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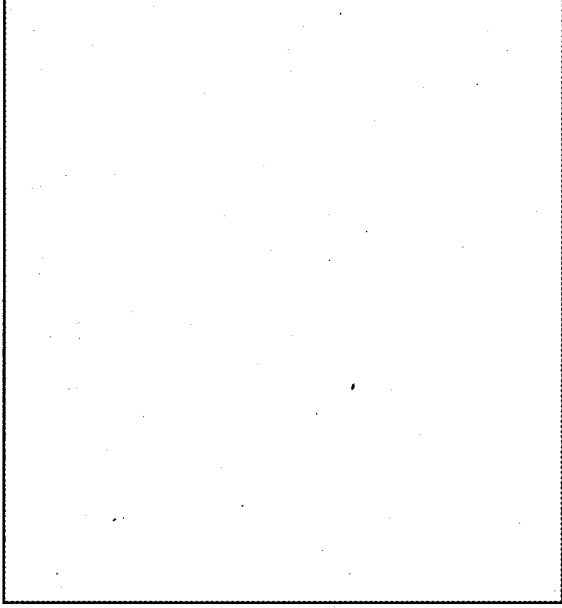
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LEBANON'S DISSOLUTION:
FUTURES AND CONSEQUENCES

STAT



August 1976
Final Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

With the exception of the Palestinian role in Lebanon and Lebanon's role (to include the Palestinians) in an Arab-Israeli confrontation, there appears to be no issue that is not subject to resolution by compromise. Most parties will settle for greater Muslim participation and representation in government. Most parties seem to agree that the Lebanese President would remain a Maronite, although some of his powers would be shared by a Prime Minister who would remain a Sunni and become more responsible to Parliament than to the President. Most parties also agree that greater representation of Muslims in the decision-making processes affecting military matters is needed (National Security type organization). And finally, most parties agree to greater Muslim officer representation and participation in decision-making processes of the Lebanese army (combined Chiefs-of-Staff type organization).

Nonetheless, it appears that a solution to Lebanon's crisis will be affected by:

1. the absence of a security force which, in the initial stages, will be able to separate the combatants and then gradually disarm them, thereby restoring some measure of security; and
 2. the atmosphere of suspicion, communal strife, and the de facto partition of Lebanon into Christian and Muslim areas which will render the creation of a Lebanese security force difficult.
- The next president of Lebanon will have to be acceptable to and enjoy the support and cooperation of all factions in order to be effective. At first, he will have to govern Lebanon with emergency powers; yet he cannot govern as a dictator, since the Muslim community will view that as a Christian attempt to rescind the understanding achieved through the new Covenant. The authors feel that a foreign security force, therefore, will be needed in the initial one-to two-year period to assist the new president in the task of restoring order, and must remain in Lebanon until a Lebanese security force can be created to assume the tasks performed by this foreign contingent.

As it affects Lebanon's *laissez-faire* policy, to include banking, compromise is possible if some degree of control is exercised by the government. The control sought is one that would ensure equitable taxation of the lower economic strata. The majority of the parties do not feel that the banks should be controlled any further.

Compromise is evident on the issue of distribution of wealth, with emphasis on Sunni and Shi'a sects and regions, with the understanding that the process would be gradual and evolutionary rather than radical and revolutionary. Although the issue of naturalization for Kurds, nomads, and overseas Lebanese appears to pit Left versus Right, a compromise is possible. A number of formulas can be developed which would open up naturalization for all for a limited and agreed upon period, after which the process would become selective on a case by case approach.

