negated, an alternative ideology was not offered.[91] Additionally, the National Pact did not create a system or means to address inter-confessional disputes or stalemates when they arose.[92] This scenario only reaffirmed the divisions between the communities, the recognition of each community's distinctiveness, and perpetuated an atmosphere of mutual distrust and little allegiance to the state. As a result, a political culture developed and generated several consequences: 1) mutual suspicions; 2) a lack of unity; 3) an untenable foreign policy; and 4) considerable interference from external powers. The reification of the state of Lebanon was not limited to the political realm; there was also an economic element.

Historically, the ports of Tripoli, Sidon and Beirut fed the hinterlands of Lebanon, Syria (i.e. Homs, Hama and Damascus) and beyond. After the division of Greater Syria and the demarcation of borders between Syria and Lebanon, initially, the French maintained these historical trade routes and relations through instituting *de jure* customs,

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[90] Ibid., 39.
[91] Ibid., 39.
[92] Kanaan, 142.

a monetary union and a *de facto* economic union.[93] However, during the mandate, these connections and relations were indirectly undermined and threatened. First, the French worked to develop the port of Beirut to the detriment of other ports in the French mandated territory (i.e. Tripoli, Sidon and Latakia(a Syrian port to the north)).[94] The development and expansion of roads to and from Beirut prepared it as a hub for goods destined to Iraq, Jordan, Palestine, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Iran.

The second development was ideological. The presence of certain individuals in government circles would prepare Lebanon for a completely different economic trajectory than her neighbors upon independence. The individual mostly responsible for this development was Michel Chiha. Chiha, a Catholic banker who was the main author of the Lebanese constitution, emphasized the uniqueness of Lebanon and its society. This uniqueness needed time to be recognized and mature in order to become a stable environment. According to Chiha, one of the ways to create that stability was through a free and open economy. Although Chiha shunned political office, through his newspaper *Le Jour*, his marriage and the marriage of family members to politicians (i.e. his sister to President Bishara el-Khoury) he was able to have considerable influence in Lebanese political circles.

Upon independence, Lebanon became a free and open economy. Some would characterize it as the merchant economy. Following the independence of Lebanon and Syria, the customs union survived until 1950. But from 1950 forward, the economic relationship with Syria was relatively rocky.

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[93] Carolyn L. Gates. *The Merchant Republic of Lebanon: Rise of an Open Economy* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1998), 18.
[94] Ibid., 31. The French wanted Beirut to rival Haifa on the Eastern Mediterranean.

Having understood the process of the emergence of the Lebanese state, a more profound comprehension of its components is necessary.

Part V:

Identifying the pieces on the chessboard in an independent Lebanon

As the previous pages and paragraphs have begun to demonstrate, the Lebanese political milieu following Lebanon's independence constituted an extremely fragmented, diverse and complicated environment. It was composed of a multiplicity of political actors with varying degrees of influence and ideological affinities which included: emerging domestic political parties addressing a spectrum of causes and ideas, religious institutions, and local elites (pl. *zu'ama* sing. *za'im*) and regional and extra-regional actors. [95]

The Domestic pieces

In 1943, Lebanon had a population of roughly 1.5 million and eighteen recognized confessions. Political allegiances were diffused within and across these confessions to a variety of political elites and parties. Political elites in 1943 could be largely characterized as *zu'ama* (sing. *za'im*). These *zu'ama* had been part and parcel of Lebanese society for several centuries. Many of their roots can be traced back to the time when the *iqta'* system existed in Mount Lebanon and the Levant. The *iqta'* system was a manifestation of feudalism, however unlike other types of feudalism in the region, there were no required military duties for the locals. Rather the obedience to the feudal lord

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[95] A *za'im* (pl. *zu'ama*), is a political leader who attempts to bring about the betterment of a local community in return for their support. Hottinger, 85.

was based on political allegiance or what could be referred to as a patron-client relationship or clientalism.[96] While the *iqtaʿ* system slowly collapsed, the phenomenon of clientalism endured. Since the mid 19th century, with the emergence of sectarian identities and conflict between sects, the practice of patronage became largely associated with communal identity.[97]

The *zuʾama* families like the Frangiehs, Khazins, Jumblatts, Arsla>ns, Asʿads, Hamadehs and Karamis became synonymous with their respective confessions (i.e. Maronite Catholic, Druze, Shia and Sunni). The entrance of some of these *zuʿama* into the political scene was facilitated by the creation of the *mutassarifiyyah* which contributed to the institutionalization of confessionalism. The administrative council that was created to counsel the governor was based on representatives from various regions of the zone. Considering that these feudal lords already had clout in their areas, it was relatively easy for them to be appointed to the council.[98] The ownership of large tracts of land was not the only entrance into politics.

Political elites also emerged from the commercial sector and as employees of the French administrative system in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[99] For example, Sāʿeb Salām, a prominent politician following Lebanese independence was born into a merchant family from Beirut. The first president of an independent Lebanon, Bishara el-Khoury, was the son of a civil official and trained as a lawyer. Bishara was appointed Secretary of Mount Lebanon in 1922.[100] Emile Eddeh, the leader of a well-known

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[96] According to Michael Johnson, the phenomenon of clientalism constitutes "a set of structures which function to maintain social and political control...." Johnson, 5.
[97] Uprisings in the 19th century and then the creation of confessional system help transform this. See Hamzeh, 169-71.
[98] Akarli, 83.
[99] The term *zaʿim* is also often used to describe these types of elites.
[100] Goria, 20.

Maronite family, was also trained a lawyer and attained prominence through his work under the French Mandate authorities. While these elites were major players in Lebanese politics, they were not able to maintain a monopoly on the political space. Political parties also became pieces on the chessboard.

Political parties in Lebanon run the gamut of ideologies and causes. These parties began to emerge in Lebanon and the region in the 20s, 30s and 40s. Adopting ideological tenets such as nationalism and emulating certain aspects of fascist parties in Europe, they began to dot the Lebanese political landscape. As previously mentioned beliefs of pan-Arabism and the idea that Lebanon was part of Syria remained widely popular in the mandate and post-mandate periods and spawned political parties embodying these ideas. These parties included: the Syrian Social Nationalist Party (SSNP), the Bath Party and the Arab Nationalist Movement.[101] For example SSNP perceived Lebanon as part of a greater Syrian entity that incorporated Lebanon, Syria, Palestine and Jordan.[102] These parties attempted to erase the divide between confessions by appealing to all Lebanese. But due to the nature of the beast — a government based on confessional representation — they did not appeal to all Lebanese (i.e. Maronites) or were unable to impact Lebanese society.

Other parties attempted to breach this confessional divide as well, but ultimately became largely confessional parties: the Phalange (Maronite), the Najjadah (Sunni Muslim) and eventually the Progressive Socialist Party (Druze).[103] Furthermore, some of

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[101] For a somewhat exhaustive list of Lebanese political parties see: Michael W. Suleiman, *Political Parties in Lebanon: The Challenge of a Fragmented Political Culture* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1967).

[102] The entity of greater Syria was revised after World War II to also include Iraq and Cyprus. Ibid., 104.

[103] The founding members of the Progressive Socialist Party drew from several different confessions: Druze (Kamāl Junblāṭ), Sunni (Abdullah al-Aleily), Greek Catholic (Fouad Rizk), Maronite Catholic (Albert Adeeb), George Hanna (Christian Orthodox) and Catholic (Fareed Jubran).

these parties (i.e. the Phalange and the Progressive Socialist Party (PSP)) would become synonymous with a particular individual/family, ala cults of personality. The PSP became the domain of the Junblāṭ family and the Phalange became the domain of the Jemayyel family. The establishment of other Lebanese parties developed in reverse order. Political parties were conceived by a particular figure/*zaʿim* or family after they became politically prominent. For example, President Camille Sham'ūnstarted the National Liberal Party after he left office in 1958. Years later and after his father became president, in 2006, politician Sulieman Frangieh created the political party Marada. Other political parties from inception were first and foremost dedicated to religious beliefs or ethnic identity. These parties included *Jammah al-Islamiyyah* (Sunni Muslim) and the Dashnak (Armenian). Political parties were not the only "groupings" that dotted the Lebanese political landscape. Loose alliances known as blocs or fronts were also formed.

Under certain conditions, *zuʿama* and political parties united around common objectives, themes, or as a reaction to developments that could be identified as blocs or fronts. For example, during the French mandate, the Lebanese constitution was suspended in 1932 by French authorities. In response to this development, two blocs emerged. The Constitutional Bloc led by future President Bishara el-Khoury called for the restoration of the Constitution. The other major group that emerged during the Constitutional crisis was led by Emile Eddeh. Eddeh formed the National Bloc which sought to defend Lebanon in its present state.[104] The manifestation of blocs at this juncture is significant, but for the purposes of this study they also reflect another significant dimension of Lebanese politics.

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[104] Meo, 68-9.

The Constitutional Bloc and the National Bloc represent the intra-confessional political dynamics of Lebanon. El-Khoury and Eddeh were both Maronites and vying for power within the Maronite Catholic community and Lebanon. Their competition demonstrates that struggles did not just occur between confessions but also within confessions. Similar competition within confessions can be witnessed in the Druze community between the Junblāts and the Arslāns, the Shia community between the Assads and Hamadehs and eventually between the Salāms and the Karāmīs in the Sunni community. It is also important to note, as will be demonstrated in the forthcoming chapters, these blocs or fronts which generally manifested around one or a few ideas was an electoral ploy and often eventually fell victim to political squabbling.

The Regional and extra-Regional Pieces

The National Pact and the withdrawal of the French mandate forces in 1946 did not mark the end of external interference in Lebanese affairs. The precedent of external interference that had been well established during the Ottoman Empire and mandate period persevered during Lebanese independence. This is attributable to several realities. Firstly, considering the mutual distrust between communities, constant fears of being dominated by one community or the other and communities marginalized or not being sufficiently represented by the state provided a pretext for the continuation of external interference as a viable means to counter these real or perceived concerns. Secondly, some of Lebanon's communities (i.e. the Maronites and the Druze) had a history of looking to external actors for assistance and had developed affinities to external identities – Arab or Western. Thirdly, the National Pact created a dicey political environment that

made it virtually impossible to avoid external interference. A real or perceived step in one direction inevitably provoked a response by the other side.

Ultimately, Lebanese leaders and parties enlisted external states/actors to counter the moves of their domestic counterparts. The enlistment of these external actor or extra-territorial veto players was contingent on a historical relationship, shared religious beliefs, ideologies, mutual enemy or the absence of a viable alternative. Thus Syria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, France, the US, Iran, Iraq, the USSR, Israel and others were never just an observer for very long. But all the blame cannot be placed on the Lebanese. External actors also recognized various interests in the Lebanese milieu and therefore exploited the divisions or concerns and interfered within Lebanese society to protect their interests.

Part VI:

The official rules of the chessboard – The Lebanese political system

A "power-sharing" formula between Lebanon's confessions had been practiced for more than sixty years as evinced by previous pages. But no specific blueprint had been institutionalized until 1926. The Lebanese constitution promulgated a parliamentary system of governance. One of the fundamental ideas of the constitution was the enshrinement of equitable representation of the various confessional communities in public office. This equitable representation extended to civil service jobs. However, the constitution did not specify whether this equitable representation necessitated proportional representation. Secondly, the constitution lacked a scheme or mechanism to implement this co-operation. Rather, according to Kama>l Salibi, co-operation was

intended to be of a spontaneous nature.[105] As will be demonstrated in the forthcoming

chapters, this is an issue that continues to hound Lebanese politics to this day.

Furthermore, the Lebanese constitution does not specify that the President must

be a Maronite Catholic or the Prime Minister had to be a Sunni Muslim. It was the

National Pact of 1943 that informally agreed to these terms. What the constitution in

1943 did specify was the powers of the various institutions and these powers fell

predominately within the institution of the presidency.[106]

The President of the Lebanese Republic

The President had considerable power with the Lebanese political system. Regarding his

power over other offices, he had the ability to appoint and dismiss ministers, among

whom he had to designate a Prime Minister. He could dissolve the chamber of deputies

with the approval of the council of ministers. He held the right to have a law reconsidered

before he promulgated it. He was also endowed with the power to negotiate and ratify

international treaties.

The Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers

 The Constitution does not expound much upon the duties of the "Prime Minister." He is

responsible for presenting the government's statement policy before the Chamber of

Deputies. Beyond that it only acknowledges that ministers are responsible for the

application of the laws that are related to his/her department.

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[105] Ibid., 167.
[106] The Lebanese Constitution was first drafted in 1927. The powers of the institutions that I speak of are based on the 1943-1990 Constitution.

The Chamber of Deputies

They are a popularly elected group who are bestowed with the responsibility of electing the President. They are also able to revise the Constitution if they can garner a two-thirds majority.

Conclusion

Overall, this chapter has provided a layout of the Lebanese chessboard, its components and rules as Lebanon entered independent statehood in 1943. How these components will interact and follow the rules of the political system is the subject of the subsequent chapters. But this chapter has provided us with an understanding of some of the overarching themes, ideas and dynamics of Lebanese politics. It has also provided some insight into the tendencies of its actors. For example, the French interaction with the Maronite community greatly contributed to Maronite notions of security and its fear of being subsumed by the Arab world. Before proceeding further I would like to conclude with these themes and tendencies since they inform the structure of the analysis in the forthcoming chapters.

1) In theory, as a result of the National Pact, there were two power brokers of Lebanese politics, the Maronites and Sunnis (in a broader sense the Christians and the Muslims). It was the responsibility of these two communities to co-exist and ensure stability for Lebanon. This co-existence is demonstrated by the allocation of the two top posts in the government, the Presidency and the Prime Minister, to these communities. The relationship between these two communities, or more specifically these posts, provide the basis for the analysis of political agreement. However, it must be noted that it was an

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imbalanced co-existence as demonstrated by the powers designated to the President vis-à-vis the Prime Minister in the Lebanese Constitution.

2) This co-existence occurred with each community perceiving itself as fundamentally distinct from the other. During the hundred years prior to Lebanese independence, Lebanon's religious communities acquired sectarian identities. This sectarian perception was reinforced by the establishment of Lebanon's political system. It created in an environment in which the community's identity challenged Lebanon's overarching national identity. In other words these developments paved the way for the creation and maintenance of a "state without a nation."

3) The Levant, particular the area to become Lebanon, experienced a tremendous of external interference in the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The interference was invited and uninvited. The experiences established the precedent of external interference and the creation of relationships between Lebanese communities and external actors. Furthermore, the invited and the uninvited external actor suggested a general disrespect for the sovereignty of the state by the Lebanese confession doing the inviting and the external actor.

4) The relationship between Syria and Lebanon resembles a breakup without closure or an unresolved divorce. While they were physically separated on the map, it was not necessarily accepted nor was it a separation that could be ideally realized politically, socially and economically.

Dictating courses of action in the presence of these issues and variables was inevitably problematic. The first major problem occurred in 1958.

Chapter 3

"No Victor, No Vanquished"

Achieving political agreement in 1958 Lebanon

1958 was a tumultuous year in Lebanese history. For the first time since its

independence, prolonged armed conflict broke out among the Lebanese in May. The

conflict was discussed at the Arab League and the United Nations in June and

eventually US marines arrived on the beaches of Beirut in July. Relative peace and

quiet did not return to the streets of Lebanon until the middle of October. Scholars have

been examining this episode for over fifty years. These studies have analyzed various

aspects and issues of the conflict – US intervention in the conflict, Egyptian-Lebanese

relations, domestic developments and US-Egyptian relations.[1]

Some have argued that President Camille Sham'ūn's attempt to hold on to

power by extending his 6-year Presidential term triggered the violence which did not

cease until his successor was chosen. Others have propounded that Sham'ūn's foreign

policy decision of signing the Eisenhower Doctrine in 1957 moved Lebanon too far into

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[1] Erika Alin, *The United States and the 1958 Lebanon crisis : American intervention in the Middle East* (Lanham, Md: University Press of America, 1994). Alin argues that the US intervention in Lebanon supported a political compromise that satisfied the needs of the pro-Arab nationalist Lebanese. Fawaz Gerges *The superpowers and the Middle East: regional and international politics, 1955-1967* (Boulder : Westview Press, 1994). Gerges argues that Sham'ūn was intent on internationalizing the conflict in Lebanon. Nasser Kalawoun, *The struggle for Lebanon : a modern history of Lebanese-Egyptian relations* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2000). Kalawoun argues that the regional dynamics instigated already present tensions in Lebanon and it was not until the US intervened to protect the Lebanese regime from a takeover. Caroline Attie. The Struggle in the Levant: Lebanon in the 1950s (London: I.B. Tauris, 2004). Attie argues that it was the US-Egyptian compromise which led to a resolution of the Lebanese domestic scene. Irene Gendzier, *Notes from the minefield: United States intervention in Lebanon and the Middle East, 1945-1958* (New York : Columbia University Press, 1997). Gendzier emphasizes the economic and strategic dimensions of the US involvement in Lebanon. Fahim Qubain, *Crisis in Lebanon* (Washington D.C.: Middle East Institute, 1961). Agnes Korbani, US Intervention in Lebanon, 1958 and 1982: Presidential Decisionmaking (New York: Praeger, 1991.)

the Western sphere of influence and ultimately upset Lebanon's neutral policy and some of its constituents. These accounts are problematic for a variety of reasons. For example, if Sham'ūnand his attempted power snatch in 1958 was the trigger, why didn't a similar situation occur when former President Beshar al-Khouri extended his term? There eventually was a revolution against al-Khoury, but it was peaceful and did not require foreign intervention.[2] If the Eisenhower Doctrine was the trigger, why didn't a similar response ensue following the Lebanese chamber's ratification of the Point IV plan in 1951?[3] These examples suggest that other variables were involved in this crisis. Instead of focusing on a specific figure or event, the following pages will examine a series of events and multiple figures to untangle the issues to reveal: how and why did cooperation breakdown during this period and how and why was it reestablished?

This chapter is divided into three parts. Part I provides background to the pre-1957 political situation. It is comprised of two sections: 1) Domestic actors and confessional relations; 2) An overview of Lebanon's interaction with the Arab and International community. The second section specifically looks at Defense Pacts, Arab Unity, relations with Syria and the Suez Crisis to create a picture of the political behavior of the Lebanese state through the Suez Crisis. This is tantamount to understanding actions of various actors during the transformation of the Status Quo. Part II traces the transformation of the status quo beginning with the fallout from the Suez Crisis, then the Eisenhower Doctrine and finally the creation of the Arab Republic

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[2] The resignation of President el-Khoury is referred to as the Rose Revolution. Despite support from fifty-eight of seventy-two deputies, a country-wide strike forced el-Khoury to resign. For further detail see: J.L., Peaceful Change in the Lebanon: The 'Rose-Water' Revolution, *The World Today* 9:4 (April 1953), 162-73.

[3] Halford Hoskins, Some Aspects of the Security Problem in the Middle East, *American Political Science Review* 47:1 (1953) 190. 188-198.

to the formation of the cabinet in October of 1958. [4] Part III constitutes an analysis of this transformation to determine who the veto players are and why they arrived at an agreement.

Part I – Actors and Background to the Status Quo

<u>Actors</u>

President Camille Sham'ūn

Camille Sham'ūn, a Maronite Catholic, was elected President of Lebanon on September 23, 1952. The Sham'ūnname was a relative unknown quantity among Lebanon's political elites. His father had been an Inspector of Finance for the Ottomans, but never a politician. Therefore Camille was largely responsible for establishing the family name in politics. After being elected as a deputy from the Chouf (an area southeast of Beirut) in 1929, sources suggest that he relied on his political prowess to build up his political stature. He was adept at forming alliances and projected a populist image while still being a proponent of a laissez faire system in Lebanon. Sham'ūnheld a variety of affinities which appears to have facilitated his ability to maneuver across political lines in his early career. Even prior to his election as president, it is safe to assume that Sham'ūnalready had a fondness for the West: his family had been exiled during World War I for their perceived connections to the French; he married a Lebanese woman who was half British and had served as the Lebanese ambassador to Great Britain for several years. This relationship to the British led people to believe he

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[4] I have identified November 1956 as the moment where the status quo is challenged. Following the Suez Crisis events in Lebanon begin to accelerate which ultimately led to the 1958 crisis and a change in the status quo.

had a "British connection."[5] But Sham'ūn's appeal also extended to "Arab issues" as demonstrated by his attendance of the National Arab Congress in Jerusalem in January of 1949.[6] This political adeptness enabled him to be an appealing candidate for President by the fall of 1952.

A diverse alliance of political parties and politicians representing a variety of confessions and ideologies backed Sham'ūn.[7] The ideologies of most of these parties clashed leaving them with little to agree on besides Sham'ūn's candidacy. Many of these supporters, including Sham'ūnhimself, had initially been proponents of former President Beshara el-Khoury; some of them including Sham'ūnhad participated as ministers in his governments. Therefore, Sham'ūn's election was more a reflection of a vote against former President el-Khoury than an endorsement of his political views.[8] For example, two parties, the Najjada and the Katā'ib , who had competing views regarding the orientation of the state supported Sham'ūnin the election. Not surprisingly, this ad hoc alliance broke apart immediately after Sham'ūn's arrival to office.

Kamāl Junblāṭ and his Progressive Socialist Party (PSP) adherents absconded from the alliance immediately after the election. Sham'ūnrefused Junblāṭ's demand to pursue corruption charges against former President el-Khoury. One of the principles of the PSP was the elimination of elements (e.g. el-Khoury) that disrupted and exploited

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[5] Goria, 44.

[6] Sham'ūn claimed to support efforts of the Arab League regarding Palestine. Abu Salih, 190.

[7] Kamāl Salibi, *The Modern History of Lebanon* (New York: Caravan Books, 1977), 194. It included: the Katā'ib , Najjada, Syrian Nationalists, the Progressive Socialists (PSP) and the National Bloc of Raymond and Pierre Eddeh.[7]

[8] While traditionally enemies, the Katā'ib and the Najjada were repressed by the al-Khoury regime. At a fundamental level, the Najjada championed the cause of the Muslim community and worked towards the creation of a Lebanese state free of all non-Arab influence. The Katā'ib did not believe in a strong Arab identity. It claimed that Lebanon had been influenced by the Arab culture but this did not necessitate that Lebanon was Arab. It strove to protect Lebanon's unique identity in the region. For further detail about both parties see: Suleiman, 201-40.

the society. The disagreement over el-Khoury was only the tip of the iceberg.

Sham'ūnand the PSP differed on fundamental policy issues like the nationalization of

some industries, the creation of a social security program, and the redistribution of large

feudal estates.[9] The Progressive Socialist Party envisioned a Lebanese society devoid of

dividing markers between people including the confessional system. As a result, Junblāt

became a political nemesis of Sham'ūnfrom the start of his term.

A wide range of parties and personalities supported Sham'ūn's candidacy but

this did not mean that he had no rivals in the Maronite community. Hamid Frangieh,

who was backed by the Maronite Patriarch initially challenged Sham'ūn's candidacy.

Frangieh eventually withdrew from the election because of a lack of political support.

Although the competition for the Presidency did not appear particularly intense in the

Maronite community, it is difficult to discern from the sources the extent of Sham'ūn's

popularity in the Maronite community upon his arrival to office. Considering the family

background, time spent overseas and the absence of a political party, Sham'ūn's popular

appeal appears to have been relatively limited among Maronite masses, at least at the

beginning of his term.

Cabinets and confessional relationships (1952-1956)

During the first four years of Sham'ūn's presidency, his cabinets lasted an

average of 6-8 months.[10] The Prime Ministers who held office during this time were

Khalid Shihab, Sā'eb Salām, Abdullah Yāfī (3x), Samī al-Solḥ (2x) and Rashid Karāmī.

These individuals represented prominent political Sunni families throughout Lebanon

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[9] Ibid., 219-25.
[10] Hudson, 288 and Attie, 47.

and brought different attributes to the composition of the governments. For example, Rashid Karāmī's presence in the government incorporated representation from Lebanon's second largest city Tripoli into the cabinet. Samī al-Solḥ's inclusion maintained the connection to his famous cousin Riyadh and the popular Sunni political family.[11]

The continual overturn in cabinets has been attributed to the struggle between reformists and traditionalists. [12] Michael Hudson characterized the period as *immobilisme*.[13] Richard Dekmejian noted that these cabinets, regardless of their size and composition, were plagued by opposition to reform attempts.[14] The divide between the reformists and traditionalists represented the unwillingness of certain political elements to sacrifice power on behalf of the system. While politicians were fearful of losing their powers through reform, societal tensions continued to reflect the dynamics of the state.

Another scholar, Caroline Attie, identified other divisions that riddled Lebanese society from inception and continued to fester during the first half of Sham'ūn's presidency. These divisions included: confessional, socio-economic, Beirut vs. Tripoli and urban vs. rural. While political battles were waged on behalf of these divisions, they ultimately took a back seat to politicians' personal interests. This political behavior was particularly apparent after the release of a document in 1954 which criticized Maronite domination of the government and economic problems. None of the prominent Sunni political elites used the document as a platform to attack the government or distanced

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[11] There are conflicting beliefs about the popular appeal of al-Solḥ. His role in the government deserves further examination.
[12] Dekmejian, 41-4.
[13] Hudson, 276.
[14] Dekmejian, 41-4.

themselves from it.[15] The relationship between the Sunni elites and their community would undergo a dramatic change with the emergence of Nasser after the Suez crisis. And the crisis demonstrated the impact of external developments on the Lebanese domestic scene.

As will continually be observed in the forthcoming chapters, Lebanon's internal scene was not immune or blind to the developments outside its borders. The big brother mentality that pervaded eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth century Mount Lebanon did not die with Lebanese independence. Furthermore the inability to establish a strong national identity continued to pull Lebanon's communities in opposite directions. The critical question becomes why did Lebanon unravel at a certain time and then come back together? Was it because of the confessional dynamics, the Lebanese personalities or outside interference?

Lebanon, Defense Pacts, Unity Projects, Relations and the Suez Crisis

Following the end of World War II, the world witnessed a changing of the guard on the international stage. The US and USSR would replace the colonial powers of Great Britain and France as the major international actors. This transformation would occur in the Middle East over the course of ten years (1946-1956). Following World War II, it became increasingly more difficult for Great Britain and France to maintain their international position of prominence because of financial constraints. Unlike the French, the British did not engage in a unilateral or haphazard withdrawal; rather they

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[15] Attie, 56. Prime Minister al-Yāfī condemned the document while former prime minister Sā‘eb Salām distanced himself from it. The issuance of *Muslim Lebanon Today* addressed concerns about a Christian-dominated government, particularly focusing on equality or proportional representation of confessions in the government and economic interests.

attempted to keep their foot in the region by (re)negotiating their "relations" with various states, former mandates and colonies.[16] Often these negotiations entailed security arrangements. As the proceeding paragraphs will demonstrate, the British desire to maintain a presence in the region complicated matters between various countries of the Middle East and accelerated the entrance of the US and USSR into the area. Considering the stipulations of the National Pact, from 1952-56, Lebanon was able to navigate this treacherous regional landscape. But by the beginning of 1957 even the most loyal adherent of the National Pact could not manage the environment without upsetting one grouping or another within Lebanon.

MEC, MEDO and the Baghdad Pact

　　　　Great Britain initially attempted to (re)negotiate its relations with the region through the establishment of the Middle East Command (MEC) and Middle East Defense Organization (MEDO) in 1951-2. The United States supported these British-led security arrangements. The success of these arrangements was contingent on Egyptian participation. Egyptian membership was critical for the British because the Suez Canal zone was still considered a vital maritime and air route between the East and the West.[17] Both proposals encountered popular Egyptian opposition and eventually were scratched. The perception that Britain was intent on maintaining its dominance over Egypt largely fueled opposition to these arrangements. Indeed Britain was intent on leaving a foothold in the region but its historical ties to the region impeded its efforts and the interests of

[16] L. Carl Brown, *Diplomacy in the Middle East: The International Relations of Regional and Outside Powers* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2001), 6-8.
[17] Hoskins, 197.

its Western ally, the United States. While the British were interested in maintaining a semblance of their former stature in the region, US concerns were directed at security and economic interests (i.e. the containment of Communism and the flow of oil).

The failure of MEC and MEDO was not a deterrent to British or American objectives in the region. They continued to pursue defensive agreements in the following years; they would just pursue those interests with different countries. In their attempt to thwart the entrance of Communism into the region, the focus turned to those countries on the periphery of the region and in close proximity to the Soviet Union. The initial step of what would eventually be called the Baghdad Pact was the signing of the Treaty of Friendship between Pakistan and Turkey in April of 1954. To literally fill the geographical gap between Pakistan and Turkey, Iran and Iraq were courted. Iran's entrance received little attention in the Arab world, but Iraq's willingness to join the Western-sponsored defense pact in February of 1955 triggered a chain of events that ultimately drew the US and USSR deeper into the region by the end of 1956 and further polarized the Middle East. Iraq perceived the Pact as a means to strengthen its regional position vis-á-vis Egypt. Egypt saw it as another manifestation of colonialism.

Arab Unity

The Baghdad Pact magnified the rivalries and competitions that had been evolving between Arab states since the end of colonialism and the mandate period. The rivalry/competition between countries revolved around leadership of the region and who would unite its peoples. As briefly mentioned in Chapter Two, notions of a united Arab world persisted through the two World Wars and after the independence of most Arab

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states. The conceptualization of a greater Syria, a greater Arab nation or a united Fertile

Crescent continued to resonate in the minds of some Arab leaders. The notion of a

greater Syria or alternative conceptualizations were constantly thwarted by ever

changing domestic scenes and rival countries.

Prince Abdullah of Transjordan propounded the idea of a "Greater Syria" which

would include the states of Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Transjordan and possibly Iraq.

Premier Nuri of As-Said of Iraq advanced the idea of a "Fertile Crescent," a unity

project similar to Abdullah's plan but consisted of Iraqi leadership.[18] In the fall of 1949,

a Syrian-Iraqi unification plan gained steam only to be derailed by Iraqi refusal to annul

its treaty with Great Britain and Egypt's proposal of an Arab Collective Security Pact in

April 1950.[19] The Egyptian proposal and its eventual acceptance by the Arab League

exposed the growing rivalry between Egypt and Iraq for leadership of the Arab world as

the region entered the decade of the 50s. The rivalry would be further aggravated by the

Free Officers Coup in 1952 and the rise to power of Gamal Abdul Nasser.

Never the initiator of these defense pacts or grandiose unification plans,

countries courted or considered Lebanon as a logical choice for inclusion.

Lebanon - Defense pacts, Arab Unity and the Great Powers

Upon independence in 1943, Lebanon entered an inhospitable region for a

country who hoped to maintain a neutral foreign policy. From the start, countries

subjected Lebanese authorities to plans of annexation and other regional configurations.

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[18] Meo, *Lebanon, Improbable Nation: A Study in Political Development*, 93.
[19] As a former British Mandate whose leadership had been designated by Britain, the Iraqi leadership maintained close relations with Britain. The Anglo-Iraqi treaty of 1948 allowed Britain to return to Iraq during a time of war.

Lebanon's immediate neighbor to the east, Syria, had aspirations of regional hegemony and refused to accept the reality of Lebanon. And as the preceding paragraphs demonstrated, Iraqi and Jordanian unification projects included Lebanon. Maintaining Lebanese sovereignty in the face of these plans proved to be a continual effort. To counter these aspirations, Lebanon utilized two strategies: 1) Its membership in the Arab League; and 2) Manipulating the competition between various states.

As a founding member of the Arab League in 1945, Lebanon resorted to one of the fundamental principles of the League, the assertion of every member's sovereignty. This premise allowed Lebanon to maintain its independence while still appearing to be in the Arab fold. Prime Minister Riyad as-Solḥ demonstrated it in his rejection of the Syrian proposal to unite Arab states and Lebanon's acceptance of the Treaty of Joint Defense and Economic Cooperation.[20] Proclamations and the signing of treaties were not sufficient, nor did they always assuage the concerns of Lebanon's leaders. Lebanon also resorted to "behind the scenes" diplomacy to defuse unity projects. For example, following the assassinations of Lebanese Prime Minister Riyad al-Sulh and King 'Abdallah of Jordan in 1951, President al-Khoury became concerned that the Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Said would use these developments to advance his plan for a united Fertile Crescent. To counter the Iraqi plan, President al-Khoury called on the Saudi King to affirm the sovereignty of Arab states. Lebanon demonstrated similar behavior after the signing of the Baghdad Pact. Sham'ūnhad attempted to mediate between Iraq and Egypt in the wake of the Pact. Following the signing of the Baghdad Pact, Lebanon

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[20] The Arab League approved the Treaty of Joint Defense and Economic Cooperation on April 17, 1950. It attempted to bring Arab Forces under one command at a time of war. The treaty proved to be a failure as several of the Arab countries ignored it and pursued independent policies. Fayez Sayegh, *Arab Unity* (New York: Arab Information Center, 1958), 6-7.

resorted to its "neutral" position of (re)affirming the Arab League Pact and the Arab League Resolutions of May 1953.[21] The desire to cooperate and defend its sovereignty was also reflected in Lebanon's relations with Syria.

Lebanon and Syria

Following their independence, Syria and Lebanon did not establish diplomatic relations. The failure to do so appears attributable to Syria's unwillingness to accept the creation of an independent Lebanese state.[22] This unwillingness was often reflected in statements by Syrian leaders and some of the actions of the Syrian state.[23] Regardless of the nature of the Syrian regime (e.g. Bathist, pro-West or leftist) there was constant talk about reuniting Lebanon and Syria. Syrian President Shurayki described Lebanon as artificially enlarged from Syrian territory.[24] According to Syrian issued maps, Lebanon was depicted as a province of Syria, not an independent state. However, the Syrian unwillingness to accept Lebanon's reality did not elicit a freezing of relations between the two countries. Rather relations could best be described as fluid. At times their actions revealed a spirit of cooperation while at other times a spirit of antagonism was apparent.

This fluidity became obvious in the late 1940s and 1950s. Lebanon and Syria signed agreements which would then be followed by heightened tensions between the

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[21] Abu Salih, 209. See also Camille Sham'ūn, *Crise au Moyen-Orient* (Paris: Gallimard, 1963), 265-69.
[22] It appears that several Lebanese politicians pushed for relations with Syria to no avail. This included George Aql and Charles Malik.
[23] It should be noted that Lebanese were not always the victim in these matters.
[24] 5, 41.

countries.[25] The economic agreement of 1949 and the actions that followed illustrate

this behavior particularly well. One stipulation of the agreement stated that an

unlimited amount of Syrian wheat could be shipped to Lebanon.[26] Then suddenly in

December of 1949, Syria suddenly suspended its wheat shipments to Lebanon. And in

March of 1950, Syria demanded the formation of an economic union between the

countries which would require both countries to pursue a unified trade, financial and

economic policy.[27] Lebanon rejected the plan and Syria responded by renouncing their

economic agreement of 1944 and dissolving the customs union.[28] Two years later a new

economic agreement was finally achieved but it failed to meet Syrian expectations. The

tenuous economic relationship continued throughout the 1950s. As President

Sham'ūnremarked:

> … changements profonds et frequents dans la structure politique de
> la Syrie avaient provoqué dans ce pays un état permanent d'instabilité
> peu favorable a son expansion….au moment ou nos voisins désespéraient
> de trouver une solution a leurs problems et cherchaient a distraire leur
> opinion publique inquiete, il leur fallait charger un bouc émissaire de tous
> les maux dont elle se plaignait. Le Liban fut accuse d'exploiter la Syrie
> tant par son commerce que par l'attirance exercée par la beauté de ses
> sites. La libre circulation de biens et des personnes fut jugée néfaste
> a l'économie syrienne.[29]
>
> ….deep and frequent changes in the political structure of Syria caused
> the country to be in a constant state of instability not favorable to its
> expansion….when our neighbors were desperate to find a solution to
> their problems and to distract public opinion, they charged [Lebanon]
> with all the problems that plagued her. Lebanon was accused of

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[25] A list of the agreements can be found in *Mideast Mirror* July 28, 1956. A health agreement was established in 1956 and there was discussion about a military agreement but this never came to fruition.
[26] Lebanon was allowed an unlimited amount of grain from Syria at the international price provided the Lebanese government taxed grains from other countries at 50%. Ziadeh, 109. For further detail about this episode, see Gates, 90-3.
[27] Abu Salih, 111. The Syrian government wanted a joint economic board to protect national industries and address foreign trade, an industrial credit bank and close cooperation with other Arab countries.
[28] Ibid., 111-12.
[29] Sham'ūn, 239.

exploiting Syria for its commerce by being attracted to the its [Syria's] beauty. The free movement of goods and people does not bode well for the Syrian economy.

Nicolas Ziadeh and Carolyn Gates observed that the economic systems of Lebanon and Syria conflicted with each other. While the regime in Syria advanced a protectionist economy, the Lebanese government advocated a largely open market. A preponderance of one economic system over the other posed a significant threat to the weaker country and its elites. The differing economic systems figured significantly in the wake of the Suez Crisis.

The oil pipeline shared by the two countries also exemplified the fluidity in relations. In February of 1952, the two countries signed an agreement regarding oil royalties from Tapline and the Iraq Petroleum Company. By then only four years later, Syria would destroy part of the pipeline depriving Lebanon of income. Conflicting economic policies and resource royalties were not the only source of tension between the two countries. Distrust also existed at the political level.

As new countries, the hold on power was frequently challenged. Both countries endured coups or coup attempts. In 1949, members of the Syrian Socialist National Party (SSNP) with the support of the Syrian government attempted to overthrow the Lebanese government. The coup failed and the leader of the SSNP fled to Syria.[30] A similar scenario existed for Syria. The continual turnover in Syrian leadership because of coup d'états during the 1940s and 50s produced numerous political refugees. Every new Syrian leader was suspicious of his surroundings. Lebanon was a particular place of concern. Members of former Syrian regimes or opposition often sought refuge in

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[30] Antoun Saadeh, the leader of the SSNP, was eventually turned over to Lebanese officials after Syria encountered international pressure regarding his asylum. Ziadeh, 109.

Lebanon because of its proximity and relative free press. In April of 1955, an army colonel was assassinated in Damascus by a member of the SSNP. The Syrian regime claimed that President Sham'ūnwas meeting with suspects involved in the case and refused to turn them over to Syrian authorities.[31]

Syrian asylum for subversives was not the only concern of the Lebanese leadership. The orientation of the Syrian government, particularly its foreign policy was a source of interference. Besides talk of annexing Lebanon, Syrian regimes criticized Lebanese foreign policy decisions. One example was the joint Lebanese-Turkish declaration on March 26, 1955.[32] Following a coup in 1955 an anti-Western regime with leanings toward communism came to power. By 1956 the Syrian foreign policy was clearly to the left and sympathetic to the Soviet Union.[33] As the forthcoming pages will demonstrate, Syrian association with the Soviet Union alarmed figures in the Sham'ūngovernment.

Lebanon and the Great Powers

At the international level, the Lebanese leadership attempted to placate both sides of the emerging Cold War. It retained cordial public relations with the US and USSR without appearing to sacrifice its sovereignty. For example, Lebanese leadership engaged in agreements that promoted economic and technological development with the US and the Soviets. Before Camille Sham'ūn, President el-Khoury ratified the US Point Four Technical cooperation agreement. It provided infusions of money for economic and

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[31] Ziadeh, 162-3.
[32] Samīr Frangieh, "Redressing Syrian-Lebanese relations," 101.
[33] Lesch, 96.

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technical assistance. The Lebanese government signed trade agreements with East

Germany (1953) and the USSR (1954).[34] In terms of defensive cooperation or assistance,

Lebanon also tried to publicly maintain its distance from the super powers during the

first half of the 1950s.

In 1950, British authorities inquired about whether Lebanon would be able to

provide Western forces with military bases if conflict broke out with the Soviet Union.

President el-Khoury agreed to the idea under certain stipulations. After the Egyptian

rejection of Middle East Command (MEC), the Lebanese government began to have

second thoughts and ultimately withdrew its support for MEC. [35] In 1952, although

initially receptive to the next manifestation of a defensive pact – Middle East Defense

Organization (MEDO) – it chose to first consult with other Arab countries. [36]

Ultimately Prime Minister Salām favored MEDO provided progress was first achieved

on the Egyptian and Palestinian issues.[37] In the cases of MEC and MEDO, Lebanese

officials appeared to toe the Arab line. Nevertheless controversy surrounded even the

most innocent of international agreements. Some individuals perceived the ratification

of the Point Four Plan as a US reward for Lebanese complacency in the Arab/Israeli

conflict.[38] A similar response occurred when Sham'ūnrejected the British-inspired

Baghdad Pact. Sham'ūn's actions regarding the Pact were not sufficient for certain

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[34] It should be noted that the Soviets did not attempt to pursue any regional defense organizations at the time.

[35] The inability to support MEC appears attributable to Lebanon being unwilling to stand alone in the Arab world. Abu Salih, 188.

[36] Kalawoun, 6.

[37] Genzieher, 172.

[38] Ibid., 126.

Lebanese politicians. They wanted Sham'ūn to unequivocally reject the Pact.[39] Sham'ūn countered the opposition by promoting a rapprochement between Turkey and the Arab world.

The Suez Crisis

As previously mentioned Great Britain's position of power in the region steadily eroded after World War II. After several failed attempts the Baghdad Pact of 1955 represented a victory for the British in the region. The victory was short lived. Problems were brewing for the British. Their position in Egypt became increasingly tenuous after the Egyptian military coup of 1952 and the emergence of Gamal Abdel Nasser in 1954. Nasser's ascendancy and diverging interests from the US concerning the region came to a head in late October of 1956.

The British (re)negotiated the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936 with the Suez Treaty of 1954. The Anglo-Egyptian treaty had allowed Britain to maintain a presence in the Canal Zone and continue to accumulate revenue from the canal.[40] The Suez Treaty renegotiated British presence by requiring the withdrawal of British military forces provided they could return in the event of an attack on Egypt. The tenets of these treaties starkly contrasted with Nasser's principle objective of sovereignty. Nasser's ascendancy to power was quickly followed by a desire to develop Egypt, establish Egypt as a regional power and assert Egyptian independence from Western domination. These

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[39] Once again Sham'ūn attempted to play the role of mediator. Sham'ūn countered the opposition by promoting a rapprochement between Turkey and the Arab world. See Attie, 76 and 78. Also see Kalawoun, 11.
[40] The initial treaty allowed for military personal while the second treaty replaced them with civilian personal.

objectives in the emerging bipolar international system would attract, repel and complicate matters for Britain and the US.

In his pursuit to build Egypt's regional power, Nasser accepted arms from the Czech Republic in September of 1955. Although the arms came from the Czech Republic, the US interpreted the event as another attempt by the USSR to spread its power and influence beyond its borders. To check Soviet influence and ensure the success of a US peace plan for the Arab/Israeli conflict, the US offered Egypt 80% of the funds necessary for the construction of the Aswan Dam, the linchpin of Nasser's plan for economic development.[41] The US government withdrew the funds after Nasser recognized Communist China in May of 1956. To fill the void left by the withdrawal of US funds, Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal.

The British interpreted Nasser's nationalization of the canal as a threat to British security. The British recruited the services of Israel and France to concoct a plan for the invasion of Egyptian territory and the reoccupation of the Canal Zone. The Israelis and the French were willing participants to the plan because Nasser had been a thorn in their side for quite some time. For the Israelis, Nasser supported fedāyīn raids on Israel that damaged Israeli infrastructure and took Israeli lives. For the French, Nasser supported Algerian rebels in its war against French colonial authorities. The British, French and Israelis carried out the plan at the end of October in 1956. The Israelis invaded the Sinai

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[41] The US peace plan was called the Alpha Plan. It proposed a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict which would allow the US to prohibit Soviet entrance into the region. For further details see: Shimon Shamir, "The Collapse of Project Alpha," in *Suez 1956: The Crisis and its Consequences*, edited by WM. Roger Louis and Roger Owen (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 81-90.

in response to fedāyīn raids which prompted a British and French invasion of the Canal Zone as stipulated by the Suez Treaty.[42]

A UN brokered a ceasefire in the first weeks of November came after Israel/Britain/France controlled most of the Sinai and the Canal Zone. The invasion infuriated the Eisenhower administration who feared the act would open the door to Soviet intervention in the region. Additionally, it had the potential to endanger the US image if it did not uphold Egyptian sovereignty.[43] The US pressured the Israelis, British and French to withdraw. However the damage was already done. It marked the final blow to British presence in the southeast Mediterranean and it brought the US/USSR competition directly into the region as Nasser. More importantly, Nasser's popularity skyrocketed, greatly exceeding his regional rivals since many Arabs perceived the withdrawal of Israeli/British/French forces as a "victory" over colonial powers. Inevitably these developments complicated matters for the Lebanese government.

Lebanon and the Suez Crisis

Leading up to the crisis, Lebanon navigated the regional and international political waters relatively well. At the Bandung Conference of non-aligned nations, Lebanon announced its support of anti-colonialist movements and the right to self-determination. The Lebanese government, including President Sham'ūn, supported Nasser's nationalization of the canal.[44] At the outbreak of hostilities in 1956, the Lebanese government maintained its support of Nasser by preventing the transport of oil

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[42] For an explanation of the *fedāyīn* raids see Chapter 4.
[43] Yacoub, 51.
[44] Kalawoun, 25-6. The author suggests it was a calculated decision on the part of Sham'ūn.

from Lebanese ports by British and French ships.[45] Realizing the potential severity of the crisis for Lebanese interests, Sham'ūnand his government acted in a manner similar to when tension erupted between Egypt and Iraq after the signing of the Baghdad Pact. Lebanon attempted to maintain the middle ground between the combatants by offering to mediate between Great Britain, France and Egypt. Lebanon's position of "neutrality" provided an open line of communication between Britain and Egypt. Additionally, Nasser's envoy, Mustapha Amin, traveled to Beirut at the beginning of the crisis and asked Sham'ūnto request that the Western powers cease hostilities.[46]

Part II – The transformation of the status quo

Post-Suez Crisis

The middle or neutral course dictated by Sham'ūn grew increasingly difficult to maintain and unpopular among some of the Lebanese after the ceasefire of November 7th. The Arab summit of November 13th in Beirut called for the implementation of UN resolutions against Great Britain, France and Israel. It also demanded the application of diplomatic and economic sanctions against Great Britain and France if they refused to withdraw from Egyptian territory. Lebanon complied. However these measures were not sufficient for some Arab states who believed the mere invasion of Egyptian land warranted a more severe punishment for the two former colonial powers.

Certain Arab powers like Syria, who were backed by popular support, called for all Arab countries to severe diplomatic relations with Great Britain and France. For

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[45] Ibid., 25.
[46] Attie, 103-4.

Sham'ūn, to follow suit would be either a step too far into the Arab camp or against the interests of Lebanon. He refused and Lebanon remained one of the few Arab countries to maintain diplomatic ties with France and Great Britain. Sham'ūn's decision to maintain ties triggered defections from his government; Prime Minister 'Abdallah al-Yāfī and the Minister of State Sā'eb Salām resigned from the government in protest claiming that the decision violated Lebanon's membership in the Collective Security Pact of the Arab League. The fallout from the Suez Crisis was not limited to domestic politics; Lebanon also encountered economic and regional pressures.

Lebanon's economic well-being came under threat from the actions of her neighbor Syria or lack thereof. During the Suez Crisis, the Iraq Petroleum Company's pipeline from Kirkuk to Tripoli was sabotaged in Syria. As a British-based company, the Syrian government refused to fix the pipeline to further demonstrate its contempt for British aggressions in the Suez Crisis. The refusal to fix the pipeline had repercussions on Lebanon's petroleum supplies. The pipeline had been a main source of petrol for the Lebanese state and for a period of time the inoperative pipeline forced authorities to rely on oil from a Soviet tanker on behalf of the Syrian government.[47] In addition to the oil issue, in the wake of the crisis Syria prohibited the British Overseas Airways Corporation and Air France from using Syrian airspace. This measure also affected Lebanon. The closure of Syrian airspace prevented these airlines from venturing to points east of Beirut. As a result, these airways began to reevaluate Beirut as a viable airline hub and consider air routes through Istanbul. This development coincided with the Lebanese government's approval for a $10 million upgrade of the Beirut

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[47] *Mideast Mirror*, January 13, 1957.

International Airport.[48] Adding further pressure to an increasingly tenuous economic

situation, by the end of January 1957, Syria stopped all meat exports to Lebanon and

prevented the transit of sheep from Iraq to Lebanon. To make matters worse, the Syrian

government looked to bypass Lebanon (i.e. port of Beirut) as a source of transit for

goods by developing its port of Latakia. Pressure on the Sham'ūngovernment, however

was not limited to economic and financial matters.

