LEBANESE INTERNAL DIVISIONS AND PALESTINIAN GUERRILLA ACTIVITY, 1967 - 1976

THESIS

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Edward Sayah, B. A.

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This study presents the thesis that religious cleavages in Lebanon have been the major factor behind most of the country's problems since the achievement of independence in 1943. The coming of the Palestinians in 1948 and in the 1970s upset Lebanon's delicate sociopolitical balance between Christians and Muslims in favor of the latter. The study's four chapters describe the origins of Lebanon's religious groups, the arrival of the Palestinians, Lebanon's emergence as the sole Palestinian guerrilla base, and the outbreak and aftermath of the Lebanese civil war of 1975-1976. Finally, suggestions are made for the resolution of the continuing Christian-Muslim conflict, notably the alternatives of federalism and confederalism as possible future political arrangements for Lebanon.
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INTRODUCTION

Contemporary Lebanon is a young state with a fragile foundation that was formally forged in 1943, in an agreement between the Christian and Muslim elites in the country. At its genesis it had to overcome internal religious divisions between the Muslim community, especially among the Sunnis, who were in some cases hostile to the founding of a separate state of Lebanon, and the Christian community, particularly the Maronites, who viewed the establishment of Lebanon as an institutionalization of a Christian political entity. National leaders recognized the need for joint action to narrow the deep chasm among the diverse religious communities that shared the land in order to achieve independence. The mere acknowledgment of separate religious communities as politico-legal units in the National Pact of 1943, however, has not contributed to the forging of a common bond in the country.

Lebanon as a state is an entity consisting of five principal communities: Catholic Christians, non-Catholic Christians, Sunni Muslims, Shia Muslims, and Druze Muslims.¹ The continuing civil strife in Lebanon demonstrates

the key cleavage separating its two major communities, Christians and Muslims.

The concepts of community and communalism have most frequently been used in connection with groups differentiated on the basis of religion—in this context, Christians and Muslims. Lebanon shares characteristics with some other societies, such as those of Cyprus and Belgium, in that it is divided along communal lines in which the attributes of religion, region, and ethnicity sharply distinguish one part of the population from another. According to Robert Kearney, the term "communalism" "refers to an attitude which emphasizes the primacy and exclusiveness of the communal group and demands the solidarity of members of the community in political and social action.”

The semi-autonomous nature of Lebanon's religious communities has precluded the building of a national identity for the country and has left it communally divided; in other words, a Lebanese national identity has been replaced by separate communal identities. The basic elements of separateness are aptly described by Kearney:

The community frequently is the most inclusive group possessing a claim on the loyalty of the individual and with which he can readily identify. An individual is born into a community,

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and membership is in that community and exclusion from all others remains with him throughout life. Virtually every permanent inhabitant of a plural society identifies himself and is identified by others as belonging to one and only one community.³

Ethnic-religious politics abound in Lebanon, and virtually all issues tend to be viewed at a sectarian level. According to Roy Wallis, sectarianism "seems to center on the right to exclusion, a self-conception as an 'elect' or elite, totalitarianism, and hostility to or separation from the state or society."⁴

Any explanation of Lebanese politics will be incomplete unless the roles of religious attitudes and organizations are taken into account. Lebanon's key institutions also reflect the religious structure of the society. In general, sectarianism is the conduct characteristic of sect members. Thus, a civil servant in Lebanese public administration is viewed and treated in terms of his religious sect, and public posts are distributed in proportion to the population of each religious group in a system that allocates specific posts to members of designated sects.

The executive and legislative branches of Lebanese government reflect this sectarian division of offices.

³Ibid.

The National Pact of 1943 stipulated that the seats in the Lebanese cabinet were to be divided equally between Christians and Muslims and that the seats in the parliament were to be divided six to five in favor of the Christians. The sectarian factor is also considered in recruitment and promotion for administrative, diplomatic, judicial, and military positions.