The Palestinians remain and will remain a problem until the relationship of the Palestinians with the Syrians is redefined and resolved. Until such time, the Palestinians will resist a Lebanese solution and will not attempt to control their Lebanese Leftist allies. The Lebanese Left, on the other hand, is not likely to accept compromise on the Palestinian issue which does not meet with the approval of the Palestinians, since their continued existence and future role in the Lebanese body politic depends to a great extent on a continued alliance with the Palestinians. Although greatly weakened by recent military setbacks and apparent non-support by the Arab governments (with the possible exception of Libya and Iraq), the Palestinians remain, nonetheless, a formidable force, which is able to exert pressure in Lebanon and Syria. At this moment, they appear to be willing to reach some understanding with the Syrians, an understanding which will guarantee them a large measure of independence. They feel, moreover, that time is on their side if the Syrian intervention in Lebanon continues much longer. Yet it must be noted that, even if the PLO is crushed in Lebanon, the Palestinian problem will not disappear. Instead, it may intensify since the PLO, as they have often threatened, may launch a terror campaign against real and perceived enemies, to include both international as well as regional targets.

Bloc. It is important to understand in what capacity these leaders have spoken and continue to speak, in order to better understand the relative position of the different factions. The three charts which follow are presented to further facilitate the task of the reader. The first one shows the alignment of the factions in February 1975, just as the crisis began. The second one, dated May 1976, depicts the polarization of the factions; and here polarization is best represented by the number of combatants that form the backbone of either extreme. The third chart shows the alignment of forces after June 1, 1976, in terms of pro-and anti-Syrian allegiance. It is important to note in this last chart the fragmentation of the Left. It is this chart that leads the authors to believe that the first scenario is the one most likely to approximate the end of the Lebanese crisis.

Scenario 1

"Syrian drive on the capital and occupation of all Leftist positions and elimination of anti-Syrian Leftists."

In this Scenario, the initial commitment of Syrian forces to achieve a cease-fire and restore security and stability is based on either of two options:

1. A thrust aimed at occupying all Leftist positions and enclaves no matter the cost;
2. A limited operation that will besiege Leftist and Palestinian forces in three main enclaves--Tripoli in the north; Aley-Sidon-Western Beirut triangle, while denying them use of the international airport, the major Beirut-Sidon road, and the port of Sidon; and Tyre in the south, thereby hoping to force the Leftist and Palestinian forces through means of a prolonged siege to accept Syrian terms for ending the fighting---while Syria resupplies and supports Rightist forces as a means of keeping constant pressure on the Leftists and Palestinians.

Further, while Syria believes the recourse to non-Lebanese forces to restore security and maintain stability in Lebanon to be necessary, the entry of non-Syrian Arab forces, or foreign forces, into Lebanon to perform that function is considered totally undesirable. Should such non-Syrian forces enter Lebanon, it is expected that Syria will resort to a series of measures which will in fact minimize the ineffectiveness of these forces, thereby, convincing all parties to the conflict, both internal and external, that Syria alone can restore security and stability in Lebanon. Acting as it has with its Christian allies, Syria has closed Beirut's international airport and seized all other major airports in the country. Also the major ports of Tyre, Sidon and Tripoli have been rendered ineffective, especially now that the Israeli blockade has been imposed on the southern ports. Syria has also shelled and put out of action the oil refinery at Sidon. The arrival of the logistical support for an Arab peace force will have to be made through Syria, giving that

country some control over this force. On the political and diplomatic fronts, Syria has fought and continues to fight a delaying rear-guard action aimed at undermining greater Arab government involvement, as seen by the recent Syrian/PLO agreement, although as yet unimplemented, which has succeeded in delaying Arab government interference.

Syrian Reasons for Intervention

On March 12, 1976, President Assad clarified his views on the Lebanese crisis and laid down Syria's reasons for intervening in the fighting. Assad made it clear that he does not consider the conflict to be one that pits the Right against the Left, or progressives against reactionaries, or one that pits those who demand reforms against those who refuse to accept them. He views the crisis "as a conspiracy against the people of Lebanon, and against the Palestinian revolution and against the Arab nation as a whole." At various times in earlier unofficial pronouncements, Assad accused the Palestinians of carrying out a plot by certain Arab governments aimed at liquidating those who opposed the American peace initiative in the Middle East. He made clear that Syria felt that security and stability in Lebanon were more important and urgent at the moment than the question of reforms and changes in the Lebanese system, most of which had already been agreed to by a majority earlier. He further warned the Palestinians to take a neutral stand and to dissociate themselves from the Progressive National Movement and Kamal Jumblatt (whom Assad considers responsible for the latest round of fighting), and made it clear that although Lebanon was an Arab problem, Syria alone bore the responsibility for security and stability in Lebanon.