The Syrian government's foreign policy stance gravitated towards the USSR at

the beginning of 1957. In January the Syrian Premier announced a new Syrian

government absent of any conservative members. Its perspective on foreign affairs

gravitated towards the USSR by propounding a positive neutrality foreign policy. The

new Syrian government and its orientation concerned President Sham'ūnas

demonstrated by this passage in his memoirs. He remarked:

> Des experts communists commencérent d'affluer, les uns pour
> apprendre aux unites syriennes le maniement des armes moderns,
> les autres en vue d'étudier les projets d'utilité publique nécessaire
> ͺa l'équipement économique du pays. Encouragé par ce premier
> success, Moscuu étendit son initiativeͺa d'autres pays du
> Moyen-Orient. L'Egypte allait, imitant le precedent syrien,
> constituer sa deuxiéme conquête.[49]

> Communist experts descended upon [Syria, the country]--some in
> order to teach Syrian [army] units how to handle modern weaponry
> and others to determine public works necessary to gear up [bolster]
> the economy of the country. Encouraged by this initial success,
> Moscow extended the initiative to other countries in the Middle East.

In the face of these pressures, Sham'ūndid not capitulate. Sham'ūnlooked to counter the

developments in Syria and the recent economic measure. These developments also did

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[48] *Mideast Mirror*, December 8, 1957. Syrian authorities actually temporarily suspended the restriction on British and French aircraft provided that flights landed in Damascus. Eventually an agreement was reached between Charles Malik and Syrian ministers in December, but certain Lebanese officials remained concerned about future Syrian actions.
[49] Sham'ūn, 263.

not escape the attention of the US government and likely contributed to their

announcement of the Eisenhower Doctrine.

The Eisenhower Doctrine

In their attempt to stem communist encroachment in the region and recoup

Western interests following the Suez Crisis debacle, US President Eisenhower

announced the Eisenhower doctrine on January 5, 1957. The doctrine called for the

provision of economic and military support to countries struggling against international

communism.[50] Most countries in the Middle East rejected the doctrine. They perceived

Zionism, not Communism as the threat. Witness the words of Sham'ūnopponent and

former Presidential candidate Hamid Frangieh. "America's enemy is Communism, but

ours is Israel."[51] As a result, the doctrine was interpreted as conforming with American

interests or a colonialist type of mechanism which would engender a US military

presence and subsequently would be an affront to Nasser's ascendancy and Arab

independence. The only two Arab countries to formally accept the doctrine were

Lebanon and Libya. Not surprisingly, it created problems for President Sham'ūn.

President Sham'ūnreadily accepted the Doctrine. According to a source

Sham'ūneagerly accepted the Doctrine before it even received the approval of the US

Congress.[52] As a condition of acceptance, the US provided Lebanon with $12 million in

grants. And Sham'ūnimmediately pursued allotments of military equipment and

weaponry from the US. In exchanges with the US ambassador he based his request on

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[50] For more detail about the Doctrine see Ray Takeyh, *The Origins of the Eisenhower Doctrine: The US, Britain and Nasser's Egypt, 1953-57* (Oxford: Macmillian, 2000).
[51] *Mideast Mirror*, April 7, 1957, 4.
[52] Charles Malik' Private Diary.

figures of Soviet military assistance recently provided to Syria.[53] If Sham'ūn's decision to maintain relations with Great Britain and France in the wake of the Suez Crisis did not cause enough of an uproar, his acceptance of the Eisenhower Doctrine pushed things to a point of no return. Prominent Lebanese politicians and Parliamentarians vigorously opposed Sham'ūn's decision to accept the doctrine. Former Prime Minister 'Abdallah al-Yāfi referred to the Doctrine as a camouflaged military pact.[54] And when it came time to vote on the matter in the Chamber of Deputies, Rashid Karāmī, Sabri Hamadeh, Kamāl Al-As'ad and Hamid Frangieh announced their resignation. Aside from Frangieh who was a Maronite, these opponents were representatives of the Sunni and Shia communities. It was clear to these figures that Sham'ūnhad clearly violated Lebanon's National Pact and offended her citizens by aligning too close to a Western power. However, the opposition from the Muslim community to the Eisenhower Doctrine was not monolithic. Not all representatives of the Muslim community opposed Sham'ūn's decision.

Sham'ūn's Prime Minister, Samī el-Solḥ, endorsed the decision. He claimed the doctrine ensured Lebanese independence. Kamāl Junblāṭ, who had vociferously opposed Sham'ūnfollowing his election in 1952, issued a statement on 15 April 1957 proclaiming that he was not against Lebanon's foreign policy.[55] Another prominent Muslim elite, Hussein Oueni also refused to denounce Sham'ūn's foreign policy. In the face of increasing opposition from the Muslim community, el-Solḥ, Junblāṭ and Oueni's stance appear to be motivated by personal factors. Oueni's position appeared to have been

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[53] Malik Diary
[54] Mideast Mirror, April 7, 1957, 4.
[55] Attie, 120. Junblāṭ and the PSP were not particularly proponents of Arab Nationalism prior to the 1958 crisis. Suleiman, 223.

influenced by his ties to Saudi Arabia who opposed Egyptian policy at the time.[56]

Junblāṭ's position appeared motivated by his party's ideology. The PSP perceived Arab Nationalism as an anathema.

Sham'ūn's decisions also encountered international opposition. Nasser told Foreign Minister Charles Malik that the Doctrine "increased instability and mischief" in the region.[57] The Soviet Ambassador to Lebanon enquired about whether the Doctrine entailed the leasing of Lebanese military bases to the US. The Doctrine further widened the divisions in the Arab World and pushed any anti-colonialist regimes closer toward the USSR. Western-leaning countries like Iraq and Saudi Arabia welcomed the Doctrine but did not sign it. And in the months following the announcement of the Doctrine, Saudi Arabia renewed its lease of the Dhahran airbase to US forces.

Lebanese Parliamentary elections

One of the complaints from opposition figures regarding Sham'ūnand the Eisenhower Doctrine was that its acceptance occurred in the shadows of upcoming Parliamentary elections. Many opponents wanted the Doctrine debated and voted on after the elections. It was their belief that elections would deliver a Parliament with a majority of members opposed to Sham'ūn's foreign policy decision and would therefore derail Sham'ūn's plans. When their attempt to delay the debate and vote failed, the upcoming elections became a referendum for Sham'ūnand his policies. The atmosphere motivated many of Sham'ūn's opponents to circle the wagons and politically unite.

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[56] Attie, 120.
[57] Malik Diary

The United National Front announced its formation on April 1st and issued a

manifesto. The Front consisted of twenty-three political figures from a variety of

confessions and parties. Representatives included the predominantly Druze PSP, the

predominantly Sunni Najjadah and the largely Christian Constitutional Bloc.[58] None of

the members were communist. Initially the Front called for the suspension of any

government decisions regarding treaties or agreements with third parties.[59] About a

month later on May 12th the Front released its electoral platform about a month later on

May 12th. The platform focused on Sham'ūn's hold on power and foreign policy matters.

Most notably they called for: 1) Preventing Sham'ūnfrom running for re-election

through amending the constitution; and 2) The maintenance of Lebanon's neutral

foreign policy.[60] None of the demands were of a socio-economic nature. The variety of

actors and the breadth of the demands of the United National Front suggest that their

only objective was contesting Sham'ūn's power.

All the measures undertaken by the United National Front proved to be fruitless.

Sham'ūn's supporters and allies won two-thirds of the seats in the election. The United

National Front only claimed eight seats. Prominent candidates of the Front including

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[58] It should be noted that some of these parties and leaders were on opposing sides during the 1952 Presidential election.

[59] The United Front issued five demands on the day of its formal announcement. These demands included: 1) Immediate ending of the state of emergency and of censorship of the press. These two measures have no longer any justification in view of the proximity of the elections; 2) Adoption of the project elaborated by the preceding government and fixing the number of deputies at 88; 3) Institution of polling by Caza [a polling district]; 4) Constituion of a neutral government, none of whose members shall be a candidate in the elections, to preside over the next elections to the legistlature; and 5) Not to conclude treaties or agreements or to tie the country by external bonds, before the elections have taken place in an atmosphere of true freedom and honesty and before a responsible government has emerged from this parliament. M.S. Agwani, *The Lebanese Crisis, 1958* (New York: Asia Publishing House, 1965), 34.

[60] Some of the other points included: 1) Lebanon remaining neutral in any foreign disputes; 2) Lebanon must refuse the instillation of foreign military bases on its lands and avoid any international military pacts; 3) Lebanon should purse a policy in cooperation with other Arab states; and 4) The existing cabinet should resign and a caretaker government should take its place until elections. Qubain, 53-4.

Kamāl Junblātt, Sā'eb Salām and 'Abdallah al-Yāfi lost their seats. The remaining seats were filled by a third political grouping that began to emerge during this period— the Third Force. The Third Force comprised of a group of elites (Henri Far'ūn, Yusuf Ḥittī, Muhammad Shuqayr, Joseph Salim, Gabriel Murr, George Naqāsh, Bahij Taqi al-din and GHasan al-Tueni).[61] It has been characterized as more moderate in its demands and also as a mediator between Sham'ūnand the United National Front.[62] The Third Force released two manifestos in the months following the elections. Their concern appeared largely focused on contesting Sham'ūn's hold on power. A statement issued by the group on December 17th warns Sham'ūnagainst amending the Constitution so that he can extend his presidential term.[63] The emergence of the United National Front and the Third Force demonstrated that divisions existed with the opposition to Sham'ūnwere not exclusively based on sectarian allegiances.

The results of the parliamentary elections worsened an already bad situation. It polarized the country and further aggravated the opposition. Not only had the United National Front been defeated, its prominent leaders (i.e. 'Abdallah al-Yāfi, Sā'eb Salām and Kamāl Junblāṭ) now stood outside the government. These somewhat surprising defeats triggered accusations of foreign interference in the elections. The United National Front accused Sham'ūnof using the United States to engineer his victory. Sham'ūnand his supporters suspected Egyptian interference in support of the United National Front during the elections.[64] The victory not only further destabilized the

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[61] Qubain, 51. Qubain also acknowledges the formation of The Congress of Parties, Organizations and Personalities. This Congress was under the direction of Husayn al-'Uwayni.
[62] Ibid., 51.
[63] Agwani, 38-41.
[64] Research has shown that both sides were assisted in the election.

political environment. Some described the ensuing months as a country divided in two.[65]

Members of the United Front refused to recognize the election results. To drive home

the point, on Lebanese Independence Day in November the Front paid its respects to the

Maronite Patriarch, not the Lebanese President as customarily done. But these actions

did not deter or stifle the supporters of Sham'ūn.

Following the elections, President Sham'ūnhad roughly one year left in office.

Up until this point, the extension of Sham'ūn's presidential term was discussed but was

not necessarily a hot button issue. As a result of the recent "landslide victory" in

parliament, Sham'ūn's own ambiguity about whether he would stand for re-election, and

certain political actions, the opposition became increasingly alarmed by the prospect of

Sham'ūnmaintaining a strangle hold over power. A statement issued by the Third Force

on 17 December warned Sham'ūnagainst amending the Constitution so he could extend

his presidential term.[66] Suspicions grew steadily throughout the first half of 1958.

Sham'ūnwas confronted with the issue in public statements made by the opposition on

17 and 27 January, but they could not garner a response from Sham'ūn.[67] Then on 12

March, the cabinet was asked to resign for no particular reason and the new cabinet, the

largest one formed under Sham'ūn, did not include any opposition members. This

represented to the opposition further evidence of Sham'ūn's determination to

manipulate and control Lebanese politics. People referred to it as the "re-election

cabinet" because many of Sham'ūn's opponents believed he would utilize the

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[65] Qubain, 54-5.
[66] Agwani, 38-41.
[67] Sham'ūn would not publicly declare his position on the extension of his presidential term until an interview with Newsweek at the beginning of July. In Charles Malik's Diary, a Vatican official claimed that Sham'ūn had no interest in extending his presidency but hoped to ensure that his policies would be maintained after he left office.

circumstances to extend his presidential term. [68] Their suspicions were validated on 10

April. Parliamentarian and Sham'ūnsupporter, George Aql, announced that an

amendment would be proposed to allow President Sham'ūnto stand for re-election

immediately after his term expired.

Happening almost simultaneously with the question of Sham'ūn's presidential

term, was the formation of the United Arab Republic.

The United Arab Republic

On 12 February 1958, Syria and Egypt combined governments to create the

United Arab Republic. Many of Lebanon's Muslims welcomed the event. Portraits of

Nasser became a common sight in Muslim areas of Lebanon as his popularity

skyrocketed. For many of Lebanon's Muslims Nasser represented the marginalized of

the Arab world who had also stood up to the West. Nasser's popularity created a

precarious situation for the Sunni elites of Lebanon. As a champion of the poor in Arab

society, Nasser embodied an ideology of that ran counter to the objectives of many

Sunni elites. Elites such as Salām, Karāmī and al-Yāfī benefited from Lebanon's liberal

economy which the UAR threatened to undermined. As a result elites sided with Nasser

to remain popular within the confession even though they had no intention of

implementing Nasser's ideology. [69]

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[68] Attie, 161.

[69] Michael Johnson, *Class and Client in Beirut: The Sunni Muslim Community and the Lebanese State 1840-1985* (London: Ithaca Press, 1986), 130-5. Johnson stated that "Salām clientelized Nasserism and thereby neutralized the revolutionism of the street."

65,000 Lebanese traveled to Damascus to witness Nasser address the creation of the union.[70] Nasser never explicitly stated that Lebanon should follow Syria and join the republic. Rather it was the Syrian President, Shukri el-Kuwatly who suggested on more than one occasion that Lebanon should follow in the footsteps of Syria and Egypt.[71] The celebratory atmosphere provoked Lebanese Speaker of Parliament, Adel Osseiran to suggest that it was in the interest of Lebanon to become a part of the republic.[72]

The creation of the UAR, the words of the Syrian president and Osseiran's suggestion alarmed Sham'ūnand his supporters, further convincing them that their course of action with the Eisenhower Doctrine was correct. From the perspective of Sham'ūnand many Christians, Lebanon's independence and their hold on power was threatened. Caroline Attie states that Christian concerns drove them to elevate Sham'ūn to the status of caretaker of Lebanon's independence.[73] The concerns about the actions of the Syrian regime and its orientation towards the USSR a year ago were now magnified by the manifestation of pan-Arabism at the doorstep of Lebanon. President Sham'ūnstated:

> Lebanon is a sister of other Arab countries and wishes them
> prosperity without interfering in their affairs. We want others
> to do likewise and not interfere in Lebanon's affairs.[74]

Despite this menacing development, the Lebanese government recognized the UAR on 27 February 1958. It was a calculated decision. To neutralize the significance and attempt to remain "neutral," Lebanon also recognized the announcement of the Iraqi-

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[70] *Mideast Mirror,* February 1958.
[71] Syrian President Shukri el-Kuwatly suggested that Beirut would become the principal trade center for a country of 28 million people and Lebanon would become their summer resort. *Mideast Mirror*, February 23, 1958, 14.
[72] Kalawoun, 48-9.
[73] Attie, 156.
[74] *Mideast Mirror,* February 16, 1958, 5.

Jordanian union also called the Arab Federation. The Iraqi-Jordanian union occurred in response to the creation of the UAR.[75] However, the Lebanese government's diplomatic maneuvers proved insufficient. Pressure continued to mount for Sham'ūn. If there were not enough issues already pulling at Lebanon's political and social fabric, the proverbial straw that broke the camel's back came in May.

The 1958 Crisis

On 7 May, a critic of President Sham'ūn, journalist Nassib Matni was murdered. The murder demonstrated further proof to the opposition that Sham'ūn was intent on holding on to power at all costs and silencing his critics. Immediately a countrywide general strike erupted with the hope it would bring down the Sham'ūn government. The United National Front and the Third Force both called the strike on 9 May. Almost immediately the strike turned violent. Demonstrators clashed with security forces and set fire the US Information Library and SSNP property. The rebellion appeared to be driven more by the Muslim populace as the leadership of the UNF responded to the violence by announcing armed revolt. The UNF blamed the escalation of violence on Sham'ūn. Sā'eb Salām stated:

> The President did not respect the will of the people, but resorted
> to steel and fire, thus transforming this peaceful political struggle
> into a bloody revolution in which the people have been forced to
> defend themselves and their principles in the face of instigation,
> aggression and murder.[76]

The Third Force did not condone the armed rebellion declared by the UNF.

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[75] The Iraqi-Jordanian union or Arab Federation was characterized by Alan Taylor as an "expression of Hashimite solidarity." The union attempted to coordinate the foreign policies, defense, customs and educational system of the two countries. Taylor, 35. Michael Barnett argues that the ambitions of the union were far less than what had been expected from the UAR. Barnett, 131-2.
[76] Agawani, 72.

Acts of violence spread throughout the country and the UNF cordoned off parts of Beirut. President Sham'ūnrefused to resign and called upon the Army to quell the violence. The Commander of the Army Fuad Shihāb refused to deploy the army claiming it was an internal conflict and the purpose of the army was to defend against foreign aggression.[77] The absence of the army did not signify that Sham'ūnstood alone and defenseless in the face of the rebellion. Many Maronites perceived Sham'ūnas the protector of the state and working in the interests of the community. Prime Minister Samī el-Solḥ continued to support Sham'ūn's actions and criticized the opposition. El-Solḥ equated some of their acts to terrorism.[78] As the caretaker of Lebanon's independence, two parties with diametrically opposed ideologies (the Katā'ib, and the Syrian Social Nationalist Party) rallied to Sham'ūn's side. The Katā'ib supported Sham'ūnbecause they viewed the rebellion as a threat to Lebanon's independence. As for the Syrian Social Nationalist Party they were proponents of a united Syria and Lebanon but were indebted to Sham'ūn. The party found new life under Sham'ūnafter being politically marginalized by Sham'ūn's predecessor Bishara el-Khoury and provided sanctuary for members of the party after Syria attempted to exterminate the party in 1956.[79] The defeat of Sham'ūnand the improvement of relations with the UAR jeopardized the existence of the SSNP.

Sham'ūnrefused to compromise with the opposition. Sham'ūn, Prime Minister el-Solḥ and his supporters traced the origins of the violence to foreign interference. This

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[77] Qubain suggests there were other reasons at work: 1) General Shihab had personal acquaintances with many of the leaders of the UNF; 2) He saw himself as a moderating force and needed to stay above domestic politics; and 3) There was a fear that the army would split if it entered the conflict. Qubain, 82.
[78] Sham'ūn's defense minister, Rashīd Beydoun, did resign after the crisis began.
[79] For details regarding the SSNP relationship with Sham'ūn and its involvement in the 1958 crisis see: Adel Beshara, Lebanon: The politics of frustration – the failed coup of 1961 (London: Routledge, 2005), 37-47.

interpretation initiated international endeavors on the part of the Sham'ūn's government

to resolve the conflict. As a signatory of the Eisenhower Doctrine, Sham'ūnbelieved he

was entitled to US assistance. Throughout the late spring and early summer

Sham'ūnappealed for US intervention. On May 16th the Lebanese government claimed

that the UAR was behind the rebellion of the last seven days and was committed to

"undermining" Lebanon. In its statement, the Lebanese government claimed:

> Yes, we say this frankly and without fear. There are elements and hands
> which extend into our country from beyond our border with the aim of
> harming the good which Lebanon enjoys and causing fear, trouble and
> terror in the peaceful and happy land of Lebanon…on the evening of
> Monday 13th May a boat from the Egyptian-controlled Gaza strip fell
> into the hands of the Lebanese coast guard….aboard were…. large sums
> of money and arms and ammunition to be used by them and their
> colleagues in Lebanon for subversion…[80]

According to Irene Gendzier, Sham'ūnand Malik attempted to frame the conflict in US

interests in order to provoke US intervention.[81] They promoted Nasser's threat to

Lebanon as synonymous with the Soviet threat – the Soviet Union was behind the

UAR's interference in Lebanon. The US did not bite. The US perceived the conflict as

largely domestic.

Sham'ūnand Malik also officially lodged a complaint against Nasser and the

UAR at the Arab League on 21 May and at the UN Security council the following day.

The Lebanese government rejected the Draft Resolution of the Arab League that was

adopted on 4 June, but begrudgingly accepted the UN resolution on 11 June to send an

observation force, the UNOGIL (United Nations Observation Group in Lebanon), to

Lebanon. The Egyptian government denied any intervention and had been only to

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[80] Agwani, 69.
[81] Gendzier, 254.

legitimize US and British intervention. Nasser claimed that the crisis in Lebanon was a purely domestic matter. Nasser stated in an interview:

> The rulers of Lebanon have since the beginning of the revolution in that country attempted by all means at their disposal to convert a purely internal crisis into an international issue….Lebanon's rulers used this accusation [the UAR's supplying of arms] in order to receive supplies of arms from America and Britain to distribute among their supporters.[82]

The Lebanese government appeared to have little faith in the Arab League as an impartial arbiter during the crisis. Its rejection of the Arab League proposal and its immediate interaction with the UN Security Council suggested a desire to move the forum of public opinion away from Nasser and his popularity in the region.[83] The UN did not necessarily produce the results Sham'ūn would have liked. The UNOGIL submitted its first report on July 3rd which President Sham'ūn criticized as giving the UAR "the go ahead signal….to take over the Middle East."[84] Sham'ūn remained adamant about reconciling and continued to pursue US assistance.

The United States government chose to remain a spectator during the first two months of the crisis. The US remained convinced that the problems in Lebanon were largely domestic and tried to facilitate a resolution. At one point during the crisis, the US attempted to arrange a meeting between Sham'ūn and leaders of the UNF. Sham'ūn balked at the idea.[85] During the crisis the divide that had existed between the US and Egypt since the withdrawal of funds from the Aswan Dam began to close. Although the US refused to openly cooperate with Nasser regarding the Lebanese crisis,

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[82] Agwani, 115.
[83] Charles Malik in a conversation with the Soviet Ambassador in January of 1958 remarked that the Arab League largely did not exist with the impending announcement of the UAR.
[84] Qubain, 35.
[85] Gendzier, 262.

the US and Nasser began to establish common ground regarding the conflict including

support for Shihāb to replace Sham'ūn. Nasser supported working with the US for a

resolution in Lebanon. US Ambassador Hare wrote to Washington at the end of May

that "no substantive differences" separated the US and the UAR.[86]

In a matter of hours the US decision to remain outside of the conflict

dramatically changed and Sham'ūngot his wish. On 14 July the Iraqi monarchy was

overthrown by revolutionaries. The revolution provoked concern among US officials

that Lebanon could be next. President Eisenhower stated:

> We share with the Government of Lebanon the view that these
> events in Iraq demonstrate a ruthlessness of aggressive purpose
> which tiny Lebanon cannot combat without further evidence of
> support from other friendly nations….Readiness to help a friend
> in need is an admirable characteristic of the American people, and
> I am, in this message, informing the Congress of the reasons why I
> believe that the United States could not in honor stand idly by in this
> hour of Lebanon's grave peril.[87]

The following day, US troops landed in Lebanon. Egypt and the Soviet Union publicly

condemned the intervention. US troops did not engage in any combat while in Lebanon

but several days later issued a warning to Egypt that it would face repercussions if its

troops were attacked.[88]

In the subsequent two weeks US undersecretary of state Robert Murphy

undertook mediation among the various Lebanese political elements to defuse the crisis

and find a suitable successor to Sham'ūn. About a dozen personalities were considered

for the position. Murphy initially considered General Fuad Shihāb as the favorite, but

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[86] Ibid., 261. Malik Mufti remarked that the US tilt towards Nasser occurred prior to the Iraqi coup. Malik
Mufti, "The United States and Nasserist Pan-Arabism," in *The Middle East and the United States: A
Historical and Political Reassessment* ed. David Lesch (Boulder, Westview Press, 1996), 169.
[87] Agwani, 230
[88] Kalawoun, 60.

popular support grew among the opposition for former President al-Khoury. Supporters of Sham'ūnwere not endeared to Shihāb either. For them, Shihāb had betrayed the state by not involving the army in the rebellion. In spite of this, Lebanese Parliamentarians elected Fuad Shihāb on 31 July. The selection of Shihāb also met the approval of Egypt who perceived the General as moderating choice.

On 22 September, Camille Sham'ūn's presidential term ended and he returned home. Two days later, President Shihāb announced the formation of a new cabinet under the leadership of Prime Minister Rashid Karāmī. The cabinet consisted of eight members which included four members of the UNF, three members of the Third Force and one unaffiliated member.[89] Several Maronite figures were included on the cabinet but these figures were not part of the Sham'ūn-Katā'ib camp. Feeling slighted and the cabinet not representing the political landscape, two days later, the Katā'ib renounced the new government. A Katā'ib spokesman stated: "We want a government with as many ministers as the former rebels had."[90] The Katā'ib, Sham'ūnand others perceived Karāmī's cabinet as a symbol of the United National Front's victory over Sham'ūn's government and its supporters.

Almost immediately the roles reversed. As the barricades came down in the predominantly Muslim areas of Beirut, they went up in the predominantly Christian areas of the city. Katā'ib members barricaded the neighborhood of Aschrafieh and prohibited the army from entering the predominantly Christian area of Furn es-Shubek. The announcement of Karāmī's cabinet occurred on the heels of a strike called by the

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[89] The members were Rashid Karami, Phillipe TAqla, Yousef Soda, Charles Hilū, Muhammad Safieddin, Rafiq Naja, Fuad Najjar and Farid Trad.
[90] *Mideast Mirror*, October 5, 1958, 5.

Katā'ib on 22 September after the kidnapping of the assistant editor of their weekly newspaper *al-Amal*. Thus the announcement of Karāmī's government added insult to injury for the Maronite community.

A deadlock ensued for the next three weeks. The Katā'ib stuck to their demand for a balanced cabinet – the inclusion of members from the Katā'ib -Sham'ūngrouping. President Shihāb believed that the inclusion of a member or members from the Sham'ūn-Katā'ib camp would be interpreted as a sign of weakness. Shihāb initially suggested increasing the number of portfolios in the cabinet to include supporters of Sham'ūnbut only after the Karāmī's initial cabinet received a vote of confidence. Others did not want to budge. One of Sham'ūn's main opponent in the spring, Sā'eb Salām believed the Lebanese government was legitimate with the Christians being well represented through the cabinet seats of Charles Hilū and Yusef Sawda. A solution was sought. Shihāb finally asked Raymond Eddeh and GHasan Tueni (a Maronite and Greek Orthodox) to form a negotiation team for Karāmī and the Sham'ūncontingent. Both sides also enlisted the help of the US.

On 27 September, Foreign Minister Philip Taqla sought the assistance of the US in regards to the impasse. Pierre Jemayyel also requested US assistance with the issue of cabinet representation. The US embassy catered to these requests by holding a meeting with many of the significant political personalities. Several scenarios were discussed including: 1) A vote of confidence for the Karāmī cabinet; 2) Expanding the Karāmī cabinet to include more portfolios; and 3) Enlarging Parliament from 66 to 88. Absent from the meeting were two important figures of the United National Front: Karāmī and Junblāṭ. Karāmī backed out at the last moment because of pressure from within the front

(i.e. Yāfī, Salām and ʿUwānī). Junblāṭ claimed to have a previous engagement. Members of the United Front were not particularly happy with US attempts to assist with the cabinet formation. Salām perceived it as intervention and rejected US proposals.

After a meeting at President Shihāb's home the issue of the cabinet was resolved. Shihāb threatened to resign if the leadership in the Muslim community and Christian community could not come to terms. A trade strike was also threatened. The new cabinet consisted of four individuals: Rashid Karāmī, Pierre Jemayyel, Hussein ʿUwānī and Raymond Eddeh. Each individual was responsible for several ministries. The only party opposed to the formation of the 4-man cabinet was the SSNP who claimed it was a sectarian government versus a national government.[91] Following the announcement of the cabinet barriers throughout the Christian areas came down and the crisis had officially ended.

Part III - Analysis

President Sham'ūn's decision not to terminate relations with France and Great Britain at the end of the Suez Crisis elicited condemnation from some corners of the Lebanese political establishment. Opposition to this one decision snowballed into condemnation of Sham'ūn's overall foreign policy and eventually his hold on to the presidency. What kept Sham'ūnfrom compromising? And why did it take until October for a compromise to be reached?

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[91] US Gov Doc, pic 140

Domestic Veto Players

Sham'ūn's actions during the Suez Crisis and immediately in its aftermath largely reflected the foreign policy behavior adopted by Lebanon since its independence. Lebanon had attempted to balance between interests in the Arab world versus its interests with Europe and the United States. Some but not all the prominent Sunni elites (i.e. ''Abdallah al-Yāfī and Sā'eb Salām) challenged this status quo. They wanted Sham'ūnto completely follow the Arab line and severe relations with Great Britain and France. Al-Yāfī and Salām's motivation to challenge the status quo appears related to a combination of factors that included a growing wave of sentiment for Nasser and his actions, political opportunism and political survival. The absence of a unified stand among Sunni elites at this stage demonstrated that elites were driven either by personal interests, did not interpret the development as particularly troubling or did not perceive Nasser as particularly appealing. The fragmentation in the community could also be attributed to the upcoming Parliamentarian elections since many of these elites were political rivals competing for popularity within the Sunni political establishment. Suffice it to say, the affront to the status quo did not dissuade Sham'ūn.

Less than two months later, Sham'ūnchallenged the status quo of neutrality by accepting the Eisenhower Doctrine and placing Lebanon under a Western military and economic umbrella. There is evidence that Sham'ūnhad Western affinities and the Eisenhower Doctrine provided an ideal opportunity for him to realize those affinities. However if this was the case, why had he failed to do it sooner? The Baghdad Pact provided an ideal opportunity for him to do it two years earlier. As the narrative demonstrated, the developments in Syria concerned Sham'ūnmore than either Nasser's

emergence and popularity or the domestic opposition of al-Yāfī and Salām. In the eyes of Sham'ūnthe Syrian actions following the Suez Crisis jeopardized Lebanon's security and the growth of its liberalized economy. The creation of the new government in Syria sympathetic with Soviet interests obviously concerned Sham'ūnfrom a strategic standpoint. Furthermore, as noted earlier regarding the airspace agreement in December of 1956, the Lebanese were unsure of Syrian acquiescence during this volatile time and Lebanese officials contemplated counter measures to protect Lebanese aviation interests. Therefore, the Eisenhower Doctrine not only provided military security but also economic support to the Sham'ūngovernment.

Al-Yāfī, Salām and others negatively interpreted Sham'ūn's acceptance of the Doctrine. Sham'ūn's decision brought more politicians into the al-Yāfī/Salām camp as witnessed by the resignation of several members from the Chamber of Deputies. The growing opposition to Sham'ūn's policies reflected a willingness of some Muslim elites to sacrifice their economic interests in order to retain popularity with their followers.[92] The Eisenhower Doctrine, particularly from an economic standpoint, served the interests of these Sunni elites who benefited from a liberalized economy. This demonstrated the growing influence of Nasser over the Sunni elites and their relationship with the Sunni community. Their ability to bargain had become increasingly restrained by regional developments.

Opposition to Sham'ūngrew throughout 1957 and 1958 ultimately manifesting into two major groupings: the Third Force and the United National Front. The Third Force could be identified as the middle point between Sham'ūnand the United National

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[92] Johnson, 134.

Front. Sham'ūndid not stand alone against these opponents; he received the support of

the Katā'ib and the SSNP. One the eve of the outbreak of violence in May of 1958,

three positions existed: 1) Sham'ūn, the Katā'ib and the SSNP; 2) the Third Force; and

3) the United National Front.

Why did the situation reach the point of violence? Why did Sham'ūnnot concede

or find middle ground between the two groupings before the outbreak of violence? Why

did he remain ambiguous about his political future? One can attribute Sham'ūn's

intransigence to three issues: the Eisenhower Doctrine, his relative popularity in the

Maronite community and the loyalty of his Prime Minister Samī el-Solḥ.

Firstly, the acceptance of the Eisenhower Doctrine installed the belief in

Sham'ūnthat the Americans would arrive or provide support when needed. Sham'ūnheld

to this belief even after the US informed him in May of 1958 that US military

intervention would only occur under certain circumstances. As the crisis raged in June,

Sham'ūnrejected an attempt at reconciliation with members of the United National

Front. Secondly, Sham'ūn's popularity in the Maronite community grew as opposition

intensified to his policies and his hold on power. Sham'ūn's policies received the

support of the general Maronite population and the Maronite political party, the Katā'ib

. There is no evidence that an alternative candidate in the Maronite community emerged

to challenge Sham'ūn's popularity. His direct political opponents, Hamid Frangieh and

Maronite members of the Third Force only possessed local followings and did not

appear to generate much if any backlash against Sham'ūnor his actions. It is worth

noting that the Third Force did not advocate armed revolt in May of 1958. The Patriarch

of the Maronite Church also opposed Sham'ūn. The Patriarch's national profile as a

church leader failed to muster popular support against Sham'ūnfurther indicating the strength of Sham'ūn's stance in the Maronite community. Additionally the Patriarch's failure to rally support demonstrates that the head of the Maronite church which had played a pivotal role in developments noted in chapter two, wielded little political leverage or veto power at this stage of Lebanese history. Sham'ūnvirtually monopolized the political space of the Maronite community at the outbreak of the crisis. Lastly, throughout the transformation of the status quo Samī el-Solḥ served as Prime Minister under Sham'ūn. El-Solḥ's participation in the government allowed Sham'ūnto proceed under the guise of legitimacy, albeit in the eyes of Sham'ūn.

El-Solḥ's participation in the government was critical for Sham'ūnbut it also provides insight into the Sunni veto power and the position of the Prime Minister. Sunni political elites became increasingly less willing to defy the sentiments of the Sunni community as the community grew fonder of Nasser following the Suez Crisis. 'Abdallah al-Yāfī and Sā'eb Salām who had served as Prime Ministers on four different occasions under Sham'ūn, removed themselves from the pool of potential Sunni candidates for Prime Minister when they resigned from the government in response to Sham'ūn's measures.[93] In theory, President Sham'ūncould have taken any Sunni individual to be his Prime Minister. And he could have kept picking a new individual until his term expired. But as demonstrated in the previous pages, there was a correlation between the legitimacy of the candidate and his standing in the Sunni community. If the candidate had little to no popularity in the community, he was illegitimate. If he was illegitimate before the community and was still chosen as the

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[93] They claimed the failure to cut ties violated the Arab Collective Security Pact.

Prime Minister, then the government was also considered illegitimate. Therefore over time the Sunni community perceived el-Solḥ's designation as meaningless. El-Solḥ's credibility took a hit and he became the target of aggression. El-Solḥ's illegitimacy demonstrated that the veto power resided outside of the position of the Prime Minister at this point.

At the outbreak of violence in May 1958, Sham'ūn clearly held the veto in the Maronite community. Regarding the other two positions it was less obvious. Salām and al-Yāfī played prominent roles in the United National Front, but it would be a stretch to label one as holding the veto power, rather it resided in the Sunni community collectively.

Extra-territorial Veto Players

Several external actors took an interest and became involved in the Lebanese developments. Initially, Syria and Egypt represented two distinct entities and opponents in the eyes of the Lebanese government. With the creation of the UAR, they became conflated into one collective actor. The UAR did not share the long term goals of the United National Front but they agreed in their opposition to Sham'ūn. The UAR's support for the UNF intensified throughout the first half of 1958, making the UAR synonymous with the UNF. Considering the secondary role of the USSR in the narrative, the Soviet position must be absorbed by the presence of the UAR. Saudi Arabia presents a middle position espoused by the Third Force and its attempt to reconcile between the opposition and Sham'ūn. A third position was represented by the

United States. Obviously the US role on the chessboard was magnified by Sham'ūn's acceptance of the Eisenhower Doctrine.

The veto player game

With the support of his community, a Prime Minister and the Eisenhower Doctrine, what forced Sham'ūnto concede or a change in Lebanese policy? It was his allies, the US that ultimately undermined him.

The landing of the US Marines on 15 July worked to the detriment of Sham'ūn. The coup in Iraq firmly put the Saudi regime on the US side when US Marines landed leaving Sham'ūnwith no one else to turn. Whether Sham'ūnintended to stay on as president or ensure a continuation of his policies both objectives were derailed. The US/Egyptian rapprochement during the early summer of 1958 created common space between the two remaining external actors which facilitated the creation of common ground between Lebanon's domestic players. Nasser's prominence among the Lebanese did not allow an elite to oppose him without jeopardizing his political career. The US show of force and role in the designating Sham'ūn's successor calmed the fears of the Maronite community. As noted in the narrative, the selection of General Fuad Shihāb as President was not initially a popular choice for either the supporters of Sham'ūnor the United National Front, but eventually it was accepted.

The election of Shihāb to the presidency provoked a transference of the veto power in the Maronite community. As demonstrated by the counter-revolution following the announcement of Shihāb's cabinet, the Sham'ūn grouping still held a prominent place in the Lebanese political equation. The eventual appointment of Pierre

Jemayyel of the Katā'ib to the Karāmī cabinet was a significant development for Maronite politics. It demonstrated the ascendancy of the Katā'ib in the political ranks of the Maronites and the transfer of leadership in the Maronite community. The cessation of violence in October indicated Sham'ūn's approval of the party and the prominence achieved by the Katā'ib within the Maronite community as a result of its defense of Sham'ūn. As will be demonstrated in the forthcoming chapters, the Katā'ib 's hold on to the Maronite veto strengthened and became less sensitive to the positions of the other major Maronite figures (i.e. Sham'ūn, Eddeh, Frangieh).

In regards to the opposition, once again it is more difficult to designate one individual or party as holding the veto power in the Sunni community following the crisis. Nasser's prominence throughout the crisis overshadowed the role of the elites. Salām, Karāmī, al-Yāfī, Junblāṭ and other played a second fiddle to the Egyptian leader. One would assume that because of their centrality in the crisis, Salām or al-Yāfī held the veto and would have become the Prime Minister under Shihāb. Yet, Rashīd Karāmī was designated to post. Therefore, one must conclude that the position of the Prime Minister remained a contested post within the Sunni community and no particular elite held the veto power of the community. Considering Nasser's popularity in the Muslim community, the veto resided with Nasser for the time being.

Conclusion

The analysis of the veto player game from November 1956-October 1958 demonstrates the centrality of external actors regarding a change in the status quo.

Without US-Egyptian rapprochement, neither Lebanese political position appeared to have an incentive to compromise.

Chapter 4

Turning Beirut into an Arab Hanoi:

The Cairo Agreement of 1969

On November 3, 1969, the Commander of the Lebanese Army, Fuad Bustani, and the head of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), Yasser Arafat, reached an agreement in Cairo under the auspices of President Gamal Abdul Nasser. Although the details of the agreement were never officially released, it effectively relinquished Lebanese sovereignty over part of its territory to the PLO.[1] The agreement also marked the end of a volatile six-month period in Lebanese history which included the resignation of the government, a considerable number of violent demonstrations and sporadic fighting between Lebanese government forces and *fedāyīn* (The Palestinian Resistance).[2] Shortly after the agreement, Prime Minister Rashīd Karāmī formed a new cabinet and a new president was elected in 1970.

Considering the instability prior to the agreement and that the agreement weakened Lebanese authority over its territory, it is surprising that most Lebanese politicians accepted it. How and why would a country surrender some sovereignty in an uncontested manner? Did the Lebanese initially believe they could gain from this

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[1] Parts of the agreement were leaked. See *An-Nahār*, June 15, 1970, 6 and June 17, 1970, 7.

[2] *Fedāyīn* is a collective term used to describe the Palestinian groups who launched attacks on Israel. Initially the term was used for individuals who conducted attacks without the oversight of Arab governments, the Arab League or the PLO of Ahmed Shuqayri. These groups represented a security concern for Arab countries because of Israeli reprisals. In the context of this study it is used to designate members of all organizations of the PLO unless otherwise stated. These groups represented an ideological challenge to Arab countries because they did not initially conform with the agenda of Arab governments. Rex Brynen, *Sanctuary and Survival: The PLO in Lebanon* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990), 24.

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agreement? Or were their hands tied and forced to concede to the interests of other parties?

Studies which focus on the Cairo Agreement are rather limited. Farid el-Khazen allocates a chapter to the agreement in his work: *The Breakdown of the State in Lebanon: 1967-1976.* El-Khazen's inclusion of the agreement is connected to the narrative regarding the outbreak of the Lebanese Civil War. According to el-Khazen, the Cairo Agreement created a set of conditions that became untenable for the Lebanese government to enforce. He attributes these conditions to external elements.[3] Other studies address the agreement in passing, designating few if any pages to it.[4] While el-Khazen's study is thorough, one key element is missing. It does not account for why and how President Hilū and other Lebanese politicians accepted the Cairo Agreement. A similar observation can be made for the other brief studies on the agreement.

Like the previous chapter, this chapter is divided into three parts. Part I, "The Actors and Background to the Status Quo," is subdivided into several parts: a) the main actors (i.e. President Charles Hilū, Prime Minister Rashīd Karāmī) and their backgrounds; and b) the domestic and regional context prior to the challenging of the status quo (ca. 1964 to the summer of 1968) which includes the place of Lebanon in the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the issue of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. Part II traces the transformation of the status quo – the Lebanese government accepting PLO sovereignty over part of its territory. This section begins with the first attempt to change the status

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[3] Farid el-Khazen, *The Breakdown of the State in Lebanon, 1967-1976* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000).

[4] Rex Brynen claims the agreement was divisive but enabled Prime Minister Rashid Karāmī to form a government. Michael Johnson and Kamal Salibi suggest that President Hilū was forced to compromise. Brynen, 51. Johnson, 154. Salibi, *Crossroads to Civil War*, 42. See also Nassif Hitti, *Lebanese-Palestinian Relations after the Cairo Agreement* (MA Thesis, American University of Beirut, 1977).

quo, Deputy Raymond Eddeh's proposal in June of 1968 in response to the Israeli shelling of a Lebanese village in South Lebanon. It closes with the formation of a new government in December of 1969. The final section, part III, is an analysis of how the relevant political players arrived at an agreement.

Part I - Actors and Background of the Status Quo

Actors

Charles Hilū [5]

Charles Hilū was elected the Fourth President of Lebanon in 1964. Unlike many other Lebanese politicians, Hilū was not the progeny of a prominent family. Born in Ba'abda, he had served as an ambassador, deputy and the minister of Information, Health and Education in various governments. Although Hilū served in one of Camille Sham'ūn's cabinets, he was not a supporter of Sham'ūn. Following the civil war of 1958, Hilū could be counted among the *Nahj el-Shihab* (path of Shihāb). *Nahj el-Shihab* was a block of politicians who advocated President Shihāb's statism approach — reforms to state institutions and the development of state infrastructure. Proponents of this school of thought were labeled Shihābists. While Hilū's election did not involve the drama of previous elections — public strikes and foreign intervention — he was not the first choice for the job.

On May 26, 1964, roughly four months prior to the end of Shihāb's presidency, seventy-nine deputies called for an extension of Shihāb's term. [6] The request

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[5] Once again I have chosen to start with the office of the President because the President had the most veto power accorded to him by the Lebanese constitution.

[6] Supporters of the extension of Shihāb's presidency included Kamāl Junblāṭ and Rashid Karāmī.

encountered stiff resistance from across the political spectrum. Former President

Camille Sham'ūn, Sham'ūn's opponent from 1958, former Prime Minister Sā'eb Salām,

Raymond Eddeh and the Maronite Catholic Patriarch Ma'ushi opposed the potential

measure. The overriding reason for the opposition stemmed from the belief among these

figures that the Shihābist-dominated Deuxiéme Bureau (Lebanese military intelligence)

was too involved in administrative and electoral matters.[7] In fact, Sham'ūnand Eddeh

threatened to revolt in a manner similar to 1958 if those seventy-nine deputies

proceeded with the extension.[8] As a result, Shihāb announced on 17 August1964 that he

would not seek another term in office.[9] Yet, Shihāb's announcement did not prevent the

continuation of Shihābism, it just required that another individual carry its mantle.

Shihāb's supporters controlled a majority of the Parliamentary seats following the 1964

Parliamentary elections, and the question became who would be his successor. The

Sham'ūnand Eddeh protest demonstrates two points: a) Shihāb's successor would not be

as strong a political figure as Shihab within the Maronite community, b) Sham'ūn,

Eddeh and other elements posed a potential challenge to any Christian candidate.

Charles Hilū was the "dark horse" or "compromise candidate" for the

presidency.[10] Sources suggest that he did not have the support of all the Shihābists in

the Parliament; nevertheless he was asked to maintain the legacy of Shihābism.[11] Unlike

the previous presidents, Hilū also lacked a popular base within the Maronite community

upon his arrival to the office. The absence of a constituency suggests that his candidacy

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[7] Goria, 62 and 94. For example Chamoun failed to get reelected in the 1964 Parliamentary elections because of rumored Deuxiéme Bureau.

[8] Trablousi, 143.

[9] There is speculation that he actually wanted to extend his term.

[10] Hudson, 326.

[11] Ibid., 325. Including the opponents of Shihābism, a thirty-three member bloc from South Lebanon did not support Hilū's election.

was a representation of the middle ground among the political forces of Lebanon. This lack of a popular support or the complete backing of a significant Parliamentary bloc required that Hilū play each side against each other.[12] While initially successful as demonstrated by the reforms he passed at the beginning of his term, Lebanese politics grew increasingly problematic for him. However there was another element that Hilū had to contend with. Hilū encountered a regional situation that was heating up, something Shihāb only began to encounter as he left office.

Cabinets and confessional relationships (1964-1968)

Similar to previous Lebanese Presidents, there were a considerable number of cabinets under Hilū. While several different Sunni Muslims served as Prime Minister, including Abdallāh al-Yāfi and Hussein Uwayni, Rashīd Karāmī occupied the post longer than the rest.[13] In fact, some Muslims believed that Karāmī monopolized power in the Sunni community.[14] From the northern city of Tripoli, Karāmī, a lawyer, was known to have strong Arab nationalist credentials.[15] He was also perceived as a Muslim leader who worked in the interests of all Lebanese.[16] Karāmī's cabinets spanned the political spectrum by including the former opponents of the 1958 civil war, Kamāl Junblāṭ and Pierre Jemayyel.[17] During Karāmī's terms as Prime Minister, he undertook

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[12] Wade R. Goria, *Sovereignty and Leadership in Lebanon 1943-1976* (London: Ithaca Press, 1985), 76.
[13] Prior to January 1969, Karāmī headed the government in 1958, 1961, 1965, 1966.
[14] *Middle East Record (*Volume 3 1967), 424.
[15] Rizq Rizq, *Rashīd Karāmī: As-Siyāsī wa rajul Ad-dawla* (Beirut: Mukhtārāt, 1987).
[16] Ambassador Porter to Department of State (DOS), May 24, 1967, RG 59, A-971. This was President Shihāb's impression of him.
[17] Prior to 1969, a noticeable exception to various manifestations of governments was Sham'ūn.

measures to reform parts of the government.[18] However it was also under Karāmī's stewardship that Lebanon experienced its worst economic problems since independence. On October 14, 1966, Intra Bank declared insolvency which produced a liquidity crisis, an economic down turn and damaged the image of Lebanon as a financial center.[19] This development further confirmed perceptions of the rampant socio-economic divisions that often fell along confessional lines and were exploited by the leftists.[20]

The 1968 Parliamentary elections reaffirmed the dominance of the Shihābists in the Chamber of Deputies, but it would be misleading to suggest that 1968 was a replica of 1964. The Lebanese political landscape was undergoing a transformation. The victory of the Shihābists in 1968 was by the slightest of margins. The Shihābists in 1968 largely constituted two groups: 1) Kamāl Junblāṭ's Progressive Socialist Party (PSP), and 2) Rashid Karāmī's Democratic Parliamentary Front (DFP). Established in 1967, the DFP's program included the consolidation of democracy, decentralization and the development of agriculture and industrial production.[21] Opposing the Shihābists was the Tripartite Alliance or the Tripartite Alliance. This alliance, formed in the wake of 1967, consisted of three parties: 1) the Katā'ib (Pierre Jemayyel); 2) the National Liberal Party (Camille Sham'ūn) and; 3) the National Liberal Party (Raymond Eddeh).[22] Together, this political grouping propounded a platform that included the maintenance

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[18] *Mideast Mirror*, February 5, 1966 and April 2, 1966. He purged the Lebanese diplomatic and judicial systems.

[19] Claims have been made that the Intra Bank liquidity crisis was provoked by many of the elites in Lebanese society who were envious of the bank's success. Salibi, 29-30. While the actual collapse of Intra Bank did not occur on Karāmī's watch. He was tasked as the Prime Minister in the immediate aftermath of the collapse.

[20] For example, in the early 1970s, thirteen families controlled fifty percent of all companies in Lebanon. Of those thirteen families, eight of them were Christian. Kamāl Dib, *Warlords and Merchants: The Lebanese Business and Political Establishment* (Reading: Ithaca Press, 2004), 127-8.