The government recognized the role of the institutions of Lebanon's religious communities in the field of personal affairs and thus left several areas of legal concern to the exclusive jurisdiction of religious courts, including contracting and dissolving marriages (nullification, separation, and divorce), guardianship and legitimization of children, religious endowments, and inheritance and wills. Outside the government, a number of political, educational, and social organizations also reflect a sectarian character. Lebanon's political parties, for example, are clearly sectarian in nature. Sectarian differences also manifest themselves in education; for centuries the various religious institutions in Lebanon have been active in the field of education and have operated their own schools.

Many social and community organizations also reflect the sectarian structure of Lebanese society. Two illustrations suffice. The Boy Scouts in Lebanon are not only
divided into Muslim and Christian groups but, within those two bodies, are subdivided into a number of smaller groups representing almost all Muslim and Christian denominations. In like fashion, Red Cross and Red Crescent\textsuperscript{5} organizations exist side by side in the country.

The Lebanese Christians and Muslims are also geographically divided—most Muslims reside in the southern region and the Bekaa Valley, and Christians live in the mountains. In addition to this division into separate districts and villages, in places where Muslims and Christians live in the same city, town, or village, they tend to reside in separate neighborhoods. In short, Lebanon continues to be a fragmented society, as Edward Shils points out: "People may know they are Lebanese but this is not as significant a fact for most of them as being Maronite, Orthodox Christian, Sunni, Shiite Muslims, or whatever else."\textsuperscript{6}

The official sanction of these separate ways of life in Lebanon hinders the development of even the minimum common basis—the unified will and the common sense of sharing the land—necessary for the functioning of a modern state. Conditions in the country are such that almost any

\textsuperscript{5} "Red Crescent" is a Muslim medical relief organization similar to the Red Cross.

problem can easily be transformed into a religious conflict between Christians and Muslims. As a result, the government has limited its initiatives and responsibility in many cases in order to avoid becoming involved in religious disputes.

The conflicts that break out between Muslims and Christians from time to time can only be managed in the short run; they cannot be permanently resolved because of the two communities' mutual mistrust. Such communal conflicts in the divided societies of Lebanon, Cyprus, Nigeria, and other nations can have serious consequences, as Eric Nordlinger observes:

A conflict is intense or a society is deeply divided when a large number of conflict group members attach overwhelming importance to the issues at stake or manifest strongly-held antagonistic beliefs and emotions toward the opposing segment, or both. It now becomes apparent that intense conflicts may readily result in widespread violence and repression when one conflict group controls the government or the army. It should now also be clear that very few, if any, intense conflicts are resolved in the short run; the most that can be expected is their regulation.7

In Lebanon to date, no consensus has been reached on the question of a constitution for the country. The new generation of Muslims is unalterably opposed to the National Pact of 1943 because it permanently gives the

7Eric A. Nordlinger, Conflict Regulation in Divided Societies (Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University, Center for International Affairs, 1977), pp. 9-10.
The presidency of the country to the Christians. The Lebanese have not yet even agreed on the question of whether or not Lebanon constitutes a state. The Christians tend to view the country as an independent permanent entity, whereas the Muslims tend to regard it as an integral part of the larger Muslim Arab world. The Christians look to the Western countries for support and protection; the Muslims, to Arab nations.

Lebanon's internal divisions have deprived the country of Christian-Muslim solidarity and were reflected in its response to the foreign threat injected in the two civil wars of 1958 and 1975-1976. The Lebanese population was divided between the Muslims, who supported the Palestinian guerrillas, and the Christians, who opposed them. This division was then followed in 1975 and 1976 by a split in the army between Christian and Muslim factions. With the disintegration of the army, the only institution potentially capable of managing the country's internal conflict, the partition of Lebanon seemed imminent. The fragility of the Lebanese governmental system gave the Palestinians the unique opportunity to establish a foothold in Lebanon and create a state within a state.