Let everyone know and understand that in this region we have complete freedom of movement. We can take any position we deem suitable; no one can prevent us from doing so.¹

The Syrian Plan

The Syrian Plan appears to be two-phased:

1. Secure the election and installation of their favorite candidate, Elias Sarkis, implement the reforms agreed to and radio broadcast by President Franjieh (see below) and conclude a "Security and Cooperation" agreement similar to the one concluded with Jordan.²
2. Syrian forces acting on the request of the new Lebanese president and cabinet of national unity would then assume two roles:
 - a. disarm the population and help in the reunification and reconstitution of the Lebanese army and security forces; and,
 - b. insure the implementation of the Cairo Agreement of 1969.³

The Syrian reasons for intervention and the Syrian Plan seem to enjoy the support of most of the internal parties to the conflict, with the exception of the extreme Right ("Cedar Guard" and the Order of the Maronite Monks), and some elements of the extreme Left. The extreme Right, however, can choose to be overruled when it allows the Front for Freedom and Man, of which it is a member, to speak for the Maronites as a whole, and therefore, tacitly supports the Syrian move since the Maronite Christian traditional leaders are in favor of the Syrian initiative. The Left has fragmented over the Syrian military intervention, with the al-Najjadah Party, Saïqah, the Ba'ath, Syrian Wing, and the Nasserite Organization-Union of Working Forces, supporting the Syrians. The Syrian Social Nationalist Party (Ina'am Raad wing) chose to take a middle-of-the-road position, while the rest, to include all the Palestinian guerrilla groups, condemned it. It is clear, however, that once the PLO comes to terms with Syria, opposition to the Syrian role in Lebanon will become negligible.

Domestic Effects

1. Greater Muslim Representation and Participation in Governmental Process

On February 14, 1976, President Franjieh addressed a message to the nation which embodies the new National Covenant. This National Covenant was achieved after a series of meetings among traditional Christian Maronite leaders, traditional Sunni Muslim leaders, and traditional

Shi'ite Muslim leaders, to include Imam Musa Sadr and Syrian officials. In essence, the new National Covenant makes the following points and changes in the traditional structure:

- (1) There will be equal representation by Muslims and Christians in Parliament--54 to 54 deputies for each side. Presently, the Shi'ites have only 19 deputies as opposed to 20 Sunnis. The new Covenant calls for 9 additional Muslim deputies, of which 3 will be Shi'ite and 4 Sunni. Two will be Druze, thus maintaining a 24 to 22 majority in favor of the Sunnis, with the Druze increasing from the present total of 6 to 8 members. (This point has not been fully accepted by the Shi'ites who want equal representation with the Sunnis.)
- (2) The Prime Minister will be nominated by Parliament rather than by the President, as was the usage under the old National Covenant. The authority of the President and the Prime Minister remains to be defined. Most likely, the Prime Minister will be given more executive power independent of consent of the President.
- (3) A constitutional court will be created to pass on existing laws, and a supreme court will also be created to try the President and Ministers in case of unconstitutional or unlawful conduct.
- (4) A new council will be established to supplement the present Council of Deputies. It is not clear whether this council will be set up to deal with economics in general, economic planning, or for the economic development of districts.
- (5) Confessionalism will be abolished from state employment. Future governmental appointments will be made on the basis of specialization and qualification.
- (6) The document stressed the fact that "Lebanon is an independent, free Arab country." Lebanon's Arab identity has never in the past been so officially stressed.
- (7) The presidency, premiership, and speaker of the House will remain the preserve of Maronite Christians, Sunni Muslims, and Shi'ites respectively. On this issue, there seems to be some disagreement. Some traditional Sunni Muslim leaders seem to feel that this should not be specifically stated in the Covenant, but should follow the practice adopted earlier in the previous National Covenant where this classification

was tacitly accepted, thereby attempting to bridge the gap between extreme Maronite demands that this be stressed in the Covenant and the refusal of some traditional Sunni Muslim leaders to sign such a Covenant. Prime Minister Karami stated that "one who is not bound by his word is not bound by his signature."⁴