[21] *Middle East Record* (Volume 4 1968), 630-1.

[22] Sham'ūn's party, the National Party was established in 1958. For further information on the party see, *Hizb al-Waṭinīyin al-Ahrār al-Niẓām al-Assāsī*, which is published by the party.

of Christian hegemony, a free economy and neutrality in inter-Arab disputes.[23] Another grouping represented a middle ground between the Tripartite alliance and the Shihābists, thus the name the Central Bloc. This grouping emerged during the election of the speaker of the Parliament in May of 1968. It included deputies affiliated with the Maronite leader Sulieman Frangieh, deputies from the Biqa, the Southern Bloc (i.e. Kamil al-As'ad's Shiite constituency), and the Sunni leader from Beirut Sā'eb Salām. The platform of the Central Bloc is not entirely clear but appears to be a product of political pragmatism. As will be explained in the following pages, certain principles upheld by the Central Bloc were shared by the Tripartite Alliance while others were shared by the Shihābists.

These political groupings represented a combination of personal rivalries, ideological differences and political pragmatism. Noting all these differences, it would be inaccurate to argue that the *fedāyīn* issue problematized the Lebanese political atmosphere prior to 1968. To give an example of the unity on the issue, two individuals who were ideologically opposed as witnessed in the previous chapter, Kamāl Junblāṭ and Pierre Jemayyel, saw eye to eye on the Palestinian issue prior to 1968.[24] In 1968, Hilū's biggest challenge emanated from Sham'ūnand Eddeh. Karāmī it appeared to be from traditional Sunnī elite Sā'eb Salām.

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[23] *Al-Ḥayāt*, September 1, 1967, cited in the *Middle East Record* (Volume 4 1968), 631. It should be noted that Jemayyel in his discussions with the US ambassador following the 6-Day war wanted Lebanon to have a more pro-West outlook.
[24] Goria,72.

Lebanon and the Arab/Israeli Conflict 1964-1968

Following the 1958 crisis, Lebanon's foreign policy can be characterized as neutral or having a pro-Nasser tilt.[25] President Shihāb had successfully maneuvered Lebanon around the inter-Arab squabbles and international developments adeptly, but it would be fair to say that he did not encounter a tumultuous international environment as did his predecessor or successor.[26] During the final year of the Shihāb presidency, navigating these diplomatic waters proved easier said than done.

From 1948-64, the Arab-Israeli conflict had no direct impact on Lebanese territory. While Lebanon felt repercussions from events like the Suez Crisis, Lebanon was not an active front in the conflict. This began to change in 1964. Israel's plan to divert the waters of the Jordan River began to draw Lebanon back into the Arab-Israeli theater of war. The Arab World perceived the Israeli plan announced in 1963 as a threat.[27] To counter the Israeli plan, the Arab League proposed to divert the waters of the tributaries feeding the Jordan River. As the site of one of those tributaries (i.e. Hasbani river), Lebanon became a central player.

The issue for Lebanon was not whether it should cooperate with other Arab countries over this course of action; rather when it did cooperate the question was how

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[25] Salibi, *Crossroads to Civil War*, 11. Kalawoun, 77.

[26] There are different explanations for Shihāb's foreign policy. Kalawoun claims that Shihāb actively supported the Arab Nationalist cause which included supporting Algerian Independence. But to protect their relations with France, an explanation of this support was provided to the French government. Kalawoun, 92. According to Salibi, Shihāb was careful not to provoke Christian antagonism. US government documents describe Lebanese foreign policy as neutral in inter-Arab disputes and supporting the Arab League as an instrument to promote inter-Arab cooperation. Ambassador Porter to DOS, April 5, 1968, RG 59, A-875.

[27] The waters of the Jordan River sparked controversy and violence in the 1950s. As a major source of water for Jordan, the diversion of water by Israel was considered a threat to Jordan's economic well-being. The US attempted to resolve the dispute through the Johnston plan but it was ultimately rejected by the Arab League, especially Syria. Charles D. Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict: A History with Documents* (Boston: Bedfords/St. Martin's Press, 2004), 261-3.

Lebanon would respond to Israeli aggressions. Compared to most Arab countries, Lebanon's military capabilities were lacking and not a deterrent to Israel. Therefore, the question became who would come to the aid of Lebanon for the successful implementation of this plan. Egypt and Syria offered to provide military forces to protect Lebanon from potential Israeli attacks. However, Lebanon refused the offer. President Shihāb believed that the presence of Egyptian or Syrian armies would increase the chances of an Israeli strike and the likelihood of Arab interference in Lebanese domestic affairs.[28] Shihāb countered by requesting that the Arab League provide Lebanon with the equipment and training to repel an Israeli strike.[29] Ultimately, Shihāb escaped making a final decision. As these issues were being addressed his Presidential term was nearing its end, and the dilemma fell into the lap of his successor Charles Hilū.

In October of 1964 at the Arab Summit in Cairo, Hilū committed Lebanon to the newly formed United Arab Command (UAC).[30] The UAC was a jointly commanded Arab military force whose purpose was to protect the Arab world from Israeli threats. Sharing similar concerns to Shihāb, Hilū made Lebanon's membership contingent on Lebanon having the ability to veto the stationing of Arab troops on Lebanese soil. The possibility of Egyptian and Syrian presence on Lebanese soil did not subside with Lebanon's membership in the United Arab Command. It continued to figure prominently in Lebanese affairs for the remainder of the decade, but they were not the Egypt and Syria that Lebanon dealt with during second half of the 1950s as witnessed in Chapter 3.

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[28] Kalawoun remarks that just years previously Nasser had called for the downfall of the Lebanese regime.
[29] Salibi, *Crossroads to Civil War*, 24
[30] Ibid., 24.

The Egyptian/Syrian union (the United Arab Republic) dissolved in 1961. Its

demise triggered a hot and cold relationship between the two countries. The nature of

the relationship between the two countries was largely influenced by domestic

developments in Damascus and Cairo and also how each respective regime responded to

regional developments. With the rise of Amin Hafiz in Syria in July of 1963, the

relationship between the two countries soured.[31] Following another coup in 1966, the

new Syrian leadership sought to improve ties with Nasser, which eventually led to the

signing of a defense treaty on November 7, 1966. Following their mutual defeat in the

Six-Day War, the respective regimes adopted contrasting foreign policies regarding the

Arab/Israeli conflict. Egypt sought to recover their land lost in the war. Syria advocated

continued attacks on Israel. These developments placed Lebanon in the midst of a

volatile environment as it attempted to protect her own interests and maintain stability.

While Lebanon's economic interests were with Syria, Nasser continued to enjoy

popularity within the Muslim community. As noted by Nasser Kalawoun, the Egyptian

and Syrian foreign policies placed Lebanon between a rock and a hard place, particularly

in the aftermath of the Six-Day War.[32]

Lebanon was the only Arab country bordering Israel that did not fight or lose

territory during the Six-Day War. There are competing explanations for Lebanon's

absence from the war.[33] One argument suggests that President Hilū and the Commander

of the Army, Emile Bustani, kept Lebanon out of the war in opposition to Prime

Minister Karāmī's call to participate in order to balance between Arab and non-Arab

[31] A Nasserite led movement tried to unsuccessfully dislodge the Bathist government from power. Alan Taylor. *The Arab Balance of Power* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1982), 41.
[32] Kalawoun, 104.
[33] These different explanations may be a product of the censorship enforced by the emergency powers granted to the government on June 5.

positions.[34] Bustani may have believed that participation was a futile act. Kamāl Salibi

suggests that the brevity of the war prevented Lebanon from mobilizing their forces and

participating in time.[35] Although Lebanon did not partake in the fighting, it did recall its

ambassadors from the United States and Britain and cut off diplomatic relations with

those nations in an act of solidarity with other regimes. Relations with the United States

were restored by the beginning of 1968.

The Lebanese government also supported UN Resolution 242 for a peaceful

settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. This placed Lebanon in the camp of Egypt and

Jordan but not out of harm's way regarding Israeli/Palestinian conflict. As noted in a US

government document:

> While the [Lebanese] government succeeded in this objective [staying out of the
> 6-Day War] during the June1967 crisis, it dare not go too far in taking initiative
> which might be interpreted by the more radical Arab states or by Arab
> nationalists in Lebanon as constituting coming to terms with Israel….The GOL
> [Government of Lebanon] viewed post-war Israeli public statements concerning
> Israeli intentions to secure a natural frontier with Lebanon along the Litani River
> with great anxiety.[36]

Lebanon's vulnerabilities and anxieties placed it in a precarious position vis-á-vis the

Palestinian movement and an increasingly divided regional political environment.

The Palestinians, the Palestinian cause and Arab Politics

The Palestinians prior to the 6-Day War

By 1968, Lebanese authorities began encountering an increasingly restive

Palestinian population. This population had resided in Lebanon since shortly after the

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[34] Kalawoun, 139.
[35] Salibi, *Crossroads to Civil War*, 30.
[36] Ambassador Porter to DOS, April 5, 1968, RG 59, A-875.

announcement of the State of Israel on May 14, 1948. The announcement triggered a

war between Israel and various Arab countries and eventually a mass exodus of

Palestinian refugees. When a cease-fire was finally established by early 1949, roughly

700,000 Palestinians had fled their homes from what became known as green-line Israel.

From its inception, the establishment of the State of Israel and the creation of the

Palestinian refugee problem was a central issue of Arab politics. But as Malcolm Kerr

has pointed out, ironically the Palestinian issue has been more divisive than unifying for

Arab states.[37] While this matter is largely outside the confines of this study, it is

important to recognize that the Palestinian issue would represent different ideas to

different entities who often used it as an instrument to promote and advance various

Arab and Lebanese agendas and objectives.[38] Identifying these agendas will facilitate

our comprehension of the Lebanese political chessboard and the veto players at this

stage in Lebanese history.

From 1948-1964, the Palestinian issue was part and parcel of the Pan-Arab

movement.[39] There was no publicly organized Palestinian movement or entity. All

actions conducted against the state of Israel were either unorganized or fell under the

watchful eye of the bordering Arab countries and would be described as the actions of

the *fedāyīn*. This began to change in 1964 when the Cairo Summit called for the

creation of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO). The organization was meant

to operate under the auspices of the Arab League and "designed to be a conservative

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[37] Malcolm Kerr, *The Arab Cold War; Gamal 'Abd al-Nasir and his rivals* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), 114.
[38] Michael Barnett, *Dialogues in Arab Politics: Negotiations in Regional Orders* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 149-50.
[39] Brynen, 20.

institution controlled by the Arab states." [40] It did not remain a conservative institution for long and within a few short years began to challenge the oversight of the League and exacerbate divisions within the Arab world. This transformation is largely attributable to the post Six-Day War environment of the Arab world.

The Arab World and the PLO after the 6-Day War

The loss of additional Arab territory to Israel in the Six-Day War clearly demonstrated that the Arab countries were incapable of liberating Palestinian lands, let alone protecting their own. In 1968, the first leader of the PLO, Ahmed Shuqari, was ousted by Yasser Arafat. Under the leadership of Arafat, the PLO began to assert itself in Arab politics. However, this assertion made the organization more vulnerable to the various political currents of the Arab world in the wake of the Six-Day War than as an instrument of the Arab League.

The devastating defeats of the Six-Day War placed Arab politics in a state of flux. The defeat tarnished Nasser's image in the Arab world and his relative political power at the regional level. The Syrian, Iraqi and Algerian regimes contested Nasser for the mantle of regional leadership. It was particularly evident regarding the approach to Israel and the Palestinian issue. For example, Nasser and King Husayn of Jordan accepted UN Resolution 242 which recognized land for peace. For many Arab governments, the acceptance of UN Resolution 242 signified the implicit recognition of the state of Israel. Even though Syria lost land in the Six-Day war, the Syrian regime in Damascus refused to acknowledge the resolution. Instead Syria advocated a

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[40] Barnett, 150. It was also a product of Nasser trying to placate Syrian pressures.

revolutionary approach to the Palestinian issue - the usage of guerilla tactics. Iraq and

Algeria also supported this approach. The divergence of policies regarding Israel and the

Palestinian movement would be divisive in the PLO and ultimately affect its political

behavior throughout the Arab World, particularly Lebanon.

The PLO acted as an umbrella institution for the numerous Palestinian parties,

unions, syndicates, exiled communities and movements that emerged following the

establishment of the state of Israel. The organization consisted of a variety of

departments. The two most prominent and important departments of the organization

were the Palestine National Council and the Executive Committee. The aforementioned

groupings filled the seats of the institutions, departments, the Palestine National

Council and its Executive committee. While the ultimate objective of these groupings

was the same – the liberation of Palestinian territories – the methods, tactics and

ideologies employed by them differed. For example, Fatah, the largest of all the

Palestinian parties, rejected the notion of Pan-Arabism propounded in Nasserism and

Ba'thism. It believed that Palestine should be liberated regardless of whether Arab

countries could unite. The second largest Palestinian party in the late 1960s, the Popular

Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), identified with Nasserism. It advocated

the defeat of imperialism and Zionism so a united Arab state could be created.[41]

Witness a slogan of the organization: "The road to the liberation of Palestine goes

through Amman."[42]

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[41] Ghada Hashem Talhami, *Syria and the Palestinians: The Clash of Nationalisms* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2001), 167-8.
[42] Alain Gresh, *The PLO: The Struggle Within* (London: Zed Books, 1983), 254.

The identification with certain principles (pan-Arabism, socialism, etc.) by various Palestinian parties proved to be a blessing and a curse. It created competing methods and means towards the realization of their goals but with the potential to undermine and create conflict within the organization. These varying positions also endeared Palestinian parties to certain Arab leaders and just as easily drove them away. To exemplify this point, the leadership of Fatah and the PFLP, (i.e.Yasser Arafat and George Habash), received considerable support from Syria at various times in the 1960s but they also spent time in Syrian jails. This example is emblematic of the constant struggle between the Palestinian parties and Arab governments. Arab regimes sought to control the PLO and inject the Palestinian cause into inter-Arab politics. The obsession of Arab regimes to control, or at least to influence a finger in the Palestinian cause is clearly demonstrated by the creation of two additional Palestinian organizations, *Saiqa* and the Arab Liberation Front, by Syria and Iraq respectively. These organizations were largely considered proxies or instruments of the Syrian and Iraqi regimes.

Syria and the PLO

The Syrian coup of 1966 brought to power a group of individuals who advocated revolutionary change and an increase of guerilla attacks on Israel. The Syrian regime considered the PLO of Ahmed Shuqari as a tool of Nasser. Thus, the Syrians undertook measures to counter the perceived influence of Nasser over the Palestinian cause. For example they provided considerable support to Fatah. According to R.D. McLaurin, in

the mid-1960s, al-Fatah was used as much against the Arab regimes as against Israel.[43]

While the Syrian government had allowed Palestinian guerillas to sometimes enter Israel from Syrian territory, after 1967 the Ba'th government allowed Fatah to operate in Syria but forbade attacks on Israel originating from Syrian soil. Rather, it encouraged attacks on Israel originating from Lebanon and Jordan. The support of the guerillas and the origins of their operations were significant for two reasons. Firstly, the support ultimately challenged the positions of Nasser after the Six-Day War – a negotiated settlement with Israel and his alliance with King Husayn of Jordan and King Faisal of Saudi Arabia. Secondly, the guerilla attacks placed Jordan and Lebanon (not Syria) in the battlefield between the Palestinian movement and Israel since they were the ones receiving the brunt of Israeli retaliations for the attacks.

The defeat of the Arab regimes in 1967 and the subsequent "independence" of the Palestinian movement made it a significant variable in Arab politics. But this independence was a blessing and a curse. The PLO's independence was contingent on two factors – financial support and a base of operations. Firstly, since there was no sovereign homeland that the PLO could derive its support from, the organization was often reliant on the goodwill of Arab countries. This goodwill was never constant and was affected by the regime's interests and the actions of the Palestinians. As mentioned earlier, to gain further control of the Palestinian movement, Syria created the Palestinian party *Saiqa*. As a result Syrian support for Fatah began to wane after the creation of *Saiqa*. Thus al-Fatah began to look to other Arab countries for support. Secondly, since the PLO had no state, it was also required to operate out of an Arab

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[43] R. D. McLaurin, "The PLO and the Arab Fertile Crescent," in *The International Relations of the Palestinian Liberation Organization* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1989), 17-8.

country. Lebanon's divided society, weak institutions and a large Palestinian refugee population made Lebanon an ideal location for the PLO and a promising battleground for Arab states to wage their power struggle. The problem for the PLO and some Arab states was that Lebanese authorities had historically kept the Palestinian refugee population under tight wraps and as demonstrated earlier, were wary of external interference.

The Palestinian Presence in Lebanon

Of the 700,000 Palestinian refugees who fled green line Israel, approximately 100,000 arrived in Lebanon and settled in seventeen refugee camps operated by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) that were primarily located adjacent to industrial and agricultural areas. While a handful of these refugees acquired Lebanese citizenship, the overwhelming majority were considered "guests." At first Lebanese citizens and authorities welcomed these guests, but rather quickly this welcome became frigid, particularly from Lebanese Christian authorities. From the perspective of some Lebanese Christian authorities, the continued presence of an increasingly growing Palestinian refugee population posed a direct threat to Lebanon's proportional system of government and represented a potential fifth column in Lebanese politics.

The continued presence of Palestinian refugees on Lebanese soil presented the matter of whether they should be incorporated into Lebanese society by granting them Lebanese citizenship. Considering that most Palestinians were Sunni Muslim, providing citizenship to almost 100,000 Sunni Muslims would inevitably offset the proportionality among confessional populations, particularly between the Maronite Catholics and the

Sunni Muslims, since the Sunni Muslims would then become the largest confession in Lebanon. Logically, the Sunnis would then demand the reforming of the National Pact and undoubtedly request the highest positions in the government. To prevent a change in this status quo and thwart the incorporation of Palestinian refugees into Lebanese society, Lebanese authorities (i.e. the Maronites) undertook measures and actions towards Palestinian refugees that were far more drastic than their Arab counterparts.

Within a few short years, Lebanese authorities prevented the establishment of new refugee camps or the expansion of existing ones. Attempts were made to prevent the transfer of refugees from one camp to another and Palestinians were required to apply for work permits, which confined them to working in the agricultural and construction sectors. These measures were all considered temporary because it was believed throughout the Arab world that the Arab countries would right the wrong perpetrated on the Palestinians and they would soon return to their homes in Palestine. The measures do not appear to have provoked an opposition throughout Lebanon. With every passing day, the Arab world as liberators became more of a dream than a reality; thus the Palestinian cause became increasingly politicized.

During the Shihāb Presidency the Lebanese government kept a watchful eye on Palestinian political activities (i.e. the Arab Nationalist Movement). The close surveillance elicited several confrontations.[44] The first encounter between Palestinian fighters (*fedāyīn*) and Lebanese authorities in Lebanon occurred on December 28, 1965. *Fedāyīn* were captured as they prepared for a raid into Israel. One of the *fedāyīn*, Jalal Kawash, was apprehended by Lebanese authorities and it was announced on January 11,

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[44] For further details, see Sayigh, 68-90.

1966 that he had committed suicide while in custody.[45] Kawash's suspected homicide ignited unrest and demonstrations throughout the Palestinian camps of Lebanon, however in the pre Six-Day War environment relatively little fallout occurred within or against the Lebanese government.[46] Kamāl Junblāṭ attended a demonstration in the Ain el-Helweh refugee camp but did not publicly challenge the position of the government.[47] Similar events occurred over the next two years in the form of skirmishes between Palestinian guerillas and Lebanese authorities. In the summer of 1966, al-Fatah leader Yassir Arafat was briefly detained, and further arrests occurred in May of 1967. Throughout this time, the preferred approach of the Lebanese government for addressing *fedāyīn* activities was the prevention of a base of operations and attacks on Israel through the army and the Deuxime Bureau.[48] This approach began to encounter domestic opposition in the latter half of 1968 and throughout 1969 until the status quo was changed in November of 1969. The Cairo Agreement authorized the creation of Palestinian bases on Lebanese soil.

Part II – Transforming the Status Quo

From guest to disputed visitor – politicizing the Palestinian issue in Lebanese politics

a) June 1968 - June 1969[49]

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[45] Goria, 78.
[46] Ibid., 79.
[47] Ibid., 79.
[48] The Deuxime Bureau was the intelligence branch of the army. It was developed under President Shihāb.
[49] I have subdivided this section into two parts to facilitate the comprehension of the material and to note significant developments. June 1969 - June 1969 marks the period from the politicalization of the Palestinian issue in Lebanon to the break in the ranks between President Hilū, Prime Minister Rashīd Karāmī and Kamāl Junblāṭ and the unification of the Christians.

During one of my various stays in Lebanon one individual I met equated the Palestinian presence in Lebanon to a dinner guest who insults the cook. While the individual did not elaborate on his comment, it was clear what he was alluding to. Although the Lebanese had allowed the Palestinians to take refuge in Lebanon, according to the individual the Palestinians began to act in disregard to their host. As indicated earlier, from 1948-1964, Palestinian refugee populations were relatively quiet entities. But this changed in the mid-1960s, in Lebanon and throughout much of the Arab world. And for some, like the aforementioned individual, this change was unbecoming of a guest. The Palestinians and the Palestinian issue fragmented Lebanese society and dragged Lebanon back into the Arab/Israeli battlefield, an arena Lebanon had been able to largely avoid since 1948.

The number of Palestinian attacks launched from Lebanon multiplied dramatically over three years. In 1967, two *fedāyīn* attacks on Israel originated from Lebanese soil; in 1968 the number increased to twenty-nine, and by 1969 the number of attacks totaled one hundred and fifty.[50] Lebanon did not endure an isolated fate. Jordan also experienced a significant spike in *fedāyīn* attacks originating from its soil. Overall, the swell in Palestinian attacks on Israel was the product of a growing sense that the governments of the Arab world had failed the Palestinians, losing additional land in 1967. Therefore, the Palestinians needed to take matters into their own hands if they hoped to achieve a future Palestinian state. The sharp increase in *fedāyīn* activity in Lebanon was also due to the growing popularity of the Palestinian movement among Palestinians and Arabs, the emergence of Marxism in the Bathist rhetoric of Syria that

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[50] Brynen, 46.

emphasized armed struggle and the encouragement from Syrian officials to launch attacks from Lebanese soil.[51] Obviously this development did not go unnoticed by Lebanese authorities, but the more pertinent issue became how to respond. While an increasing number of Lebanese supported the methods of the Palestinians, Lebanese infrastructure was being destroyed and citizens were being placed in harm's way.

The *fedāyīn* issue in Lebanon began to become a divisive political issue on 25 June 1968. Following an Israeli Defense Force (IDF) shelling of the Lebanese village Mis al-Jabal near the Lebanese-Israeli border on 15 June, during a session of Parliament, Maronite Deputy, leader of the National Bloc and member of the Tripartite Alliance, Raymond Eddeh, proposed the stationing of a UN force at the border.[52] It is important to note that Eddeh and other politicians such as Sham'ūnand Jemayyel who eventually joined his camp did not oppose the Palestinian cause or were proponents of Israel. Their opposition to the movement concerned the danger it presented to Lebanese security and sovereignty and the potential to draw Lebanon into a war with Israel. Eddeh's proposal forced various Lebanese politicians to respond and clarify their position vis-á-vis *fedāyīn* activity. Many of the non-Maronite politicians and parties, including Prime Minister 'Abdallah al-Yāfī, Kamāl Junblāṭ, Sā'eb Salām, Kamāl Al-As'ad, Karāmī's Democratic Parliamentary Front and the Najjada opposed the proposal. They were content with the status quo. For example, Karāmī believed that placing a UN force at

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[51] Helena Cobban, *The Palestinian Liberation Organization: People, Power and Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 36-45. Talhami, 90. The Syrian government encouragement of Palestinian activity in Lebanon prevented Syria from receiving Israeli retaliation while maintaining itself as a champion of the Palestinian cause.

[52] The first exchange of fire between Israeli and Lebanese forces occurred on 12 May 1968 which had followed a Palestinian rocket attack on Israel. Goria, 95. Eddeh was not calling for the end of *fedāyīn* activity against Israel but to bring peace to the Lebanese-Israeli border. This was not the first time Eddeh had called for the placement of UN troops at the border with Israel. On multiple times dating back to 1964 Eddeh had raised the issue.

the border would defy Lebanon's pro-Arab policy vis-á-vis Israel.[53] Others, like Foreign

Minister Fuad Butros (a Shihābist), downplayed the Palestinian element of the event,

claiming Israel had designs to occupy southern Lebanon because of its water resources.[54]

Fellow Tripartite Ally Pierre Jemayyel took a more conciliatory position by suggesting

that Eddeh's proposal needed the acceptance of all Lebanese and Arab countries.[55]

Following a *fedāyīn* ambush of a Lebanese military patrol on 29 October 1968,

Lebanese army commander Fuad Bustani and the head of the Deuixime Bureau, Gaby

Lahoud met with Palestinian officials.[56] At the meeting Lebanese officials indicated

they would not tolerate the further entrance of PLO fighters into Lebanon for attacks on

Israel.[57] However, the meeting was not a deterrent. The Palestinian resistance proceeded

to continue with their attacks on Israel from Lebanese territory. The ambush also did

not provoke any serious political turbulence in Lebanon; however Lebanese positions

towards the *fedāyīn* and their actions were beginning to crystallize.

On 2 November, the anniversary of when Great Britain announced the creation

of a Jewish State in Palestine otherwise known as Balfour Day, Prime Minister al-Yāfī

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[53] Ambassador Porter to DOS, June 23, 1969, RG 59, A-74.
[54] El-Ḥayāt June 26 cited in *Middle East Record* (Volume 4 1968), 653. Boutros says that the Israelis should know that the commando raids are the work of Syria. US Gov June 4 68. Throughout Lebanese history there have been claims that the Israelis had designs on south Lebanon because of its abundant water supplies, particularly the Litani River. These beliefs were based on actions of pre-1948 Zionists. Prior to the establishment of the state of Israel, Zionists sought to include the Litani River within the borders of a future state as a natural border and as a means to develop the northern part of the state. See Laura Eisenberg. *My enemy's enemy: Lebanon in the early Zionist imagination, 1900-48* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1994), 41. Therefore any future designs by Israel related to water conjured up these beliefs. One example was the Israeli plan to divert the waters of the Jordan River in 1963.
[55] El-Ḥayāt July 2 cited in *Middle East Record* (Volume 4 1968), 653.
[56] The Palestinians claimed they thought it was an Israeli patrol. *International Herald Tribune* October 31 cited in *Middle East Record* (Volume 4 1968), 654.
[57] El Khazen, 141-2. Lebanese authorities were concerned that the attacks violated its armistice with Israel and would lead to Israeli retaliations. Furthermore, Lebanon only supported operations under the United Arab Command (UAC).

and Kamāl Junblāṭ publicly condoned the actions of the *fedāyīn*.[58] In an apparent

reference to Eddeh's UN proposal, Al-Yāfī proclaimed that Lebanon would not tolerate

the "internationalization or proclamation of neutrality" regarding the *fedāyīn*.[59] Junblāṭ

called for eliminating any restrictions on *fedāyīn* activities in Lebanon.[60] The interior

minister and Tripartite figure Pierre Jemayyel had slightly changed his stance vis-á-vis

the Palestinian cause from June. He advocated practical ways to avoid divisions among

the Lebanese and blamed the Communists for the disturbances related to the Palestinian

cause.[61] Jemayyel perceived that the capitalistic system of Lebanon was threatened by

Palestinian groups with Communist sympathies and affiliated with pro-Communist

Arab countries. Jemayyel's comments are significant because they suggest an attempt at

avoiding sectarian tensions by maintaining a relatively pro-Arab stance as popularity for

the Palestinian movement grew. But the ground under Jemayyel's feet was giving way.

Support for the *fedāyīn* was not limited to al-Yāfī and Junblāṭ, it coincided with

growing popularity for *fedāyīn* action, particularly among the Muslim community and

elicited demonstrations throughout the country on November 6th, 7th, 11th, and the

14th.[62] Posters called for the resignation of the government and criticized the Minister

of the Interior Pierre Jemayyel.[63] It would be short sighted to interpret the support of the

fedāyīn among the constituents of Junblāṭ, al-Yāfī and Muslim elites as solely being

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[58] Balfour Day commemorated the issuing of the Balfour Declaration on 2 November 1917 which provided British support for the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine.
[59] *Arab Record and Report*, November 1-15, 1968, 352.
[60] Middle East News Agency (MENA) November 3, 1968 cited in *Middle East Record* (Volume 4 1968), 655.
[61] Jemayyel perceived the Palestinian movement, particularly a group like the Palestinian Front for the Liberation of Palestine – General Command, as a Trojan Horse for Lebanon which would disrupt Lebanon's capitalist system." Brynen, 48
[62] An-Nahār September 16 cited in Middle East Record (Volume 4 1968), 654. Also Brynen, 47. 79% of the Lebanese population supported the fedayīn according to a An-Nahār poll.
[63] *Arab Record and Report*, November 1-15, 1968, 352.

pro-Palestinian or pro-Arab. The Palestinian resistance signified more to many Lebanese. It represented a broader revolutionary movement that appealed to elements in the Muslim community dissatisfied with the structures of power in Lebanon and their general socio-economic malaise. The repression of the *fedāyīn* issue at the hands of Lebanese authorities became synonymous with the injustices perpetrated by the Lebanese state. *Fedāyīn* activity gained popularity throughout the Arab world placing those in Lebanon who opposed it in a shrinking crowd.

The seriousness of *fedāyīn* operating from Lebanese territory did not hit home for most Lebanese until December 27, 1968. On this date, Israeli commandos attacked the Beirut International Airport in retaliation for a Palestinian attack. The commandoes operated with relative ease, moving in and out of Lebanon without encountering resistance and destroyed thirteen planes from Lebanon's civilian airline. The attack generated immediate responses throughout Lebanese society and brought back to the surface the political and social divisions that had existed but been festering for some time. The *fedāyīn* issue greatly contributed to the eventual disintegration of the government and an atmosphere of division and relative instability for much of 1969.

In the wake of the attack on the Beirut airport, Prime Minister al-Yāfī immediately reaffirmed the government's support for the *fedāyīn*. In a press conference on January 2nd Yāfī declared *fedāyīn* activity as sacred, claiming that: "It is the viewpoint of the government and the people."[64] However it proved to be a development that the al-Yāfī government could not overcome. The government's failure to prevent or properly respond to the Israeli attack received criticism from all facets of the political

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[64] *Record of Political Opinions and Events in the Arab World* January 1969, 201. Al-Yāfī equated the activities of the *fedāyīn* with the liberation of Europe from Nazi occupation.

spectrum. Students from the American University of Beirut, St. Joseph University, the

Lebanese University and the Arab University of Beirut demonstrated against the

government's actions or lack thereof. And once again Deputy Raymond Eddeh proposed

the placement of UN forces at the border with Israel.[65] The al-Yāfī government resigned

on 8 January 1969.

President Hilū called on Rashīd Karāmī, a favorite of the Nahjist establishment,

during this time of crisis with forming the next government. Karāmī established a

government on January 15th but when it first convened, Pierre Jemayyel and Raymond

Eddeh, the Ministers of Finance and Public Works were not present. Their absence

represented a refusal to accept their portfolios and a boycott of the government since

their ally, Camille Sham'ūn, was excluded from the government.[66] The act represented a

united stand among three main political brokers in the Maronite community and an

increasing uneasiness with the current status quo. Although they had established the

Tripartite Alliance in 1967, this level of solidarity had yet to exist. Sham'ūnand his

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[65] According to US government documents, Karāmī suggested the usage of French troops at the border. It should be noted that there were increasing calls for military conscription in the wake of Israeli attacks on Lebanon. During a cabinet meeting on January 4th Prime Minister Yāfī called for military conscription as a response to Israeli attacks. Although he was not against conscription, Raymond Eddeh argued against the proposal because it was not an effective measure against the immediate dangers posed by Israel. *Record of Political Opinions and Events in the Arab World,* January 1969, 210 (from *al-Jarida*). The Katā'ib were not terribly supportive of military conscription. They perceived it as a means of pushing Lebanon into an unwinnable war with Israel. *Record of Political Opinions and Events in the Arab World,* January 1969, 216. (al-Amal).
[66] Radio Beirut January 17 cited in *Middle East Record* (Volume 5 1969-70), 902. President Hilū met with former President Sham'ūn on 9 January regarding the formation of a new cabinet. President Hilū asked Chamoun to drop his demand that all three groups of the Tripartite Alliance must be represented in Rashid Karāmī's cabinet. The fact that Karāmī ignored the demand suggests a hope to maintain a split in the ranks of the Tripartite alliance. *Record of Political Opinions and Events in the Arab World,* January 1969, 219.

party had been shunned from participation in the cabinet at the request of Kamāl Junblāṭ.[67]

Following the boycott of Jemayyel and Eddeh, Karāmī formed another government on January 22nd, but it did not include any members of the Tripartite alliance. Jemayyel and Eddeh's spots were filled by Maronites aligned with Karāmī's DPF and the Central Bloc.[68] The inclusion of the Central Bloc in the government was contingent upon the new government implementing of the Bloc's demands within one month of the government receiving a vote of confidence.[69] These demands included: 1) the abolishment of the division in the government; and 2) the confirmation of the legality of the *fedāyīn*.[70] The absence of the Tripartite members from the Karāmī cabinet resulted in the perception of a government unrepresentative of the nation. Pierre Jemayyel and the Katā'ib noted in their newspaper al-'Amal:

> The dominant feeling now is that the new, modified cabinet
> threatens to put the country back in the same situation that prevailed
> when Mr. Karami formed his cabinet in 1958….So I repeat that the
> trouble does not stem from the members of the government, among
> whom we have many capable friends, but arises from the fact that this
> government embodies the preponderance of one faction over another, if
> not the preponderance of a   political minority over a popular majority.
> When that happens there is unrest and mistrust among the people. [71]

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[67] Junblāṭ's veto of Chamoun and his National Liberal Party can be traced back to the conflict of 1958.
[68] Rene Muaawad and Habib Kayruz filled their spots. Two other members of Karāmī's initial government also resigned. They were Nasri Ma'luf and Husayn Mansur. Both had ties to the Tripartite Alliance but were not part of it.
[69] These conditions included: compulsory military service, arms for individuals living in the border region with Israel, holding accountable those individuals who failed to respond to the Israeli airport attack, supporting the legality of *fedāyīn* activities. El-Ḥayāt January 17-19 cited in *Middle East Record* (Volume 5 1969-70), 902. It is not clear who constituted the Central Bloc, but it appears to have been led by the Maronite feudal leader Suleiman Frangieh.
[70] *Record of Political Opinions and Events in the Arab World,* January 1969 (Nahar), 229.
[71] *Record of Political Opinions and Events in the Arab World,* January 1969, 235.

Karāmī's government was not considered a national unity government by some without members of the Tripartite alliance. Karāmī's government would last until 24 April 1969.The Tripartite Alliance staged a one-day strike on 30 January 1969 in response to the formation of the Karāmī government.[72] The unification of the ranks in the Tripartite Alliance occurred at a conference roughly one month later. At the conference they announced their support for the placement of UN forces at the border and adherence.[73] From this point forward, the political situation in Lebanon was tenuous at best since a major bloc (roughly one-third of the Parliamentary seats) was absent from the cabinet.

Popular support for and against the *fedāyīn* became increasingly explicit throughout the country. Junblāṭ stated in an article for the *al-Moharrer* news daily that Lebanon should emulate the Jordanian front with daily attacks on Israel.[74] By the middle of April, demonstrations in support of the *fedāyīn* freedom of movement were becoming a regular occurrence. On 23 April demonstrations turned violent as individuals clashed with security forces resulting in the death of ten people. Immediately the government declared a state of emergency, but the measures taken by the government came under fire by figures in the opposition (i.e. the Tripartite Alliance). Junblāṭalso held Karāmī accountable for the student deaths. On 24 April, Karāmī's government resigned. Karāmī blamed his resignation partly on the difficulty to maintain a government with conflicting opinions about the *fedāyīn*.

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[72] It is interesting to note the power of the Katā'ib within the alliance. A meeting of Tripartite members convened on January 27th to discuss the objectives and length of the strike. Camille Sham'ūn advocated an indefinite strike, Raymond Eddeh desired a strike to attack the one-sidedness of the government. Pierre Jemayyel pushed for a one-day strike limited to Beirut. Ultimately Jemayyel's position won out. *Record of Political Opinions and Events in the Arab World,* January 1969 (al-Jarida), 241-2.
[73] *Arab Record and Report*, March 1-15, 1969, 98.
[74] *Record of Political Opinions and Events in the Arab World 1969*, April, 1535.

> There are those who ask that feda'i action should take place in and from Lebanon regardless of the consequences and the hazards. This is an opinion with its arguments and reasoning. There is another opinion that considers such action dangerous to Lebanon. This opinion, too, has its arguments and reasoning …..Thus no government can adopt one of the two opinions without causing possible dissension. All of this dictates – in precaution and in anticipation, to which I have referred – a frank discussion and an agreement on the attitude to be adopted.[75]

To prevent things from further spiraling out of control and maintain the position of the state, President Hilū gave General Bustani the green light on 1 May to "shoot to kill" the *fedāyīn* if the situation warranted it.[76] These developments demonstrated that the maintenance of the status quo was increasingly untenable and had the real potential to tear the country apart. Yet, no compromise appeared to be in sight.

After several weeks of consultations, on 20 May, President Hilū once again requested that Karāmī form a new government. But this time, it was not just the Tripartite Alliance that was a problem for Karāmī. Karāmī faced resistance on two other fronts: Kamāl Junblāṭ and within the Sunni community. After a visit to Syria on 17 May, Junblāṭ adopted a more intransigent position towards the formation of the next government. He was adamant about not serving in a government that included a member of former President Camille Sham'ūn's party, preferred an alternative to Karāmī as Prime Minister and wanted his list of eighteen demands adopted by the government. These demands included the allowance of *fedāyīn* activity from Lebanese territory, development projects and providing support to the disenfranchised.[77] Junblāṭ's interaction with the Syrian government appears motivated by a shared interest to

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[75] *Record of Political Opinions and Events in the Arab World 1969*, April, 1541.
[76] Ambassador Porter to Djereian, May 2, 1969, RG 59.
[77] *The Daily Star,* May 23, 1969.

provide unequivocal support to the *fedāyīn*. In an interview conducted by *al-Jarida* newspaper, Junblāṭ accused Lebanese authorities of providing unsubstantiated claims of Syrian interference in *fedāyīn* affairs. He stated that the answer to Lebanon's problems with Israel was the improvement of its defense and the implementation of conscription.[78] Junblāṭ's shared interest with Syria also strengthened his hand as demonstrated by his increased number of demands in addition to the *fedāyīn* issue. These demands precipitated a meeting between Karāmī and Junblāṭ on 30 May that allowed Karāmī to proceed with attempting to establish a new government without interference from Junblāṭ[79]

The other development was the growing prominence of leftists within the Sunni camp. For example figures like 'Abd al-Mājid ar-Rifai, the leader of the Bathist party in Lebanon, and eventually Farouk Muqaddem, both from Tripoli, began to pose a threat to Karāmī's leadership in Tripoli and the Sunni community. On 31 May President Hilū further complicated matters for Karāmī.

Hilū's speech suggested a compromise must be reached regarding Lebanon's relationship with the *fedāyīn*. He was not opposing the *fedāyīn* or their right to attack the state of Israel, but realized the present course of action was untenable. Hilū said:

> Nous ne souhaitons que le bien du people palestinien et nous ne visons qu'á soutenir sa légitime résistance. Mais il nous faut bien expliquer, que ce soutien ne pourrait se réaliser, que dans un climat de comprehension fraternelle et selon les imperatives de notre souveraineté et de notre sécurité.[80]
>
> We wish nothing more than goodwill for the Palestinian people and we aim for nothing but to support their legitimate resistance. But it

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[78] *Record of Political Opinions and Events in the Arab World 1969*, May, 1981.
[79] *The Daily Star*, May 31, 1969.
[80] Charles Hilū, *Mélanges Tome 1 (1938-1970)*, (Jounieh: Librairie St. Paul, 1995), 323.

must be well known that this support must be realized in a climate of fraternal understanding and according to the imperatives of our sovereignty and our security.

The speech provoked contrasting responses within the Lebanese political landscape. It also witnessed the further solidification in the Maronite ranks. The members of the Tripartite Alliance largely endorsed the President's position. In fact, it hardened Pierre Jemayyel's opposition to reaching some sort of a compromise with the *fedāyīn*. Speaking with press officials on June 5th he stated: "it is wrong to announce our acceptance of the principle of coordination in as far as commando work is concerned."[81] But Jemayyel hinted at the possibility of a secret agreement arranged with the *fedāyīn* claiming a public arrangement would devastate Lebanese society.[82] More importantly, prominent member of the Center Bloc and Maronite Deputy Suleiman Frangieh agreed with the President's speech. Karāmī, Junblāṭ and others criticized various aspects of the speech.[83] While claiming that Hilū's actions coincided with Lebanon's commitment to the Arab League regarding the Palestinian issue, Karāmī condemned the President for exceeding his power, namely excluding Karāmī from the formulation of the policy.

> Obviously the government – which relies on the Chamber of Deputies, representing the people – is considered by our democratic parliamentary system to be responsible for preserving the Constitution and for its policy…..Power in Lebanon is shared by various elements of the executive – particularly by the president and the premier. This must be preserved to ensure that the democratic system remains sound and to preserve national unity[84]

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[81] *Record of Political Opinions and Events in the Arab World 1969,* June – Sept, 2475.
[82] Ibid., 2475-6.
[83] Others who opposed Hilū's speech included Deputy Maaruf Saad.
[84] *Record of Political Opinions and Events in the Arab World* June – Sept 1969, 2473.

Junblāṭ claimed Hilū's remarks were part of a "conspiracy" against the *fedāyīn*. He now equated Hilū with representing one of the positions in the government, not the arbiter who must maintain unity among the people.[85] This favoritism or representing a particular position is further reflected in the words of the religious leader of Lebanon's Sunni community, Mufti Hasan Khaled, who told Raymond Eddeh that the President's speech of 31 May had made Hilū appear as a Maronite President, not a Lebanese President.[86] The issue of forming a government became increasingly intertwined with the issue of the *fedāyīn* — should the *fedāyīn* issue be addressed before or after the creation of a new government? Certain parties believed the *fedāyīn* issue must be addressed first, while others felt a new government was imperative. With the inability to bridge the divide domestically, Hilū and others looked internationally to resolve the situation.

In an attempt to alleviate the political divide and a burgeoning crisis with the *fedāyīn*, Lebanese figures and parties looked to external actors for assistance. The crisis also enabled some external forces to exert influence over how the crisis should be resolved. As mentioned earlier, various elements in the Palestinian Movement received support and funding from different Arab countries. As Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Libya were principle supporters of al-Fatah, President Hilū sent emissaries to Jeddah, Kuwait City and Tripoli to urge these governments to restrain al-Fatah's *fedāyīn*. As the principal supporters of *Saiqa*, the French government approached the Syrian government on behalf of the Lebanese towards the end of April. On April 30, following the violence between demonstrators and security forces, Hilū also sent former Prime Minister al-Yāfī

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[85] *Record of Political Opinions and Events in the Arab World*, June – Sept 1969, 2473
[86] Ambassador Porter to DOS, June 23, 1969, RG 59, A-217.

to Syria to request a curtailment of Saiqa *fedāyīn* attacks. The Syrian regime claimed that they did not control Saiqa *fedāyīn*.[87] Three weeks later, Junblāṭ would also visit Syria regarding the issue of the *fedāyīn*, however Junblāṭ's visit did not share the same objective of al-Yāfī's trip.

Junblāṭ went to Damascus to learn more about a recent meeting between Lebanese officials and the *fedāyīn*.[88] A meeting between Lebanese officials and the *fedāyīn* occurred on 9 May, after President Hilū asked for the assistance of Nasser. During the meeting of 9 May, the PLO, an Egyptian envoy and the Lebanese Army Commander agreed upon a fifteen-point plan. One of the stipulations of the agreement was the creation of a *fedāyīn* base of operations in Lebanon. President Hilū rejected the plan, maintaining the status quo of forbidding *fedāyīn* operations on Israel originating from Lebanon territory.[89] After Junblāṭ's trip to Damascus, he claimed the Lebanese had rushed to judge the Syrian role in the current Lebanese affairs. He placed the blame on Lebanon for not properly defending itself against Israeli aggressions.[90]

Additionally, throughout this period of time, the Lebanese government sought US assistance. Initially, the US was approached by Lebanese officials regarding the Israeli/Palestinian aspect of the situation. For example, at the funeral of President Eisenhower at the end of March 1969 in Washington DC, Lebanese Foreign Minister Yusef Salem asked US government officials to deter Israel from launching attacks on Lebanon.[91] Lebanese officials also asked the US to approach the USSR because of their relationship with Nasser and the Syrian leadership. They hoped USSR influence with

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[87] Ibid., Hilū referred to al-Yāfī as a fool according to US Embassy records.
[88] *The Daily Star* May 18, 1969.
[89] Fouad Butros, *Memoires* (Beyrouth: Editions L'Orient-Le Jour/MMO, 2010), 181.
[90] *Record of Political Opinions and Events in the Arab World,* May 1969, 1981
[91] Ambassador Porter to the Secretary of State, May 1, 1969, RG 59.

Nasser and Syria could in turn help defuse the situation with the *fedāyīn*. Similarly, Lebanese officials asked the US to speak with the Saudi and Kuwaiti regimes with the hope they could exert pressure over the *fedāyīn*.

The Lebanese government and some of its parties were not just interested in US diplomatic endeavors. They also sought additional support. In several meetings with US Ambassador Dwight J. Porter and US officials in April and May of 1969, President Hilū and his envoy Michel Khoury pressed the US on the nature of its assistance to Lebanon. Hilū made it explicit at one point that his actions vis-á-vis the *fedāyīn* were contingent on US support. If the US could offer support beyond the behind-the-scenes diplomatic endeavors, Hilū ascertains that he could take a hard line on the issue of commandoes and the leftists in the Arab world. Without US support, he would be required to be more amendable with these entities. Hilū's actions and words suggest a fear of going at it alone or the inability to effectively wage a veto in the face of the opposition encountered in the Arab world. Although it should be noted, US correspondence does not explicitly state concerns about the Christian community, there is a sense of the US as a game changer for President Hilū and the Christian community.

Hilū's subtle warnings, predictions and probing with US officials only elicited the most minimal of US commitment to Lebanon. State Department documents indicate that the US believed the crisis of 1969 was worse than the civil war of 1958. It had concluded there was the potential for the overthrow of the government because mobs controlled the leaders of the Sunni community. Yet, the US was still hesitant to get involved. Aware of the domestic dimensions of the crisis and fearful of supporting one Lebanese group over another, the US repeatedly only emphasized its support for the

Lebanese government and the territorial integrity of Lebanon.[92] The subtle aggression of

the Syrian regime through the *fedāyīn* made the introduction of an international force in

Lebanon extremely difficult to justify. After being pressed by President Hilū,

Ambassador Porter notes in a report of a meeting: "I reiterated that involvement of US

forces in Lebanon is not possible."[93] And when it was alleged at the end of May that the

US had offered military units to Lebanon, the US quickly rebuffed the allegation. The

US denial angered Hilū. Hilū believed that even rumored US support would buoy

Christian support for Hilū's position vis-á-vis the *fedāyīn.* It would also strengthen

Karāmī's ability to form a government which he had been attempting since April of

1969.[94] Ambassador Porter informed Hilū that US military involvement was out of the

question because the US presence in Vietnam had led to growing opposition in Congress

and the public to additional military endeavors.[95] Ambassador Porter was unwilling to

concede anything to Hilū regarding any hypothetical situations. He stated that the US

would only address the situations as they develop.[96]

       Without the guarantee for US troop involvement, the focus of their

conversations centered around two courses of action: 1) the United Nations, and 2)

political and social reforms in Lebanon. Hilū appears to have been considering Raymond

Eddeh's proposal of placing a UN Emergency Force (UNEF) at the border with Israel if

things continued to worsen. Although he expressed concern that an Emergency Force

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[92] The US was particularly concerned about a visit by former President Camille Sham'ūn to the US. The US government was fearful of receiving Sham'ūn at a high level which could be perceived as them supporting conservative elements in Lebanon.

[93] As mentioned earlier, the US was concerned about getting involved in a domestic issue.

[94] Ambassador Porter to DOS, April 1969, RG 59.

[95] Ibid. In an interview in February, former President Camille Chamoun accused the US of having a pro-Israeli bias which affected its approach to the situation. *Arab Report and Record*, February 1-14, 53.