(8) Relationships between Palestinians and Lebanese will be strictly regulated in accordance with the Cairo Accords; and Syria will act to guarantee full implementation of this agreement. The Syrians feel "that if the Cairo Agreement is implemented scrupulously, especially concerning the ban on armed men walking in the streets and the withdrawal of heavy weapons from refugee camps in Lebanon, some of the major causes of friction between the Lebanese authorities and the Palestinians will be removed."⁵

In a statement in February 1976, Pierre Gemayel, leader of the Phalange Party, said that he accepted the Cairo Agreement of 1969 in spite of himself so as to save the country from civil war. The Phalangists, he stated, waited five years "accepting the most humiliating concessions before taking a step."⁶

(9) Once the cease-fire goes into effect, there will be economic and social reforms aimed at improving the lot of the Lebanese people. But this would be left to the Cabinet of National Reconciliation or Union to determine the portent of such reforms.

(10) Amendment of the citizenship clause, undefined as yet.

This new National Covenant, though, does not have the support of the Progressive National Forces (PNF). Kamal Jumblatt has reiterated his demands for a total laicization of the Lebanese political system and has stated his opposition to the concept of consecrating the Presidency of the Republic to the Maronite sect. Also, Mr. Jumblatt has stated his opposition to the election of Elias Sarkis, because he feels that Sarkis has the support of the Syrians and that the Syrians want to limit the reforms of this new National Covenant. On the other hand, since the election of Sarkis and in order to avoid a confrontation with him, Mr. Jumblatt has moderated his position and has set two conditions for cooperation with Sarkis: the withdrawal of Syrian troops, and the implementation of reforms, even though minimal.

The extreme Maronite wing, as represented by the "Cedar Guards"--- generally associated with the Maronite League and the Order of Maronite Monks---rejected the following points in President Franjieh's document:

- (1) Lebanon's Arab identity;
- (2) repudiation of the Cairo Agreement and the rejection of a Palestinian presence on Lebanese soil;
- (3) sectarianism, demanding instead the total secularization of the Lebanese state;* and
- (4) opening up naturalization to non-Lebanese. They stated that "Any civilized country allows 6% of its total population to be strangers, whereas Lebanon has 57%."7 However, the Front for Freedom and Man, which incorporates all the Maronite leadership of the country, to include the Phalangists, is believed to hold similar views as regards the new National Covenant as that of the Phalangists who praised it. The Front for Freedom and Man believes that the new National Covenant forms a suitable basis for national understanding.

Judging by the number of casualties on both sides, it would appear that Lebanese Christian and Muslim losses have been light in comparison to those of the Palestinians. In other words, most of the casualties have been Palestinians; thus mutual hatred of the two major Lebanese communities, generated by the number of lives lost, can be minimized. In terms of material losses, the Christians have suffered the most; but they are in a better position to recoup their losses once the fighting subsides.

Finally, since the Lebanese Left is split between pro- and anti-Syrian factions, and is not broadly based, a Christian gambit to seek partition will put the Sunni traditional leadership in a quandary. A Lebanese Muslim state would be controlled by either Palestinians or Leftists or a Druze leader (Kamal Jumblatt) who is bent on secularization. These three options are not relished by the traditional Sunni leaders and may impel them to seek some compromise with the Christian leadership