[96] These hypothetical situations included a civil war.

would be vetoed by the USSR and not attain the necessary votes in the UN General Assembly. Once again, Hilū pushed for US assistance. He inquired about the possibility of the US presenting the matter at the UN and whether the US would be willing to participate in the UNEF. Ambassador Porter denied both requests. He believed the Lebanese government needed to propose the matter at the UN and remained adamant about not committing troops to Lebanon, even in the context of a UN Emergency Force. The US did encourage President Hilū to begin floating the idea of social and political reforms in public.[97] The US perceived that this avenue would defuse the internal tension within Lebanon which would then allow the Lebanese government to pursue a harder line with the commando issue.

Without access to Lebanese private correspondence or Soviet archives, one can only ascertain a third party perspective of USSR involvement. The Lebanese government appeared ambivalent toward the USSR and the role it could play in the crisis. President Hilū was hesitant to engage the Soviets, fearful it would further drag Lebanon into the Soviet sphere of influence. On 13 March 1967, the Soviets offered Lebanon an assistance package which included the sale of military items to Lebanon and the purchase of Lebanese agricultural products. Hilū rejected the proposal but by 1968, the US notes that Lebanese contacts with the Soviets and Eastern European countries were intensifying.[98] During the first half of 1969, the Lebanese signed a series of trade agreements with the Soviets that deepened the amount of commerce between the nations. There is no evidence that Soviet relations with Lebanon intensified in other areas. The lack of engagement with the Soviets appears to have been connected to the

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[97] Ambassador Porter to DOS, May 1969, RG 59.
[98] Ambassador Porter to DOS, April 21, 1967, RG 59, A-969.

USSR's relations with Syria. The Soviet position was ultimately reflected in the Syrian position. For example, Hilu's previous hesitation with engaging the Soviets is from the belief that if Lebanon asked the Soviets to pressure the Syrians on *Saiqa*, the Soviets would request a price tag – technical assistance, food purchases and military hardware.[99]

By June of 1969, the crisis had symptoms of a confessional conflict in Lebanon. The divisions over the precepts of Shihābism had become a secondary issue for the moment. The President's speech had brought Hilū closer to his opponents within the Maronite community – the Tripartite Alliance. Pierre Jemayyel and Camille Sham'ūnwere contemplating the acquisition of arms for their respective parties.[100] The enquiries into weapons by the Christian leadership suggest a growing concern that the state was incapable of providing security and the Christians believed it was necessary to take matters into their own hands. And the relationship between Junblāṭ and Karāmī appeared to be tenuous at best. Somewhat surprisingly, considering the tense atmosphere at the onset of summer, and the mindset of some of the domestic political actors, tensions between the *fedāyīn* and Lebanese authorities subsided and also appeared to have temporarily quieted within Lebanese society for several months.

b) July 1969 - January 1970

Confrontations between the *fedāyīn* and Lebanese authorities continued during the summer months but at a reduced level.[101] The relative calm ended in mid-October. The Lebanese army blocked an attempt by the *fedāyīn* coming from Syria to establish a

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[99] Ambassador Porter to Secretary of State, April 26, 1969, RG 59, 3463.
[100] Ambassador Porter to DOS, June 23, 1969, RG 59, A-217. Eddeh questioned the Ambassador about the acquisition of arms from the US for elements in the Maronite community. The US rejected the inquiry. The State Department document notes that representatives of Pierre Jemayyel and Camille Sham'ūn had also inquired about weapons from the US.
[101] The Middle East Record attributes the reduction of fedāyīn/Lebanese authorities clashes to the *fedāyīn* strengthen their positions in refugee camps. *Middle East Record,*(Volume 5 1969-70), 911.

base of operations adjacent to the town of Majdal Silm.[102] It resulted in clashes on 15,

19 and 20 October in the area between the army and the *fedāyīn* and the death of ten

fedāyīn. The clashes triggered more fighting over the next two weeks.[103] It also elicited

another round of demonstrations and domestic disturbances throughout the country as

well as international condemnation.[104] Syria's Bath Party Political Bureau stated on 21

October:

> The Political Bureau has found that the acts committed by the Lebanese
> Army, backed by the lackey authorities who dominate the fate of
> fraternal Lebanon, aim at liquidating the feda'iyin, and are coordinated
> with the imperialist Zionist plots to strike the feda'iyin, and to liquidate
> the liberation issue and the Arab right in Palestine.
> Therefore, the Political Bureau has decided to adopt an immediate
> and firm attitude required by national duty and to make the Lebanese
> plotting authorities appreciate the serious consequences of their stands.
> It has closed the Syrian-Lebanese borders in preparation for firmer and
> more effective measures in support of the important national role
> represented by the feda'i presence in Lebanon.[105]

These words turned into actions when the Lebanese-Syrian border closed on 21 October.

The closure disrupted the transit of goods between Lebanon and four Arab countries and

added further pressure for Hilū as the Lebanese economy rebounded from the intra-Bank

crisis of 1966. Couple these events with the rising popularity of socialist movements in

Lebanon (i.e. 'Abd al-Mājid ar-Rifai and Farouk Muqqadem) and Hilū was placed in an

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[102] In an article by J. Gaspart of the *New Middle East*, the author suggests that the *fedāyīn* were attempting to fortify their positions with the onset of winter. The smuggling routes for the *fedāyīn* and their equipment would be blocked by the winter snow in the Hermon Mountain range. *Record of the Arab World*, Oct-Dec 1969

[103] On 25 October fedāyīn forces occupied the Lebanese village of Yanta and entered the village of Deir al Ashayer. Attacks were launched on army posts at the villages of Hasabaya, Khayyam and Soq el Khan on 25 October. *Record of the Arab World*, Oct-Dec 1969, 3253.

[104] Student demonstrations occurred in Tripoli and Beirut.

[105] Damascus Radio, October 21*Record of the Arab World*, Oct-Dec 1969, 3229.

increasingly precarious position.[106] In an attempt to further tighten the screws on the

Lebanese government and its economy, the Syrian regime advertised the usage of its

ports in Tartous and Latakiyyah on the Mediterranean as an alternative to Beirut.[107]

In the midst of the clashes, demonstrations and the border closure, two

significant domestic developments occurred: 1) the election of a new Speaker of the

Parliament and; 2) the resignation of Rashid Karāmī and other members from the

caretaker government. On 21 October, Sabri Hamadeh was elected Speaker of the

Parliament by a vote of 45 to 34.[108] The significance of the election was not necessarily

the outcome, but how votes were cast. A division within the Maronite community (i.e.

the Tripartite Alliance) occurred over Hamadeh's election. While Sham'ūnand Eddeh

voted for Hamadeh's opponent, Kamāl Asaad, Pierre Jemayyel and the Katā'ib refused

to vote for Asaad.[109] It should be noted that in the weeks leading up to the vote,

Sham'ūnand Eddeh expressed concern to the US ambassador that Jemayyel would break

ranks with his Maronite allies.[110] Furthermore, internal divisions were not limited to the

Christian community.

Karāmī's resignation as the Prime Minister of the care taker government

reflected an attempt to maintain unity within the Sunni community under the Prime

Minister. Cracks that had been slowly emerging during the spring in the Sunni Muslim

community widened in the fall. In Karāmī's hometown of Tripoli, Lebanese pro-

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[106] Syria actually closed the border on 19 October but did not officially announce it until two days later.
[107] *The New York Times* cited in the *Middle East Record (Volume 5 1969-70)*, 624.
[108] *The Daily Star*, October 22, 1969.
[109] Eddeh and Chamoun had expressed concern to the US ambassador about Jemayyel's loyalty to the alliance. In the preceding week to the vote, Sham'ūn and Eddeh believed that Jemayyel would abandon the alliance because he was eyeing the presidential election of 1970.
[110] Ambassador Porter to DOS, October 22, 1969, RG 59, A-416.

commando forces took over most of the city by 25 October.[111] These forces were led by

Farouk Muqaddem. Muqaddem represented a socialist ideology related to the fedāyīn

movement that resonated with the lower classes. As a result, Karāmī's resignation as the

Prime Minister of a caretaker government was an attempt to distance himself from the

Hilū crackdown on the *fedāyīn* in order to save face with his own constituents and

broader Arab world.[112] As an op-ed from the *Daily Star* newspaper on 23 October states:

> If elections were held tomorrow Karāmī would not have a chance….
> Farouk Muqaddem is riding the wave of commando activity in Tripoli.[113]

Muqaddem further tightened the vice on Karāmī by issuing an ultimatum on October 25.

Muqaddem stated that his supporters would continue to escalate the situation in Tripoli

unless three conditions were met: 1) the creation of a Lebanese government that

endorses commando activity; 2) the dismissal of officials responsible for the fighting

with the *fedāyīn*; and 3) putting those officials on trial.[114]

Syria was not the only Arab country to negatively respond to clashes between

the *fedāyīn* and the Lebanese authorities. Opposition to the actions of Lebanese

authorities vis̱-a-vis the *fedāyīn* intensified throughout the Arab world. Libya recalled

its ambassador to Lebanon on October 22 for consultations. The Lebanese embassy in

Baghdad was attacked. The Iraqi, Algerian and South Yemeni governments demanded a

cessation of Lebanese government actions.[115] The most significant position of all the

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[111] *The Daily Star*, October 26, 1969.
[112] Other caretaker ministers resigned from the government on the same day as Karāmī. They included Justice Minister Shafiq Wazzan and Hydroelectric Power Minister Uthman al-Dana. As Sunni, they also wished to distance themselves from the recent outbreak in violence between the Lebanese army and the *fedāyīn*, particularly as the position became increasingly unpopular in the Sunni community.
[113] *The Daily Star*, October 23, 1969.
[114] *The Daily Star*, October 26, 1969.
[115] Jordan reframed from criticizing Lebanon because of its own problems with the *fedāyīn*.

Arab countries appears to have been the words of President Nasser. Nasser placed the

Hilū government in a precarious position with a letter on October 22nd. He stated:

> The reports emanating from Lebanon on military clashes between the
> Lebanese army and Palestinian resistance forces cause us the strongest
> and deepest anxiety. We feel grieved that a critical time of our nation's
> struggle, we find that Arab bullets are fired at the wrong target, whatever
> the justifications and reason given….We cannot imagine what the
> [Palestinian] resistance faces in Lebanon, while at the same time it suffers
> from the enemy's [Israel's] fire and violence.[116]

Thus, a flurry of diplomatic activity ensued.

On 25 October, the Soviets issued a statement via their telegraph agency, Tass,

warning against any intervention in the Lebanese crisis. Keeping with their earlier

policy, the US continued to maintain a low profile.[117] Egypt dispatched an envoy to

Damascus on October 26. The French President sent a letter to Nasser. Then on

November 1, the Syrian regime completely sealed off its border with Lebanon and there

were reports of Syrian troops massing at the border.[118] Concurrent with the closure of

the Syrian border, Yassir Arafat left Damascus for Cairo to meet with President Nasser

and Lebanese commander Emile Bustani.[119] Approximately two days later, an

agreement was reached between the two parties. Most notably, the *fedāyīn* were

guaranteed passage through the border region of Lebanon to conduct attacks on Israel

and arrangements made for where the *fedayīn* could congregate in the border area.

Although the contents of the Cairo Agreement were a secret, the major factions

of the Lebanese political spectrum welcomed it. Pierre Jemayyel is quoted as saying,

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[116] Kalawoun, 143.
[117] The US did move the 6th fleet within 450 miles of the Lebanese coast.
[118] *The Daily Star*, October 31, 1969.
[119] There was discussion about whether Prime Minister Karāmī should head the delegation. According to an interview with Samī el-Khatib, it was deemed a security issue and therefore should be handled by the military.

"…news of a cease-fire between Arab brothers brings joy to the hearts since the blood of that has been spilled should have been kept for confrontations with the enemy."[120] Only Raymond Eddeh and his National Bloc spoke out against the agreement and used the agreement as the basis for refusing to participate in Karāmī's government that was formed on November 26th. Eddeh's opposition was just one of the obstacles facing the creation of Karāmi's government following the agreement.

The formation of the Karāmī government required roughly three weeks of negotiations. Besides Eddeh, the Central Bloc refused to join the cabinet and initially it was unclear whether Pierre Jemayyel's Katā'ib and Camille Sham'ūn's National Liberal Party would also participate.[121] Without Gemayal and Sham'ūnthe government could not be acceptable to Maronite community. Jemayyel and Sham'ūnwanted to see the contents of the Cairo Agreement before partaking in the new government but eventually conceded and were awarded three cabinet positions (two for the Katā'ib and one for the National Liberals). The National Liberal Party member given a cabinet portfolio did not attend the first cabinet meeting and the party subsequently resigned from the cabinet. The resignation left Jemayyel and the Katā'ib as the only member of the Tripartite Alliance in the government demonstrating the importance of the Katā'ib to the implementation of the agreement and its prominence in the Maronite community. Furthermore, following the Cairo Agreement, Karāmī remained unpopular among many of the constituents in Tripoli because of the leadership of Muqaddem. The continued

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[120] *The Daily Star*, November 4, 1969.
[121] The Central Bloc were against the appointment of Karāmī as Prime Minister.

opposition to Karāmī required the intervention of Junblāṭ to defuse the situation.[122] The cabinet received a vote of confidence from the Parliament on December 4th.

Part III - Analysis

The growth of the Palestinian resistance movement, the increasing number of its attacks on Israel and the explosion of popular support in Lebanon and throughout the Arab World for the movement in the post Six-Day War environment quickly forced the hands of Lebanon's politicians. What began as a unified stance among the Lebanese toward the *fedāyīn* fragmented into three positions vis-á-vis the resistance in about a year. The reconciliation of these positions on 3 November 1969 occurred after one of these positions failed to secure international backing and a reconciliation between the Syrian and Egyptian governments regarding the *fedāyīn* issue. This failure was not initially crippling but coupled with an impending economic crisis, the combination proved too foreboding to overcome and maintain the status quo. Thus, the predicament required a compromise – the Cairo Agreement. Why did the achievement of this agreement take the better part of a year? In May it appeared an agreement was feasible. And which actors were necessary for the agreement's success?

Domestic Veto Players

The government's position regarding *fedāyīn* activity in Lebanon at the start of the summer of 1968 was complete restriction of the movement, specifically the prevention of a base of operations on Lebanese soil. Initially this status quo was

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[122] Muqaddem would eventually leave Lebanon for Cairo.

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challenged from opposing sides. Raymond Eddeh's proposal on 25 June 1968 — placing UN troops at the border — intensified this surveillance/restriction. But there is another element to Eddeh's proposal. As an opponent of the Shihābist-dominated Deuxiéme Bureau, Eddeh's idea of UN troops in Lebanon also appears as an affront to the influence of the institution. The second position — support for the actions of the Palestinian resistance — relaxed this surveillance and emerged over the course of the following seven months. Initially the two main proponents of this line of thought appear to have been Prime Minister Abdullah al-Yāfī and Kamāl Junblāṭ.

Eddeh's proposal did not garner much support within or outside the government whereas the al-Yāfī and Junblāṭ position appears to be buoyed by popular support as evinced by demonstrations on 1 November 1968 and at the beginning of January 1969. However, even with this support and as the Prime Minister, al-Yāfī did not produce a change in the status quo, prevent the failure of his government or was asked to create a new government. First and foremost, al-Yāfī's inability to change the status quo demonstrates the veto power of the Prime Minister versus the President. Without additional documents it is difficult to ascertain al-Yāfī's standing in Lebanese society, however the fact that President Hilū chose Karāmī to replace al-Yāfī demonstrates that Karāmī was a more stable, moderate, central or unifying figure. This perception is further revealed by Hilū's insistence on asking Karāmī to not only form a government in January of 1969 but throughout the rest of 1969. However Karāmī failed to unite the country for approximately seven months. Additionally, there is no indication that Hilū seriously contemplated an alternative candidate as Prime Minister. Karāmī's

appointment and first attempt to create a government triggered a significant development within a segment of the Maronite community.

The formation of the Karāmī government in January provoked the emergence of a unified position within a segment of the Maronite political community. The Eddeh and Jemayyel boycott of the Karāmī cabinet on 15 January demonstrates that the absence of their Tripartite Alliance ally, Camille Sham'ūnor his party, from the government was no longer negotiable or acceptable. While Eddeh and Jemayyel had chosen to partake in the previous government without Sham'ūn, in the wake of the Israeli attack on the Beirut airport on 27 December, there appears to have been a closing of the ranks within the Tripartite Alliance. The foreign policy advocated by the Tripartite Alliance bloc in 1967 momentarily superseded their respective interests. However, similar to al-Yāfī, their position ultimately proved to be only a brief impediment, but not a successful veto of the formation of the Karāmī government. Why? It demonstrates two issues: 1) the political strength of the Tripartite Alliance was overstated, at least at this point; 2) a division still existed between the Tripartite Alliance and the Shihābist President. As indicated, Prime Minister Karāmī, was able to call on other Maronites, the Central Bloc represented by Sulieman Frangieh, to represent the confession in his government and maintain a government for approximately three additional months without the presence of the *Ḥilf*.

With a lack of support for Raymond Eddeh's proposal of placing UN troops at the border, it is safe to assume that until the end of April, the status quo was only credibly challenged from one side – relaxing the surveillance of the Palestinian resistance. However, beginning at the end of April, one begins to observe the emergence

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of another position within the Lebanese political milieu that could be characterized as a third or middle position.

On 24 April, Karāmī's government collapsed again. It now reached a point of futility. With the emergence of vetoes that prohibited the creation of a new government and the further changing of the political landscape, Lebanon entered a critical period. From this point forward, Karāmī's ability to form a government became directly linked to the government's position on the activity of the Palestinian Resistance. The question became whether this would occur before or after a resolution to the Palestinian issue. Some parties such as members of the Tripartite Alliance wanted a government formed prior to addressing Palestinian activity while others (i.e. Junblāṭ) wanted the issue addressed before the formation of a government. Obviously, the logic behind these strategies was to exact their solution to the issue of the *fedāyīn*. They also demonstrate the weakness of Karāmī and his failure to be a unifying figure. Karāmī's inability to bridge the divide between these groups from 24 April until 25 November 1969 indicates the presence of more formidable vetoes.

First, there occurred a further consolidation with the Maronite Catholic ranks. The Central Bloc which had provided an alternative to the Tripartite Alliance in the formation of Karāmī's government in January, was no longer a willing participant in the government unless measures were taken to restrain *fedāyīn* activities. A further sense of unity within the Maronite ranks occurs in the wake of President Hilū's speech to the nation on 31 May. Hilū's speech is significant because the Tripartite Alliance withdraws its veto of Junblāṭ's presence in the next government following the speech. This change in the position of the Tripartite Alliance indicates the removal of an alternative

perspective in the Maronite community. Hilū and the *Ḥilf*, once political enemies, are in agreement at least regarding *fedāyīn* activity. This agreement contributes to the intransigence over the proceeding five months. Without any significant challengers from within the Maronite community regarding the *fedāyīn* issue, President Hilū was under no pressure from his community to alter the status quo. A similar perspective could not be applied to the Muslim community.

Prior to Junblāṭ's trip to Syria in mid-May, there was no significant division within the ranks of the Muslim community. However following Junblāṭ's return from Damascus, he presented a list of eighteen demands that included access of the *fedāyīn* to Lebanese territory for attacks. These demands complicated matters for Karāmī. Junblāṭ's insistence on the adoption of these eighteen demands temporarily distanced him from Karāmī and appeared to create divisions within the pro-*fedāyīn* camp. It also suggests a widening of opinion between the Shihābists, Junblāṭ and Hilū. Only after Karāmī's reconciliation with Junblāṭ at the end of May does there appear to be unity within this camp but this unity was tenuous at best. However one must also note that by this point, the relations between Junblāṭ and Hilū became strained by his speech of 31 May 1969. Added to the mix, was the growing popularity of the leftists (i.e. Farouq Muqaddem a Sunni Muslim) in Karāmī's hometown of Tripoli.

Muqaddem was a bigger concern for Karāmī than Junblāṭ. Although Muqaddem and Junblāṭ professed similar progressive outlooks, as a Druze, Junblāṭ did not pose a direct threat to Karāmī. Therefore Karāmī created a *modus vivendi* with Junblāṭ. On the other hand Muqaddem and other leftists threatened Karāmī's leadership and power base because they were Sunni. Karāmī could not ally with Muqaddem without weakening his

position in the Sunni community. However, he could not completely discount Muqaddem without also discounting Junblāṭ. If he did, this action would have effectively killed his leadership at this critical juncture. It is important to note that the issue of the Palestinians had become wrapped around the social grievances of many disenfranchised Muslims.

In many ways, Karāmī did not represent the interests of his constituents. As a result, Karāmī was caught in a difficult spot. In an attempt to salvage his political career, Karāmī adopted a do nothing approach that embodied a weak middle or third position. Another term used to describe the Karāmī position was the *tansīq* (compromise) solution. Karāmī could not publically support the Maronite position; however he was apprehensive about fully endorsing the position of Muqaddem and Junblāṭ. Interestingly, it appears that none of the other traditional Sunni politicians (i.e. Sā'eb Salām) fully endorsed the commando position until the very end of the crisis. These weak positions toward the *fedāyīn* suggest that the traditional elites in the Sunni community were more interested in maintaining power than being proponents of the Palestinian cause and more importantly, promoting significant reform to the Lebanese political system. The three positions identified in the Lebanese domestic political scene vis-á-vis the Palestinian resistance by the summer of 1969 was emblematic of the positions represented by Syria, Egypt and the United States.

Extra-territorial veto players

The United States, according to US government documents, was supportive of the maintenance of the status quo in Lebanon – supporting the position propounded by

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Hilū. As demonstrated by Syrian actions, Syria encouraged Palestinian activity to be launched from Lebanese territory. The attempted cessation of it by the Lebanese authorities was initially criticized by the Syrian government in the fall of 1968. In October of 1969 after another round of conflict between Lebanese authorities and the Palestinian resistance the Syrian regime closed its border with Lebanon. The Syrian position was synonymous with Junblāṭ and was further demonstrated by their interaction with Junblāṭ and al-Yāfī. With no distinction from Syria, it must also be recognized that the Soviet position was absorbed by the Syrian presence in the issue. Egypt represents the middle position that was espoused by Karāmī. Like Karāmī, Egypt was not against the *fedāyīn* however Egypt could not support unrestricted Palestinian action.   It would be an exaggeration to conclude that the Egyptians were particularly robust supporters of Karāmī. They feared more that if the Junblāṭ/Syria course of action was undertaken, Egyptian leadership in the Arab world and its interests would be further challenged or usurped by Syria and the other progressive Arab regimes. As a result, in order to ensure the realization of their objectives - adhering to UN Resolution 242 - Egypt was in search of a compromise regarding *fedāyīn* attacks.

The veto player game

Under the supervision of Egypt, a compromise appeared to be reached on 9 May which would have allowed the *fedāyīn* to maintain a small base of operations in Lebanon, but it was rejected by President Hilū. However, Hilū agreed to these stipulations roughly six months later. Why six months later and not in May? There were two factors preventing a compromise at the time. First, throughout the month of May,

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there was a perception that Hilū was holding out for US assistance. The experience of

the US intervention in 1958 must have had an effect on their thinking. As noted in the

previous chapter, Lebanese authorities requested US assistance for a considerable

amount of time before it eventually arrived in the form of US troops. In 1969, that

assistance never materialized, but the hope appears to have remained with Hilū and

other Christian politicians until the week of the Cairo Agreement as demonstrated by

the continued pleas by the Christians for political support and/or arms. Hilū and the

Tripartite Alliance were also able to maintain their position or veto a change in the

status quo for several months without US assistance. This is attributable to the unity in

the ranks of the Maronite community. Once former foes, Hilū (the Shihābist), and

members of the Tripartite Alliance, were now allies. This unity, the second factor, is

maintained throughout the remainder of the crisis. And because of this unity, they are

able to oppose a challenge to the status quo until 3 November. Also, the situation for the

Maronite leadership never appeared to become dire enough for them to dictate a new

position until the end of October.

The catalyst behind the transformation of the status quo was the Syrian closure

of the border and the growing opposition to the Lebanese government's position toward

the *fedāyīn* in the Arab world. Without the US willingness to veto any change, the

Maronites remained exposed to external developments.[123] With Lebanese society

already in a state of crisis because of the clashes with the *fedāyīn*, it appears that the

Maronite leadership could not endure an additional calamity. An economic downturn

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[123] The British were concerned to speak out regarding the situation because of their economic interests. They were concerned about upsetting the Arab world. US Embassy London to Secretary of State, October 30, 1969, RG 59, 8903.

with the potential of pushing trade toward Syrian ports in the wake of the Intra-Bank crisis would contribute to the growing popularity of socialism. It should be noted that the agitation from within the Sunni community (i.e. Muqaddem and al-Rifai) was not only pro-*fedāyīn*, it challenged the traditional leadership in the Sunni community. The replacement of Karāmī with Muqaddem or al-Rifai posed a troubling future for Maronite leadership. Hilū and the Maronite political leadership had become isolated in the Arab world with no international assistance – the US, British or French – to counter Syrian action.

In light of these developments, Hilū and the Tripartite Alliance leadership were left with two options: 1) the Junblāṭ/Syrian position of unrestricted fedāyīn activity; or 2) the Karāmī/Egyptian *tansīq* solution of restricted *fedāyīn* activity. Option one had the potential for anarchy and to eventually dislodge the Maronites and their leadership from a position of power and overthrow the political system. Hilū chose option two and compromised by negotiating the Cairo Agreement. The agreement provided the Maronite leadership with hope that the situation could be controlled and their position of hegemony could ultimately be maintained. The maintenance of Maronite power superseded the violation of Lebanon's sovereignty. It is important to note that none of this would have occurred without an understanding being reached between the Egyptian and Syrian governments. The withdrawal of the Syrian veto provided an opening for this agreement to occur. Egyptian involvement in the negotiations also suggest a sense of security regarding the stipulations of the agreement for Hilū and his Maronite allies.

Hilu's concession only provides one half of the story. Junblāṭ did not achieve his objective of unrestricted *fedāyīn* activity. The catalyst behind Junblāṭ's concession

appears to be his unwillingness to challenge the authority of Nasser. While Junblāṭ had pushed for unrestricted *fedāyīn* activity he appeared content with the stipulations of the Cairo Agreement by 3 November. Why? Junblāṭ's concession was a reflection of the Syrian concession to Egypt. Most likely this occurred when the Egyptian envoy was dispatched to Damascus on 26 October. Following this meeting, Nasser takes charge and ultimately negotiates the agreement. Junblāṭ's opposition to Nasser would have been an affront to a revered Arab leader.

The process of forming the Karāmī cabinet in the wake of the agreement provides further insight into the Lebanese veto player game. The events that unfolded in the four weeks following the agreement provide additional clarity of two key domestic veto players at the end of 1969: 1) Pierre Jemayyel's Katā'ib party, and 2) Kamāl Junblāṭ's Progressive Social Party.

Jemayyel and the Katā'ib's willingness to stay in the Karāmī cabinet after the Eddeh boycott and Sham'ūn's withdrawal testifies to the status of the party in the Maronite community. Without the Katā'ib, Karāmī would have been forced to return to the drawing board. It also demonstrates that Eddeh and Sham'ūn needed Jemayyel for success more than Jemayyel needed them. One observes a preview of this status when the Katā'ib deviated from the Tripartite alliance during the election of the Speaker of the Parliament in October. However, under further analysis, it can be concluded that the Katā'ib wielded a significant amount of veto power in the Maronite community earlier in the year. Without a popular base, President Hilū needed the Katā'ib to maintain the Maronite position vis-á-vis the *fedāyīn* when his relations with his Shihābist allies (i.e.

Karāmī and Junblāṭ) became strained. It also suggests that without the support of

Jemayyel and the Katā'ib, Raymond Eddeh's UN proposal never had a chance.

Junblāṭ's ability to defuse the situation in Tripoli, indicates that his power

greatly exceeded the leadership of his party or the power allocated to the Druze

community in the Lebanese political system. Karāmī and any other traditional Sunni

elite were beholden to him at this point. Throughout the crisis, it was Junblāṭ who was

the champion of the general Muslim population and pushed for change in the status quo

the hardest. Without his political presence and the intertwining of the *fedāyīn* cause

with socio-economic injustices, ultimately there would have not been a change in the

status quo. Therefore a veto never really resided in the hands of Karāmī without the

support of Junblāṭ. It also indicates how unrepresentative Karāmī was of the general

Sunni Muslim population in Lebanon.

Conclusion

The analysis of the veto player game from 1968-69 demonstrates that at this

point in Lebanese history, the real veto power existed outside the offices of the

Presidency and the Prime Minister. Hilū and Karāmī were ultimately beholden to the

whims of Gemayel and Junblāṭ. The individuals or their parties carried a more

formidable presence than the office of the Presidency and the Prime Minister. Why? As

leaders of political parties, they appealed to a broader constituency than Hilū and

Karāmī. Hilū had little to no popular constituency and Karāmī's was provincial.

Furthermore, Junblāṭ's message particularly resonated beyond his Druze community.

The power of Gemayel and Junblāṭ also demonstrates at a fundamental level that the

Lebanese political system was not a Maronite/Sunni arrangement and their agreement was contingent on a Syrian/Egyptian agreement.

It is important to note that while the Cairo Agreement provided a change in the status quo regarding the presence of the *fedāyīn* in Lebanon, it did not resolve Lebanon's communal tensions. If anything, the Cairo Agreement only postponed a resolution to the *fedāyīn* predicament and other issues to a later date. As the next chapter will demonstrate, the Cairo agreement proved to be ephemeral and a more encompassing agreement or change in the status quo was necessary.

Chapter 5

"Failure is Forbidden"

The road to the Taif Agreement

Michel Aoun and the remnants of the Lebanese Army were defeated on October 13, 1990, by a combined Lebanese and Syrian force. Aoun's defeat marked the cessation of Lebanon's civil war and provided an environment for the implementation of the Taif Agreement after roughly fifteen years of fighting. [1] The agreement would be identified as the source of relative peace and cooperation between Lebanon's confessional groups for the next eighteen years.[2] This however begs the question: Why – after hundreds of ceasefires, countless meetings, and multiple attempts at peace throughout Lebanon's civil war – did the Taif Agreement succeed and yet numerous other attempts at agreement proved to be exercises in futility? Who or what blocked these attempts, and for what reason?

Considering its success in ending the civil war, numerous studies have been conducted on the Taif Agreement focusing on the tenets of the agreement and/or its implementation. Several studies conclude that the Syrian presence in Lebanon was responsible for the agreement's success, while other studies argue that the stars were aligned in Lebanon and in the region for the agreement to succeed. A third line of thinking argues that the Taif only became possible because of the cessation of a

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[1] Aoun was defeated by a combination of Syrian troops and Lebanese regiments of the Lebanese Army under the command of General Emile Lahoud, Walid Junblāṭ's forces, the Lebanese Forces, and troops loyal to Eli Hobeika.

[2] Certain scholars believe that the Taif only stopped the fighting but did not establish true peace and reconciliation. For example see: Rola el-Husseini, *Pax Syriana* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2012), xxi.

bipolarized struggle over Lebanon.[3] All these arguments have validity, but the application of the veto players framework provides a more nuanced understanding.

The structure of this chapter differs slightly from the previous ones. Because of the longevity of the war and the failed endeavors to end it, it is prudent to incorporate these previous attempts in our analysis to understand why 1990 marked the end and not some other date either earlier or later? What happened? What had changed? Therefore this chapter begins with an examination of four concerted efforts at resolving the war: the Constitutional Document of 1976, the Geneva Conference of 1983, the Lausanne Conference of 1984 and the Tripartite Agreement of 1985.[4] For each of these failed attempts I include a background to the actors, the nature of relations between the various confessions and external actors and a narrative of the events surrounding the failed endeavor. These examinations of the failed attempts are followed by the format utilized in the previous chapters. The format includes: 1) a detailed account of the actors and events leading up to the signing of the Taif Agreement; 2) a narrative regarding the arrival at and the implementation of the Taif Agreement (September 1989-October 1990); and 3) an analysis of how and why this agreement succeeded.

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[3] For an argument regarding the role of the Syrian presence see Marie-Joelle Zahar, "Peace by Unconventional Means: Lebanon's Ta'if Agreement" in *Ending Civil Wars: Implementation of Peace Agreements*, eds. Stephen John Stedman, Donald Rothchild and Elizabeth Cousens (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2002), 567. For a stars were aligned explanation see Nawaf Sala>m, "Taif Revisited," in *Lebanon in Limbo: Postwar Society and State in an Uncertain Regional Environment*, eds. Theodor Hanf and Nawaf Sala>m (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgeschellschaft, 2003), 40 and Hani A. Faris, "The Failure of Peacemaking in Lebanon, 1975-1989," in *Peace for Lebanon? From War to Reconstruction*, ed. Deirdre Collings (Boulder: Lynne Reinerr, 1994), 27. Regarding the cessation of the bipolarity struggle see Birthe Hansen, *Unipolarity and the Middle East* (Richmond Surrey: Curzon, 2000), 147-8.

[4] I selected these events because they went beyond ceasefires and attempts to stop the fighting. They attempted to resolve disputed issues between the parties (e.g. the distribution of power and the identity of Lebanon). It should also be noted that there were many different proposals throughout the war that attempted to resolve many of the outstanding issues. However these proposals never reached the level of a significant conference or were signed and intended for implementation.

Part I:

Failed agreements of the Lebanese civil war

As noted in the previous chapter, the Cairo Agreement called on the Lebanese government to relinquish sovereignty over part of its territory to the PLO and facilitate the organization in its attacks on Israel. Enforcement of the agreement ultimately proved futile, and violent clashes between Lebanese authorities and the members of the PLO persisted.[5] A second attempt to co-exist with the PLO, the Melkert Agreement, was finalized in 1973.[6] But this agreement also proved to be ephemeral. Not only were both agreements short-lived, their failure contributed to the growing sense of insecurity and instability in Lebanese society.[7] These circumstances drove all Lebanese parties and factions to search for and secure the means to defend themselves. The precarious situation also led to the proliferation of arms throughout most Lebanese communities and the covert development of militias.[8] Considering these dynamics, the question became not if, but when an outbreak of violence would occur.

13 April 13 1975 is often identified as the beginning of the Lebanese Civil War.[9] On this date, militia members of the Katāʿib Party attacked a bus full of Palestinians as

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[5] No more than three weeks after the signing of the Cairo Agreement, a skirmish broke out between the Lebanese army and Palestinian guerillas. El-Khazen, 166.

[6] Negotiations consisted of three Lebanese military officials and representatives of Fatah, the PFLP and the DFLP. The agreement acquired the name Melkert from the hotel where the negotiations took place. The terms of the agreement were not publicized but news reports suggest it consisted of ten points. The agreement basically attempted to reaffirm the principles of the Cairo Agreement. For further detail see *Arab Report & Record*, May 16-31, 1973, 230.

[7] Salibi, *Crossroads to Civil War*, 69-70.

[8] As noted in Chapter 4, some of the Christian leadership had been attempting to procure armaments. Similar actions were undertaken by the leftist forces.

[9] Earlier in the day on 13 April, a church in Ain el-Rommeneh came under fire as it was being consecrated. Four people were killed including Pierre Jemayyel's bodyguard and two Katāʿib militia members. Some

it passed through the Beirut suburb of Ain el-Rommanieh. Twenty-seven Palestinians were killed in the attack. The event triggered waves of violence throughout the country. Yet while the Palestinian issue may have sparked the war, it would be naïve to conclude that the Lebanese groups fought for this sole reason. As noted in the previous chapters, several issues and controversies (e.g. the power of the Presidency, Maronite hegemony, a biased political system, the identity of the state and socio-economic matters) were never truly addressed or resolved and continued to fester just below the surface of the Lebanese political establishment and society prior to 1975. The outbreak of violence in April 1975 brought many of these issues to the forefront of reconciliation discussions for the next fifteen years.

Roughly seven months after the aforementioned attack, the first concerted attempt at an agreement began and broached many of these issues.

1) The Constitutional Document (aka The Damascus Agreement) of 1976

a) Actors and Background of the Status Quo

President Suleiman Frangieh

Deputies elected Suleiman Frangieh as President of Lebanon on August 17, 1970 by a margin of one vote.[10] His election represented a victory of the center-right (the Center Bloc, Sham'ūnand Jemayyel) over Shihābism for the first time in twelve years. Despite the victory, the close margin demonstrated the persistence of a sharp political divide in

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believe it was an assassination attempt on Jemayyel. It must also be noted that leftist accounts often trace the initial outbreak of the war to the shooting of the Nasserite leader Marouf Saad during a protest in Sidon on 26 Feb 1975. Saad died on 6 March. The protest regarded the establishment of a fishing company in Sidon headed by Camille Chamoun. The fishermen of Sidon believed it was an attempt to monopolize the fishing industry.

[10] Frangieh won by a vote of 50 to 49. It is believed that Frangieh won at the last moment when the nine Katā'ib parliamentarians voted for him after Pierre Jemayyel's candidacy failed to reach the second ballot.

Lebanon.[11] Frangieh, a Maronite *za'im* from the village of Zgharta near Tripoli in Northern Lebanon had popularity that extended little beyond the area of Tripoli. He served as a parliamentarian and cabinet member throughout the 1960s. He was a proponent of Maronite hegemony in Lebanon and of a strong Presidency but unlike his fellow Maronite colleagues (i.e. Jemayyel and Sham'ūn) his ties to the Arab world (i.e. Syria) were stronger. These ties were largely attributable to his close his friendship with Hafez al-Al-As'ad (the President of Syria) which dated back to 1957.[12]

Frangieh did not escape the problems of his predecessor Charles Hilū. He immediately confronted the Palestinian issue and the demands to reform the Lebanese political system.[13] These issues persisted and would escalate during the last years of his 6-year term.

Cabinets and Confessional Relations

The Palestinian issue and reforms to the political system remained hot button issues, complicating matters for the formation of governments during the Frangieh Presidency. Several Prime Ministers served under Frangieh. They included Sā'eb Salām, Amin Hafez, Takieddine el-Solḥ, Rashid el-Solḥ, Nureddine Rifai and Rashid Karāmī. Salām

[11] It is believed that Chehabism would have prevailed if former President Chehab had decided to run again. The Katā'ib and the Progressive Socialist Party would have voted for Chehab according to Samī el-Khatib. El-Khazen, 200 (fn 30).

[12] In 1957, twenty-three individuals were murdered in a church in Northern Lebanon. The murders were part of an ongoing feud between two Christian families, the Frangiehs and the Duwayhis. Sulieman Frangieh was present at the attack and it was reported that he took part in violence. To avoid arrest, Sulieman fled to Syria. During his stay in Syria he met a young Air Force colonel named Hafez al-Al-As'ad and a friendship ensued. Goria, 123-4.

[13] Roughly twenty-one days after Frangieh took office, a plane load of Arab resistance fighters landed in Beirut and attempted to disembark. It was a clear violation of the Cairo Agreement and Frangieh forced the plane to return to its place of departure. Goria, 125.

served the longest under Frangieh, but the two had a falling out in April of 1973.[14] The bad blood between Frangieh and Salām limited Frangieh's choices among the popular Sunni leaders when the political situation grew increasingly unstable by the spring of 1975.

The attacks of 13 April 1975 triggered ongoing violence throughout Lebanese society for more than a month and contributed to the collapse of the government of Rashid el-Solḥ in May. Nureddine Rifai put together a military cabinet but it collapsed after three days. Frangieh then appointed Rashid Karāmī as Prime Minister, who created a government on 28 May. Karāmī's appointment lasted only until the end of Frangieh's term in September 1976. Several notable issues contributed to the collapse of the el-Solḥ government and the eventual formation of Karāmī's cabinet. Some of these issues were characteristic of the nature of confessional dynamics existing at the start of the war.

When fighting broke out in April, some individuals in the Maronite community (such as Jemayyel and Sham'ūn) pushed for the deployment of the Lebanese army in the areas affected by the conflict in order to quell the violence. Others, like Junblāṭ opposed the deployment because they perceived it as the state aiding and abetting the Katā'ib and its allies. Furthermore, cabinet members feared that deploying the army would splinter it along sectarian lines and send Lebanon into a deeper spiral. Ultimately Prime Minister Solḥ refused to have the army intervene – a decision that angered Jemayyel, Sham'ūnand others. On 7 May six ministers (3 Katā'ib, 2 National Liberal Party (NLP)

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[14] The rift originated with rumored comments by Salām that the true power of the government resided in the institution of the Prime Minister. The affront to the office of the Presidency angered Frangieh and Salām eventually resigned. Salibi, 66-7.

members and last of all Junblāṭ's rival in the Druze community Mājid Arslān) resigned from from Solḥ's cabinet.[15] Without the presence of the Katā'iab and the NLP in the cabinet, Solḥ's government had no legitimacy in the Maronite community and folded. The failure of the government without Jemayyel or Sham'ūnalso demonstrated that, even with Frangieh occupying the Presidency, his presence was not sufficient.

Frangieh first attempted to create a new government by appointing retired General Nureddine Rifai as prime minister and six other military officers to the cabinet. This met with stiff opposition from leaders in the Sunni community (i.e. Karāmī and Salām) and leftists like Junblāṭ. They believed the orientation of the Rifai cabinet would inevitably choose a military solution to the conflict. A military option ultimately meant that Junblāṭ and his ilk would come out on the losing end. With the prominence of Junblat and others, and their refusal to endorse the cabinet, the cabinet was doomed from the start. It folded after three days in the face of this opposition.[16]

Frangieh then entrusted Rashid Karāmī with the job. Karāmī's task was no less insurmountable than his predecessors. Immediately upon Karāmī's appointment, Junblāṭ placed a condition on the latter by refusing to participate in any government containing an official from the Katā'ib party.[17] Junblāṭ and others blamed the Katā'ib for the outbreak of violence and by the summer of 1975 accused the party of working in the interests of Israel and the United States.[18] Karāmī obliged Junblāṭ and refused to include the Katā'ib in his government, demonstrating by this compliance the continued

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[15] Goria, 186. Five days later, the Shia *za'im* Adil Usayran also resigned.
[16] Salām , Karāmī and Jumblatt all spoke out against the formation of the cabinet. They saw the military cabinet as an extension of the army. This was the same army that had been heavy handed in its attempts to control the Palestinian Resistance. Goria, 188.
[17] The traditional Sunni Muslim politicians did not approve of Junblāṭ's boycott of the Katā'ib but they did not speak out against it. Hanf, 206.
[18] Goria, 189.

ascendency of the leftists vis-a-vis the traditional Muslim elites in the Lebanese political equation. Other traditional Sunni elites were unwilling to break ranks and oppose him on the issue in fear of losing popularity.[19]

The exclusion of Katā'ib representation in the cabinet made it virtually impossible for Karāmī to create a government and receive the endorsement of most of the Maronite community. Complicating matters further, since 1958 Karāmī had been at odds with the other prominent Maronite main political player – Camille Sham'ūn.[20] In order to overcome the impasse, Karāmī reconciled with Sham'ūnand formed a cabinet. For the Katā'ib, Sham'ūn's participation provided a voice for the Katā'ib's views since Sham'ūn's views often fell further to the right of the Katā'ib.[21] The reconciliation between Karāmī and Sham'ūnand the creation of a new government failed however to terminate the violence. And by now the violence had attracted the attention of non-Lebanese actors.

The Arab World and the outbreak of the Lebanese Civil War

Since the signing of the Cairo Agreement in 1969, the regional political dynamics had dramatically changed. The death of Nasser in 1970 left a void in the leadership of the Arab world. The regional hegemony Egypt demonstrated under Nasser through its involvement in the 1958 crisis and the signing of the Cairo Agreement had diminished considerably by 1975. Anwar Sadat, Nasser's successor, was not his prodigy, nor was he a proponent of Pan-Arabism; his focus was directed first and foremost on Egypt.

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[19] Hanf Co-existence, 205-6.
[20] Ibid.,, 205. Raymond Eddeh had abandoned his alliance with Chamoun and Jemayyel by 1975.
[21] Ibid., 206.

Egyptian nationalism deepened and foreign policy decisions increasingly took on an Egypt-centric position under Sadat. Even more unprecedented was Sadat's decision to move Egypt out of the Soviet sphere of influence by first expelling Soviet military advisors in 1972 and then interacting with the US to attain a disengagement agreement with Israel in 1974. These developments did not halt Egyptian intervention in Lebanese affairs, but they decidedly altered the Egyptian dynamic.

Sadat's Egypt-first policy did not particularly appeal to Lebanon's Muslims or others in the region. Egypt was no longer the top dog on the street. The disappearance of Nasser's appeal and Sadat's alternative policy produced a vacuum at the top of the Arab world's power structure. Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia and others vied for leadership of the region and competed to be champion of the region's causes, most notably the conflict with Israel and the Palestinian issue. The competition often manifested itself in Lebanon.

In fact, Syria had already begun to challenge Egypt in regional politics, and especially in Lebanon, before Sadat's new policies took shape. Syria for instance exerted influence the parliamentary elections of 1972, and then in 1973 it once again closed its borders with Lebanon after an escalation in violence between the PLO and Lebanese authorities. [22] The result of all this was the Melkart Agreement. In 1974 Syria encouraged Suleiman Frangieh to deliver a message at the UN that Arab blood would not be spilled in Lebanon.[23] The pro-active role taken by Syria in Lebanon was largely attributable to its change in leadership.

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[22] Weinberger, 114.
[23] Talhami, 115.

Egypt was not the only country on the Lebanese political chessboard to have undergone a change in leadership in the 1970s. Emerging as the Defense Minister after a coup in 1966, Hafez al-Al-As'ad took the reins of the Syrian government in 1970. Al-As'ad's foreign policy shifted from the revolutionary agenda of his fellow coup predecessors. Instead Al-As'ad propounded a more tempered approach towards the Arab/Israeli conflict and the Palestinian issue.[24] This did not entail a suspension of its support of the Palestinian cause. It signified a tighter control over the movement, which meant Syria kept a close eye on Lebanon and its developments.[25]

Two additional Arab powers made their presence felt in Lebanon: Saudi Arabia and Libya. Saudi Arabia supported the maintenance of the status quo in Lebanon.[26] US government documents from the time noted the growing prominence of Saudi officials in 1975 assigned to calmiing the situation.[27] Libya's efforts on the other hand provided a stark contrast with the Saudi approach. The Libyan regime advocated a change in the status quo and provided weapons and money to various Lebanese parties including Kamāl Junblāṭ's PSP.

The first five months of the civil war (April – September 1975)

Following the incidents in Ain el-Rommenieh in April of 1975, violence broke out in various parts of Beirut, Tripoli, Sidon and Tyre. Christian, Muslim and Palestinian areas came under attack. While the Katā'ib and the PLO were the initial combatants, both of

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[24] Barnett, 185. Michael Barnett describes that explaining Syrian foreign policy was "akin to reading tea leaves." He suggests that Syria was in no rush to make a deal with Israel. Hinnebusch, 147. Hinnebusch argues that Syrian policy under Al-As'ad was more realist and accounted for Israeli military superiority.
[25] Any training of the PLO in Lebanon or access to weapons came through Syria. Talhami, *Syria and the Palestinians*, 99.
[26] Marius Deeb, *Lebanese Civil War*, 5.
[27] *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976, Volume XXVI, Arab-Israeli Dispute*, 932.

them received support from various elements inside and outside Lebanon. Inside

Lebanon two opposing combative entities emerged: The National Movement and the

Lebanese Front.

The National Movement (*al-Harakat al-Wataniya*) was comprised mostly of groups

with leftist orientations. They included Junblāṭ's Progressive Socialist Party (PSP), the

Syrian Socialist National Party (SSNP), the Communist Party, the Bath, Harakat Amal,

the Popular Nasserite Organization of Sidon, the Independent Nasserites, the 24 of

October Movement of Tripoli and the Mourabitoun. These groups consisted of members

from most, if not all of Lebanon's confessions, and represented a variety of leftist

concerns, ideologies and causes. They coalesced around reforming the political system

and the Palestinian cause. Besides being aligned with the PLO, the groups received

political and material support from Syria, Iraq and Libya, whose regimes shared many of

their beliefs.[28] For example, Muammar Ghaddafi, the leader of Libya was alleged to

have funneled $34 million dollars during the first year of the conflict.[29]

The National Movement opposed the deployment of the army into the fighting. It

believed that the use of the army in the conflict demonstrated the state's sympathies for

its opponents, the Lebanese Front. In addition to supporting the PLO in its struggle

against the Katā'ib, the National Movement strived for an extensive reform of the

Lebanese political system. They clearly articulated their agenda in August of 1975,

when they published *al-Burnamij Marhali lil-Islah al-Siyasa* (The Program for Political

Reform). The document consisted of seven parts that targeted the different branches of

the government (i.e., the Legislature, the Executive, and the Judiciary), the electoral

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[28] Khalidi, 82-87.
[29] *Arab Report* June 16-30, 1975, 364.

system and organization of the army. Notable points of the document included the abolition of confessionalism, the reduction in power of the Presidency and the creation of a Constituent Assembly where everyone would be equally represented (i.e. no proportional representation).[30]

The Lebanese Front constituted the other combative element at the outbreak of the civil war. Joining the Katā'ib in its struggle with the PLO and the National Movement were Camille Sham'ūn's National Liberal Party, President Frangieh's army of the liberation of Zhargta, the Tanzim and the Guardian of the Cedars.[31] The Lebanese Front wanted the army deployed into the conflict because they perceived the Palestinian armed presence as a threat to state sovereignty and a fifth column.