*A subtle difference exists between demands for the laicization of the state and total secularization. By demanding total secularization, the extreme Maronite wing hopes to put the Muslims on the spot since it will abolish the religious courts and will allow interfaith---Christian-Muslim--- marriages, especially the marriages of Muslim women with Christian men which is expressly forbidden by the Qur'an. Thus, the extreme Maronite wing hopes that the demands for laicization will be dropped by

as can be seen by the recent meeting between Saeb Salam and Bashir Gemayel. This is also based on information that the relationship between Lebanese Muslims and Palestinians in the western part of Beirut has begun to sour. Therefore, if one accepts the fact that Lebanese Christian and Muslim casualties have not been catastrophic, that the Christians are prepared to absorb their economic losses, and that traditional Muslim leaders have no option but to seek a compromise with the Christians in order to preserve their positions, one can conclude that reconciliation is still possible, especially if the Muslim community will derive greater political gain from such a move, and if conservative Arab governments, ie. Saudi Arabia, are prepared to finance the traditional Muslim leaders in a bid to win back their electorate while, at the same time, making reparations for Muslim economic losses.

One has to note that neither the Christians nor the Muslims have been able to impose a military solution on the other, thereby enabling the old formula of "no winner, no loser" to be used as a basis for compromise. Moreover, it is likely that the traditional Christian Muslim leaders' will use the Palestinians as a scapegoat, especially if the relationship of the Muslim to the Palestinians continues to deteriorate, and continued fighting between the Rightists and the Palestinians further weakens the latter. The beginning of this trend is evident if one considers the fact that the crisis began as a Christian-Muslim fight, progressing to a Leftist-Rightist struggle, and now is portrayed as a Syrian/Rightist-Palestinian conflict. In other words, the Lebanese Muslims are no longer a prominent party to the conflict, which now pits Syria and its Rightist allies against the Palestinians.

2. Reconstruction of a Lebanese Army, with Greater Muslim Representation in the Officer Corps.

Plans for an expansion of the Lebanese Army to five or six brigades, totalling 35- to 40,000 men, have been considered for the past four years. It was felt that this would be sufficient to maintain internal security in face of growing Palestinian/Leftist strength and would be a credible

by the Muslims if it means opening the secular Pandora's box. (For an interesting explanation of a moderate Muslim's point of view on secularization and laicization, see: Mahmasani Subhi, "A Legal Interpretation of Secularism," Al-Hawadess (in Arabic), 23 April 1976, No. 1015, pp. 24-25.)

deterrent to Israeli raids into Lebanon.* Several factors, however, affected the implementation of such a plan, such as the negative attitude of Parliament to enact legislation creating the proposed army, and the inability of the Lebanese army to attract volunteers, especially from the Christian community.

In the past two years, the army found itself the constant subject of criticism, especially from Muslim, Leftist, and Palestinian sources, for doing little to defend southern Lebanon and the Palestinian camps from Israeli attacks. A request by Premier Saeb Salam to General Iskandar Ghanem, then army commander, for the Lebanese army to provide cover for Palestinian infiltrators and for the defense of the Palestinian camps, led to a break between Sunni leaders and the army command. Subsequently, Sunni leaders demanded a greater say in decisions affecting national defense policies and promotion within the army. More recently, the Sunni Prime Ministers have taken for themselves the defense portfolio. Also they have demanded that decisions affecting national defense be referred to a body resembling the United States National Security Council, in which greater Muslim representation gives the Muslims a greater say. This proposed National Security Council was supposed to limit the powers of the president and the army commander in deciding matters affecting national defense. The Muslim leadership, moreover, demanded the creation of a Superior Officers Council, similar to the United States' Joint Chiefs-of-Staff, in which the number of Muslim officers would be increased.⁸ This Superior Officers Council would be responsible for matters affecting the army itself in such areas as recruitment, armament, equipment, promotion, strategy and tactics. This was seen as a way of limiting the authority of the army commander in such matters since the

*It is recognized by the authors that Israel will not react passively to such an increase in numbers and will attempt to pressure Lebanon, through the United States, to keep the army to its former size. It may use the 45,000 figure as justification for additional US military aid to Israel. This point will be discussed further in Scenario 4B.