> Many Lebanese and Phalangists once believed that it would be alright to sacrifice Lebanon's security and prosperity if this would bring back Palestine. Now, however, when the Palestinians are fomenting the crisis in Lebanon, we say that we will not allow them to do this, not only for the sake of our existence and rights but also because our patriotism will not allow Lebanon to become the graveyard for Palestine…..[32]

Sources indicate that the Lebanese Front did not oppose a change to the status quo regarding the political system: its concern was with the circumstances in which this would occur. The Front was willing to talk about reforms provided the discussion came after the cessation of violence.[33] For example, members of the Front supported the abolition of confessionalism provided the Lebanese system became completely secularlized. Members of the Lebanese Front feared that deconfessionalization would open the door to the Arabization of Lebanese society. They perceived an Arab society as

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[30] For further details about the document see *Monday Morning* Volume 4:167 August 25-31, 1975, 33-5.
[31] For details about Frangieh's army, the Tanzim and the Guardian of the Cedars see Deeb, 28-30.
[32] Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS)/MEA, September 25, 1975, G8.
[33] Hanf, 208.

being synonymous with its Islamization. Part of their reasoning behind their demand to discuss reforms only after the cessation of violence appears to have been motivated by the belief that Muslim demands had been co-opted by Marxists and Communists. According to the Front, Sunni leaders like Karāmī no longer represented the Muslim majority. The Front blamed the "international left" for Lebanon's problems and advocated the removal of Palestinians from predominantly Christian areas. This lack of confidence in the state's ability to deal with the situation led to rumblings of partition from the group in late 1975.

The Lebanese Front received support from external actors in its fight against the PLO and the National Movement. These supporters included Israel and Egypt.[34] The Israelis had been interacting with Lebanese elements (i.e. the Maronites) in various capacities and degrees for decades.[35] By 1975, certain Israeli officials (e.g., Yigal Allon) were publically making statements in support of the Maronites. Current research

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[34] *Arab Report and Record*, June 1-15, 1975, 339.

[35] For greater detail about the interaction between Lebanese and the Zionists prior to the establishment of the state of Israel see Laura Eisenberg. *My enemy's enemy: Lebanon in the early Zionist imagination, 1900-48*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1994. Eisenberg argues that the Jewish agency promoted a pragmatic approach to relations with its Arab neighbors. The agency believed that inter-Arab rivalries and politics provided an opportunity for the Zionists to ally with someone. The agency's ultimate goal was to prevent a unified anti-Zionist front which would hinder the establishment of a Jewish homeland. The author traces the Agency's search for allies among the Arabs with particular emphasis on Lebanon's Maronite Catholic community. The interaction between the Maronites and the Zionists throughout this period is portrayed as up and down with the author arguing that the pursuit of relations was ultimately a failure. With all the supposed promise of a Zionist/Maronite alliance (i.e. the increasing Muslim demographics, Jewish-Christian superiority, and Phoenician-Jewish corollaries), Eisenberg demonstrates that the 1920 treaty and 1946 agreement between the groups were nothing more than words on paper. She attributes the failure of the treaty and the agreement to the Maronites's inability to extricate themselves from the Arab world. For greater detail on Israel's relations with Lebanon after 1948 see Kirsten Schulze. *Israel's Covert Diplomacy in Lebanon*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998. Schulze's main argument is that Israeli foreign policy is hegemonic. According to Schulze, in order to assure this hegemony, Israel has striven to avoid isolation in the Middle East. As a result, Israel has worked to keep the Arabs divided and has searched for allies. One example of the Israelis to conform to this policy was the attempt to make an alliance with the Maronite Catholics of Lebanon - part of Israel's search for minority alliances in the region. It was the belief that if these minorities came to power, they would end Israel's isolation in the Middle East.

indicates that tangible Israeli support for the Maronites did not come from the Israelis until the latter half of 1976; however contemporary observers of the conflict like the United States and media reports suggested otherwise.[36]

Noticeably absent from the Lebanese Front's list of active supporters was the United States. Similar to 1969, documents suggest that the Front's leadership, particularly the Katā'ib , believed the US would eventually come to their rescue. According to US government documents US intervention had been requested by members of the Front, but the US chose to stay out of the conflict. Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Joe Sisco maintained that the Katā'ib expected the US to intervene like in 1958.[37] During National Security meetings Henry Kissinger indicated no interest in getting involved in Lebanese domestic matters. The US believed the conflict was a sign that the Maronite community had to work to reform the political system or promote some sort of change.[38] The US expressed a willingness to intervene only if outside intervention occurred.[39] Additional discussions in National Security meetings demonstrated that the US was only concerned with the conflict in Lebanon as it related

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[36] The Israelis did provide the Christians along the border in Southern Lebanon with weapons, food and medication beginning in 1975. But regarding the major Maronite political players – the Katā'ib and the National Liberal Party – it does not appear that any Israel aid was given to them until the latter part of 1976. Schulze, 86-90. US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger remarked after a US official said that the Israelis were giving assistance to the Christians in a Washington Special Actions Group Meeting on October 10, 1975: "Of course. Some of their [Israel] best friends are Christians." See *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976, Volume XXVI, Arab-Israeli Dispute*, 933. On June 3, 1975 a report appeared in Lebanese papers that mortars shells with Hebrew markings had been left on the shore by a boat just south of Tyre. *Arab Report and Record*, June 1-15, 339.

[37] *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976, Volume XXVI, Arab-Israeli Dispute,* 935.

[38] Ibid., 936.

[39] Ibid., 936.

to its potential effect on the disengagement agreements they had negotiated between Israel, Syria, and Egypt.[40]

A third grouping existed in Lebanon, but it was purely a political one. The *al-Tahaluf al-Thulāthī*, (Tripartite Coalition) included the traditional leadership/*zu 'ama* in the Sunni community - Sā'eb Salām and Rashid Karāmī - and the Maronite leader Raymond Eddeh. This alliance was more a product of circumstances than a shared political ideology. Raymond Eddeh left the Tripartite Alliance due to conflict with Pierre Jemayyel's Katā'ib and Sham'ūn's National Liberal Party. And in a repeat of their experiences in 1969, Salām and Karāmī felt threatened by the leftist movement in general and particularly the leftist movement within the Sunni community. In 1975 their seats of power in Beirut and Tripoli were challenged by such Sunni leftist organizations as the Mourabitoun and Muqaddem's October 24th Movement. Once again these *zu'ama* faced the dilemma of siding with the government or the leftists. Supporting a government that appeared increasingly pro-Christian would inevitably destroy their political career, but allying themselves with leftists increased their chances of becoming marginalized in the Sunni community and politically irrelevant. Ultimately the alliance marked out a middle position between the Lebanese Front and the National Movement to ensure their political survival.

The *Tahaluf* clashed politically with the Lebanese Front and the National Movement. With the outbreak of war, they protested the actions of the Katā'ib. The group also called for dissolution of all militias and criticized the government's failure to

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[40] Ibid., 937. The disengagement agreements followed the Arab-Israeli War of 1973. Kissinger had been involved in the agreements with the hope they would lead to something bigger. It also allowed Kissinger to keep the Soviets out of the discussions for a Arab-Israeli peace.

exercise full authority over all political parties (i.e. allowing the Katā'ib and others to arm). Although they were critical of President Frangieh and the actions of the Katā'ib, they were not willing to support the level of reform demanded by the National Movement. It is not clear if the *Tahaluf* received extraordinary support from external entities.

As in previous situations, the wave of violence that engulfed Lebanon did not go unnoticed by regional actors. By mid-1975 the Syrians took an active role in mediating between the various entities. On 24 May 1975 Syria dispatched Foreign Minister Halim Khaddam and Deputy Defense Minister Naji Jamil to Beirut. Khaddam visited again on 16 June and 30 June. An Egyptian initiative rivaled the Syrian one. Reflecting its new position under the leadership of Sadat and attempting to weaken Syrian influence in Lebanon, Egypt pushed for an "Arab solution" to the crisis. Furthermore, on June 5th, Sadat called on Arab countries to cease their intervention in Lebanese affairs and asked Pierre Jemayyel to restore peace in Lebanon. Jemayyel welcomed any assistance from the Egyptian government with the Palestinian presence in Lebanon and with external interference.[41] Sadat also personally appealed to President Frangieh on June 7th. None of these measures however produced results.

The Egyptian voice in Lebanon began to be adversely affected by developments in the Arab/Israeli arena. On 4 September 1975 Egypt signed Sinai II, its second disengagement agreement with Israel. This angered the Syrian regime and the PLO because they considered the act an abandonment of the Palestinian cause and breaking ranks with the Arab world. Henceforth, Egypt could never be an impartial mediator in

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[41] *Arab Report*, June 1-15 1975, 339. According to some sources, Jemayyel enjoyed warm relations with Sadat. Sadat accused Qaddafi of aggravating the situation inside Lebanon.

the eyes of the Lebanese National Movement. Sinai II did not actually eliminate Egypt from the Lebanese political chessboard but its role diminished and now appeared to favor one side.[42] It also allowed Syria to play a more prominent role in the conflict and negotiations.

b) Failing to change the status quo

With the downtown commercial district of Beirut in flames, President Frangieh at odds with Prime Minister Karāmī and Raymond Eddeh, Frangieh's credibility at an all-time low with many Lebanese and with rumors of partition circulating, Syria sent Foreign Minister Khaddam back to Lebanon on September 19 to seek a resolution. Five days later the National Dialogue Committee (NDC) convened in an attempt to achieve reconciliation between the parties.

The Syrian-sponsored National Dialogue Committee consisted of twenty members equally divided between Christians and Muslims.[43] Under Syrian mediation these members intended to address a variety of reforms. From the outset of the meetings, the Lebanese Front announced it would not agree to reforms unless other issues were first addressed. The Front believed national sovereignty trumped reforming the political system. They wanted the Palestinian issue discussed first and would not consider reforms that destroyed the National Pact. Front member Pierre Jemayyel

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[42] Khalidi, 84. Reports circulated that the Egyptians were giving arms to Katā'ib. One could argue that the Egyptian presence effectively ended when they signed the Camp David Treaty in 1979 and Lebanon cut off diplomatic relations with Egypt.

[43] The Muslim side consisted of four Sunni (Rashid Karāmī, Abdullah Yafi, Sā'eb Salām, and Najib Quranouh) four Shia (Kamāl Asaad, Rida Wahid, Hasan Awada, and Assem Qansou) and two Druze (Mājid Arslān, Abbas Khalaf). The Christian side contained four Maronite (Camille Chamoun, Pierre Jemayyel, Raymond Eddeh, Rene Muawwad and Edmond Rabbat), two Greek Orthodox (Ghasan Tueni, Elias Saba), one Greek Catholics (Philippe Taqla) and one Armenian (Khatchik Babikian). Mary Jane Deeb and Marius Deeb, *Internal Negotiations in a Centralist Conflict: Lebanon* ,126.

believed that the Constitution and the National Pact could not be altered unless there was unanimous agreement. This negotiating position may have been bolstered by an expression of support for the Front by the Egyptians.[44] The National Movement called for an end to confessionalism at the dialogue. Karāmī wanted to introduce only some of Junblāṭ's reforms.[45]

The dialogue convened seven times with few tangible results. Several members ceased going after a meeting or two. Subsequently, partition talk emerged at the beginning of January 1976. In the midst of partition rumors and the intensification of fighting, Syria dispatched another delegation to individually engage the various Lebanese political groupings. At the end of January a Syrian mediation plan received the approval of a group of Muslim leaders meeting at the residence of the Mufti Shaykh Hasan Khalid. The plan called for the implementation of seven points:

1) An equal number of Muslim and Christians [in Parliament].

2) Abolition of the sectarian structure of government posts below the top-level posts.

3) The Prime Minister to be elected by the Chamber of Deputies [Parliament].

4) The establishment of a higher council for planning and development.

5) The establishment of a supreme constitutional court.

6) A solution to the problem of acquiring citizenship.

7) Improvement of the electoral law.

These seven points became the basis of the Constitutional Document, also referred to as the Damascus Agreement following a trip by President Suleiman Frangieh and Prime

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[44] *Arab Report and Record*, September 16-30, 1975, 530.
[45] Deeb, Lebanese Civil War, 77.

Minister Rashid Karāmī to Damascus on 7 February 1976. The Document received the endorsement of the members of the dialogue committee and the cabinet. President Frangieh announced the plan to the nation on February 14. However, in the ensuing days and weeks the consensus fell apart.

Several factors contributed to the failure of maintaining a consensus. For instance, there was intransigence over the formation of a national unity cabinet in the wake of Frangieh's address. Disputes between members of the Lebanese Front and the National Movement occurred over who would be included in the Karāmī cabinet. Witness the words of Kamāl Junblāṭ.

> How can we link our hands with those who do not recognize
> the Arabism of Lebanon, people and state. How could we link our
> hands with those who serve to disrupt our close links with the Arab
> and Islamic heritage, and who underestimate moral and cultural
> values.[46]

The issue of cabinet appointments coincided with increasing friction between Syria and the PLO. Inevitably the friction affected the Lebanese National Movement (LNM) because of its relationship with the PLO. Junblāṭ and the PLO saw a greater Syrian presence in Lebanon as detrimental to the realization of their goals. Syria wanted tighter control over the PLO. And Syria's sponsorship of the Constitutional Document demonstrated to Junblāṭ that Damascus was not supportive of wholesale change in Lebanon. Junblāṭ initially approved the Damascus Agreement. The Cairo-based Middle East News Agency (MENA) stated:

> Junblat said that if the Moslem leaders agree on this plan, then he has
> no objections. As for the parties, he said they will continue their efforts

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[46] FBIS/MEA, February 13, 1976, G1.

to achieve their program with the democratic framework and through the methods they think best for achieving reform in Lebanon.[47]

Junblāṭ and the LNM eventually vetoed the document citing an unwillingness to concede on the issue of reserving the top posts for the various confessions.

Other developments contributed to Junblāṭ and the LNM's maintenance of their veto of the Constitutional Document. In one instance, the Lebanese Army began to fragment at the beginning of the year, when First Lieutenant Ahmed al-Khatib and others defected in January and February and created the Arab Army of Lebanon. These defections continued in March and April. Then there was the attempted coup d'etat of Brigadier 'Aziz Ahdab. Junblāṭ eventually combined forces with al-Khatib and thereby strengthened the hand of the Lebanese National Movement. The Lebanese Front perceived the alliance of Junblāṭ with al-Khatib's defectors as a threat to the military balance in Lebanon and this appears to have contributed to the Front maintaining support for the Document. Pierre Jemayyel noted in March that "our Syrian brothers….can greatly help us."[48] With the Lebanese Front deepening its connections with Syria, Junblāṭ increasingly perceived Syrian involvement in the Lebanese crisis as problematic and thus came to regard the Syrian-sponsored Constitutional Document in a negative light. By March Junblāṭ sensed the changing dynamics.

> We strongly hope that our Syrian brothers will stand by us by virtue of Syria's historic task in opposing and defeating the isolationist current and in enabling us to achieve a pure national formula for the state and public institutions, which is in the real interest of Syria and the Arabs.[49]

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[47] FBIS/MEA, January 21, 1976, G3.
[48] FBIS/MEA, March 16, 1976, G9.
[49] FBIS/MEA, March 22, 1976, G5.

Any hope of the Document's resurrection had faded by the beginning of April.

Junblāṭ's veto of Syrian assistance elicited condemnation even from some leftists. The

Bath Party of Lebanon accused Junblāṭ of selling out to the Americans.

> It is time our people knew the reality of the subversive role Junblat
> has been playing since the Syrians came to this country in an attempt
> to crush and liquidate the plot, and to protect Lebanon's Arabism and
> the unity of its land and people….. For Junblat now to open his battle
> with Syria, the bastion of the Arab revolution…..He has placed
> himself in the vanguard of the American plot but under national and
> progressive slogans.[50]

The fragmentation of the army and the addition of al-Khatib's forces suggest that

Junblāṭ believed holding out and not accepting the Constitutional Document would

eventually lead to a better set of circumstances further down the road.

2) *The Geneva Conference (1983)*

a) Actors and Background to the Status Quo

President Amin Jemayyel

No one expected Pierre Jemayyel's son Amin to become President of Lebanon in

1983. His other son, Bashir, appeared to be the one destined to lead the country. During

the war Bashir quickly rose through the ranks of the Lebanese Forces and by the early

1980s had become a prominent figure in the Maronite community. For a brief moment

he did reach the pinnacle of Lebanese politics when he was elected President on August

23, 1982. Two weeks later he died in a bomb blast and Amin was immediately chosen as

his successor. Somewhat ironically, the less prominent Amin received more votes than

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[50] FBIS/MEA, April 1, 1976, G5.

Bashir for president.[51] The differences did not end there. Amin, the politician, did not garner the popularity within the Maronite community as did his brother Bashir the military leader.[52] As a result, Amin appeared as a Lebanese candidate and was referred to as "Muslim Amin" while Bashir was considered a Maronite candidate. This lack of prominence in the Maronite community would often make Amin beholden to heavy weights like his father, Camille Sham'ūnand the strengthening Lebanese Forces

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Cabinets and confessional relationships (1983)

Amin Jemayyel designated Shafiq Wazzan as the Prime Minister shortly after his election. Wazzan, a former Parliamentarian and Justice Minister, had served as Prime Minister under the presidency of Elias Sarkis. Wazzan, from Beirut and not from a particularly prominent Sunni family, appeared to be a middle of the road figure. He had assisted in negotiating the withdrawal of PLO forces earlier in the year but also had been critical of US policy. Wazzan constructed a 9-member cabinet of relative political unknowns.

The Jemayyel/Wazzan government attempted to reestablish the presence of the state in West Beirut and other areas of Lebanon. Initially this entailed the redeployment of the army and security forces to West Beirut and other areas. Residents of West Beirut initially welcomed the measure but eventually saw it as another attempt to reassert Maronite hegemony. The measure also disillusioned Amin Jemayyel and his government

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[51] Hanf, 269. Of the eighty deputies present at Amin's election, he received seventy-seven votes. Only sixty-two deputies were present at Bashir's election.
[52] During trips to Lebanon, Maronites often remarked that Bashir was the last hope for the community and the country.

in the eyes of the residents of West Beirut. It also aggravated many of Lebanon's unresolved issues that were often manifested along confessional lines.

Confessional relations remained tenuous at best during the period that stretched from the failure of the Constitutional Document to the Geneva Conference. Violence between and within communities flared up from time to time. A semblance of normality sometimes returned to Beirut and its surrounding environs, but the failings and absence of the state and its institutions could not be concealed or overlooked. [53] Militias filled the void left by the state. These militias often became part and parcel of the political equation. This was when Harakat Amal, which had existed for almost ten years, began to feature more prominently in discussions.

The emergence of the Shia

By 1983, a relatively new militia, Harakat Amal (the Amal Movement), emerged as a rival to the prominent militias discussed earlier in the chapter (i.e. the Katā'ib and the PSP). Amal's new status gave it a seat at the negotiating table for the foreseeable future. Its inclusion marked the realization that the Shia community could no longer be ignored and that it had to be a party in any successful negotiation. Until this point, the Shia community had been largely absent from the Lebanese chessboard. Although the Shia were the third largest community and retained the third most prominent position in the government — the Speaker of the Parliament — the community and the position wielded little power. The relative invisibility and weakness of the Shia can be

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[53] The PSP created a civil administration in parts of Mount Lebanon beginning in October of 1983. This action would spark rumors of partition in 1983 in the weeks leading up to the Geneva Conference. For further detail see: Judith P. Harik, "Change and Continuity among the Lebanese Druze Community: The Civil Administration of the Mountains, 1983-90" *Middle Eastern Studies* 29:3 (July 1993), 377-398.

attributed, in retrospect, to the apathy of their political leaders and the absence of a confessional party resulting in the diffusion of their political allegiance across a wide spectrum of Lebanese political parties (e.g. the Katā'ib and the Communist Party). These circumstances marginalized the community and led to vast swathes of predominantly Shia areas lacking basic infrastructure. The state's ignorance of their plight was particularly visible and egregious in the late 60s and early 70s when the Shia community was exposed to the clashes between the *fedāyīn* and Israel in southern Lebanon. With no one looking out for the community in the years since Lebanese independence, the situation motivated the cleric Musa al-Sadr to establish Harakat Amal (the Amal Movement) in 1974. One year later Harakat Amal revealed its militia.

The formation of Harakat Amal marked the first manifestation of a united and mobilized Shia political organization in Lebanon. The movement quickly challenged the political hegemony of the traditional elites of the Shia community (i.e. the Assads and the Hamadehs). It provided a voice to the Shia that was desperately needed in Lebanon's vast political landscape. The organization perceived the Shi'a as a part of the diverse Lebanese sectarian map but with the hope that religious identity (confessionalism) would eventually be eliminated from the political system.[54] Harakat Amal upheld the belief that Lebanon was and would remain a secular democratic state.

Following the disappearance of al-Sadr in 1978, Husayn al-Husayni and then Nabih Berri led Harakat Amal. The party created a militia which was intended to provide protection for the community. Relatively quickly it became mixed up in the fighting. Harakat Amal initially allied with the Lebanese National Movement at the

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[54] Marius Deeb, "Shia Movements in Lebanon: Their Formation, Ideology, Social Basis and Links with Iran and Syria," *Third World Quarterly* 10:2 (1988), 689-90.

beginning of the civil war, but broke away from it when Syria intervened in 1976.[55] In the following years its political footprint grew. The increased relevance of the party and its militia was demonstrated by Nabih Berri's inclusion in President Sarkis's Nationl Salvation Committee in 1982. The latter committee was intended to ensure safety to Lebanese citizens as Israeli troops reached the outskirts of Beirut. By 1983, Harakat Amal did not join the National Salvation Front (NSF) but was politically and militarily allied.

National Salvation Front

The National Salvation Front announced its formation on 23 July 1983. Its membership was comprised of Walid Junblāṭ (the son of the assassinated Kamāl Junblāṭ) and his PSP colleagues (formerly of the Lebanese National Movement), Suleiman Frangieh and Rashid Karāmī.[56] All three of these individuals at one time had been political opponents. Therefore the NSF was the product of circumstance and expedience, not ideology. As Karāmī's words demonstrated, the Front's one true goal was to oppose Israel.

> ……safeguarding Lebanon's sovereignty, national unity
> and Arab affiliation and confronting Israel, which seeks to
> occupy southern Lebanon, carry out its designs in our country[57]

Not surprisingly, Syria ardently supported the NSF.[58]

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[55] Apparently al-Saḍr wanted to maintain as neutral a position as possible.
[56] Frangieh distanced himself from the Lebanese Front following the Front's growing ties with Israel to counter Syria in 1978. Added to the alliance with Israel was the murder of Frangieh's son Tony in 1978 at the hands of members of the Lebanese Front. Walid took over the party after his father's assassination on 16 March 1977.
[57] FBIS/MEA, August 1, 1983, G1. Damascus Domestic Service, H2 and H3 NSF program released on February 3, 1984, G5

The NSF for its part opposed the Lebanese Front which was constituted of the same members as before (i.e. Pierre Jemayyel and Camille Sham'ūn) minus former President Suleiman Frangieh. The Front's position on the Lebanese political system had not changed since 1976 while its relationship with Israel had evolved to the point where it hoped to achieve a *modus vivendi* with its neighbor to the south.

The emergence of the Shia in the domestic political dynamics of Lebanon in 1983 was only outweighed by the activities of external entities like Syria, Israel and the Multinational Force s, which further complicated the Lebanese political chessboard.

Syria

Syria had played a significant role in Lebanon from as early as 1976, but by 1983 its role had dramatically transformed. No longer was Syria just the supporter of a particular Lebanese faction or a mediator between warring parties. Its stakes in the game had grown and become more obvious with its physical presence on Lebanese soil. The Syrian physical presence magnified its veto in Lebanese developments by 1983.

When Syrian forces entered Lebanon on 31 May 1976, the Lebanese Front welcomed the intervention since the Lebanese National Movement (LNM) and Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) forces were threatening to overrun the Christian heartland north of Beirut. President Frangieh justified the intervention as a means to implement the Constitutional Document of 1976.[59]

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[58] Junblāṭ announced on August 30th that all the resources of NSF were at the disposal of Harakat Amal. FBIS/MEA (Ihdin Radio of Free and Unified Lebanon), August 30, 1983, G1.

[59] There are contending explanations as to who was responsible for inviting Syria into Lebanon. Regarding Syrian motivations for intervening in Lebanon a considerable number of studies exist. Naomi Weinberger. *Syrian Intervention in Lebanon: The 1975-76 Civil War.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1986. Weinberger's overall thesis is that Syria was motivated to intervene in Lebanon in 1976 because of

Eventually, fraternal Syria saw that Lebanon must inevitably be helped. It offered to mediate and its offer was accepted…. Is it cruel not to deprive Lebanon of salvation – Lebanon which has continued to ask you to rescue it? Do you not agree with me that the Syrian mediation will insure gains for Lebanon…[60]

The Syrian military, with the cooperation of Christian militias, halted the advance of the LNM and PLO – an action that did not receive the support of the Arab League, most individual Arab states and the Soviet Union.[61] This opposition did not however deter Syria. President Frangieh's backing and the support of the Katā'ib and Sham'ūn's National Liberal Party eventually led to Syria's incorporation into the Arab Deterrent Force which further legitimized its presence. The Arab League established the Force after summits in Riyadh and Cairo in October 1976.[62] Its purpose was to "maintain security and stability in Lebanon."[63] Within a year the Syrian-Lebanese dynamics changed.

By 1978, the Christian leadership's endorsement of Syria's intervention had turned to condemnation. Beginning in 1977 and leading to an all out confrontation in

a fear that religious and ethnic problems/conflict would spillover into Syria and ultimately destabilize it. Also see Yossi Olmert. "Syria in Lebanon." In *Foreign Military Intervention* eds. Ariel Levite, Bruce Jentleson and Larry Berman, 97-127. New York: Columbia University Press, 1992. Olmert's argument is that Syria's intervention in Lebanon was ideological and strategic. See also Reuven Avi-Ran. *The Syrian Involvement in Lebanon since 1975*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1991. Avi-Ran provides a three-fold argument for Syrian intervention in Lebanon: 1) irredentism; 2) security and national interests; 3) the Arab-Israeli conflict. Also see Fred H. Lawson "Syria's intervention in the Lebanese civil war, 1976: a domestic conflict explanation" *International Organization* 38:3 (1984), 451- Karen Rasler, "Internationalized Civil War: A Dynamic Analysis of the Syrian Intervention in Lebanon" *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 27:3 (Sept 1983), 421-456. Adeed Dawisha. *Syria and the Lebanese Crisis*. London: Macmillan Press, 1980.

[60] FBIS/MEA, June 9, 1976,G4-5 "Frangieh sends message to Arab Kings, Presidents."

[61] For further detail about Syrian-Christian relations in 1977 see Avi-Ran, 37-42. A red-line agreement was arranged between Israel and Syria by the United States to prevent a Syrian/Israeli conflict prior to the intervention.

[62] For background on Arab Deterrent Force see Istvan Pogany. *The Arab League and Peacekeeping in Lebanon*. Aldershot: Avebury, 1987. Disagreement, particularly by the PLO occurred over the amount of Syrian troops in the Deterrent Force. Ultimately Syrian troops constituted 25,000 of the 30,000 strong force. Libyan, Saudi and Sudanese constituted the remaining 5,000 troops. Ibid., 109.

[63] Ibid., 82. For further detail see Ibid, 83.

1978, Christian militias fought to expel Syrian forces and reclaim Lebanese sovereignty.

The confrontation between Christian militias and Syrian forces ebbed and flowed

between 1977 and 1983. Assisting the Lebanese Front in this confrontation with Syria

was Israel.

Israel

As previously noted, the Maronite community established links with Israel well

before the outbreak of the civil war. These links deepened as the war progressed. In

1978, the Maronite leadership (e.g. Bashir Jemayyel, Dany Sham'ūn(son of former

President Camille Sham'ūn) and others) intensified their contacts with the Israelis in an

attempt to buttress their strength vis-a-vis the Syrian presence and its Lebanese allies.

Within a few years Israeli security interests began to coincide with the security interests

of their Christian allies and these slowly drew Israel into the conflict. For Israel, defeat

of the Christians would entail the emergence of an inhospitable force on its northern

border. Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin stated:

> The Israeli government saw no reason for changing its earlier decision
> not to be drawn into war with Syria except on the basis of its own
> considerations….This does not contradict the statement that the
> security and survival of the Christians and the preservation of a
> non-hostile Lebanon are vital to Israel's security.[64]

These overlapping security interests were publicly manifested in 1980-81 when

Syrian forces attacked and besieged the Lebanese city of Zahle in the Beqa and

allegedly attacked Christian positions in the mountains with helicopters.[65] In response

Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin said: "The Christians are now in a very great

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[64] Evron, 97.

[65] Yair Evron. *War and Intervention in Lebanon* (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1987), 50. The alleged
use of attack helicopters broke a red-line agreement between Israel and Syria brokered by the US when
Syria initially intervened in Lebanon in 1976. One of the red-lines was the introduction of airpower.

danger. We have the moral obligation to come to their rescue, and we will." [66] Israeli air forces downed two Syrian helicopters over Lebanon. The US temporarily prevented a further escalation of violence between the Israelis and the Syrians. But the willingness of Israel to come to the aid of the Maronites had been made clear.

The relationship between Israel and the Maronites reached its apex in 1982. With mutual dislike for the PLO leadership and a desire for the resolution of their conflict with the Palestinians in Lebanon, the Israelis launched an invasion in June of 1982. The initial objective of the invasion was the removal of Palestinian military forces from within forty kilometers of the Lebanese/Israeli border. But the architect of the invasion, General Ariel Sharon, had other plans. Israeli forces advanced to the doorstep of Beirut with the intention of defeating and removing any and all remaining PLO leadership from Lebanon. [67] The PLO and its Lebanese allies resisted Israeli forces to the very edge of West Beirut. The stalemate required an internationally negotiated withdrawal of the PLO leadership and its forces from Lebanon under the watchful eye of the Multinational Force s consisting of US, French and Italian troops. [68]

With the PLO leadership out of the way, Israel and the Lebanese Front looked to solidify their contacts with the creation of a Lebanese government that would enjoy favorable relations with the Israeli state. The first step occurred on August 23, 1982 when the one-time visitor to Israel, Bashir Jemayyel was elected President of Lebanon.

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[66] Avi-Ran, 118.

[67] It should be noted that none of the Christian militias took part in the fighting between the Israelis and the Palestinians and their Lebanese allies.

[68] According to Naomi Weinberger, the decision to deploy a multilateral force instead of a UN force in Lebanon reflected a broader trend to utilize multilateral forces in the 1980s particularly by the United States who believed UN forces had proven ineffective. Naomi Weinberger, "How Peace Keeping Becomes Intervention: Lessons from the Lebanese Experience," in *International Organizations and Ethnic Conflict* ed. Milton J. Esman and Shibley Telhami (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), 152.

Things began to fall apart from there. Three weeks after his election Jemayyel died in a bomb blast. The assassination provoked a series of massacres in two Palestinian refugee camps. The international outrade over the incidents in the camps brought the return of the Multinational Force to Lebanon. This series of events did not deter Israel. The withdrawal of Israeli forces remained the objective provided an agreement could be arranged between the two governments. Israel just had to deal with a different Jemayyel.

Amin Jemayyel did not enjoy the close relationship that his brother had previously had with the Israelis. According to some sources, he was more interested in maintaining good relations with the Arab world than with Israel.[69] This put Amin in a difficult position. Both Amin and Israel wanted a withdrawal; it was the conditions of that withdrawal that became subject to negotiation. The Israelis wanted certain guarantees when they pulled out, including the withdrawal of Syrian forces from Lebanon. Negotiations were overseen by US officials and after several months of talks an agreement was arrived at on May 17th.[70] The May 17th Agreement called for a security zone along the Israeli/Lebanese border that would be patrolled by Israeli forces and the Israeli-supported South Lebanese Army. Furthermore, Israel would be allowed to carry out attacks into Lebanon if Israel deemed them necessary. Even with US support, however, they were unable to procure a satisfactory Syrian withdrawal. The National Salvation Front and Syria rejected the May 17th Agreement and it became a central topic of discussion at the Geneva conference.

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[69] Schulze, 89-90 and 138.
[70] Israeli Lebanese direct negotiations also occurred.

The Multinational Force (MNF)

The assassination of Bashir Jemayyel and the massacres in the Palestinian camps elicited the return of the Multinational Force (US, French, and Italian soldiers).[71] Its mandate was to provide security for the Palestinians and prevent the outbreak of violence between Lebanese actors and the Israelis. For the purposes of this study, we will focus on the US participation. In September of 1982, just prior to the assassination of Bashir Jemayyel, the US announced the Reagan plan which proposed a solution to the Arab/Israeli conflict.[72] Lebanon received little attention in the Reagan Plan because of the belief that Lebanon was on its way to recovery after the withdrawal of PLO forces.[73] Following Bashir's assassination and the outbreak of violence, the US feared that the plan could be sabotaged in its early stages. The US and the rest of the Multinational Forces quelled the violence and maintained a semblance of tranquility in Lebanon. But the US also committed to rebuilding and modernizing the Lebanese army. It also took on the role of facilitating the withdrawal of Syrian and Israeli forces from Lebanon. As a peacekeeper, mediator and a force involved in propping up the Lebanese government, the US could not maintain its distance and its troops got sucked into the conflict. As the actions of the Lebanese government became increasingly perceived once again as working in the interests of the Maronites, the US found itself ever more associated with the reestablishment of Maronite hegemony. Eventually Lebanese elements bombed the

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[71] The Multinational Force comprised of US, British, French and Italian troops was deployed to Lebanon on two occasions. First it acted as a barrier between the withdrawing PLO fighters and the Israeli army. It returned a second time following the Sabra and Shatilla Palestinian refugee camp massacres out of guilt because its initial mandate had been to protect the Palestinian civilians.

[72] The Reagan Plan called for Jordanian oversight of a Palestinian governed West Bank and Gaza Strip.

[73] William B. Quandt, "Reagan's Lebanon Policy: Trial and Error," *Middle East Journal* 38:2 (Spring 1984), 239-40.

US Embassy in April of 1983 which was followed by the destruction of the US Marine Barracks in October.

US forces became entangled in an increasingly precarious situation as violence erupted between the Lebanese Army, members of the Lebanese Front and the PSP in the mountains above Beirut. A Saudi sponsored ceasefire began on September 26th with the intention of convening a reconciliation conference in the proceeding weeks.

b) Failing to change the status quo

In the days and weeks leading up to the conference, the main political factions began to expound on their positions regarding two significant issues expected to be addressed at Geneva: the May 17th Agreement and the National Pact. The Lebanese Front wanted the agreement ratified. A member of the Front, Dany Sham'ūn, equated the abrogation of the agreement with "playing the ostrich."[74] President Jemayyel's Foreign Minister, Elie Salem, believed that the agreement was the best means to ensure an Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon.[75] Adding pressure to the situation, Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Arens interpreted any attempt to abrogate the agreement as a threat to Israel's security.[76] The US also desired to see the agreement come to fruition.

These perspectives contrasted with the position of the National Salvation Front and its ally Nabih Berri. Berri equated the agreement to a new can of worms for Lebanon. He envisioned a ratified agreement causing more problems for the country. Berri pushed for the abrogation of the agreement and a unilateral withdrawal of Israeli

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[74] *Monday Morning*, October 17-23, 1983, 21.
[75] FBIS/MEA, Oct 31, 1983, G4.
[76] Ibid., G4

forces from Lebanon. Berri's allies in the NSF also called for the agreement's

abrogation. Junblāṭ believed the agreement put Israel in a position of hegemony in

Lebanon and would lead to Lebanon's partition.[77] As an alternative to the Agreement,

they suggested strengthening of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)

at the Israeli-Lebanese border to ensure security.[78]

A Christian enclave with the support of Israel presented a real threat to Syria's

interests. Syria opposed the agreement from the start and endorsed the NSF's steps for

reconciliation. Having been abandoned by his ally and former *Tahaluf* member Rashid

Karāmī, former Prime Minister Sā'eb Salām propounded an ambivalent position towards

the agreement. Salām said:

> I don't want to express an opinion now. I would rather wait until
> the matter is discussed in the meeting and see what consensus the
> discussion produces.[79]

Salām supported May 17th Agreement in Parliament but claimed that Israel had violated

it by its unannounced withdrawal to the Awali River (in the South).[80] At the same time

he described the current Lebanese relationship with Syria was "unhealthy."[81]

The National Pact also received considerable attention prior to the reconciliation

conference further reflecting the discrepancies over the nature of the political system.

Positions espoused by the expected participants did not entirely coincide with views on

the May 17th Agreement. For example, former President Sulieman Frangieh did not

share the opinion of his allies in the NSF regarding the National Pact. Frangieh believed

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[77] FBIS/MEA, Sept 29, 1983, G3.
[78] Former President Suleiman Frangieh believed the abrogation of the agreement would allow for the resolution of all of Lebanon's problems. Hamadeh's interview regarding UNIFIL to provided guarantees.
[79] *Monday Morning*, October 10-16, 1983, 21.
[80] Ibid., 21.
[81] *Monday Morning*, Oct 10-16, 1983,

the National Pact should not be toyed with and that in particular the Christian hold on

the presidency in the political system needed to be maintained. He stated:

> What are the rights that our brothers the Moslems have been
> deprived of? There is one right that was determined by the
> tradition and not by the Constitution: the Presidency for one
> sect, the premiership for another, and the speakership for another.
> That's all.....I really don't know what they want, but if we look at
> the State as a whole, we find that no one is deprived.[82]

Like his father in 1976, Junblāṭ demanded the cancellation of the National Pact, that

presidential elections be based on a popular vote and that a secular system be

established. His ally Nabih Berri defined similar parameters for reconciliation. Berri

claimed that the National Pact had failed and could not be revived. However Berri

appeared to be a bit more conciliatory than Junblāṭ. According to Berri, if Lebanon's

sectarian system could not be abolished then all sects should be equally represented.

> In other words, no sect should have the right to monopoly at the
> expense of another sect. This means that we must have a criterion.
> The criterion can be one of two things: The first is the criterion of
> merit….But if some insist, God forbid, on keeping this a country
> of distinct communities….the same criterion must apply to all
> sects without exception.[83]

Dany Sham'ūnadvocated for the writing down of the National Pact, which until this

point had only been an understood agreement. And as he had done in 1976, Sā'eb Salām

supported the notion of deconfessionalization except at the highest of levels.

The Lebanese participants met in Geneva on 31 October 1983. They included

President Amin Jemayyel, former President Camille Sham'ūn, Pierre Jemayyel, former

President Suleiman Frangieh, Nabih Berri, Adil Usayran, Walid Jumblatt, former Prime

Ministers Sā'eb Salām and Rashid Karāmī. Raymond Eddeh was invited but refused to

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[82] *Monday Morning* October 10-16, 1983, 6.
[83] *Monday Morning*, October 17-23, 1983, 9.

attend on account of the Syrian occupation of Lebanese territory. Syria and Saudi Arabia both sponsored the conference, but the Syrian shadow at the meeting loomed larger than the Saudi one. Syria vetoed the attendance of current Prime Minister Shafiq al-Wazzan and the current Speaker of the Parliament Kamāl Assad, asserting that Wazzan and Assad publicly supported the agreement with Israel.[84] Wazzan had also apparently expressed support for a Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon while Assad had assisted in the election of Bashir Jemayyel. Camille Sham'ūnthreatened to boycott the conference if Wazzan and Assad were prohibited from attending.[85] However the threat proved to be empty as Sham'ūnattended nonetheless. The forced absence of Wazzan and Assad suggested the Syrian sway over the Sunni and Shia communities and the Jemayyel government.

President Jemayyel's speech to open the conference asked for sacrifices from all the participants.[86] His words went largely unheeded. Participants discussed at length the May 17th agreement, the political system and the identity of Lebanon but to little avail.[87] The absence of tangible results can be attributed to two interrelated circumstances. First, most participants suggested that the differences among the Lebanese could be bridged in the absence of external actors.[88] Yet, many of these

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[84] Syria vetoed Wazzan's presence because he had called for a Syrian withdrawal and peace with Israel. Syria also vetoed Assad's presence because he assisted in the election of Jemayyel.

[85] FBIS/MEA (Beirut Voice of Lebanon), September 26, 1983, G1.

[86] Amin Jemayyel, *Peace and Unity: Major Speeches 1982-1984* (Gerrads Cross: Colin Smythe, 1984), 144.

[87] They included the 12-point plan of Sham'ūn, the 10-point plan of Salām, the NSF working paper and Jemayyel paper.

[88] Ambassador Johnny Abduh words accurately reflect this perception. "If we, the Lebanese, meet around a table, this does not mean that our country is not occupied by the Israelis, Syrians and Palestinians. Do you believe that these three occupations have no connection with the Lebanese crisis?" FBIS/MEA October 31, 1983, G2-G3. The idea was also present in the language of Foreign Minister Salem. Salem, *Violence and Diplomacy*, 126.

Lebanese participants aligned themselves with external actors or held positions that were associated with them. Witness the words of Walid Junblāṭ:

> When a new Lebanon is established where powers reflect the new demographic reality, then I will end the war and will no longer be Syria's man[89]

He further elaborates here.

> Lebanon is an Arab country and belongs to the Arab group, and it has its traditional language and its history and relations with Syria. When Lebanon is liberated from the Israeli presence, we will then ask Syria to get out of Lebanon.[90]

Additionally, Junblāṭ perceived President Jemayyel as a tool of the United States and Israel whose legitimacy derived from the US and Israeli presence in the country, and not from the Lebanese.[91]

Regarding the May 17th Agreement, four proposals were presented over the course of the conference: 1) abrogation, submitted by Rashid Karāmī; 2) freezing the accord, by Sulieman Frangieh; 3) a temporary freeze until the creation of a unity government; and 4) revising the agreement, by Sā'eb Salām.[92] Ultimately the participants agreed to freeze the accord with Israel or what was largely understood as buying President Jemayyel time to get an Israeli withdrawal without adhering to the agreement.[93]

The participants also reached a consensus on the identity of Lebanon. They agreed that Lebanon should be Arab. Agreement to an Arab identity was a concession

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[89] FBIS/MEA, Oct 31, 1983, G5.
[90] FBIS/MEA, November 2, 1983, G8.
[91] Junblāṭ notes: How can we recognize a president imposed on us at Israeli bayonet point, just as his brother Bashir was imposed on us? FBIS/MEA, Nov 4, 1983, G4.
[92] FBIS/MEA, Nov 3, 1983 G2-G3.
[93] *Monday Morning,* Nov 21-27, 1983, 34.

by the Christians (i.e. the Lebanese Front). The acceptance of an Arab identity, it was

agreed, did not entail an Islamic identity. President Amin Jemayyel's advisor, Farouk

Jabre, suggested that embracing the Arab identity would recognize Lebanon's

contribution to the Arab world – a bridge between the East and West.[94] However this

concession did not lead far since the NSF wanted the Arab identity clause to entail the

abrogation of the May 17th agreement. As noted by Junblāṭ:

> The innovation [the Arab identity of Lebanon]….but this is
> not enough. Now we must see whether these same forces will
> also agree with everything deriving from the understanding.
> I repeat: This is a crucial problem that will determine
> Lebanon's future.[95]

The participants achieved consensus on two other issues: 1) the establishment of

a security committee; and 2) the establishment of committees to discuss reforms. The

establishment of committees once again demonstrated the inability to generate any

common ground regarding reforms to the political system.

Unlike the Constitutional Document, the failures of Geneva appear to have been

attributable to both the domestic and external actors. Divisions among forces both

inside and outside the country created an environment that was anything but favorable

to the hunt for concessions.

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[94] *Monday Morning*, Nov 21-27, 1983, 43.
[95] FBIS/MEA, Nov 4, 1983, G4.

3) Lausanne Conference

a) Actors and Background to the status quo

The Lausanne conference saw no real change in actors from the Geneva meeting. Amin Jemayyel was still serving as president and he continued to retain Shawfic Wazzan as the Prime Minister.

Confessional Relations

Two significant developments had occurred since Geneva that affected confessional relations and altered the dynamics for negotiations in Lausanne: 1) the Shia and Druze control of West Beirut; and 2) the abrogation of the May 17th Agreement.

The Fall of West Beirut

Harakat Amal, the Progressive Socialist Party (PSP) and the Lebanese Communist Party (LCP) took over West Beirut on 6 February 1984. The event signified two new realities in the Lebanese political landscape. In the first place it effectively ended the government's presence in the Western part of the city, especially once the Lebanese Army's 6th Brigade (composed mostly of pro-Harakat Amal soldiers) defected and joined Harakat Amal and other militias. It demonstrated President Jemayyel's failure to unite the city and ultimately the country. It further proved that Jemayyel was a party to the conflict and not a mediator. The failure also indicated that the institutions of the state (i.e. the army) could not supersede confessional identity, be inclusive or pretend to be distinct from Maronite hegemony.

The takeover of the western half of Beirut by Harakat Amal, the PSP and the LCP also signified the dominance of non-Sunni Muslims in a predominantly Sunni area. It further demonstrated the continued ascendancy of non-Sunnis on the Lebanese political chessboard, particularly vis-a-vis the traditional elites in the Sunni community. As a reflection of the deteriorating position of the Sunnis in the political arena, the weeks leading up to the takeover of West Beirut saw the closure by Saudi Arabia of its embassy.

In the wake of the events of 6 February, the Multinational Force south of Beirut became further isolated and their mandate increasingly scrutinized. The US and French barracks had been bombed on 23 October and those nations were gradually being drawn into the conflict. Sensing the beginning of the end, British troops redeployed to their warships on 8 February. On 10 February, the US announced that it was withdrawing its forces within thirty days.[96] In light of these developments it became increasingly more difficult for Amin Jemayyel to retain the May 17th Agreement.

The Abrogation of the May 17th Agreement

With the collapse of the government's presence in West Beirut and the imminent withdrawal of the Multinational Force s, Jemayyel became increasingly isolated. The mandate provided to him by the Geneva Conference to secure a withdrawal of Israeli forces without adhering to the May 17th Agreement failed. Jemayyel could not convince leaders in Arab and European capitals or in Washington to amend the agreement. Jemayyel noted:

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[96] Salem, *Violence and Diplomacy*, 146.

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> Les Etats-Unis tentaient bien d'ultimes efforts, mais leurs
> emissaries auprés de Damas ou de Tel-Aviv revenaient les mains
> vides. L'attentat contre leurs contingents de la Force
> multinationale acheva de les désarçonner. Avec la represe des
> affrontements en février 1984, lesvEtats-Unis décidérent de
> retirer leurs soldats du Liban. Je me retrouvai alors seul face
> á un veritable drame….[97]

> The US tried a final effort, but their emissaries from Damascus
> as well as Tel Aviv returned empty-handed. The attack against
> the contingents of the Multinational Force resulted in their
> unseating… After clashes resumed in February of 1984, the US
> decided to withdraw their soldiers from Lebanon. I found myself alone
> facing a real catastrophe.

Following the US Marine withdrawal at the end of February, Amin Jemayyel traveled to

Damascus. Five days later on 5 March, Jemayyel and the Wazzan cabinet abrogated the

May 17th Agreement.

The decision received endorsements and condemnations. Former Prime Minister

Rashīd Karāmī called it a "historic action" and "a starting point which undoubtedly will

have repercussions on the entire Arab region, if not the world."[98] Camille Sham'ūnand

his National Liberal Party opposed the decision. Sham'ūnstated:

> We will not be able to forgive Amin al-Jumayyil for his disgraceful
> surrender to Syria…. Amin al-Jumayyil has betrayed us, the Lebanese
> Christians and the Lebanese people who believed they had a new
> opportunity for independence and sovereignty. We will not be able to put
> up with this move.[99]

Sham'ūn's comment was particularly revealing on the eve of the Lausanne Conference.

It demonstrated a divide between the traditional leadership of the Maronite community,

its militias and President Jemayyel. Jemayyel had not only distanced himself from many

in the Muslim community but he was also on shaky ground within the Maronite

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[97] Amin Jemayyel, *L'Offense et Le Pardon* (1988), 99.
[98] FBIS/MEA, March 5, 1984, G4.
[99] FBIS/MEA, March 4, 1984, G1.

community. The decision of Jemayyel and the Wazzan cabinet to abrogate the May 17th Agreement marked a shift in the dynamics of Lebanon. It forced President Jemayyel to rely on Syria for a resolution to the Lebanese conflict. With the removal of a major sticking point from the Geneva conference and the diminished presence of the United States, it appeared as though reconciliation was in sight. It proved to be wishful thinking.

b) Failing to change the status quo

Seven days after the abrogation of the May 17th Agreement the second round of the National Dialogue convened in Lausanne. Once again Syria and Saudi Arabia sponsored the conference and invited the same participants. Several participants believed the abrogation had removed the primary obstacle to reconciliation. In President Jemayyel's address on the opening night of the conference he stated:

> When choice is between an agreement and a homeland, we must choose the homeland. However, the abrogation of the agreement is also a means for unifying the will and closing the ranks, and an approach to the liberation and unification of the land within the framework of a cohesive society that transcends the narrow and self-centered groupings and disintegration and division produced by recent changes.[100]

From the outset it was apparent that President Jemayyel's negotiating position had weakened vis-a-vis his Maronite colleagues and his opponents. To temper the opposition from within the Christian community regarding his decision to abrogate the May 17[th]Agreement, Jemayyel attempted to secure a Syrian withdrawal from the heavily Christian area of the Metn (east and north of Beirut). Syria refused. Also on the

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[100] FBIS/MEA March 13, 1984, G1.

eve of the conference, Jemayyel dismissed General Tannous as the head of the Lebanese Army. Tannous's dismissal had been a demand of Junblāṭ's for months. The act failed to generate an atmosphere of compromise in Lausanne. The mindsets of Geneva — placing blame on external actors as obstacles to compromise — continued to prevail at Lausanne.

Accusations were exchanged regarding the interference of external actors in Lebanese affairs. Camille Sham'ūnindicated that the Syrian presence in Lebanon and at the conference prevented "free decision-making to the Lebanese and the Christians."[101] According to Sham'ūn, any solution in this environment would favor Syrian plans to impose hegemony on Lebanon. NSF member Rashid Karāmī openly conceded to the presence of Syria claiming that Syrian and Lebanese interests coincided. Karāmī noted:

> The two countries are twins and their common interests behoove them to continue to their consultations, coordination and cooperation. This is natural because what happens in to one of them has a positive or negative effect on the other. I can say that Syria is always prepared to help extricate Lebanon from this ordeal.[102]

Accusations were also leveled at some Christians for continuing to work in Israel's interests. Sulieman Frangieh stated:

> Lebanon lived in prosperity until the devil entered it. The devil is Israel. If we accept the federation now, then we will have the devils with us.[103]

Also, Syrian Vice President Abd al-Halim Khaddam spoke at the conference spoke of Israeli attempts to continue to influence Lebanese actors. It must be remembered that Israel continued at this time to maintain troops in southern Lebanon.

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[101] FBIS/MEA, March 16, 1984, G9.
[102] FBIS/MEA, March 12, 1984, G4.
[103] FBIS/MEA, March 1, 1984, G1 and G2.

In another similarity to Geneva, many of the same proposals were presented regarding reforming the political system. Five working papers were presented at the conference by, in turn, the government, the Lebanese Front, the Islamic Grouping, the NSF and Harakat Amal. One notable difference from Geneva concerned the Lebanese Front's view on the governance of the Lebanese state. In the Front's working paper and the words of its leadership (e.g. Pierre Jemayyel and Camille Sham'ūn) a federal system or cantonization of Lebanon was advocated. While in Geneva, Junblāṭ threatened to partition Lebanon if the status quo was sustained, Christian leadership in Lausanne began to distance itself from a unified Lebanese state. The Front's proposal encountered condemnation from Amin Jemayyel, Rashid Karāmī, Walid Junblāṭ, Sulieman Frangieh and Nabih Berri. Jemayyel's opposition to the Front's proposal to cantonize Lebanon demonstrates the division between the Christian community and the President. The issue of the cantons also suggests a measure of fear on the part of the Christians to take part in the state with Israeli and American influence dissipating.

The participants did agree on one issue, i.e., the creation of a national unity government, although its membership was left to be determined afterwards.

4) The Tripartite Agreement

a) Actors and Background to the Status Quo

Amin Jemayyel continued to serve but a new cabinet under the leadership of Rashid Karāmī formed in June of 1984.

Confessional Relations

Lebanon, like Beirut, remained divided. The government's authority extended little beyond the predominantly Christian areas. Syria occupied portions of the country and Israeli forces occupied a security zone in southern Lebanon. Sporadic fighting between the Druze and Christian militias continued, particularly in the mountains east and south of Beirut and in the area surrounding Sidon. Conflict also erupted in Tripoli between Sunni Fundamentalists and a group of Alawites, Communists and Bathists. In Beirut itself, fighting erupted between the PSP and Harakat Amal in July of 1985. It continued to flare up throughout the remainder of the year. Palestinians in Lebanon and Syria also came in conflict. The PSP intervened on the side of the Palestinians (pro-Arafat forces) while the Harakat Amal fought against the Palestinians at the behest of Syria.

Leadership in the Maronite community underwent a transformation. Pierre Jemayyel, Amin's father and a founding member of the Katā'ib, passed away. His death marked the ascendancy of the Lebanese Forces (LF) within the Maronite community. Amin did not enjoy particularly warm relations with the organization, largely because it had supplanted the Katā'ib and did not share his vision of Lebanon. Nor were the Lebanese Forces (LF) new to the scene. The LF had existed since 1976 as a joint command to coordinate military operations between the various Christian militias. Eventually it became its own distinct entity and its presence grew under the leadership of Bashir Jemayyel and Fadi Frem. In 1983-4, they were part of the mix in the Maronite community but by 1985, with Pierre Jemayyel out of the way, they had become the

predominant Maronite organization. [104] The abrogation of May 17th Agreement and Amin's inability to receive any concessions in return for abrogating it weakened Amin as a president and within the Maronite community. His replacement became in effect the Lebanese Forces. A corrective movement within the Lebanese Forces initially put Samīr Geagea in charge. Elie Hobeika was then elected chairman of the LF in May and reelected unanimously in September. The centrality of power had moved away from the office of the President and into the hands of the Lebanese Forces.

b) *Failing to change the status quo*

A draft of the Agreement was finalized in October. In November, the Lebanese Forces began to balk at it. One source suggests that a particular point of contention was its characterization of the relationship with Syria as integration, whereas they preferred that this be changed to coordination.[105] Another concern revolved around the abolition of sectarianism. While they did not oppose the idea, they were concerned that secularism would not prevail and society would be overwhelmed by an Islamic identity.

On 28 December 1985, the final version of the Tripartite Agreement was signed by the leadership of three Lebanese militias: The Lebanese Forces, Progressive Socialist Party and Harakat Amal. Discussions between the groups began during the summer of 1985 and excluded the participation of the government. The 25-page document

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[104] For more details see: See Snider and Phares. Following Bashir Jemayyel's assassination in 1982, Fady Frem took command. Frem was unseated by Hobeika and Geagea. Since 1986, Samīr Geagea has been the leader of the organization.
[105] FBIS/MEA, Nov 21, 1985, G2.

addressed numerous points which included reforms to the political system and the future

of Lebanese and Syrian relations.[106]

Besides the militias, Prime Minister Karāmī and Parliamentary speaker Hussein

el-Husseini supported the agreement. Some division occurred within the Sunni Muslim

community. The al-Murabitoun rejected the agreement which ran counter to the Islamic

Gathering that had supported it.[107] Nor was there unity within the Shia ranks. Iran did

not perceive the agreement as viable since it failed to consider the interests of

Hizbullah. [108] One of the major points of contention was the future power of the

president. Elie Hobeika claimed that some of the powers of the president had not been

transferred to another office; instead, some powers were to be shared by both. [109]

Almost all of the Maronite community opposed the agreement, including Hobeika's own

party the Lebanese Forces.[110] A power struggle within the Christian community ensued

with a revolt occurring against Hobeika in the leadership. Hobeika was eventually

removed and expelled to France. Hobeika's successor, Samīr Geagea claimed:

> Therefore we carried out the painful operation executed on 15 January
> in order to restore principles, values and unity to our society and the
> Forces.[111]
> We carried out the uprising to unite the Christians, reinstate their
> freedom of decision and draw up a strategy to end their suffering…
> Hobeika divided the Christians further, removed their freedom of
> decision and confused the security situation with the slogan: 'The

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[106] FBIS/MEA, December 28, 1985, G1.
[107] FBIS/MEA, January 13, 1986, G2.
[108] FBIS/MEA, January 8, 1986, G2.
[109] FBIS/MEA, January 2, 1986, G2.
[110] Hobeika came to power through the March 12 movement of 1984. The movement wrested control of the Lebanese Forces out the hands of the Jemayyel family. The March 12 movement wanted to create a federal solution and establish a Christian parliament. On May 8 Hobeika is able to take over the reins of the Lebanese Forces. Some sources claim that he politically overthrew Samīr Geagea while others claim Geagea conceded. Shortly after Hobeika changed alliegances and became a proponent of an "Arab-Syrian" solution for Lebanon.
[111] FBIS/MEA, January 21, 1986, G2.

> Christian's community's security comes before every other
> consideration.[112]

Thus the agreement was effectively rendered void since one of the signatories, the

Lebanese Forces, no longer supported the agreement. And once again the status quo was

not altered.

Part II – The Taif Agreement

a) *Actors and Background of the status quo*

The competing heads of state

Lebanon began the morning of 23 September 1988, without a president. An

agreement could not be reached between the pertinent actors on a candidate in the

months leading up to this day.[113] With no agreement in sight and the minutes winding

down on the his Presidential term, Amin Jemayyel appointed the head of the army,

General Michel Aoun, as the acting prime minister until the election of the next

president.[114] The designation of Aoun as the acting Prime Minister was the equivalent of

putting gasoline on a fire. The caretaker Prime Minister Salim el-Hoss refused to

acknowledge Aoun's appointment. El-Hoss believed he was the logical choice to lead

the government until a president was selected. El-Hoss was not alone in this belief.

Most inhabitants of the predominantly Muslim areas and also some Christians did not

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[112] FBIS January 28, 1986, G2.

[113] This was not just a domestic matter, international actors were also involved. For example, in the weeks prior to the deadline, Mikhail Daher, a candidate for President from the northern village of Kobayyat was acceptable to Syrian and American officials. However his candidacy was rejected by leading figures in the Maronite community: the Patriarch, the Lebanese Forces, the head of the Lebanese Army Michel Aoun and many Christian deputies. *Middle East International* (October 7, 1988), 3.

[114] This was not an unprecedented move by Jemayyel. Beshara el-Khoury had appointed Fuad Chehab as President in 1952 until President Chamoun was elected.

support of the appointment. The opposition to Aoun's selection effectively split the country into two rival governments.[115] Aoun governed the predominantly Christian area that extended from Mount Lebanon in the east to the Mediterranean coast and from East Beirut in the south to Batroun in the north. El- Hoss governed the areas of Lebanon that were effectively under Syrian control. The Israeli security belt in south Lebanon remained outside the jurisdiction of either government.

Michel Aoun - The Acting Prime Minister

In comparison to other Lebanese leaders, Aoun's origins were humble. He was not the scion of an elite Lebanese family; but rather was born into a farming family from the village of Haret Hrak just south of Beirut. He had no political experience since he had entered the military academy at the age of eighteen and worked up the chain of command. His military prowess was acknowledged: his maneuvers at Souk al-Gharb (1983) had catapulted him to the top of the army in 1984. Aoun's military, non-political background and humble origins endeared him to many Lebanese, in fact for a period of time his popularity crossed confessions. His position was the result of merit, not privilege – as had been common among the higher echelons of the government. Aoun garnered the title "son of the people." Aoun's popular appeal was also attributable to his actions and rhetoric. Unlike most Lebanese leaders, sectarian language was absent from

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[115] It would be inaccurate to characterize these governments as two completely separate entities. For example, Aoun's government still paid the salaries for the military troops in the areas under the control of el-Hoss.

Aoun's vernacular.[116] Furthermore, Aoun was intent on resurrecting the Lebanese state, welcome news to many Lebanese, but not for Lebanon's militias or Syria.

Salim el-Hoss - The Caretaker Prime Minister

On May 4, 1987, Prime Minister Rashid Karāmī resigned from office. His minister of education, Salim el-Hoss, was tasked with heading a caretaker government until a new government was formed. El-Hoss, an economist and academic, had been Prime Minister from December 1976 to 1980. El-Hoss's status as caretaker Prime Minister changed on November 11, 1989. Rene Mouwwad, who was elected President in the Syrian-controlled areas on 5 November 1989, designated el-Hoss as his Prime Minister on this date.

Confessional relations and the international community - September 1988 to September 1989

Michel Aoun's appointment was well received by some and rejected by others. The US welcomed Aoun especially since he was eager to shut down Lebanon's militia. The Egyptian and Iraqi governments extended an implied recognition to Aoun's government as well.[117] Like other past Maronites who had occupied the community's top administrative post, Aoun did not enjoy a monopoly over Maronite politics. From the start, the Lebanese Forces opposed his designation as Prime Minister.[118] This opposition escalated on 14 February when fighting broke out between the Lebanese

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[116] *Middle East International*, October 1988.
[117] *Middle East International*, October 1988.
[118] *Middle East International*, January 1989.

Forces and the Lebanese Army still under Aoun's command. After several days of fighting, the Lebanese Forces conceded victory to the Lebanese Army. Further demonstrating the ascendancy of Aoun and his objectives in the Maronite community following the defeat of the Lebanese Forces, a summit of Maronite clergy, politicians and prominent personalities voted on 17 February in favor of Aoun and the resurrection of state institutions. [119] With little opposition remaining in the Maronite community, Aoun set his sights on the rest of Lebanon.

Beginning on 3 March, Aoun embarked on the resurrection of state authority throughout all of Lebanon. His first measure was the blockading of all illegal Lebanese ports including Khalde, Jiye and Ouzai. The objective was to dry up the main source of income for the militias of the PSP and Harakat Amal and redirect trade through state-controlled ports.[120] The measure provoked a violent backlash by the PSP and Harakat Amal. Artillery immediately rained down on Aoun's Lebanese enclave. Aoun responded with his own barrage of artillery on West Beirut and its environs.[121] Most importantly these artillery exchanges drew the Syrian army into fighting. Syrian participation enabled Aoun to launch his second measure, a "War of Liberation" on March 14th.

Before addressing Aoun's War of Liberation, developments within the Shia community must be noted. As mentioned earlier, Harakat Amal had become a political heavyweight at the beginning of the decade, although its monopoly over Shia politics did not last long. During the Israeli invasion, particularly at the time of the Israeli siege and bombardment of West Beirut, certain members of Harakat Amal and other Shi'a

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[119] *Middle East International*, March 3, 1989, 9.

[120] Aoun proclaimed that he would seize any ship not destined for a state port. *Middle East International* March 17, 1989, 5.

[121] These bombings killed numerous Lebanese citizens which hurt his popularity in the non Christian community.

became displeased with the response of the Shi'a leadership (i.e. Nabih Berri, the leader of Amal), to the situation and its willingness to participate in the National Salvation Committee under the auspices of President Sarkis as a means to resolve the crisis.[122] In the wake of the Iranian revolution and the spread of Ayatollah Khomeini's anti-West ideology, many Shi'a became convinced that the committee was further proof of Western desires to manipulate events in the Middle East and give credibility to Israel's actions and presence in Lebanon.[123] These developments ultimately resulted in the defection of numerous members of Amal and the disillusionment of other Shi'a. These individuals coalesced around Baalbak in the Biqa' Valley in the latter half of 1982 and with the permission of the Syrian government received guidance and training from Iranian Revolutionary Guards (*Pasdaran*). These developments marked the creation of Hizbullah and the inclusion of Iran on the Lebanese political chessboard.

Initially Hizbullah's ultimate objective was the implementation of the *sharī'a* at the level of the state and the removal of foreign forces from Lebanese soil, an objective perceived as an extension of the revolution and Iran.[124] This perception was affirmed by Hizbullah's association with Iran's leadership — the *wilāyat al-faqīh*. Hizbullah believed that ultimate authority lies in the *wilāyat al-faqīh* and therefore was committed to this leadership.[125] Beginning in 1987, Hizbullah challenged Harakat Amal's prominence in the community. Fighting broke out on numerous occasions between the

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[122] Magnus Ranstorp, *Hizb'allah in Lebanon: The Politics of the Western Hostage Crisis* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), 31.

[123] Ibid., 31.

[124] While this is stated in Hizbullah's Open Letter, there is disagreement as to whether they still adhere to this idea. See Joseph Alagha, *Shifts in Hizbullah's Ideology: Religious Ideology, Political Ideology, and Political Program* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006).

[125] Naim Qassem, *Hizbullah: The Story from Within*, Translated by Dalia Khalil (London: Saqi, 2005), 56.

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two Shia organizations and pointed to differences between the Iranian and Syrian governments over the course of the next two years.

The War of Liberation

Aoun's War of Liberation served two purposes. Firstly, it acted as a vehicle for the Arabization and internationalization of the conflict.[126] Aoun's forces on their own did not pose a credible threat to the Syrian army in Lebanon nor did it have the ability to expel them from the country. However, creating the perception of a conflict between Aoun and the Syrian army – the semblance of a state versus state conflict – increased the likelihood of attracting international support and intervention. As witnessed in the US State Department correspondence cited in previous chapters, the conflict in Lebanon had generally been considered a domestic conflict by US officials and therefore warranted little desire to get involved. Secondly, focusing on the Syrian element of the conflict provided an excuse to delay addressing reforms to the Lebanese political system.[127]

The War of Liberation occurred at a time of regional and international transition. On 20August, 1988, the Iran/Iraq war officially ended. The cessation of this eight-year conflict allowed the Iraqi and Iranian regimes to focus more of their attention elsewhere. Lebanon provided an opportune environment for both regimes to pursue grudges against their enemies. For Iraq, Lebanon was an arena to harass and challenge Syrian forces after years of Syrian support for Iran during the Iran/Iraq war. For Iran, the termination of the war allowed Iran to deepen its ties to Lebanon's Shia community. In addition to

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[126] *Middle East International*, March 1989.
[127] *Middle East International*, March 1989.

the conclusion of the Iran/Iraq war, Egypt began to come back in from the cold. Following Egypt's peace with Israel in 1979, Egypt had been expelled from the Arab League and had largely been absent from inter-Arab affairs. In 1987, Arab League states began reestablishing relations with Egypt and on 22 May 1989, Egypt was readmitted to the Arab League. In the Arab/Israeli arena, the PLO renounced terrorism and accepted UN Resolutions 242 and 338 on 13 December 1988. On the international level, the Soviet Union had fully withdrawn from Afghanistan by 22 May 1989. Thus, in the matter of roughly one year, Lebanon became the last remaining battlefield in the region. This notoriety proved to be a blessing and a curse for various actors in the Lebanese political landscape.

Aoun's War of Liberation lasted until 24 September 1989 when a ceasefire was announced. Over the course of this war, several significant developmentshad occurred affecting the Lebanese conflict. First among them was the Arab League's attempt to resolve the Lebanese crisis finally began to gain steam. The Arab League summit in Casablanca in May 1989 pushed aside the Kuwaiti-sponsored peace initiative regarding Lebanon and transferred the mandate to the League's newly established Tripartite Committee.[128] The committee was led by the leadership of Morocco, Saudi Arabia and Algeria. Initially it failed to bring a halt to the violence, openly admitting to having reached a "dead end" by the end of July. The committee attributed its lack of progress to Syria's and Michel Aoun's intransigence.

Another development was the steady deterioration of Aoun's relations with the US government during this time. In March, Aoun had claimed that the US was

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[128] Kuwait attempted a peace initiative on 17 March but disagreement ensued over the list of the participants.

indifferent to developments in Lebanon, particularly the Syrian shelling of Christian territory. Aoun said: "Unfortunately, the world is looking elsewhere, especially the US government."[129] By that point the US preferred a ceasefire over the continuation of Aoun's war of liberation and a negotiated peace through the assistance of the Arab League. In May a joint US-USSR statement supported the Arab League peace initiative. The withdrawal of direct US involvement in the conflict frustrated Aoun. Anti-American rallies began outside the US embassy, which was located in the Aoun-controlled territory of Lebanon. The frustration became particularly evident in his interactions with the US embassy. Friction developed with the US chargé d'affaires and then eventually with US Ambassador McCarthy over how the US was covering the conflict. By September Aoun insisted that the US acknowledge him as the sole leader of Lebanon and claimed the US was preventing the French from intervening in the conflict. The proverbial straw that broke the camel's back was the concern about embassy security. This came to a head when embassy officials were evacuated in September.[130]

Fortunately for Aoun, America was not his only backer. Iraq had been providing him with weapons.

Part III - Transforming the status quo

September 1989 to October 1990

On 16 September, the Saudi Foreign Minister proposed a seven-point plan that was able to attract sixty-two of the seventy-one remaining members of Lebanon's parliament to Taif, Saudi Arabia. These sixty-two members espoused a variety of

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[129] Gregory, 75.
[130] Ibid., 75.

political ideologies.[131] Absent from the conference, however were representatives of Michel Aoun, Harakat Amal, Hizbullah and Junblāṭ's Progressive Socialist Party.

The issues discussed at Taif were: 1) political reforms; 2) withdrawal of foreign forces; and 3) the election of a new president. Initially, the Maronite representatives were pressured by General Aoun to secure a Syrian military withdrawal before conceding on reforms. Aoun took nearly a week before he begrudgingly accepted the 7-point plan. The Muslim representatives sought to achieve agreement on reforming the political system. Simultaneous with the talks in Taif, a meeting took place in Tehran that was attended by Shaykh Subhi Tufaili of Hizbullah, Nabih Berri of Amal, Walid Jumblatt and several other leaders. The purpose of the meeting was to unite Islamic forces in the face of the negotiations in Taif which they perceived as providing an opportunity for the Maronites to reestablish their authority.[132]

Several sticking points remained to the end, among them a timetable for a Syrian withdrawal and the eradication of sectarian politics. The Maronites conceded on the powers of the presidency for a date on the Syrian withdrawal. As a result, 58 of the 62 deputies signed the agreement. The question remained whether the agreement would remain just a string of words on a piece of paper. Michel Aoun intended for the Taif to Agreement to remain an empty formula unless certain conditions were met. He believed the withdrawal of Syria was necessary before any specific reforms were agreed upon. But he was becoming increasingly isolated by the day. Roughly three months later, in November 1989, the US ambassador presented his credentials to the newly elected President Mouwwad. This act effectively demonstrated the US willingness to work with

[131] Kerr, 160.
[132] FBIS/NESA, October 3, 1989, 55

Syrian-affiliated Lebanese officials instead of Aoun. One month later, after the assassination of President Mouwwad, the US repeated the formalities with Mouwwad's successor Elias Hrawi.

Although they were not his allies, Aoun was not alone in his rejection of the Taif Accord. Walid Junblat, Nabih Berri, Hizbullah and Iran rejected the agreement. Berri referred to the the accord as an Arab May 17th Agreement meant to impose Maronite hegemony over Lebanon.[133] Eventually, Junblāṭ claimed Taif returned Lebanon back to 1975 since the reforms were rather superficial. He blamed Syria for "letting him down," but he "would approve the accord" nonetheless.[134] The words of Junblāṭ also demonstrate the common ground achieved by Syria and the Arab League and the willingness of Junblāṭ to concede to Syrian interests without achieving his objectives – the abolition of a sectarian political system. Hizbullah, Harakat Amal and Iran would also follow suit.

Taif: The implementation

The reforms and stipulations agreed upon at Taif were ratified on 5 November in a location far outside Aoun's jurisdiction, i.e., at the Qulayat air force base in Syrian-occupied Northern Lebanon. In addition to the ratification of the accord, deputies elected Rene Mouwwad as President and reelected Parliamentary Speaker Hussein el-Husseini.[135] Aoun attempted to undermine the events in Northern Lebanon by

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[133] FBIS/NESA, October 13, 1989, 42.
[134] FBIS/NESA, October 23, 1989, 44.
[135] The roughly 30 Christian deputies who had been at Taif had not returned to Lebanon in fear of retribution by Aoun's partisans. They had remained subsequently in Paris. They also feared entering West Beirut, so arrangements were made to have them return through Qulayat and proceed with the vote. Husayni was no longer a member of Harakat Amal at this time.

announcing the dissolution of parliament and claimed that any proceedings on Taif were unconstitutional. Aoun's actions were well received in Christian areas where large popular demonstrations broke out in opposition to the elections and the ratification and a general strike was called on 6 Novemeber. Speaking to demonstrators on 4 November Aoun said:

> Your voice will be heard throughout the world. As of today we will not accept any advice from any quarter unless it contains freedom, sovereignty, and a free presence which we enjoy through a system based on these principles….No power in the world can stifle our willpower.[136]

The popular support in the Maronite community for Aoun's rejection of the events in Qulayat was further reflected in the attacks on the head of the Maronite church who subsequently fled to Syrian-controlled territory. The Patriarch vocally supported the Accord. After the ratification and elections were conducted, Aoun still regarded the results as null and void.

Popular support among Maronites continued well into 1990. Aoun attempted to parlay the public support and solidarity among leaders in the Maronite community to shore up opposition to the elections and ratification, but little support was forthcoming. In the wake of the Taif Accord, the Lebanese Forces (i.e. Samīr Geagea) were ambivalent. They refused to commit either way until they could evaluate the situation more. Geagea said: "I am neither for or against the al-Ta'if accord."[137] This ambivalent position was reflected in Geagea's offer to mediate between Aoun and the newly-elected Mouawwad, but Aoun refused the offer. Geagea did not immediately turn his back on

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[136] FBIS/NESA, October 7, 1989, 41.
[137] FBIS/NESA, February 15, 1990, 29.

Aoun, and so in the wake of the Mouwwad's assassination at the end of November,

Geagea called on the Lebanese Forces to fight side-by-side with Aoun and the Lebanese

Army. But eventually the push for solidarity on how to address the predicament and co-

exist aggravated the existing divide between Aoun and the Forces. It triggered another

round of clashes at the end of January 1990, more deadly and longer than the fighting of

February1989. The war devastated the Maronite community and weakened the military

strength of Aoun and the Lebanese Forces. Iraq negotiated a ceasefire between Aoun

and the Lebanese Forces but the damage was done.[138] The fighting further distanced

Aoun from the international community. By the summer of 1990 France and the US had

largely abandoned Aoun and the hope of reconciliation between the opposing sides.[139]

The Lebanese Forces and Samīr Geagea came out in support of President Hrawi and the

Taif Accord in July.[140]

As the support for Aoun continued to dissipate, he was dealt a final blow at the

end of the summer in 1990. With virtually no support from France and the US and

isolated within the Maronite community and among other Lebanese, Aoun's only

remaining and significant supporter was Iraq. With the end of the Iran/Iraq war in of

1988, Saddam Hussein was able to increase his support to opponents (such as Aoun) of

his Bathist nemesis Hafez al-Al-As'ad by providing weapons and encouraging criticism

of Syrian actions in Lebanon. But this support came to an abrupt halt in the summer of

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[138] *Middle East International*, February 1990.

[139] Relations with Americans and Aoun deteriorated shortly after his designation as Prime Minister. Aoun had been disappointed with the American unwillingness to condemn Syrian actions in Lebanon. Relations reached a point of no return when Aoun "threatened" to take Americans hostage in order for the Americans to focus on the situation in Lebanon. Gregory, 76-7.

[140] FBIS/NESA, July 23, 1990, 44. Regarding the Taif, Geagea stated: "We are for the Taif Agreement, but we reserve the right to have a say on its clauses . Al-Taif is not a final solution, but a temporary settlement of the conditions created by the war of liberation." It should also be noted that Geagea brought up the notion of federalism again.

1990. Iraq's priorities changed after it invaded and occupied Kuwait and abandoned Aoun. Furthermore, the Iraqi invasion, occupation and subsequent annexation of Kuwait generated opposition in the region and internationally. Even Syria, a long time US opponent and nemesis, joined the US coalition against Iraq in the summer of 1990.

By the fall of 1990, Aoun faced overwhelming odds. Except for the popular support within the Maronite community, he was unable to find any external assistance due to his continued veto of the Taif Accord and the Hrawi government. Yet Aoun continued to maintain his position. Isolated, weakened from his war with the Lebanese Forces, and with no one to turn to, Aoun became easy prey for Syria and her Lebanese allies. They defeated Aoun in battle on October 13, 1990. Because of his isolation,this defeat received little regional or international condemnation. It also marked the transformation of the Taif Agreement from a mere piece of paper to an "acknowledged document" and brought about the cessation of two governments.

Part IV:

Analysis

The Lebanese civil war claimed the lives of roughly 150,000 people. The number of lives taken and the devastation wrought on the country were however still not enough to motivate the political entities concerned to find a resolution to the conflict for more than fifteen years. The longevity of the conflict points to its complexity and the entrenchment of certain political positions.[141] These complicating factors may well have

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[141] For a more detailed argument about the war's longevity see: Al-As'ad Abu Khalil, "The Longevity of the Lebanese Civil War", 41-65.

been attributable to the domestic and extra-territorial veto players. Yet the question remains: How did the Taif Agreement resolve this political impasse while others failed?

Unlike the situation described in Chapter 4, where the government, politicians and external actors were forced to respond and adapt to the growing issue of *fedāyīn* attacks, the positions of the various veto players regarding the issues of the civil war were largely espoused from the start and changed very little over the course of the conflict. Although the conflict became entangled in a myriad of issues (e.g., the presence of several foreign powers), at a fundamental level, the Lebanese civil war concerned the status of the Lebanese political system. All the concerned parties desired a Lebanese political system which represented a structure of power that ultimately reflected their conceptualization of the identity and the nature of the state. If and how that recalibration would occur has been the focus of this chapter.

Why did the unacceptable of the previous decade become the acceptable in October of 1990 and not sooner? This is particularly puzzling since a) many of the ideas present in the Taif Accord had been floating around for almost the last fifteen years; and b) the tenets of the Taif Accord did not particularly reflect the main combatants at the end of the conflict. To solve this puzzle requires a side-by-side analysis of the Taif and the failed attempts.

The Constitutional Document (1976)

Similar to the scenario witnessed in Chapter 4, three positions existed regarding the Lebanese political system. The first position reflected the maintenance of the status quo – the continued hegemony of the Maronite Catholic community which in theory

ensured the security to the community. The Lebanese Front, consisting of Pierre Jemayyel and the Katā'ib , former President Camille Sham'ūnand the National Liberal Party and President Frangieh embodied this position. The only significant Maronite figure not to espouse this position was Raymond Eddeh. And as demonstrated by the last chapter, Eddeh's veto in the Maronite community had become largely nonexistent. The second and third position on the other hand challenged the status quo of the political system. The second one entailed a milder challenge – reforms to the political system that weakened but did not erase the Maronite hold on power. The traditional elites from the Sunni community (i.e. Karāmī and Salām) and Raymond Eddeh propounded this position. Their position was reflective of a desire of hold onto power in the face of growing liberalization within the Muslim community. The third position was propounded by the Lebanese National Movement (i.e. Junblat). It espoused a complete overhaul to the political system – one devoid of confessionalism and bringing an end to political offices reserved for particular political confessions.

These positions remained irreconcilable until late January/early February when common ground was achieved between the three groupings. The catalyst behind the reconciliation of these three positions appears to have been related to the Syrian mediation role and changes on the ground. Some Maronite military positions and villages had been recently overrun while others were threatened by the LNM and the PLO. This threat became more menacing with the fragmentation of the Lebanese Army. Syrian guarantees to reign in the Palestinians appealed to the Lebanese Front, forcing them to make concessions concerning the political system. It should also be remembered that pleas for American assistance had fallen on deaf ears, providing them with no

alternative. The Lebanese Front's concessions suggest that their imminent security superseded the maintenance of the political system; it could be salvaged at a future time, or a deal could be struck with the LNM one-on-one at a later date. This thinking may have been associated with the ensuing feud over the unity cabinet. It must be noted that the Constitutional Document continued to designate the Presidency and considerable powers to the Maronite community. The Lebanese Front's concession reflected a position more in line with the second one enumerated above, namely, the position propounded by the traditional Sunni elites or *Tahaluf.*

It also initially appeared that the Lebanese National Movement (or the third position) had conceded and fallen in line with position two. However after a short period of time, the National Movement (i.e. Junblāṭ) vetoed the agreement. Why? Junblāṭ's veto can be partly attributed to his past experiences. In 1969 Junblat had abandoned his fifteen principles, accepting the Cairo Agreement and the formation of Karāmī's government and working for change within the system. Seven years later he had little to show for this sacrifice. Considering the tenets of the Constitutional Document, a similar situation was quite possible. Furthermore, the current circumstances provided an opportunity to veto the document and extract more favorable concessions. The gains made by the PLO and the LNM at the beginning of 1976 suggest little incentive to accept the Constitutional Document. Additionally, the fragmentation of the Lebanese Army and the creation of Lebanon's Arab Army which allied itself with the LNM, further strengthened Junblāṭ and the LNM vis-̧a-vis its Lebanese domestic opponents.

Junblāṭ's veto of the Constitutional Document was also a testament to his veto power within the Muslim community. Indeed, his message, objectives and/or popularity

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continued to resonate within the Muslim community. This leads to the question of why

his allies (e.g. Muqaddem's October 24th movement and Mourabitoun) who shared

similar beliefs were not able to supplant the traditional elites (i.e. Salām and Karāmī).

Part of this must be attributed to the role of the extra-territorial veto players. Syria's

mediation and initial agreement with the representatives of position two validated

individuals such as Salām and Karāmī and prevented them from being marginalized by

more leftist elements regardless of their popularity. Also, the Saudi presence in the

conflict, who supported the traditional elites like Salām, brought further validity to

position two. One must also not forget that the Egyptian signing of Sinai II provided no

alternative to the LNM since the agreement was considered anti-Arab and Palestinian.

Yet the presence of Syria also demonstrates the waning power of the traditional Sunni

elites, particularly Karāmī and Salām. Although common ground had been established

between the President Frangieh and the Katā'ib and Prime Minister Karāmī and former

PM Sā'eb Salām, it could not prevail without the acceptance of Junblāṭ. Junblāṭ, whose

veto ultimately buried the Constitutional Document in the pages of history.

The Geneva Conference (1983)

Instead of using the Constitutional Document as the basis for negotiation, the

actors reverted to the starting line. The events of the previous six years and the reality

on the ground suggest that the document was no longer a viable starting point. While

the three positions regarding the status quo of the political system had not particularly

changed, there had been a shift in and addition of players to the Lebanese chessboard.

The Lebanese Front lost President Frangieh, who defected and joined the National

Salvation Front. The Lebanese Front gained the support of Israel and to a lesser extent the United States. With this support it is not surprising that the Front did not feel compelled to concede on their demands regarding the political system. A similar observation for the National Salvation Front could be made since it had the backing of Syria. And Saudi Arabia was there to support the middle position.

Considering the presence of external powers and the fragmentation of the Lebanese Front and the middle position, it does not appear a solution to the political system could have been reached anyway. This is partly speculation but demonstrates that the conflict in Lebanon had taken on external dynamics which at this stage overshadowed the domestic disputes. The alliances in 1983 reflected a mixture of personal rivalries and external dynamics, not necessarily positions regarding the political system. Unsurprisingly, the focus of the conference concerned the May 17th Agreement and no resolution was achieved.

Lausanne Conference (1984)

The abrogation of the May 17th Agreement appeared to remove the obstacle blamed for the failure of the Geneva Conference. However, the proceedings were futile. Why? The loss of Israel and the withdrawal of the MNF appear to have put the Maronite leadership on the defensive. It is at this point that talk of federalism appears circulated among the Maronites. The proposal countered the attempts of the NSF to reform the system. The Maronite idea is was thus vetoed by the NSF and Amin Jemayyel. The Maronite idea thus had the effect of eliminating any hope of establishing common ground between the parties.

The Tripartite Agreement (1985)

The Syrian dominance of these negotiations and subsequent agreement demonstrated two interesting developments regarding the Lebanese political chessboard. Firstly, it completely marginalized the two premier institutions in Lebanon – the Presidency and the Prime Minister. Secondly, it precluded the Sunni community from the agreement. It also demonstrated the parity established between the PSP and Harakat Amal. Once allies, the cooperation of both these groups were required for a change in the status quo. It also indicates the existence of a Shia veto in the Lebanese political process. Until this point, the Shia had not been required for a change in the status quo. Thirdly, it demonstrated relative Syrian dominance over the chessboard: the Syrians now defined who was necessary for the achievement of an agreement. So with relative Syrian dominance, why did it fail? Obviously, the Lebanese Forces blocked the change in the status quo. But how? And why? Hobeika's decision was not popular among the majority of the Lebanese Forces and the Maronite population.

Taif Agreement (1990)

Domestic Veto Players

Once again, on the eve of the Taif negotiations, three positions existed regarding Lebanon's political system. The support given to Michel Aoun by the public, Maronite politicians and the acceptance of Aoun's power by the Lebanese Forces indicated that Aoun was a veto power player. He supported the maintenance of the status quo – negotiations regarding the future of Lebanon and its political system could not occur

until after the withdrawal of foreign forces. The second position supported a slight alteration of the status quo – some but not extensive reforms to the political system. The Islamic Grouping and Salim el-Hoss embodied this position. And finally the third position once again called for the complete overhaul of the Lebanese political system. This political option was comprised of Junblat's PSP, Berri's Harakat Amal and Hizbullah.

Extra-territorial Veto Players

The participation of the Tripartite Committee inevitably made it a player on the chessboard. One could expand this to include the Arab world (minus Iraq and Syria) since it was operating under the mandate of the Arab League. The Tripartite's veto eventually became absorbed by Syria over the summer of 1989 in order for the negotiations at Taif to proceed. Since the US had also been supportive of the Tripartite committee's agenda to resolve the solution, it could be concluded, that by the time of the negotiations the US veto had been absorbed by the Tripartite and then Syria. Somewhat ironically the Syrians and the US shared common ground regarding the status quo of the Lebanese political system. Going into Taif, the status quo was challenged by two states: Iran and Iraq. Their opposition is not because of a shared belief but because of the factions they associated with.

The veto players game

The agreement that emerged from Taif in October of 1990 largely resembled the middle or second position propounded by the traditional Sunni elites regarding the

Lebanese political system. Unlike previous conferences or attempted agreements, the domestic veto players were largely absent from the negotiations that produced the agreement. Therefore, the accord still needed to clear several hurdles in the following weeks and months.

Out of the gate, the agreement was rejected by both sides. Aoun objected to any talk of reforms before Syrian forces vacated Lebanese lands. He believed objective reforms could be produced with the presence of an occupying force, since they would not be in the interests of the Lebanese. And as demonstrated in the previous pages, Aoun undertook several measures to discredit the agreement and the individuals involved in reaching the accord.

Junblāṭ's PSP, Berri's Harakat Amal and Hizbullah also opposed the accord but from the perspective that the reforms were insufficient. This grouping received the support of Iran, also critical of the agreement. However after a period of time their tune changed and in the weeks and months that followed the negotiations and withdrew their veto. Although Taif did not meet their expectations or demands, what triggered their transformation? The change can be largely attributed to the overwhelming presence of Syria in Lebanon and the approval of the Arab League and the international community extended to Syria's presence. Opposition would have proven futile. While Syria had been opposed in 1976 when it was outside of Lebanon, its presence in the areas it occupied could not be objected to at this juncture. For an individual like Walid Junblāṭ, his father Kamāl had been assassinated because of his opposition to the Syrians. Other than Iraq, there was no one else to turn to. Iraq was not a viable alternative since it supported Michel Aoun their sworn enemy. And for Harakat Amal and Hizbullah, Iraq

was a major suppressor of the Shia. Iran's concession to the Syrian veto was attributable to an arrangement worked out between the two powers.[142] For the Iranian regime, the ability to maintain pressure on Israel superseded its desire to see a just Lebanese political system.

By the end of 1989, only Michel Aoun with the support of Iraq maintained a veto against the Taif Accord. For the next ten months, it prohibited the implementation of the Accord and the reunification of Lebanon. The Lebanese Forces were also unwilling to endorse the accord but this significance pales in comparison to the popularity received by Aoun. The relationship between Aoun and the LF is significant because its deterioration ultimately weakened Aoun, enabling Syria to defeat him. There was no common ground achieved between Aoun and Syria and her Lebanese allies. Aoun's defeat rid the Maronites of a formidable figure capable of generating a veto. All leadership in the Maronite community at this point had very little power base. With these circumstances, an alternative leader could always be picked.

Conclusion

The common ground established at Taif was the result of the forceful elimination of a veto player, not the establishment of any common ground between veto players. Taif had the potential to fail just like the previous attempts at agreement during the civil war but it did not. Why? In 1976, when the veto player in the Maronite community made concessions, it received guarantees from Syria. Furthermore, by 1976, the Syrians

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[142] For further information on this see: Ehteshami, Anoushiravan and Raymond Hinnebusch. *Syria and Iran: Middle Powers in a Penetrated Regional System*. London: Routledge, 1997. Hussein Agha and Ahmad Khalidi. *Syria and Iran: Rivalry and Cooperation* (London: Pinter, 1995), 12.

and the Lebanese Front shared a common enemy. While the Lebanese Front had seen the Palestinians as the enemy, Syrians became increasingly alarmed by the Palestinians. This mutually shared threat provided the circumstances for the Lebanese Front to make concessions regarding the political system.

In the case of Michel Aoun, the regional and international environment eliminated any opportunity for him to build common ground with a domestic or external actor. And as a result he was unwilling to concede. But the opportunity to create common ground with an external actor does not always entail a concession. In the other failed agreements, the support or potential support from an external actor cwas enough to torpedo an endeavor. With this support none of them were willing to make a concession.

The leaders or their parties carried a more formidable presence than the office of the Presidency and the Prime Minister. Why? As leaders of political parties, they appealed to a broader constituency than Hilū and Karāmī. Hilū had little to no popular constituency and Karāmī's was provincial. Furthermore, Junblāṭ's message particularly resonated beyond his Druze community. The power of Jemayyel and Junblāṭ also demonstrated at a fundamental level that the Lebanese political system was not a Maronite/Sunni arrangement and their agreement was contingent on a Syrian/Egyptian agreement.

It is important to note that while the Cairo Agreement provided a change in the status quo regarding the presence of the *fedāyīn* in Lebanon, it did not resolve Lebanon's communal tensions. If anything, the Cairo Agreement only postponed a resolution to the *fedāyīn* predicament and other issues to a later date. As the next

chapter will demonstrate, the Cairo agreement proved to be ephemeral and a more

encompassing agreement or change in the status quo became necessary.

Chapter 6

The Doha Agreement

A group of Lebanese political leaders emerged from a meeting in Doha, Qatar on 21 May 2008 with an agreement to end the political impasse that had plagued Lebanon for the last nineteen months. Marred by demonstrations, sit-ins, assassinations, and violence, the nineteen-month period witnessed the first major political and societal upheaval since the end of the civil war. How did this impasse get resolved? And why did it take nineteen months?

This chapter is structured similar to the previous three chapters: 1) Actors and Background to the Status Quo; 2) The Transformation of the Status Quo; and 3) The Analysis. The one difference concerns the section on the actors and background to the status quo. The Taif Agreement restructured the balance of power in the Lebanese political system. Powers removed from the office of the Presidency were placed in the Cabinet. This was coupled with the extension of the Speaker of the Parliament's term from one to four years. These changes have subsequently characterized the post-Taif power structure as a "troika" – the President, Prime Minister and Speaker of the Parliament.[1] To accurately reflect this transformation, the section on the actors and background to the status quo has been subdivided further to include the Prime Minister and Speaker of the Parliament in addition to the part on the President.

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[1] I am not suggesting the Taif Agreement leveled the playing field between the three largest confessions: the Maronites, the Sunni and the Shia. But the preponderance of power in the office of the President had been reduced by the agreement. The use of the term "troika" originates in the writing of Michael Hudson. Michael Hudson, "Lebanon after Ta'if : another reform opportunity lost?" *Arab Studies Quarterly* 21 (1999), 4. The characterization has also been used in other studies.

Part I – Actors and Background to the Status Quo

President

Emile Lahoud's election on October 15, 1998 was greeted with a mixture of excitement and skepticism. As the former Commander of the Armed Forces, Lahoud's entire professional career had resided outside the political establishment. This nonpolitical background brought hope to many Lebanese who believed that Lahoud would effectively tackle the corruption endemic to Lebanese politics. With these hopes also came fears. As noted by Rola el-Husseini, Lahoud's leadership of the military witnessed a growing bond with Syria. In years past Lebanese officers had been sent to the United States, France and Great Britain for training. But under Lahoud's direction an increasing number of officers were sent to Syria.[2]

In addition to the burgeoning military relationship with Syria, the manner in which Lahoud became President suggested further Syrian complicity in the Lahoud presidency. As the Commander of the Army, Lahoud could not directly assume the position of the Presidency without either resigning from his post or amending Article 49 of the Constitution. The latter occurred. Considering the prominence of the Syrian regime in Lebanese politics, the Constitution could not have been amended without Syrian consent. The amendment of the Constitution and Lahoud's military relationship with Syria quickly made it obvious that Lahoud was part of the Syrian political camp. Some would even claim that Lahoud owed his position to Syria. As will be noted in a

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[2] Husseini, 91.

few pages, Lahoud's connection with Syria made him an unpopular leader among most of the Maronite community.[3]

Five different individuals occupied the post of the Premiership during the Lahoud Presidency: Salīm al-Ḥāṣ (1998-2000), Rafik al-Hariri (2000-2004), Omar Karāmī (2004-2005), Najib Miqatī (2005) and Fuad Siniora (2005-2007). For the purposes of this study, it is particularly important to focus on the Hariri/Lahoud and Sinora/Lahoud relationship.[4] According to several sources, tensions existed between the personalities from the start.[5] Controversy initially emerged during the formation of the first government of the Lahoud presidency and came to a head in 2004 when Hariri resigned as the Prime Minister. Lahoud's crusade against corruption and his ties to Syria conflicted with Hariri's contacts with Western countries and his vision of a rebuilt and resurrected Lebanon.[6]

Prime Minister

On June 30, 2005 Fuad Sinora became Prime Minister of Lebanon. Originally from Saida, Sinora served as finance minister and the minister of state in various cabinets between 1992 and 2004. His political career was not the product of a popular

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[3] This became particularly evident during the 2005 elections. Lahoud parliamentary allies fared poorly in the elections. For example Jean-Louis Qordahi had been appointed Minister of Communications in 2000 because of his relationship with Lahoud. He ran in the 2005 Parliamentary elections and only received 10% of the vote. Husseini, 177-8.

[4] Karami's appointment coincided with Hariri's resignation in 2004. And Miqati's appointment occurred in the wake of the Hariri assassination. As will be demonstrated in the proceeding pages, one's understanding of Siniora is largely contingent on understanding Hariri and his place in the Lebanese political landscape.

[5] Nicolas Blanford notes the frustration between Finance Minister Fuad Siniora and Lahoud regarding expenditures for the army in 1995, 51-2. Pakradouni, 23-7.

[6] As noted by Nicolas Blanford, the problem of corruption extended far beyond Hariri and his associates. "If he [Lahoud] stuck to his pledge….no civil servant or politician would be able to applaud his diligence." Blanford, 7-8.

local following in Saida or his service in the government. He was neither a *za'im* nor scion of a distinguished Lebanese family. His political life and ultimately his appointment as Prime Minister were the product of his connections to Rafik al-Hariri. To comprehend Sinora's significance and the power he wielded as Prime Minister beginning in 2005 one must analyze Hariri Inc. – the Rafik al-Hariri business and political empire. Sinora was a trusted associate of the business empire created by Rafik al-Hariri in the 1980s and 90s. This trust and loyalty was rewarded when Saad al-Hariri (son of Rafik) nominated Sinora as Prime Minister on 4 June 2005, just three and a half months after the assassination of his father on 14 February.[7]

The roots of Hariri Inc. began in the 1960s and 1970s. Rafik al-Hariri was born and raised in Saida, but like many Lebanese he moved abroad in the 1960s to achieve financial success and security. Hariri's initial business endeavors occurred in Saudi Arabia. During his time in Saudi Arabia he earned the trust of Crown Prince Fahd after he completed a major hotel complex in Taif, Saudi Arabia.[8] His connection to the Saudi Royal Family facilitated Hariri's transformation from successful Lebanese expatriate to international businessman and politician. This connection was particularly critical in gaining notoriety in Lebanese political circles. Hariri's first official foray into Lebanese politics occurred as a special envoy for the Saudi King at the Geneva and Lausanne conferences in 1983 and 1984. His emergence on the Lebanese political scene in the 1980s coincided with the Syrian occupation of most Lebanese territory. These circumstances led Hariri to also develop contacts with figures in the Syrian regime. As a

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[7] Saad al-Hariri inherited the political mantle of father in the wake of his assassination. However Saad had little experience in political matters. Sinora's appointment could be understood as a stopgap measure until Saad was prepared to lead a government.
[8] Hariri acquired Saudi nationality during his time in Saudi Arabia.

result, Hariri often was designated as a go-between among Lebanese and Syrian political forces during the war.

Hariri's financial success in Saudi Arabia allowed him to undertake cleaning projects in Lebanon during the war. Most notably in 1982 his company cleared the rubble in downtown Beirut after the Israeli and Palestinian withdrawals from the city. Through these acts of public works, informal diplomatic service and his connection to the Saudi royal family, Hariri's public persona grew eventually leading to his designation as Prime Minister in 1992.[9] Hariri's ascendancy to the highest position in the government for a Sunni marked a new era of politics in the community of Lebanon. Many of the traditional *zu'ama* of Lebanon's cities and outlying areas had been replaced by entrepreneurs.[10] Hariri's arrival to the office in 1992 did not curtail his business ventures or political appetite; rather he became the dominant political force within the Sunni community.

As Hariri's financial reach grew he became the preeminent figure in the Sunni political community. In 1992, Hariri started the Horizon 2000 project which rebuilt downtown Beirut and infrastructure throughout Lebanon.[11] In addition, as the Prime Minister, Hariri obstructed the development of bureaucratic institutions to the benefit his own business interests. During Hariri's time in office, the Independent Municipal Fund was created to assist in the development of municipalities. The fund was not dispersed by bureaucratic structures; rather it fell into the hands of Hariri's associates in

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[9] Hariri's appointment as Prime Minister indicated that Syria did not have a complete monopoly. Hariri was not Syria's man. Hariri represented an aspect of the Syrian/Saudi dynamic in Lebanon. Talal Nizameddin, "The Political Economy of Lebanon under Rafiq Hariri: An Interpretation, *Middle East Journal* 60:1 (Winter 2006), 103-4.

[10] Another entrepreneur of the Sunni community was Najib Miqatī.

[11] Husseini, 116.

the cabinet. Through this fund Sukleen, a garbage collection service, became the garbage collecting service of Beirut and its environs. Sukleen is linked to Hariri's business empire.[12]

Hariri's influence also extended to Sunni religious politics. His candidate for Muftī of the Republic, Muhammad Rashīd Qabānī, was elected in 1996, the first Mufti since the assassination of Hasan Khālid in 1989. This was significant because it not only filled a longstanding void, the election witnessed the first time politicians elected the Muftī, not 'ulama. The neutralization of the Maqāṣid in 2000 left Hariri's religious candidates unrivaled among religious figures.[13] Furthermore, beginning in the mid-1990s, Hariri began to expand health care and educational facilities.[14] Hariri's business empire, philanthropy and politics created a deep and extensive political force in the Sunni community. As Hannes Baumann notes:

> The *zuama* tended to dominate particular locations, for
> instance the Salams in Beirut or the Karamis in Tripoli. Hariri
> managed to build up a truly national presence by spending
> amounts that were beyond the financial capability of the *zuama*.[15]

Hariri Inc. had a large stake in Lebanon's recovery and economic development. Therefore escalations of violence between Hizbullah and Israel in 1993 and 1996 worried Hariri because it had the potential to scare off foreign investment needed to

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[12] Reinoud Leenders, "Nobody Having too much to answer for: Laissez-Faire, Networks and Postwar Reconstruction in Lebanon,"in *Networks of Priviledges in the Middle East: The Politics of Economic Reform Revisited.* Edited by Steven Heydemann (New York: Palgrave, 2004), 181-2.
[13] Baumann, 133-4. Historically the Maqāṣid had been the domain of the Salam family.
[14] For further details see: Melani Cammett and Sukriti Issar, "Bricks and Mortar Clientalism: Sectarianism and the Logics of Welfare Allocation in Lebanon." *World Politics* 62:3 (July 2010), 381-421.
[15] Baumann, 134.

sustain the recovery of Lebanon. As a result Hariri's support for Hizbullah and Syria's role in Lebanon became contentious at times.[16]

In 2000 Hariri's growing monopoly of the Sunni community was further demonstrated by the Hariri bloc taking the largest number of Parliamentary seats – twenty-six. This dominance continued to grow in the 2005 Parliamentary elections shortly after Hariri's assassination. While some parties deferred to Hariri's bloc - Jamā'ah al-Islāmīyah withdrew from these elections in fear of splitting the Sunni community – Hariri's bloc still accumulated 36 Parliamentary seats under the leadership of his son, Saad.[17]

Speaker of the Parliament

The leader of Harakat Amal and prominent civil war figure, Nabih Berri, became Speaker of the Parliament on 20 October 1992.[18] Berri's ascension to the top post in the Shia political community appears to be have been facilitated by his contacts with Syrian officials and visits to Damascus in the days leading up to the election. It also helped that Harakat Amal and Syria developed a strong relationship during the war.[19] Berri's relationship with Syria has been characterized as *l'homme Syria* (Syria's man) in Lebanon.[20] Through his hold on the speakership, Berri put many Shia in the Lebanese

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[16] Bassam Fattouh and Reinoud Leenders, "The Lebanese economy: exaggerated prospects," *Middle East International* (October 4, 1996), 19 -20.

[17] "La Jamaa islamiya ne reviendra pas sur sa décision de boycotter les elections," *L'Orient Le Jour* (June 15 2005).

[18] Berri received 105 of the possible 125 ballots.

[19] Harakat Amal was often accused of carrying out Syrian policy in Lebanon during the civil war. For example the offensive led by Harakat Amal against the Palestinians dubbed the "War of the Camps," was conducted at the behest of the Syrian regime.

[20] Haddad, Scarlett. "Nabih Berry, l'homme de tous les régimes qui a réussi sa reconversion." *L'Orient Le Jour* (September 8, 2006).

civil service during the 90s. The measure buttressed his position in the community but did not lead to a near monopoly like Hariri.

At the time of Hariri's assassination, Berri and Harakat Amal shared the political spotlight in the Shia community with Hizbullah. Tensions between the two parties existed since the civil war. From 1990-2005, the parties managed to co-exist, but this was sometimes a forced co-existence. For example, leading up to the 1996 Parliamentary elections Hizbullah publicly stated that it would post an independent electoral list in the south. Syria immediately requested a meeting with Hizbullah's leadership in Damascus. Shortly after the trip, Hizbullah announced a political alliance (joint electoral list) with Haraket Amal. According to most analysts the joint electoral list forced Hizbullah to forfeit many seats it would have won as an independent.[21] Analyst Paul Salem noted: "Hizbullah's eventual acceptance of a joint list with Amal shows that it is not an autonomous player."[22] After the Syrian withdrawal the co-existence or toleration of each other continued as demonstrated by their electoral alliance in 2005.

Confessional and International Relations

Lebanon's future shifted dramatically on 14 February 2005, when former Prime Minister Rafik el-Hariri and several of his associates died in a bomb blast in downtown Beirut. The deadly event did not entail a renegotiation of the Lebanese political contract established at Taif, but subsequently lessened the heretofore ubiquitous Syrian presence

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[21] Graham Usher, "Why Hizbullah's wings have been clipped," *Middle East International* (October 4, 1996), 18.
[22] Ibid., 19.

in Lebanese society. The development loosened the tight grip of Syria over Lebanese society and opened the door further to external actors who challenged Syria's near monopoly of Lebanon.

a) Pax-Syriana

It could be argued that the Syria's heavy hand kept things relatively quiet between Lebanon's confessions.[23] The Syrian military presence received legitimacy from the Taif Accord, which stipulated that Syrian forces remain in Lebanon until the Lebanese and Syrian governments agreed on a withdrawal date. Syria more or less unofficially annexed Lebanon in the months following the end of the civil war. Also, beginning in May of 1991 Syria and Lebanon "signed" a series of pacts: The Treaty of Brotherhood, Cooperation, and Coordination (1991), the Defense and Security Agreement (1991), the Modernization of Telecommunications Agreement (1993), a Tourism Agreement (1993), an Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine agreement (1993), a Healthcare Pact(1993), and the Lebanese-Syrian Cultural Agreement.[24] On the surface the pacts suggested the strengthening of bonds between two fraternal countries. But in reality the pacts were skewed in Syria's favor. Ultimately the pacts deepened Syrian occupation, interference and manipulation of many facets of the Lebanese state. Syrian actions appeared to be motivated by a combination of strategic, political and economic interests.[25]

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[23] Zahar, 567-8.
[24] Habib Malik, *Between Damascus and Jerusalem: Lebanon and Middle East Peace* (Washington, DC: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2000), 34-6.
[25] Raymond Hinnebusch, "Pax-Syriana? The origins, causes and consequences of Syria's role in Lebanon," *Mediterranean Politics* 3:1 (Summer 1998), 154.

The relative peace in Lebanese society came at the price of Lebanese self-determination. The maintenance of Syria's hegemony in Lebanon entailed not letting any group or political institution, including Hizbullah become too powerful. Syria manipulated the political process and most political players on various occasions.[26] As an indication of the profoundness of Syrian influence from 1990-2005, an informant related to me a story about his promotion in a state institution. He did not receive information about his promotion from Lebanese authorities; the news came during a visit to Syrian authorities. Syria also made itself indispensable in the realization of Lebanese political careers and the resolution of political disputes. Lebanese politicians took countless trips to Damascus to procure Syrian political backing.[27]

The Syrian manipulation of Lebanese affairs went largely uncontested at the domestic and international level for most of 1990-2005. Initially the Lebanese community unhappiest with the Syrian presence was the Christians (i.e. the Maronite Catholics).[28] As demonstrated by their words and actions during the war, the Maronites perceived the Syrian presence in Lebanon as an anathema. After the war this perception endured however their voices became silent and their active resistance ceased. By the early 90s, the main Maronite political players and most of the community abandoned the political process. In the years following the war, the Maronites had their leadership largely gutted. Michel Aoun, Raymond Eddeh and former president Amin Jemayyel

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[26] Harik, 109-10. For example, analysts blamed Syria for the absence of Hariri from the government in 1998. Another example that was mentioned earlier in the chapter was the joint electoral list of Hizbullah and Harakat Amal.

[27] Hinnebusch, "Pax-Syriana? The origins, causes and consequences of Syria's role in Lebanon,"150-1.

[28] It should be noted that Suleiman Frangieh retained good relations with the Syrian regime largely because of the historical ties between his family and the Asad family. Other figures in the Christian community (e.g. Gabriel al-Murr) maintained relations with Syria but were not particularly prominent during the civil war. Also it must be noted that elements in other communities did not welcome the Syrian presence or eventually became with it.

lived in exile. Dany Sham'ūn(son of Camille Sham'ūn) had been assassinated at the end

of the war. And Samir Geagea, the leader of the Lebanese Forces, had been convicted of

crimes against the state and was serving a life sentence.[29]Maronite politicians did serve

in the government but were not representative of the community. Many Maronites

considered participation in the political process as an act of sedition against the

community.

Compounding the absence of prominent Maronite leadership, many Maronites

boycotted the Parliamentary elections in 1992. They claimed ongoing violations of the

terms and spirit of the Taif Accord precluded involvement in the government.[30] They

also believed that the Syrian military presence would not ensure "free and fair"

elections.[31] The Maronites pursued a less successful boycott of the 1996 elections as

some Maronites broke ranks.[32] Without leadership or politicians truly representing the

interests of the community in the government, the Christian community largely stood

outside the political process for the first ten years after the civil war.

At the turn of the century, the Maronites began to raise their voice and the

community's opposition to the Syrian occupation slowly intensified. The first glimmers

of opposition to the Syrian presence came from religious figures. In 2001, thousands of

Lebanese lined the streets from Beirut to Bkirke (the residence of the Maronite

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[29] Initially Ja'ja' received a death sentence but it was commuted to life in prison. Adherents of the Lebanese Forces claim that the state conspired against Ja'ja'since he was the last major opponent of the Syrian presence in Lebanon. It should be noted that Ja'ja'refused to serve in the Lebanese government after the conclusion of the civil war.
[30] El-Khazen, 123. Turnout among the Christian community for the 1992 elections was extremely low. In the district of Jbeil only 6.52% of the registered voters turned out. For more detail see Khazen, 131.
[31] Hinnebusch, 151.
[32] The Lebanese Forces and adherents of Michel Aoun, Amin Gemayel, Raymond Edde and Dory Chamoun boycotted the elections. However some of the Christians broke ranks. Deputy Albert Mukhaiber and fifty-eight Christian politicians issued a statement encouraging Christian participation in the elections. El-Husseini, 33.

Patriarch) after the Maronite Patriarch openly condemned the Syrian occupation during a trip to the US and Canada. The head of Université Saint Joseph, Fr. Selim Abboud S.J., spoke out against the Syrian presence on St. Joseph Day. Invigorated by the actions and words of their religious leaders, demonstrations against authorities in August 2001 led to a series of arrests. These outbursts did little to faze the Syrian authorities and Syria's Lebanese allies or elicit much of a response.

Other manifestations of opposition originated outside the borders of Lebanon and became increasingly more difficult to ignore. Prior to 9/11, the international community often informally acknowledged Syrian control of Lebanon. For example, diplomats travelled to Damascus in an attempt to quell the outbreak of violence between Hizbullah and Israel in April 1996.[33] Also Syria represented Lebanon at negotiations even though Israel occupied Lebanese land. Deference toward Syrian interests in Lebanese affairs began to be challenged in the wake of the events of 9/11 and the US invasion of Iraq. With the Bush administration's international crackdown on terror organizations, increasing pressure centered on Syrian support of Hizbullah and the continued Syrian presence in Lebanon. The Bush administration addressed the Syrian/Hizbullah relationship in December of 2003 with the Syrian Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Act. The Accountability Act sanctioned the Syrian regime specifically mentioning its support and military assistance to Hizbullah.[34] The Act had virtually no effect on Syria because of limited amount of trade between the two nations. The legislation clearly packed more bark than bite.

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[33] The American government refused to negotiate with Lebanese authorities during the crisis. In fact the US offered *de jure* recognition of Syria's presence in Lebanon if Syria agreed to a US resolution to the crisis. Michael Jansen, "Syria's central role" *Middle East International* (April 26, 1996), 7.

[34] The timing and measures of the Accountability Act questioned whether it targeted Syria in Lebanon or Syria's role in allowing "foreign jihadists" into Iraq responsible for attacks on US troops.

The international spotlight on Syria and its presence in Lebanon intensified in 2004. The extension of Emile Lahoud's presidential term in September 2004 witnessed a noticeable increase in international pressure on Syria and its interference in Lebanese affairs. For the international community, Syria had gone a step too far. On 3 September 2004 Emile Lahoud received a 3-year extension to his presidential term. For many, the extension reaffirmed Lebanon's puppet status. The extension of the Presidential term had historically been taboo (i.e. see Sham'ūnand Shihāb) and demonstrated Syrian intervention at the highest levels of Lebanese politics and the relative absence of democracy in a Syrian-dominated environment.[35]

Religious figures such as the Maronite Patriarch, the vice president of the Higher Shiite Council Shaykh Abd al-Amir Qabalan and Sunni Mufti Rashīd Qabbani vehemently opposed the extension.[36] The measure also evinced growing opposition in the political ranks. A largely Christian political grouping formed in 2003 called the Qurnat Shahwān expressed dissatisfaction about the extension.[37] The opposition to the extension also demonstrated the distance between the unofficial leaders of the Maronite community and Lahoud. Adding to the mix, some of the traditional Lebanese allies of Syria also broke ranks. Walid Junblāṭ expressed his dissatisfaction with the measure by withdrawing ministers from the Hariri government on 6 September.[38] The Minister of the Environment, Faris Buwayz, a Maronite, also resigned. Hariri supported Lahoud's

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[35] President Elias Hrawi (1989-1998) also had his presidential term extended. However it did not receive opposition from the international community.
[36] For more on the controversy with Qabbani and Qabalan see: "Lebanon and Syria against the world," *Middle East International* , Sept 10 2004, 4.
[37] For more details about the principles and objectives of the grouping see:
<http://themiddleeastmirror.weebly.com/uploads/7/5/3/0/7530186/qornet_shehwan_gathering.pdf >
[38] Junblāṭ's ministers included the Trade and Economy Minister Marwan Hamadeh, Culture Minister Ghazi Aridi, and the Minister of the Displaced Abdullah Farhat.

extension, although studies indicate it was done under duress.[39] Roughly one month later, Hariri resigned following an assassination attempt on an ally and Syrian pressure.[40] The extension of Lahoud's term not only upset many Lebanese; it garnered the attention of the international community and resulted in a US-French proposed UN Resolution.

Originally drafted by the US and French on 2 September, UN Resolution 1559 pressured Syria and called for the disarmament of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias. The resolution supported the establishment of a sovereign Lebanon, calling for the withdrawal of Syrian military and security forces from the country, the disarmament of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias, and Lebanese authorities extending their authority throughout the country. The resolution brought a more unified international approach to Lebanon since it was backed by both the United States and France.[41] It also led to the EU perceiving Hizbullah as a terror organization.[42] International pressure continued on Syrian and the Lahoud presidency with the issuance of UN Resolution 1583. The resolution called for an extension of the UNIFIL mission and in the wake of violence along Lebanon's border with Israel requested the deployment of Lebanese troops throughout Southern Lebanon.[43] The resolution attempted to re-impose the authority of the state in an area frequented by Hizbullah's militia. Syria and its Lebanese allies did not budge in the face of these international and domestic pressures. They only conceded to demands after another Lebanese development.

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[39] Blanford, 91-95.
[40] Syria accused Hariri of orchestrating UN Resolution 1559.
[41] Jim Quilty, "Lebanon and Syria against the world," *Middle East International* (September 10, 2004), 5. It should be noted that the US and France had been at odds over the US invasion of Iraq.
[42] "Hizbullah official criticizes EU labeling his organization 'terrorist'" *Lexis Nexis, BBC Monitoring Middle East – Political* (March 11, 2005).
[43] <http://www.un.org/press/en/2005/sc8299.doc.htm>

Rafik al-Hariri died in a bomb blast on 14 February 2005. The assassination became a watershed event as Lebanese society polarized around the issue of the Syrian presence in the country. The level of Syrian involvement in the Lebanese state caused many to accuse Syria of the assassination. Others did not rush to judgment. Although Syria had manipulated the situation in Lebanon for roughly fifteen years, certain groups realized that a Syrian withdrawal would be detrimental to their interests. If Syria left, they would be more subjected to the whims of other Lebanese actors and external actors. On March 8th, hundreds of thousands of Lebanese representing most Lebanese confessions demonstrated in downtown Beirut in support of the Syrian presence. The Shia represented a majority of the demonstrators and Hizbullah's leader Hassan Nasrallah addressed the crowd:

> Dear brothers and sisters, we gather here today to express our support for the goals we outlined in the news conference, the most important of which thanking Assad's Syria, Hafez Assad's Syria, Bashar Assad's Syria, the resisting Syrian people and the steadfastness of the Syrian Arab Army who accompanied us, and still does, throughout the years of defense and resistance.[44]

A week later on March 14th a crowd representing most, if not all Lebanese confessions numbered over a million, demonstrated in downtown Beirut against the Syrian presence in Lebanon. Following the demonstrations Damascus recognized that they had overstayed their welcome and withdrew their military forces from Lebanon on 30 April 2005.

Considering the level of Syrian interference in Lebanese politics and society, it would be naïve to conclude that Syrian influence completely vanished when the last

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[44] <http://www.cggl.org/scripts/document.asp?id=46225>

troop departed from Lebanese soil. Syria retained several allies in the Lebanese political environment, most prominently Harakat Amal, Hizbullah and President Lahoud.[45] Many also claimed that Syria maintained an intelligence apparatus in Lebanon. Suffice it to say, the Syrian influence had been reduced but not eliminated. Syria kept a foot in Lebanon to maintain its security vis-a-vis Israel, confront Israel through Hizbullah, reap economic benefits and maintain prominence in regional affairs.[46] The circumstances also allowed Syria's ally, Iran, who had traditionally taken a back seat to Syrian interests in Lebanon or played second fiddle to Syria, to play a more prominent role in Lebanon.

Those in Lebanon who celebrated the Syrian withdrawal looked to outside actors to help counter the remaining Syrian influence and Syria's Lebanese allies. The United States and Saudi Arabia developed close relations with the participants of March 14th. The US perceived the weakening of Syria in Lebanon as an opportunity to isolate Hizbullah in its struggle against the US's traditional ally Israel. Furthermore, the US saw an opportunity to facilitate the creation of a US-friendly government that would be more amendable to US regional interests. During a brief visit on 22 July to Beirut, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice stated that Lebanon could not find a "better partner than America."[47]Saudi interests in Lebanon derived from its regional position as a leader of the Sunni community, its close relationship with the deceased Rafik al-Hariri and their subsequent support of his son. Inevitably, Saudi Arabia would be involved in Lebanon in some capacity, particularly from a financial perspective.

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[45] Other less prominent allies included Suleiman Frangieh, the SSNP and the Bath.
[46] Thousands of Syrian day laborers remained in Lebanon following the withdrawal. They provided an important source of income for many Syrian families.
[47]*As-sharq al-Awsaṭ*, July 23, 2005.

Overarching regional developments also drove US and Saudi interests in Lebanon. The US invasion of Iraq resulted in the collapse and defeat of the Iraqi government of Saddam Hussein. Hussein had traditionally provided a check or counter measure against Iranian interference in the region. With Saddam Hussein out of the way, Iran could operate more freely in the region, increase its influence in Iraq, strengthen its alliance with Syria and deepen its ties with Hizbullah. This concerned US officials who emphasized that Lebanon must be free of foreign influences.

The idea of potentially three Shia-oriented states (Iran, Iraq and Syria) side-by-side with Lebanon as a possible fourth challenged Saudi and Sunni hegemony in the region.[48] The emergence of sectarian fighting in Iraq between the Sunni and the Shia further aggravated the increasingly polarized environment. Lebanon already contained these dynamics but these regional developments exacerbated them. Once again, Lebanon became a microcosm of the regional conflict and a regional/international battleground. A struggle ensued between Syria/Iran and Saudi/USA in Lebanon that was reflected in the demonstrators of March 8 and March 14.

b) Post Pax-Syriana

The exit of Syrian forces shook up the dynamics of Lebanese politics and witnessed the return of some Lebanese politicians from exile. Within four weeks of the Syrian military withdrawal, the Lebanese government initiated parliamentary elections.

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[48] King 'Abdullah of Jordan coined the term "Shia crescent" in 2004 following the collapse of Iraqi state and uncertainty surrounding Iranian intentions in the region. For more information on the Saudi/Iranian rivalry in the region see: Shahram Chubin and Charles Tripp, *Iran-Saudi Arabia Relations and Regional Order* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996) and Henner Furtig, *Iran's rivalry with Saudi Arabia between the Gulf Wars* (Reading: Ithaca University Press, 2002).

With the exception of the Shia community, pro-Syrian candidates in other confessions were largely defeated.[49] Candidates aligned with Saad al-Hariri (in 2006 Hariri formed the Mustaqbīl Party or Future Movement) emerged from the elections as the biggest bloc in Parliament. It totaled thirty-seven deputies and dominated the Sunni community. Most of Hariri's allies received over 60% of the votes in their districts.[50] These thirty-seven deputies constituted over half of the seventy-two deputy coalition in the Parliament. Subsequently the coalition became referred to as March 14th. The predominantly Christian parties of the Lebanese Forces and the Kataib and the predominantly Druze party the PSP joined Hariri as the other members of March 14. They represented the views of most constituents who demonstrated on March 14th. In total all these groups constituted seventy-two seats in the Parliament.

Michel Aoun and his allies (subsequently referred to as the Free Patriotic Movement (FPM)) constituted the second largest bloc in Parliament following the elections. They held twenty-one seats and mostly consisted of Maronite representatives. Aoun, the former acting Prime Minister and Commander of the Lebanese Armed Forces returned from exile on May 7th to run in the elections. Aoun's FPM dominated the Maronite heartland of Kisrawan which demonstrated that his popularity still endured in predominantly Maronite areas. This staying power among the Maronites made Aoun a critical variable in the political process and demonstrated the existing political divisions within the Maronite community. Although Aoun and his supporters were anti-Syria and had participated in the demonstration of March 14th, Aoun ran independently of most

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[49] The one notable exception was Michel Murr in the region of the Metn. His victory appears attributable to his joining the list of Michel Aoun's candidates prior to the elections. While Murr may not have been particularly popular in the Greek Orthodox community, Lebanese voters will often vote for a list of candidates rather than individually picking candidates from a listing.
[50] < https://www.ndi.org/files/Lebanese_Elections_Report_2009.pdf>.

other March 14 candidates. He chose to reject offers to create an electoral alliance with Hariri and others.[51]

Hizbullah and Harakat Amal tied for the third largest bloc. During the elections, the two parties chose to overlook their differences and contentious history and create an alliance. They held thirteen seats each and garnered upwards of 70% of the votes in their districts. Their landslide victory meant they held a near political monopoly in the Shia community. It surpassed the Hariri landslide in the Sunni community. The Hizbullah/Harakat Amal alliance endured after the elections and largely represented constituents who demonstrated on March 8th and were subsequently referred to by that date.

The first post-Syrian cabinet was approved several weeks after the elections. Noticeably absent from the cabinet were representatives from Michel Aoun's Free Patriotic movement, the second largest bloc in the Parliament. Although the FPM movement carried a majority of the seats in the Christian community, the electoral alliance of Hariri's al-Mustaqbil Party, the PSP, the Lebanese Forces and the Kataib were unwilling to provide a sufficient number of cabinet posts to satisfy Aoun and the leadership of his party. Aoun's refusal to join the coalition prevented the Sinora cabinet from acquiring a two-thirds majority in the Parliament to pass bills. The absence of Aoun and the lack of popular representation of the Maronite community warranted a refusal by the Maronite Patriarch to bless the cabinet.[52] As a result, Aoun decided to lead the opposition to the government.

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[51] Haddad, 48. Aoun appeared motivated by the chance to maximize his number of seats.
[52] *Middle East International*, Aug 1, 2005, 12.

The cabinet was remarkable for another reason. It marked the first time an official member of Hizbullah accepted a ministerial position. As the Minister of Water and Energy, Muhammad Fneish's presence in the cabinet indicated a willingness by Hizbullah to play a more prominent role in the government to ensure the protection of its interests and adapt to the void left by the Syrian withdrawal. [53] Until 2005, Hizbullah refused to partake in a cabinet. They believed participation in cabinets was tantamount to condoning a government whose actions often conflicted with its ideology. [54] The inclusion of Hizbullah in the cabinet also demonstrated the status of the party in the Shia community and the overall Lebanese political landscape. Hizbullah could not be ignored in the creation of any government. An example of the party's political sway was demonstrated in choice of the Lebanese Foreign Minister in 2005. Fawzi Salloukh, a Shia, needed the approval of Hizbullah before being assigned to the post.

Hizbullah crossed new thresholds in 2005 but with these new thresholds brought further controversy. Throughout the 90s, Hizbullah evolved as an organization. Initially it refused to participate in Parliamentary elections. After meetings in Iran, the organization changed its position and only refused to participate in the cabinet. Hizbullah justified the organization's presence in parliament as a means for formally declaring and defending its positions and when necessary, pressuring or criticizing the

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[53] The International Crisis Group believes this change can be attributed to the Syrian withdrawal and growing pressure on it to disarm. Participation in the cabinet gives Hizbullah "another line of defense" against disarmament. "Lebanon: Managing the Gathering Storm" *International Crisis Group Middle East Report 48* (December 5, 2005), 20-1.
[54] Hamzeh, 120. Hizbullah Parliamentary members did not give a vote of confidence to the 1992,1996 and 2000 cabinets.

government.[55] As demonstrated in the previous paragraph its position towards the cabinet also evolved.

A similar transformation did not occur regarding its militia. In 2005, Hizbullah continued to retain a formable military force outside the control of the state and adamantly refused to surrender its arms. The Taif Agreement called for the disarmament of all Lebanese militias. However one stipulation existed; those who resisted the Israeli presence in South Lebanon could retain their weapons. This stipulation provided justification for Hizbullah to retain its arms, albeit with Syrian connivance.[56] Violence between Hizbullah, Israeli forces and the South Lebanese Army (SLA) flared up from time to time and posed a risk to Lebanese and regional stability. Hizbullah's retention of its weapons troubled many in the international community because they existed outside the control of the Lebanese state and were also interpreted as an extension of Iranian power.

The quandary of Hizbullah's arms appeared to be resolved in May of 2000 when Israeli forces withdrew from its security zone in South Lebanon and the SLA dissolved. The UN recognized the Israeli withdrawal as complete and in accordance with UN

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[55] Qassem, 189.

[56] Syria cannot officially engage Israel in combat without breaking the terms of the disengagement agreement reached between the two countries in May of 1974 or defy their unofficial agreement with Israel that forbid Syrian forces from crossing a "red line" in Lebanon; therefore Hizbullah became a convenient surrogate for the Syrian regime to aggravate the Israelis while still "legally" adhering to its agreements with Israel. This *modus operandi* has frequently been acknowledged by both the United States and Israel. The United States has maintained that Syria is a state sponsor of terrorism and has accused the regime of provoking and manipulating events inside Lebanon. Judith Harik states: "Syria alone can pull the plug on Hizbullah." Judith Harik, *Hizbullah: The Changing Face of Terrorism* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 201. In a 2003 article Daniel Byman said: "…cracking down on Syria is Washington's most promising option". Daniel Byman, "Should Hizbullah be Next?" *Foreign Affairs* (November/December 2003). Daniel Byman, "Hizbullah's Dilemma." *Foreign Affairs* (April 13, 2005). Giles Trendle, "Hizbullah; politics behind the passion," *Middle East International* (April 26, 1996), 16.

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Resolution 425.[57] Hizbullah, the Lebanese and Syrian governments disagreed. They

argued that the withdrawal was incomplete because Israel still occupied a small tract of

Lebanese territory called the Shebaa Farms.[58] The Shebaa Farms issue provided

justification for the retention of Hizbullah's arms. In addition to liberating the Shebaa

Farms, Hizbullah started to argue that the retention of its arms deterred Israel from

launching attacks on Lebanon.[59] As a result Hizbullah placed more emphasis on its

militia as an instrument of defense, not liberation, a perspective it continued to espouse

after the Syrian withdrawal.[60] In 2005 Lebanese Foreign Minister, a non-Hizbullah

Shi'a, stated:

> We said that Hizbullah's weapons were not militia weapons. These
> weapons are meant to support the Lebanese army troops and to defend
> Lebanon in case of danger. The weapons of Hizbullah maintain
> security and stability on the Lebanese borders.[61]

Hizbullah leader Hasan Nasrallah stated:

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[57] United Nations Resolution 425 was drafted after the Israeli invasion of south Lebanon in 1978. It called for an immediate withdrawal of all Israeli troops and the creation of a United Nations Interim Force to monitor the border and eventually confirm the Israeli withdrawal.

[58] The Shebaa Farms is a roughly twenty-five square kilometer area located at the base of Mt. Hermon that constitutes a part of the Golan Heights. They were captured by Israel during the Six-Day War in June of 1967 and annexed by Israel in 1981. The Golan Heights has been a focal point for mutual Israeli/Syrian distrust concerning the other's objective(s) and the centerpiece of failed negotiations. With the emergence of the Sheb'a Farms controversy, Lebanon, largely against the wishes of the international community, has been added to the Golan Heights equation. The international community does not recognize the Sheb'a Farms as Lebanese land but as Syrian land, therefore indicating that Israel's withdrawal from Lebanese territory in May 2000 was complete and in accordance with UN Resolution 425. Adding further confusion to this issue is the fact that Syria and Lebanon have never officially demarcated their shared border in this area. One recent study by an Israeli argues that the Sheb'a Farms is indeed subject to dispute. There is no clear evidence that the land is either Syrian or Lebanese. Arguments can be made by both. Asher Kaufman, "Who owns the Sheb'a Farms? Chronicle of a territorial dispute," *The Middle East Journal* 56 (Autumn 2002), 576-97. And Asher Kaufman, "Understanding the Shebaa Farms dispute: Roots of the Anomaly and Prospects of Resolution," *Palestine-Israel Journal* 11 (2004).

[59] "Hizbullah: Rebel without a cause?" *International Crisis Group* (July 30, 2003), 8.

[60] "Hizbollah: Rebel without a cause?" 8. The International Crisis Group reported that Hizbullah has changed its appeal to the Lebanese populace —"'liberating' Sheba'a to 'protecting Lebanon and Syria and empowering all Arab positions facing the Israeli challenges' as a result of its military presence in S. Lebanon."

[61] "UN Envoy's report on Hizbullah arms offers nothing new – Lebanese Foreign Minister," *Lexis Nexis, BBC Monitoring Middle East - Political* (November 3, 2005).

> We are a small state that confronts this strong state, which also enjoys very strong international protection and backing, led by the United States….We speak about protecting the country, Lebanon, the Lebanese people, and the resources, fate, the future of Lebanon.[62]

Lebanese politicians convened a national dialogue to address Hizbullah's weapons and other outstanding issues following the Syrian withdrawal. Before any agreements were reached, Hizbullah's weapons created further problems. After a cross border raid on an Israeli patrol that resulted in the death of several Israeli soldiers, Israel launched a 34-day offensive that devastated South Lebanon and much of the infrastructure throughout Lebanon. Many Lebanese, particularly in the March 14th camp, believed Hizbullah brought the conflict on Lebanon, placing the interests of the resistance above the interests of the state and the rest of the society. Furthermore Hizbullah did not consult with the political establishment prior to launching the attack. During the war, Prime Siniora pleaded for international assistance to stop the war. But his calls for a cease fire initially fell on deaf ears. The US supported Israeli security concerns and did not interfere with Israeli actions. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice was famously quoted as saying:

> What we're seeing here, in a sense, is the growing -- the birth pangs of a new Middle East. And whatever we do, we have to be certain that we are pushing forward to the new Middle East, not going back to the old one.[63]

The 34-day war aggravated the divisions in Lebanese politics and society. Hizbullah's popularity following the war soared in Lebanon and the Middle East. Hizbullah's actions created friction within the Shia community, particularly with Nabih

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[62] International Crisis Group,"Hizbullah: Rebel without a cause."
[63] < http://www.cnn.com/2006/POLITICS/07/22/Bush.radio/>.

Berri.[64] UN Resolution 1701 called for the deployment of Lebanese soldiers along Lebanon's border with Israel. For the first time in twenty-five years, Lebanese soldiers stood between Hizbullah and Israeli Defense Forces. Hizbullah, Syria and Iran's ability to pressure Israel had been curtailed. After the war Siniora refused to dissolve the government. Increasingly a Sunni/Shia dichotomy emerged, but Hizbullah and the Shia were not alone; some of the Christians had joined them.

In February 2006, Hizbullah signed "A Memorandum of Understanding" with Michael Aoun's Free Patriotic Movement political party, bringing Aoun into the March 8th political grouping. The memorandum called for the strengthening of Lebanese state institutions, the practice of consensual democracy and the creation of a joint dialogue to address Lebanon's outstanding issues, but it also expressed the desire to establish sound relations with Syria and the maintenance of Hizbullah's arms. At first glance it appeared that Aoun, a self-avowed Lebanese nationalist, had abandoned his principles. He had allied with an organization whose militia was juxtaposed to the state and expressed interest in creating relations with his historic enemy Syria. Aoun's action appeared motivated by politics within the Maronite community and the March 14th grouping, rather than an affinity for Hizbullah and its ideology.[65] The alliance accomplished two objectives: 1) March 8th went from a predominantly Shia grouping to a more diverse movement; and 2) Strengthened Aoun's bargaining position since he had the support of the foremost Shia political party.

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[64] < http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/7335>.

[65] In conversations with American diplomats at the beginning of May 2005, Aoun blamed Hariri, Junblāṭ and other Christian politicians for the inability to reach a common position. He then expressed his willingness to work with Hizbullah because they had not been corrupted like other Lebanese leaders and were a popular choice among Lebanon's Shia.<http://wikileaks.org/cable/2005/05/05PARIS3053.html>.

In the wake of the 34-Day war, Aoun took the initiative to pressure for change.

Aoun called for the formation of a national unity cabinet because the Sinora government

"has forged an alliance with foreign countries working against Lebanese parties."[66]

Hassan Nasrallah appealed for the creation of a national defense strategy. Hizbullah

believed that the Lebanese government had become too oriented towards the US in the

wake of the 34-Day War. A Hizbullah official noted:

> If there were a Lebanese person, party or any side still wagering on
> disarming the resistance, we would say to them: The hope to disarm
> the resistance by force has become a thing of the past. This possibility
> has fallen down for good. We do not feel that the resistance's back is
> covered unless a national unity government is formed. What happened
> is that we are living with a government that enjoys the trust of America
> but does not enjoy the trust of the resistance.[67]

Their pleas fell on unsympathetic ears. March 14th member, Atef Majdelani stated:

> Some parties are seeking either to increase their shares in the Cabinet
> so that they can hamper ministerial decisions or prevent the current
> government from assuming its responsibilities in implementing UN
> Resolution 1701 and the creation of international tribunal to try those
> accused in the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri…
> The cabinet will not resign because it enjoys the trust of the people and
> the parliamentary majority."[68]

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[66] *The Daily Star*, September 1, 2006.
[67] Government enjoys trust of USA, but not trust of resistance - Hizbullah official *BBC Monitoring Middle East – Political*, (October 18, 2006).
[68] *The Daily Star*, September 1, 2006.

Part II - Transforming the Status Quo

Resignations, Protests and Sit-ins

On November 11, 2006, five ministers withdrew from the Siniora cabinet. They constituted all five Shia representatives in the cabinet.[69] Two days later Yacoub Sarraf, a Christian and ally of President Lahoud also submitted his resignation.[70] Prime Minister Siniora rejected all the resignations. The resignations resulted from the refusal of the government to respond to Hizbullah, the Free Patriotic Movement and Harakat Amal's demand that the Shia be given one-third of the seats in a national unity cabinet.

Some argued that the move was an attempt by Hizbullah and March 8th to foist its agenda on the government; others suggested the demand represented the true size of the Shia community in Lebanon. Subsequently a dispute broke out within the political establishment over the legitimacy of the government. President Lahoud and others like Speaker of the Parliament Nabih Berri immediately claimed that the government could not function properly without Shia representation in the cabinet. Siniora and other March 14th members argued that the government could function since the resignation of eight members of the cabinet was necessary for the formation of a new government. Others perceived the demand as unreasonable. Walid Junblāṭ noted:

> They have the president who is totally favoring them, they
> have their alliance with the Iranian and Syrians at the expense
> of Lebanese independence.[71]

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[69] The ministers included Fawzi Salloukh (Foreign Minister), Muhammad Fneish (Minister of Energy and Water), Trad Hamadeh (Minister of Labor), Muhammad Khalifeh (Minister of Health) and Talal Sahili (Minister of Agriculture).

[70] Yaacoub Sarraf stated: "Since I do not see myself belonging to a constitutional authority because the representation of one group, regardless of its identity, is completely absent, I tender my resignation from the government as of today. I appreciate your confidence and cooperation."

[71] *The Daily Star*, November 15, 2006.

In the meantime, Siniora and the remainder of the cabinet continued to proceed with matters of the state. In the wake of the resignations and after weeks of warning, Hizbullah, Harakat Amal and the Free Patriotic Movement escalated their demands with protests and a sit-in in downtown Beirut on December 1st.

On the eve of the protest and sit-in, Hasan Nasrallah called upon all the Lebanese to participate in a peaceful protest to achieve the resignation of the Siniora government and the formation of a national unity government. By the end of the week tents occupied Riad al-Solh and Martyrs squares in Downtown Beirut. The sit-in lasted until May of 2008. Sinioria and the remaining cabinet members refused to concede in the face of the resignations and protests. As the political impasse progressed, it became enmeshed with other issues making a difficult situation all the more complex.

Assassinations

Assassinations and failed assassination attempts had become a norm in Lebanon. Between October 2004 and May 2009 more than a dozen politicians, high-ranking civil servants and political personalities were murdered or injured in bomb blasts or shootings. The perpetrators of these acts have not been identified and are subject to dispute; judging by the background of most of the victims the perpetrators were opponents of the March 14 political grouping. During the political impasse four prominent officials were murdered. Roughly a week after the resignation of the six ministers, assailants gunned down Pierre Jemayyel (son of former president Amin Jemayyel), the minister of Industry. The timing of the assassination aroused suspicion that attempts were being made to topple the government. The assassination of Jemayyel

brought the total number of empty cabinet seats to seven, one short of grounds for the

resignation of the government. Jemayyel's assassination was followed by the murder of

March 14th and Kataeb party member Antoine Ghanem. Ghanem died in an explosion on

September 19, 2007. Politicians in the Siniora-led government and their supporters

viewed the act as further evidence of the opposition forcing their views on the majority.

Two other Lebanese officials were also murdered: Francois al-Hajj and Wissam Eid.

Eid's murder also provoked suspicion since he had been involved in the investigation of

previous assassinations including the Hariri assassination. Eid's assassination

emphasized the controversy surrounding the Special Tribunal of Lebanon which also

became entangled in the government impasse.

The Special Tribunal for Lebanon

In the wake of the Hariri assassination Kofi Annan established a fact-finding

mission to investigate Hariri's murder. On the basis of this mission the UN Security

Council adopted Resolution 1595 with the objective of assisting the Lebanese

authorities in the identification and prosecution of the perpetrators. Roughly two years

later negotiations began between the office of the UN Secretary General and the

Lebanese government regarding the creation of a tribunal to prosecute suspects. Three

days after the resignation of the Shia ministers in November of 2006, the Siniora cabinet

unanimously approved a draft of the Tribunal. Those boycotting the government

condemned the move. In a speech on 19 November, Hasan Nasrallah accused the Siniora

government of complying with US interests by pushing issues through the government

without the proper consultations.

The Sinora government faced a daunting task since formal ratification of the tribunal required the approval of President Lahoud and two-thirds of the Parliament. Sinora could not count on either. President Lahoud saw the tribunal as a threat to Hizbullah and therefore Lebanon. And Siniora could not muster two-thirds support in the Parliament since March 14 only constituted 72 of the seats. With no domestic support for the tribunal, the UN pursued an alternative course. The UN Security Council circumvented the Lebanese vetoes by adopting Resolution 1757. This resolution argued for the creation of the tribunal because the Hariri assassination posed a threat to international peace and security.[72]

The presidential election

The political impasse became compounded by the issue of presidential succession. On November 23, 2007 Emile Lahoud's term ended. According to Lebanese law, a presidential election can be scheduled beginning two months prior to the end of a presidential term. A candidate must receive two-thirds of the Parliamentary votes to be elected President. Not surprisingly, the discussion of Presidential candidates became intertwined with resolving the government impasse. Nabih Berri claimed that March 8 would drop its demand for a national unity government if a consensus could be reached on a presidential candidate.[73] Berri's strategy entailed that a consensus president would not object to March 8th demands and veto any legislation regarding the tribunal.

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[72] United Nations Security Resolution 1757 Adopted by the Security Council at its 5685th meeting, on 30 May 2007. < http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N07/363/57/PDF/N0736357.pdf?OpenElement> The document states: "Reaffirming its determination that this terrorist act and its implications constitute a threat to international peace and security…."

[73] *The Daily Star*, October 2, 2007.

Therefore a national unity government would be unnecessary. March 14 rejected the proposal because it favored March 8 interests. Another proposal advanced was to elect a president with half plus one of the MPs, but March 8 rejected the proposal since March 14 had a majority in the parliament.[74] Hizbullah's leader, Hasan Nasrallah, proposed conducting opinion polls among the general Lebanese population regarding the next president.[75] The top candidates from the opinion poll would then be voted on by Parliamentary members. Over the two months, four groups of candidates emerged: 1) candidates from both political sides; 2) candidates accepted separately but vetoed; 3) neutral candidates; 4) candidates from state institutions – Armed Forces Commander Michel Sulieman or Governor of Banque du Liban Riad Salameh[76] Pressure on the selection of a candidate also increased from the outside. US Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice stated:

> …..any candidate for President or any President needs to be committed to Lebanon's sovereignty and independence, needs to be committed to resolutions that Lebanon has signed on to, and needs to be committed to carrying on the tribunal."[77]

Rice also warned against a compromise between the Siniora-led government and Hizbullah and its allies.[78] To encourage the Sinoria government to hold its ground, the US increased its 2007 military aid to the Lebanese army from $45 to $280 million.[79] Walid Junblāṭ directly appealed to the US, Saudi Arabia and France in regard to March 14 maintaining its objectives. Junblāṭ stated:

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[74] *The Daily Star*, November 1, 2007.
[75] *Moqawama.org*, October 5, 2007.
[76] *The Daily Star*, November 2, 2007.
[77] *The Daily Star*, November 3, 2007.
[78] Ousama Safa believed US interests lie in preventing Hizbullah to continue to build on the war with Israel.
[79] *The Daily Star*, October 2, 2007.

> Only you, Lebanon's friends can protect us. We are confident of
> your continued support for our striving for freedom by ensuring the
> election of a new president."[80]

Bashar al-Asad believed these pleas by members of March 14 for external assistance

were counterproductive to Lebanon's well-being. Asad stated:

> These forces [those who tie fate to the West] link Lebanon's
> fate to that of regional conflicts, which signifies that Lebanon
> will not know stability in the near future.[81]

May clashes

In May of 2008, the Siniora-led government initiated an investigation of

Hizbullah's communication network. Additionally they relieved the head of airport

security, Brigadier General Wafiq Shoukair, alleged to have links to Hizbullah. Walid

Junblāṭ believed Shoukair's presence at the airport enabled Hizbullah to monitor the

airport grounds and bring in weapons from Iran.[82] The actions of the Siniora-led

government encountered stiff resistance. Hizbullah and others in March 8 believed the

measure was initiated at the behest of the United States to further marginalize the

organization. Hizbullah supporters joined forces with a labor strike called by the General

Labor Confederation requesting a call for an increase in wages. They blocked the road to

the airport with overturned garbage bins and burning tires.

The protests quickly escalated. Nasrallah equated the actions of the government

to an act of war against the resistance. On May 9th, Hizbullah, Harakat Amal and SSNP

members took control over most parts of West Beirut. [83] Fighting also spread to

locations outside of Beirut including Tripoli and areas in the Beqa valley. March 14

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[80] *The Daily Star*, October 1, 2007.
[81] *The Daily Star*, October 12, 2007.
[82] More specifically, Shoucair was apathetic in preventing Hizbullah from placing cameras in the airport.
[83] Conflict occurred against Hariri internal security forces.

supporters blocked the road from Beirut leading south to Sidon and the road leading east to Damascus. The actions of the Siniora-led government received the support of the US, Egypt and Saudi Arabia.[84] Syria justified the response of Hizbullah and her allies claiming the actions of Siniora were coup-like. By May 11th, the violence had largely ended and Hizbullah and her allies handed over their positions to the Lebanese army. By this time, the death toll exceeded sixty individuals and two hundred wounded. Michel Aoun claimed: "It is not the victory of one party over the other. It is a victory for Lebanon."[85]

Events came to an end after the Siniora-led government rescinded its investigation of Hizbullah's communication network and the removal of Brigadier General Shoucair from the airport. Their decision occurred in the wake of a visit by an Arab League delegation headed by Qatari Premier al-Thani.[86] The delegation visited Berri, Siniora, Commander of the Lebanese Armed Forces Michel Suleiman, Aoun, Junblāṭ and Hariri. The delegation convinced the parties to travel to Doha to negotiate a resolution to the impasse.[87]

In Doha, negotiations centered around several issues: 1) the election of the president; 2) a new electoral law; 3) the formation of a national unity government; and 4) the creation of a new electoral law. March 14 wanted Hizbullah's weapons to be

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[84] The Egyptian Foreign Minister stated: "Egypt supports the Lebanese government as a constitutional institution charged with looking after Lebanese affairs and with taking the necessary measures to prevent its power and credibility from being damaged." *The Daily Star*, May 9, 2008.
[85] *The Daily Star*, May 10, 2008.
[86] The delegation included Foreign Ministers from Algeria, Djibouti, Jordan, Morocco, the UAE and Yemen.
[87] Qatar has often played the role of mediator in Middle East politics. In the case of Lebanon, Qatar has maintained relations with the Iranians, Saudis and Egyptians which allows it to be a "impartial" mediator. For further information on Qatar's foreign policy see: Mehram Kamrava, "Mediation and Qatari Foreign Policy," *Middle East Journal* 65:4 (Autumn 2011), 539-556. Lina Khatib, "Qatar's Foreign Policy: Limits of Pragmatism," *International Affairs* 89:2 (2013), 417-431.

included in the negotiations, but Hizbullah's leadership refused to address this issue at the negotiating table.[88] Negotiations proceeded. On May 21st concessions were finally decided upon. Officials agreed that Michel Suleiman, the former commander of the Lebanese armed forces would be the next President of Lebanon. Suleiman was considered a neutral figure, who did not favor either March 14 or March 8. March 8 was also able to achieve a one-third veto in the cabinet and the creation of a national unity cabinet. March 14 and the Lebanese government was able to maintain a relationship with the international tribunal.

The agreement received the endorsement of all parties. One Hizbullah member, Hasan Hobballah, claimed the agreement at Doha brought an end to the politics of monopoly practiced by March 14.[89] Prime Minister Sinora argued that Lebanon was the winner at Doha – all sides in the conflict benefitted from agreement. Saad Hariri stated that while March 14 had conceded to certain demands of March 8, but the International Tribunal could not be avoided. Certain Syrian officials believed that the agreement would facilitate better relations between Arab states. American officials took a more cautious approach to the outcome at Doha but claimed that March 14 had not appeased March 8.

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[88] It was agreed that Hizbullah's weapons would be discussed by a national dialogue led by the new Lebanese President.

[89] "Hizbullah figure speaks to Iran paper on expectations from Doha talks," *Lexis Nexis, BBC Monitoring Middle East - Political* (May 21, 2008).

Part III - Analysis

At a fundamental level the 19-month impasse concerned a struggle over government policy at the national and international levels. This policy would dictate Lebanon's relationship with the International Tribunal and in a broader sense with the international community. The selection of the president ultimately became a pawn in the establishment of this policy.

Domestic Veto Players

The Taif Agreement changed the political equation in Lebanon. The office of the Presidency became a shadow of its former self. Much of its veto power had been stripped by the agreement and placed in the institutions of the Prime Minister and the Cabinet. The 19-month impasse reflected the empowerment of the Prime Minister and Cabinet by Taif. The contest for power and the establishment of policy resided in the dynamics of the Sinora cabinet and indicated the centrality of the cabinet to the Lebanese political equation. This was no more evident than witnessing the initial veto being cast by some cabinet members. As a result, President Lahoud and Speaker of the Parliament Nabih Berri played secondary roles as veto players or became subsumed within the dynamics of the cabinet. For example, Lahoud was pivotal in blocking the domestic ratification of the International Tribunal, but this was a product of his support for the policies of March 8 and as an ally of Syria. Berri's secondary importance was reflected by the fact that Shia cabinet members, not Berri the most prominent Shia politician in the political system, initiated the veto.

Having identified the cabinet as the central piece of the Lebanese political equation, who amongst its members were the veto players? From 2006-2008 Fuad Sinora's cabinet consisted of twenty-four members. Of those twenty-four members, fifteen were either a part of the Mustaqbīl political movement or allies of Mustaqbīl in the March 14 alliance. Therefore, nine members of the cabinet were not loyal to Sinora or the March 14 alliance. Of those nine, six chose to leave the government in November of 2006. And of those six, five were from the Shia community. Three of the Shia were members of or affiliated with Harakat Amal while the remaining two were members of Hizbullah.

The question becomes whether these actions constituted a Shia veto of the policies of the Sinora cabinet or must one look deeper within the Shia community to either Harakat Amal or Hizbullah. The five Shia ministers publicly claimed that their departure from the cabinet was over the issue of a national unity government. Understanding the context of this veto facilitates the identification of the veto player(s). The veto occurred in the wake of 34-Day war with Israel and as the cabinet discussed ratification of the International Tribunal. For Harakat Amal, the implementation of the Tribunal had the potential to disrupt its relations with Syria. However, for Hizbullah the repercussions were far more severe. Although Hizbullah claimed a "victory" in its war with Israel in 2006, UN Resolution 1701 placed restrictions on the movement of the organization's military wing. Furthermore, the Tribunal had the potential to implicate Hizbullah and/or its ally Syria in the assassination. Unlike Harakat Amal, Hizbullah's relations with Syria largely served as a lifeline to its military wing. Syria acted a conduit for Iranian arms headed to Hizbullah in Lebanon. International measures against Syria

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could effectively weaken Hizbullah militarily. Therefore the veto exerted by the five ministers on 11 November was fundamentally driven by Hizbullah. Hizbullah had the most to lose.

Considering these dynamics, why did Harakat Amal join Hizbullah in the veto? Harakat Amal's decision was motivated by political survival in the Shia community. Hizbullah had been cutting into Harakat Amal's popularity in the Shia community for years. Harakat Amal's initial empowerment in the Shia community was partially attributed to the Syrian presence and the Syrian manipulation of Lebanese politics. As noted earlier, without Syrian interference in 1996 Hizbullah would have taken several Parliamentary seats from Harakat Amal. With Syria gone from Lebanon, Harakat Amal's political presence in the Shia community became more vulnerable to Hizbullah. Furthermore, Hizbullah's popularity within the Shia community had grown in the aftermath of the 34-Day War. In these circumstances it would have been political suicide for Harakat Amal to oppose Hizbullah's objectives. Also an act of solidarity with Sinora by Harakat Amal would have been considered traitorous by most Shia. The Shia had greatly suffered during the war while most of Lebanon stood and watched. To add insult to injury, Sinora had been accused of hoping for a Hizbullah defeat by Israel.

Harakat Amal's compliance with the Hizbullah-led veto indicated the political strength of the Hizbullah in the Shia community. It also demonstrated the willingness to temporarily put aside the two parties' differences. Between the two parties, they had a virtual political monopoly over the community. While Sinora and other opponents could find individuals from the Shia community to challenge the two parties, these individuals lacked any substantial popular support in the community.

Prime Minister Sinora and his allies stood in the face of the Hizbullah-led veto. Sinora constituted the face of the opposition to Hizbullah's measures. In reality Saad Hariri and the Mustaqbīl movement were the force and support behind Sinora. This said more about the legacy of his father and continued symbolic presence than Saad's political acumen. As Prime Minister and the top political figure in the Sunni community, Sinora could not act without the support of Hariri and the movement. The cabinet members who identified with Hariri and the Mustaqbīl movement bolstered that support. This support entailed a virtual political monopoly of the Sunni community. No one in the Sunni community had the popular support to oppose Sinora and the Mustaqbīl movement or provide an alternative position.

Unlike previous episodes, a significant third position vis-a-vis the Sinora-led grouping and the Hizbullah-led grouping did not exist.[90] The Maronite community constituted a potential third grouping. But the community remained divided throughout the events. This reality weakened the Maronite veto power. In comparison to the Sunni and Shia communities, the Maronite veto had virtually disappeared by 2006. Two factors can be blamed for this. The reforms of the Taif had considerably weakened the power of the presidency. But based on previous chapters a veto could be wielded by a Maronite without holding the position of the presidency. Therefore, more emphasis must be placed on the division within the Maronite political establishment. The

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[90] Salīm el-Hoss acted as a middle man or "Third Force" but his actions do not demonstrate any type of veto power. While he shuttled around from group to group and country to country, there is little evidence that he influenced the situation. See Scarlett Haddad, "Bilan fructueux de l'ancien Premier ministre après sa tournée a Ryad, Damas et Téhéran Hoss estime possible un compromis pour sortir de la crise actuelle," *L'Orient Le Jour* (March 6, 2007). There also appeared to emerge a middle element or Third Force within the Christian community. It constituted MPs Henri Hilū, 'Abdullah Hanna and 'Abdullah Farhat. Within the Shia community there also existed the Free Shiite Movement *The Daily Star* (December 1, 2006).

inability of Michel Aoun's Free Patriotic Movement and Samir Geagea's Lebanese

Forces to share space within the March 14th umbrella doomed the Maronite veto.

In the weeks following Hizbullah's 34-Day War with Israel, members of the

March 8th political grouping demanded the formation of a new government. It argued

that the current government had fallen under Western influences which endangered

Lebanon's independence. The accusation of Western influences was symptomatic of

more specific concerns – the potential implementation of the Special Tribunal on

Lebanon and a foreign policy more aligned with the West. The Hizbullah-led veto of the

growing Western orientation of the Sinora government initially failed. Why?

From a procedural standpoint the withdrawal did not entail the necessary number

of members to bring about the collapse of the government. However it does not appear

that the Sinora-led cabinet was purely motivated by procedural matters. The June 2005

parliamentary elections delivered a mandate for Prime Minister Sinora. Sinora had been

awarded the duty of extricating Lebanon from Syrian and to a lesser extent Iranian

influence. Eventually this also entailed the realization of the tribunal which was

perceived as an instrument of justice for evils committed by Syria against the Lebanese

State.

Why were the March 8th grouping and March 14th able to do maintain this

impasse for 19 months? The source of the deadlock was the virtual political monopolies

that existed in the Sunni and Shia communities. In the 2005 elections Hizbullah and

Harakat Amal parliamentary candidates garnered between 72 and 94% of the vote in

their districts. In Sunni districts some Mustaqbīl candidates garnered upwards of 70% of

the vote. With virtually no political opposition from within their confessions Sinora and

the Hizbullah/Harakat Amal alliance could maintain their negotiating position without fears of losing their popularity.

Extra-territorial veto players

Several countries expressed their concern and interests during the nineteen-month impasse. They pointed to the domestic veto players and each other for provoking the standoff. The Syrian military withdrawal weakened the Syrian presence in Lebanon, but it had not been eliminated. However, the instituting of the Tribunal and a western oriented government threatened to further weaken it. It was in Syrian interests that March 8 not concede to March 14 demands. Although Iran did not entirely share the same objectives with Syria, these developments ultimately would have weakened it too, particularly its relationship with Hizbullah. As the words of both of these countries demonstrated throughout the impasse, they were collectively supportive of the actions of the Hizbullah-led veto.

The implementation of the tribunal and a government favorable to the West worked in the benefit of the United States and Saudi Arabia. For the United States, a pro-US government in Lebanon provided a bulwark against Syrian and Iranian interests particularly in regards to the Arab-Israeli conflict. For Saudi Arabia, a pro-Saudi Lebanese government counter Syrian and Iranian regional influence. Both countries worked to rhetorically and financially support the Sinora-led government.

The veto players game

From November 2006 - May 2008, Prime Minister Sinora and his allies in March 14 were deadlocked with Hizbullah and its allies in March 8th. Neither Sinora nor

Hizbullah felt compelled to make concessions because of their popularity within their respective communities and the backing they received from external actors. With these two variables not changing, why did Siniora and March 14 ultimately fold and make concessions in Doha?

The May 2008 clashes marked a decisive turn in the impasse. Instead of maintaining the impasse, Sinora with the support of the United States pushed the March 8 alliance too far, particularly Hizbullah, by investigating Hizbullah's communications network and its presence at the airport. Sinora and March 14 crossed a red-line on 6 May and paid a price. The fallout from the investigation forced Sinora and his allies to recognize that they could not push for further concessions. In fact the events worked to the detriment of the Sinora, Hariri and their supporters. The clashes in May of 2008 placed March 14 in a weaker and more vulnerable position vis-̧a-vis Hizbullah and its allies. Hizbullah felt threatened by the acts of 6 May and aggressively responded. The introduction of weapons by Hizbullah and its allies against fellow Lebanese demonstrated that they had the capability of running the table against March 14. Sinora and March 14 could not match Hizbullah's response. As a result, Sinora and March 14 were compelled to cut their losses and negotiate in order to avoid the further weakening of their political position.

The weakening of the March 14 position was clearly reflected at the negotiations in Doha. In the first day of the May clashes, Amin Gemayel, stated that March 14 would enter in negotiations with March 8 provided the first issue of discussion was Hizbullah's arms.[91] By the end of the violence, March 14 was unable to put Hizbullah's weapons on

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[91] *The Daily Star*, May 10, 2008.

the negotiating table at Doha. The demand was rejected, yet negotiations proceeded. Furthermore, March 14 conceded to the one-third veto demand of March 8. And lastly and most importantly, a central issue to Sinora and the Mustaqbīl Movement – the International Tribunal – was only postponed to a later date. In the short-term, Hizbullah and its allies benefitted from the negotiations. March 14 negotiated for long term gains thru the continued realization of the International Tribunal.

The question that needs to be asked is why did Hizbullah and its allies not run the table during the May clashes? The army did not intervene in the conflict and Hizbullah and its allies easily overran the security forces loyal to Sinora. They could have seized control of power with the army not interfering. The reluctance of Hizbullah and its March 8 allies suggests limits to their power and limits to the veto player game. Hizbullah's actions suggest a desire to retain the semblance of a power-sharing formula. And this power-sharing formula necessitated representation from popular elements within the Sunni community for it to succeed. Without popular Sunni leadership in any Hizbullah-led government, it was doomed to fail. A Hizbullah-seizure of power would inevitably have warranted a Sunni boycott of the government. Hizbullah and its allies' actions also demonstrated an additional point. It was unwilling to be subsumed or controlled by the government.

Conclusion

Similar to previous case studies, the veto players and power in the twenty-first century did not entirely correspond to the top posts in the government. The analysis of the veto player game from 2006-2008 demonstrates that veto power resided within the Lebanese cabinet and within that cabinet two of its parties: Hizbullah and Mustaqbīl.

The events also clearly demonstrated that at a fundamental level the Lebanese political system had shifted from a Maronite/Sunni power arrangement to a Sunni/Shia power arrangement. This shift is attributable to the actions of the Shia and Maronite communities. The political divisions within the Maronite s effectively negated their veto power. Hizbullah and Harakat Amal's actions showed that the political leadership of the Shia community was unwilling to remain a third wheel. Their actions demonstrated that they required being a partner to any change in the status quo. The interesting question that needs to be asked is whether this could have been accomplished without the use of weapons. Instead of a troika, a new National Pact or *modus vivendi* was established in May 2013 between the leadership in the Sunni and Shia communities.

Chapter 7

<u>Towards Deciphering the Lebanese Political Chessboard</u>

It would be an understatement to claim that the achievement of agreement in Lebanese politics is a long and arduous task. As the case studies have demonstrated, the road to agreement in Lebanon is often fraught with controversy and violent conflict. Small acts of cooperation or a tit for tat process which generates further acts of cooperation do not occur in Lebanese politics. Agreement in Lebanon is the product of a prolonged bargaining process which is not civil and involves a multitude of actors. The bargaining process is not simply the product of negotiations between various actors who arrive at a fair division of the pie; it is the product of the capitulation of an actor who recognizes the moment that their leverage has waned. In one of the case studies the recognition came too late as the actor was pushed aside by force. At the end of the process several issues, such as the presidency, members of the cabinet, sizes of voting districts and foreign policy orientations are often determined at once or consecutively within a relatively short period of time. The objective of this study has been to determine the necessary actors for an agreement and a more precise understanding of how they arrived at an agreement.

Assisting in this endeavor has been the utilization of a veto players framework. The framework is critical for comprehending Lebanese politics because the strategic interaction between various actors in the Lebanese political milieu does not entirely occur within and/or between political institutions. By focusing on the processes of the agreement rather than the institutions one can capture a more articulate understanding

of the political process and the identity of the necessary actors. In the following pages I will highlight three important aspects for deciphering the Lebanese political chessboard: veto power, the veto players and the veto strategy. Based on these findings I will speculate about the future of the Lebanese political system and the potential contributions to the study of states which share similar political characteristics with Lebanon.

Veto Power

The previous chapters demonstrated that veto power is derived from the popularity of an individual or party within their respective confession. The greater the popularity a figure or party attains in a confession the greater the range of veto power they acquire in the Lebanese political equation. The range of veto power is a measure of a figure/party's ability to successfully employ and maintain a veto in a political dispute. A greater range of veto power translates into little political competition from within the confession or political competition that is bereft of popular confessional support. President Camille Sham'ūnis one example of this veto power. He encountered opposition from the Maronite Patriarch and other Maronite politicians for his policies from 1957-58. The words of the Patriarch and others lacked popular political support and therefore were unable to pressure Sham'ūninto changing his ways.

Confessional popularity does not necessarily correlate with the top government institutions. Although the President and Prime Minister are designated by the Lebanese constitution as the two most powerful institutions in the government, the actions of several Lebanese Presidents and Prime Ministers clearly demonstrate that they were

often beholden to other actors inside or outside their confessions. For example, President Charles Hilū needed the Kataib for Maronite support of a change in the status quo in 1969. It must also be noted that without first achieving considerable confessional popularity, appealing across confessional lines generates no veto power.

The retention of weapons and military prowess can add to an individual or party's power, but this characteristic alone does not necessitate veto power. If this were true, parties like the Mourabitoun, the Popular Nasserite Organization and Sulieman Frangieh's Zgharta Liberation Army would have factored more prominently in the agreement-making process during the Lebanese civil war. A similar conclusion can be reached about the Syrian Socialist National Party (SSNP). The SSNP participated on the side of Sham'ūnand the Kataib in military operations during the 1958 crisis, but they were excluded from the agreement that ended the crisis. Furthermore, the ownership of weapons by a party with veto power does not entail complete hegemony over the political process. Hizbullah's weapons did not produce a Hizbullah-chosen candidate for the office of the presidency at the end of May 2008. This example demonstrates that even with weapons there are limits to veto power.

The achievement of confessional popularity is contingent on several elements: patronage networks, the embodiment of an ideology, and/or the representation of a popular sentiment. The extent of a patronage network greatly contributes to an individual or party's veto power. Patronage nurtures the loyalty of segments of a confession's population because of the services and opportunities that are provided. The growth of a patronage network is usually commensurate with the growth of supporters. These dynamics favor political parties more than individual politicians since most

individual politicians only have provincial appeal. Unlike their predecessors in the Shia community, Hizbullah's efforts to provide various services to the Shia community throughout Lebanon, not just a specific locale, have helped catapult the party to the forefront of the community.

The popularity of an ideology or popular sentiment is more situational and temporal compared to patronage networks. For example, Camille Sham'ūngarnered the support of most Maronites during the 1958 crisis. After stepping down from the Presidency, he was never able to recapture the same level of popularity within the Maronite community. The Progressive Socialist Party grew in popularity and appeal throughout the 1960s and the 1970s and its ideology attracted followers from a variety of confessions. By the early 1990s, the message had remained the same but the party had largely become the domain of the Druze community. The combination of an extensive patronage network and an ideology/popular sentiment further enhances a figure's veto power.

An additional factor contributing to veto power is support from external actors. The various Lebanese elites and political parties maintained or adopted the political behavior of 18th and 19th century Mount Lebanon. In all the case studies Lebanese actors sought external assistance. External assistance ranged from rhetorical, ideological and financial support to outright military intervention. President Sham'ūnand Muslim elites were guilty of this in 1958. Kamel Junblāṭ, President Charles Hilū and others practiced this behavior in 1969. On numerous occasions throughout the civil war the Kataib, Harakat Amal, the National Salvation Front, Presidents Frangieh and Amin Gemayel

and others acted in this manner. And between 2006 and 2008, Walid Junblāṭ and others

pleaded for the assistance of the US and Saudi Arabia.

Lebanese elites, parties and political groupings resorted to this behavior because

they believed external support/assistance buttressed their veto power in the form of

protection, insurance, the reaffirmation of a political stand, a shared interest with a

larger entity or facilitated the eventual delivery of justice. The Eisenhower Doctrine

provided a form of reassurance or security for President Sham'ūnand his government as

the regime in Syria became increasingly hostile and Nasser's regional prominence grew.

Walid Junblāṭ utilized Syrian support during the civil war to reaffirm his political stand.

In 1983 he stated:

> When a new Lebanon is established where powers reflect
> the new demographic reality, then I will end the war and
> will no longer be Syria's man.[1]

Michel Aoun relied on Iraqi military support to assist in his resoluteness against Syria

and the government of Elias Hrawi and Salim el-Hoss. US rhetoric and military

assistance in 2007 encouraged Fuad Sinora to proceed with government measures after

the withdrawal of six ministers from the government.

The reliance on external support/intervention demonstrates the impact of extra-

territorial actors on the Lebanese political equation. Their presence in the equation

raises the issue of whether veto power can also be acquired by a non-Lebanese actor. In

certain circumstances external actors do attain veto power. Two variables determine

veto power for an external actor: 1) the external actor's willingness to project power and

commit assets to the Lebanese political scene; and 2) the dynamics of intra-confessional

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[1] FBIS October 31, 1983, G5.

politics. The existence of a vacuum in the leadership of a confession provides fertile ground for an external power to attain veto power. This vacuum pertains to the absence of a national leader of the confession. For example, Nasser's prominence in 1958 was the result of the absence of a national figure in the Lebanese Sunni community. A similar opportunity occurred during the civil war for Syria. The fragmentation of Muslim leadership during the war enabled Syria with the assistance of its military force to acquire increasing amounts of veto power, particularly after the failure of the May17th Agreement and the withdrawal of the Multinational Forces in 1984. This reality became particularly apparent in the stipulations of the failed Tripartite Agreement (1985) and the Taif Agreement that legitimized the continuation of Syrian troops in Lebanon following the cessation in violence. Syrian veto power also continued after the war. The election of Emile Lahoud to the presidency is an obvious example. Although the perpetrators of Rafik al-Hariri's assassination have yet to be determined, the act could easily be characterized as the employment of Syrian veto power.

The presence of Syrian troops and its intelligence apparatus in Lebanon clearly buttressed Syrian veto power. This reality raises another question: Does the sheer presence of foreign troops on Lebanese soil generate veto power for the intervening actor? Why did Syrian designs for Lebanon appear to succeed during the civil war and after the war while American and Israeli efforts failed? Once again the intra-confessional dynamics of a confession influences the veto power of an external actor. Syria was able to manipulate the situation since the Sunni and the Muslim community in general remained fragmented. In a way, Syria was able to impose its will over Lebanon's Muslims and distance other external actors (i.e. Arab) from Lebanon. The

United States and Israel were forced to deal with a united Maronite and Christian community. A united Maronite community retained more independence vis-̧a-vis external actors. Israel and the United States were able to support and guide Maronite leadership at times but there is little evidence that they were able to control or manipulate Maronite decision-making. The Maronites refused to fight alongside the Israelis during their siege of Beirut in the summer of 1982. And also during the negotiations that led up to the failed May 17th Agreement, the United States could not prevent Amin Gemayel from speaking separately with the Israeli negotiating team.

Veto Players

Lebanese politics fluctuates between a 2 and 3-veto player system. The identity of these 2-3 veto players are represented by four of Lebanon's eighteen confessions – the Maronites, Sunnis, Shia and Druze - and several of the roughly half dozen external actors. In certain situations some of these veto players must be characterized as collective veto players because they do not constitute a specific individual or a monolithic/homogenous entity. At times a veto is employed by an entity that constitutes a grouping of several actors and it is unclear who among those actors is calling the shots. This was particularly evident in the events that led up to and included the proceedings in Doha in May 2008. At Doha unlike the other agreements, there is no strong evidence of a decision or understanding achieved between the external actors prior to the agreement. Considering the interests and commitments of external actors in Lebanon at the time, the decision-making process was shrouded in ambiguity in regards to who was actually pulling the strings. Was it just Hizbullah? Or did Syria and Iran also

have a say in the process? The same question could be asked about the Mustaqbīl Movement, Saudi Arabia and the United States.

The variables affecting the degree, acquisition and retention of veto power produces a fluid number of veto players whose identities have changed over time. At a fundamental level, the basis for agreement in the Lebanese political system is the National Pact – the informal agreement reached between the leadership of the Maronite and Sunni communities and in a broader sense represents the coexistence between the Muslim and Christian communities. The Pact was epitomized by the relationship between the President and the Prime Minister. As time passed, agreement in Lebanese politics resembling this Maronite-Sunni or President-Prime Minister dynamic existed in name only.

Prior to the Taif Agreement, Maronite leadership was a necessary partner to any change of the status quo. The Maronite presence in the political equation was attributable to its sheer numbers and the relevance designated to it by the National Pact. Its size and relevance overshadowed the other Christian communities in Lebanon. There is no evidence that other Christian communities (e.g. the Greek Orthodox and the Greek Catholic) attempted to challenge the Maronite hegemony in the Christian community. Individuals from other Christian communities (e.g. Ghassan Tueni and Henri Pharaon) appear in the political narratives but their participation was not critical to the veto player game.

Initially Maronite leadership constituted elites (i.e. Camille Sham'ūn), but immediately following the crisis of 1958, the Kataib political party became the dominant political force in the community. The Kataib achieved this position because of

its role in the 1958 crisis and its growing appeal throughout the Maronite community. The Kataib became the necessary Maronite partner to any change in the status quo until its power weakened in the mid-1980s. The Kataib veto power was particularly obvious with the Cairo Agreement and the early stages of the civil war. It is worth noting that although the Kataib were the preeminent power in the Maronite community, a party official did not occupy the post of the presidency until 1982. The Lebanese Forces challenged the Kataib for veto power in the mid-1980s. This was demonstrated by the absence of a Kataib member or President Amin Gemayel at the Tripartite Agreement. The Lebanese Forces were supplanted by Michel Aoun during the final two years of the civil war. Aoun gained the veto power of the Maronite community through his popularity with the general Maronite community and his designation as the leader by the Maronite politicians and church officials in February of 1989.

The situation of the Maronite community after the civil war continues to reflect a fragmented and politically marginalized political community. The political boycott of the government in the 1990s by the Maronites and the divisions in their leadership, specifically between Aoun and the Lebanese Forces, has led to the disappearance of the Maronite veto in the Lebanese political equation. The Maronites are currently not a necessary partner to any change in the status quo even though in theory Lebanon remains a Muslim/Christian state. Although the Maronites are largely responsible for their current political situation, the question must be raised whether they can reacquire their veto player status. What will also be interesting to witness is if this can be done without the support of an external actor. As these case studies have demonstrated the

United States government failed the Maronite leadership on several occasions. If they cannot expect support from the United States, will another country buttress their veto?

The Maronite counterpart in any change of the status quo up to the Taif Agreement was a representative of the Sunni community. In reality this Sunni representative only constituted a figurehead. The elites of the Sunni community (i.e. Rashīd Karāmī, Saeb Salam, ʿAbdullah al-Yāfī and Salim al-Hoss) contended with domestic and regional elements to maintain leadership of their community. Sunni elites were forced to tolerate the ideas and presence of Nasser, al-Asad, and Junblāṭ at various times because they lacked national appeal in their community and needed to keep other political forces within the community at bay. Karāmī, Salam, al-Yāfī and others effectively sacrificed the veto power of the community to maintain control over their share of the community.

Until the arrival of Rafik al-Hariri in the 1990s, no national Sunni political figure existed. Rashīd Karāmī's power and influence did not extend much beyond the environs of Tripoli. Saeb Salam's political weight did not exceed much beyond the confines of Beirut. These limits on popularity adversely impacted their veto power in the Lebanese political equation. During the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s and 1980s little veto power resided in the hands of the Sunni elites. It mostly existed in the hands of personalities and parties outside the community. Certain ideologies (i.e. Nasserism or Junblāṭ's Arabism) appealed to the Sunni general population. Sunni elites were cognizant of this reality but they could not fully embrace these ideas. Nasserism and Junblāṭ's Arabism had the potential to subvert the leadership and power of Sunni elites. For example, Nasserism and its socialist agenda, if adhered to in Lebanon, had the potential to undermine the

economic interests of Sunni elites. A similar argument can be made for the ideology propounded by Junblāṭ's Progressive Socialist Party. Sunni elites retained these fears from the late 1960s until the end of the civil war. A clear indication of the absence of any credible Sunni veto power was witnessed at the end of 1985 when no Sunni figure was a party to the Tripartite Agreement.

The Sunni community reacquired considerable veto power after the civil war. Rafik al-Hariri single-handedly placed the Sunni community back in the middle of the Lebanese political equation. The emergence of Rafiq al-Hariri's business empire and his ever expanding patronage network enabled him to become the national leader of the community and monopolize its politics. His impact on Sunni politics has been reflected by the continued prominence of his family's political party after his assassination.

The main domestic beneficiaries of the often unrealized Maronite/Sunni relationship have been figures and parties from the Druze and Shia communities. The actions of the Sunni elites provided an opportunity for Kamel Junblāṭ, his son Walid, the PSP and the Druze community to acquire veto power not commensurate with the community's size. Although the Junblāṭs were not able to hold the highest positions in the government, Kamel or Walid's participation was necessary for change in the status quo for roughly twenty years. The acquisition of veto power by the Shia community is also attributable to the actions of the Sunni leadership, however other factors must be considered. The growth of the Shia population, the forced migration of the community from southern Lebanon to Beirut's southern suburbs, the political fragmentation of the Maronite community after the civil war, and the replacement of traditional elites by the

political parties of Harakat Amal and Hizbullah contributed to the emergence and retention of Shia veto power, particularly in the post-Taif environment.

The remaining veto players reside outside the borders of Lebanon. Similar to the domestic actors, there is turnover in regards to the identity of these extra-territorial veto players. This turnover is attributable to the changing international and regional dynamics. The Egyptian veto figured prominently in the Lebanese political landscape during the time of Nasser. With his death, an independent or overriding Egyptian veto ceased to exist. The minimal action undertaken by the Sadat and Mubarak governments meant that Egypt retained the status as part of the collective veto. The independent or overriding Egyptian veto was eventually replaced by a Syrian veto during and after the civil war. Following the Syrian withdrawal, one cannot characterize Syria, Iran, the United States and Saudi Arabia as independent veto players. As mentioned earlier in the chapter, they must be characterized as collective veto players. They have been and continue to be part of the Lebanon's political equation but there is no evidence that they have the ability to completely override a domestic veto player or provide an alternative to domestic veto players.

The Veto Strategy

Disagreements over the orientation of a government or the refusal to change a policy are not unique to Lebanon. These are dilemmas encountered by all countries. The difference between Lebanon and most other countries of the world is how those disagreements are resolved. Throughout the four case studies, Lebanese politicians/parties displayed seemingly contradictory behavior. All Lebanese politicians

acknowledged the necessity of the power-sharing formula for Lebanon to exist and properly function. However their actions ultimately demonstrated disregard or contempt for the constitutionally endorsed political formula. As evinced from this brief observation, Lebanese politicians have not learned from previous experiences and continue to replicate behaviors of the past. The question becomes why does this detrimental behavior persist, particularly when it is obvious that it has negative repercussions?

Every Lebanese government encountered opposition to its policies. Initially these objections occurred in the form of a withdrawal from the government, protests and/or the refusal to join a new government. At certain stages of this political game the opposition was diverse and therefore the chessboard was occupied by more than two veto players. In every case these objections and actions were ignored or not perceived as credible because the government recognized that its own actions were not in violation of any laws. In a way, the initial veto of the opposition carried no weight or concern at this point in the game. It also points to the reality that not all vetoes are equal. Camille Sham'ūncontinued to designate another Sunni politician to hold the position of the Prime Minister as a growing number of Sunnis objected to his foreign policy and other measures from 1957-58. Fuad Sinora noted that the Shia withdrawal from the cabinet in November 2006 did not constitute grounds for the creation of a new government since additional cabinet resignations were necessary. Charles Hilū refused to concede to Kamel Junblāṭ's demands in 1969 and continued to expect Rashīd Karāmī to form a government. The leading Maronite politicians refused to surrender some of the powers of the office of the Presidency throughout the civil war.

This behavior can best be characterized as partaking in a game of chicken. The figures leading the government believed that their actions were valid and continued to maintain or pursue their course of action. Their opponents believed that either the process was unjust, incapable of delivering their objectives or certain actions threatened the well being of their party/community. It became imperative for the opposition to abandon the government with the hope of obstructing the government's actions. What made these dynamics possible, particularly the perpetuation of this game of chicken, was the veto power retained by the various players. For example, the support attained by Sinora or Sham'ūnwithin their respective communities allowed them to prolong the game of chicken and continue with their agendas.

Compounding this game further and adding to the veto power of the domestic actors was the assistance/support of external actors. External actors exacerbated the intransigence or prolonged and intensified the game of chicken. They allowed Lebanese actors to further "dig in their heels." Following the acceptance of the Eisenhower Doctrine, Sham'ūn's actions and words indicated an unwillingness to make concessions or find common ground with his opponents. Kamel Junblāṭ acted in a similar manner in May of 1969. After a trip to Syria he added several more demands for his participation in Prime Minister Karāmī's government.

The assistance of external actors further crowded and convoluted the Lebanese political chessboard. For example, the leadership in the Maronite community worked to deepen its relationship with Israel in the late 1970s and early 1980s when Syrian relations improved with the Muslim community. These actions obfuscated the divide between domestic and international politics. External assistance exposed Lebanon to

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additional sets of interests which were not entirely in the interests of Lebanon. The failed conferences of Geneva and Lausanne suggested that Israeli and Syrian security interests were used to obstruct Lebanese attempts to resolve outstanding domestic issues.

Finally, external assistance/support created a culture of expectations. Previous experiences dating back to the Ottoman Empire instilled the belief in Lebanon's communities and political actors that assistance or support would eventually arrive. President Charles Hilū delayed a settlement regarding the *fedāyīn* issue because of the hope that the US would intervene. He explicitly told the US ambassador that he would take a strong position against the *fedāyīn* if the US provided support. Michel Aoun held similar beliefs from 1989-90.

The obvious questions arising from this predicament are: 1) why did Lebanese actors engage in behavior that created and exacerbated the political intransigence? and 2) did the government ever acknowledge the opposition's veto? The historical precedent of external assistance certainly contributed to the prolonging and exacerbating of the crises. The idea of countering the actions of one's opponent also contributed to each situation. However additional factors must be identified to accurately answer these questions.

Beginning in the 19th century, leadership in the Maronite community operated with the belief that it resided in a hostile environment. Lebanon became a sanctuary for the community provided Maronite leadership controlled the reins of the government. This mindset interpreted any attempt to alter the status quo as a real or perceived threat to Maronite status and ultimately the community's existence. In 1958, 1969, and

throughout the civil war, developments occurred in which events provided credence to this mindset. In 1958, the volatility of the Syrian regime combined with the growing prominence of Nasser provided the justification for President Sham'ūnto pursue a particular course. In 1969, leadership in the Maronite community believed *fedāyīn* operations posed a threat to the status quo. A similar argument can be made for the actions of the Kataib party at the outbreak of the civil war. The *fedāyīn* presence combined with Lebanese opponents once again threatened to change the status quo for the Maronite community. Former President Bashir Gemayel stated in 1980:

> But why this striving to annihilate the Christians of Lebanon? Because this is what seems to be the long-term objective driving this whole war, the engine of all the events that have been taking place in this country for six years. Qaddafi had just frankly proclaimed: 'the Christians do not have a place in Lebanoṅ.' He gives us the choice to either convert to Islam or to leave……but he is only an instigator, a manager an accomplice, an ally, and a principle actor in this war of extermination being conducted against us.[2]

When the Maronite leadership felt particularly threatened talk of cantonization or the partition of Lebanon emerged. After the reforms of the Taif Agreement and the reduction of the presidency the Maronites continued to retain this mindset. Without the veto power of pre-Taif, the Maronite leadership has attempted to align with other Lebanese domestic partners who provided the best chance of protecting and enhancing the prestige of the community.

The Sunni community played second fiddle to the Maronites in the Lebanese power structure until 1990. As witnessed in chapter two, the Sunni community rejected

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[2] *Words from Bashir: Understanding the mind of the Lebanese Forces founder Bashir Gemayel from his speeches*. Translated by Rani Geha (N.P., 2010), 163.

the creation of the Lebanon. It eventually accepted its reality; however its elites often worked to create the semblance of equality or a more balanced relationship with the Maronites. Their attempts at the realization of this objective occurred in response to developments or the actions of external actors. Nasser galvanized the community and its elites leading up to and during the crisis of 1958. The *fedāyīn* issue of 1969 triggered elements of the Sunni community to demand for a more just political system. The emergence of the Lebanese National Movement at the beginning of the civil war motivated Sunni elites like Saeb Salam and Rashīd Karāmī to advocate for the altering but not the overhauling of the political system. The Taif Agreement provided the community with the foremost power in the political system. Once they attained this power through the institution of the Prime Minister and after the withdrawal of Syrian troops, the Sunni leadership (i.e. Sinora) blocked any attempt to weaken it.

The Shia community historically played the third wheel to the Maronite Catholics and the Sunni Muslims until the early 1980s. Throughout the first forty years of Lebanese history, the Maronites and the Sunnis marginalized the Shia. Beginning in the early 1980s, Harakat Amal and subsequently Hizbullah in proceeding decades worked to achieve a more prominent role for their parties and the community in the Lebanese political equation. This idea was evident in the words of Harakat Amal's leader Nabih Berri in 1983.

> Justice can be achieved either by giving citizens what they deserve on the basis of merit or by equality of sects. There is no other solution for Lebanon. There can be no return to 1943. What happened in 1943 is outdated; it has proved its failure.[3]

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[3] "Nabih Berri: Message to the Maronites," *Monday Morning*, October 17-23, 1983, 10.

Once that prominence had been achieved, leadership in the community attempted to block any attempt to weaken it. The tribunal and the events that directly preceded the Doha Agreement were examples of this behavior.

As the primary leader of the Druze community, Kamel Junblāṭ pursued an agenda that challenged the Maronite political hegemony. This challenge grew from 1958 until his death in 1977. Junblāṭ's objectives were not primarily concerned with just empowering his community but all communities who were secondary to the Maronites. He adopted an increasingly intransigent approach after he failed to achieve his objectives in 1969. His son, Walid, succeeded in maintaining these objectives until the latter stages of the civil war.

What turned these political impasses or periods of intransigence into violent conflicts? In other words, how and why did this game of chicken lead to a collision? Did vetoes breakdown? Did one or both sides miscalculate? In all four cases a red line was crossed which triggered a violent response from elements in the opposition. In 1958, the murder of Nassib Matni triggered a two-month uprising. Fighting between Lebanese security forces and the *fedāyīn* in October 1969 elicited violence throughout Lebanon. The attack on the Palestinian bus in April 1975 led to the civil war. The removal of General Shoukair as head of security from the Beirut International Airport triggered the clashes of May 2008. These events suggest a miscalculation by a party or parties in the government. In three of the cases it was the veto player in the Maronite community and in the other case it was the veto player in the Sunni community that crossed the proverbial red line. We can attribute this behavior to the attempt to maximize self-interests and an unwillingness to recognize the veto of the opponent until the outbreak

of violence. Sham'ūncontinued to ignore the antagonism toward his policies right up to May of 1958. But even then, in several of the cases, the violence lasted for a significant period of time which suggests that even violence or the destruction of the state was not sufficient for deterring the pertinent veto players from abandoning their objectives.

How were these vetoes and conflicts overcome? And how was agreement eventually achieved? The veto players in this study did not lose veto power because of deteriorating public support in any of these cases. It appears that public support actually grew stronger for the domestic veto players in all of these situations. Agreement was achieved in a different manner. In three of the four case studies, an agreement or understanding between the extra-territorial veto players preceded or was required for the realization of a change in the status quo among Lebanon's domestic veto players. In 1958, the United States and Egypt reached an understanding prior to the resolution of the crisis. A similar development occurred in 1969 when Syria and Egypt reached an understanding regarding the *fedāyīn*. The understanding led to the Cairo Agreement, the end of disturbances throughout Lebanon and the creation of a new Lebanese government. Between 1989 and 1990, several countries (i.e. the US, Iran, and Saudi Arabia) eventually conceded to Syrian hegemony in Lebanon. The concession ultimately enabled Syria to defeat Michel Aoun and effectively ended the civil war. The only exception occurred in 2008 when an understanding did not necessarily precede the agreement. However it should be noted that none of the external actors objected to the Doha Agreement.

The agreement or understanding between external actors reduced the bargaining space for Lebanon's domestic actors. Without the support or protection from an external

actor, Lebanon's domestic actors were more limited in their options. For example, in 1969 the understanding between Syria and Egypt along with the US refusal to intervene left Lebanon's actors only with Egypt. The leadership of the Maronite community, Kamel Junblāṭ and the Sunni elites conceded to an Egyptian brokered agreement with the *fedāyīn*. In 1958, the Maronite and Muslim leadership ultimately accepted the American selection of Fuad Shihāb as president.

The agreement or understanding between external actors appeared to facilitate concessions among domestic actors on several occasions. Why? It provided a safe environment or guarantees for elites to make concessions. For example, the understanding reached between Egypt and the US in 1958 provided an environment that neither the Maronites nor the Muslims felt particularly exploited or vulnerable, thus the notion of "No Victor, No Vanquished." Egyptian oversight of the Cairo Agreement provided reassurances for the Maronite leadership. At the Taif negotiations Christian delegates sought international backing for a Syrian military withdrawal. The position of the United States and Saudi Arabia leading up to the Doha agreement and its support of the March 14 grouping, suggests that March 14 would not have made concessions with its opponents if the United States and Saudi Arabia had been against the agreement.

Do these examples indicate that Lebanese domestic actors worked at the behest of external actors or lacked agency? Two examples suggest that this was not entirely the case. Kamel Junblāṭ's refusal to concede to the Syrian-sponsored Constitutional Document of 1976 was one example. Michel Aoun's unwillingness to back the Taif Agreement was another example. In both cases these individuals chose to defy the international consensus and demonstrated the limits of external interference in Lebanon.

Their ability to do this was contingent on the popular support they received from their communities. Junblāṭ had the support of many in his community and his ideas appealed across confessions. Aoun was riding a wave of popularity in the Maronite community. Their defiance of the international consensus must be questioned. The Junblāṭ and Aoun vetoes met violent ends. Junblāṭ was assassinated in 1977 and Aoun was forcefully evicted from Lebanon in October of 1990. This also raises the issue of whether a domestic veto can be sustained without external support.

It would be shortsighted to limit the explanation of an agreement to a reduced bargaining space, especially since Lebanese domestic actors have demonstrated the ability to act independently of external actors. One must also consider the recognition of a weakened bargaining position by the veto player. In three of the four cases, there appears to be a point of realization by a veto player that their position had weakened and they were in jeopardy of further losses. It is at this point that we witness the concessions made by President Sham'ūn, President Hilū and Prime Minister Sinora. For example, the Sinora-led contingent realized that continued conflict with the Hizbullah-led contingent was futile and they risked further losses if the conflict ensued.

The future of veto power, veto players and the veto game in Lebanon

The Lebanese political system remains unstable because of the dynamics it inherited from the Doha Agrement and the events surrounding the agreement. Changes in the status quo will continue to be difficult and political impasses will become more prolonged. This prognosis is attributable to two variables: 1) the diminishing prominence of individual elites in the Lebanese political equation portends a bargaining

environment dominated by fewer and fewer political actors; and 2) the increased polarization of the region enables the prominent veto players to maintain intransigence regarding a certain issue.

The political diversity within the various confessions continues to dissipate, particularly within the Shia, Sunni, Druze and Maronite communities. Hizbullah and Harakat Amal have deposed the traditional political families of the Shia community (i.e. the Asaads and the Hamadehs). These families have been relegated to secondary status in the politics of the confession. Individuals from these families may run in elections and may even hold a seat but they have little to no sway over the community.[4] A similar scenario exists in the Sunni community. The traditional leadership of the Karāmīs, Salams and others have been supplanted by Hariri Inc. and the Mustaqbīl movement. Individuals from these families have participated in governments but they cannot hold significant positions without the support of the Mustaqbīl movement. The Druze community has become increasingly monopolized by Walid Junblāṭ and his Progressive Socialist Party. And the Maronite community continues to be the domain of Michel Aoun's Free Patriotic Movement and to a lesser extent the Lebanese Forces.

The absence of political competition within each confession entails a greater amount of veto power at the inter-confessional level. This was epitomized during the 2006-08 standoff between the Hizbullah-led contingent and the Mustaqbīl-led contingent. Neither party encountered significant opposition within its confession. As a

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[4] Ahmed Asaad, the son of the former Speaker of the House Kamel Asaad, created the Lebanese Option party as a challenge to Hizbullah but it has been unable to acquire a broad popular following in the Shia community.

result, they were under no pressure to concede or compromise with their opponents. These dynamics have endured since the Doha Agreement.

The virtual monopolies in the most prominent confessions have remained coupled with the increasingly polarized regional environment. The withdrawal of Syria from Lebanon, the collapse of Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq and the ongoing civil war in Syria has further exposed Lebanon to a regional tug of war between Iran and Saudi Arabia. Iran and Saudi Arabia appear unwilling to improve relations as sectarian conflict intensifies throughout the region. These two countries have not been hesitant to intervene in various capacities in Iraq, Syria, Bahrain, Yemen and elsewhere. This behavior suggests they will remain involved in Lebanon and scrutinize any Lebanese development. With these regional dynamics the veto power of the Mustaqbīl movement and Hizbullah is further strengthened.

This domestic and regional situation paints a dire picture for the future of Lebanon and its citizens. As with previous situations, political impasses have eventually erupted into violence. Considering the aforementioned circumstances can Lebanon avoid more conflict in the future? The answer to this question resides mostly in the hands of Hizbullah's leadership. Based on the outcome of the clashes of May 2008 and stipulations of the Doha Agreement, Hizbullah and the Shia community currently holds the upper hand in the political equation. It has obtained the ability to legally veto any measure in the cabinet. Therefore any initiative undertaken by the Mustaqbīl movement from this point forward will be futile without Hizbullah and the Shia community's support. Mustaqbīl knows it cannot proceed with any measure without the support of

the Hizbullah-led contingent. Therefore Hizbullah has become the informal master of the Lebanese political domain.

Hizbullah's leverage in the Lebanese political equation will remain precarious like its predecessors. As with previous situations, the party or individual with the upper hand who pushed its agenda encountered opposition from other elements in Lebanese society. The friction generated by the stronger party and its agenda eventually erupted into violence. And as a result, the party with the upper hand was forced to make concessions. Has Hizbullah learned from the experiences of the past or will it receive push back from elements in the Lebanese political landscape? Time will tell. If Hizbullah pushes an agenda that generates too much opposition from among other elements of Lebanon's multi-confessional society, Hizbullah will meet the same fate of its predecessors and be forced to make concessions. Similar to previous veto players, Hizbullah cannot exact its will over the entire country.

If Hizbullah does push too hard, where will the opposition come from, particularly if it turns violent? The Christian community remains divided and this division will not disappear in the near future. One can attribute this situation to the political competition between the Lebanese Forces and Michel Aoun. The divide is reinforced by recent memories of the conflict between Aoun's forces and the militia of the Lebanese Forces at the end of the civil war. The conflict took many Maronite lives or adversely affected them. The animosity between the two groups is often greater than the animosity directed towards Hizbullah, Harakat Amal or the Mustaqbīl Movement. In regards to the Sunni community the Mustaqbīl movement is certainly cognizant of its previous experience with Hizbullah and its allies in 2008. Therefore one must look

elsewhere in the Sunni community for actors willing to confront the Hizbullah-led contingent. The emergence of new opponents in the Sunni community is contingent on the maintenance of the Mustaqbīl movement's relative monopoly over the confession's politics. Unlike Hizbullah, the popularity and success of the Mustaqbīl movement is based more on the work and personality of Rafik al-Hariri. Does his legacy have the staying power to maintain the movement's monopoly of the confession? And will this be sufficient to avoid conflict?

Considering these dynamics, Lebanon will be a 2-collective veto player system for the foreseeable future. On the surface Lebanon will continue to be referred to as a model of Muslim/Christian co-existence, in reality its stability will be contingent on Sunni/Shia relations. At a fundamental level this political equation will be fronted by Hizbullah and the Mustaqbīl movement with the support of Iran and Saudi Arabia and to a lesser extent Syria and the United States. Lebanon will remain a collective veto player system provided Hizbullah and Mustaqbīl maintain a monopoly on their respective confession's politics. If not, expect deeper interference from external actors.

Political Agreement beyond Lebanon

Are these findings unique to Lebanon or are they present in other weak/failed states? Several of these findings should be critiqued in other contexts to determine their explanatory power. This study has revealed several significant dynamics of the agreement-making process in Lebanon. Intra-confessional politics, not inter-confessional politics, play a more important role in the realization of a change in the status quo. The monopoly or near monopoly of intra-confessional politics by an elite or party buttresses the veto power of an elite/party. The more veto power acquired by an

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actor, the easier it is for them to employ and maintain their veto. A monopoly over intra-confessional politics also makes the confession less vulnerable to external manipulation. However the presence of an intra-confessional monopoly does not entail the absence of an international factor. The international factor is critical in the enhancement of a domestic actor's power. In fact, it is so critical that we only find two counterexamples of a domestic veto player taking positions without external support.

For more than seventy years, Lebanon's political landscape has been riddled by intra-confessional, inter-confessional, regional and international struggles. The intense co-mingling of a multitude of actors and struggles creates a very complicated political picture. Veto players hold the key to deciphering its intricate politics. Lebanon's long history of intersecting struggles provides an opportune laboratory for future researchers. Lebanon may very well hold insight into comprehending other political environments.

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