The subject of this study is the continuing problems of the Lebanese polity. It differs from other accounts that have analyzed United States foreign policy toward
Lebanon and the attitudes of the Lebanese Muslims toward Lebanon; instead, it concentrates upon the role of religious divisions in Lebanon's civil and political problems, the impact of Palestinian guerrilla activity upon the polity of the country, and Lebanon's domestic situation and prospects for future stability.

The thesis is divided into four chapters. The first presents information on the background of Lebanon's religious divisions by tracing the coming of the various religious sects to the country, naming and describing the locations in which each sect lives today, and citing the percentage comprised by each sect in the country's total population. The first chapter also discusses conditions in Lebanon under Ottoman rule and the French mandate, the political systems established by both of these powers and their relations with Lebanon's Christian and Muslim communities, the Lebanese National Pact of 1943, and the manner in which the country's religious factions were accommodated in it. Finally, Chapter I surveys the Lebanese

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crisis of 1958 and the differing views of Christians and Muslims regarding Arab nationalism.

The second chapter traces the establishment of the Palestinian Liberation Organization by the Arab League in 1964 and the impact of its formation on Lebanon as well as the Christian and Israeli response to Palestinian guerrilla activity in Lebanon and Israel's retaliatory actions to counter these guerrilla military operations. Chapter II also describes the confrontation between the Lebanese army and the Palestinian guerrillas, Lebanese internal divisions between Christians and Muslims concerning guerrilla activity in Lebanon, and the Cairo Agreement of 1969, whose purpose was to forestall a split in the Lebanese population.

The third chapter describes the activities of the Palestinian Liberation Organization and the subsequent resumption of military confrontations between the Lebanese army and the guerrillas, accompanied by the reappearance of internal divisions in Lebanon between Christians and Muslims with regard to guerrilla activity. In addition, Chapter III describes the Milkart Protocol of 1973, another agreement intended to avoid a serious domestic rift in Lebanon.

Finally, the fourth chapter discusses the Lebanese civil war of 1975-1976, tracing the history of the military encounters and Syria's role in ending the civil strife. The
conclusion reviews the complexity of the politico-religious conflict in Lebanon and presents possible options for resolving this conflict and its attendant problems.

Primary and secondary sources in both English and Arabic were utilized in compiling this study, including books, periodicals, United States government documents, newspapers, and other materials.
CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Lebanon's internal divisions have their roots in the past. In order to understand Lebanese politics and the issues from which these domestic conflicts arose, therefore, one must examine the history of the diverse religious sects to which the Lebanese people belong.

The mountainous Lebanese terrain made the region an attractive haven for persecuted ethno-religious minorities, who found protected places in which to take refuge in Lebanon's valleys. As a result, these ethno-religious minorities lived as strange neighbors in the same land. Each of the religious sects preserved its individual autonomy, which was legitimized by the Ottomans and later by the French.

Lebanon as a Refuge for Ethno-Religious Minorities

The valleys of Lebanon have been a refuge for persecuted ethnic and religious minorities for centuries. The oldest of these sects was the Maronites, named after their patron St. Maroun, an ascetic Antiochean monk who died in 410 A.D. Religious conflicts with the Greek church of Antioch in the Byzantine Empire led to the departure of
the dissidents, under the leadership of St. John Maroun, to Lebanon in the seventh century. In Lebanon the Maronites met another Christian group, the Mardaites from the Amanus mountains in southern Anatolia, and united with them to form the Maronite Nation. In 1932, this group was officially estimated as constituting 30 per cent of the Lebanese population.¹ Today the Maronites reside principally in the valleys and on the slopes of the Lebanese mountains.

Other Christians groups that settled in Lebanon as a result of religious persecution were the Greek Catholics, estimated in 1932 as comprising 6 per cent of the country's population, and the Greek Orthodox sect, estimated as constituting 10 per cent of the population. Both are called "Greek" because they are the descendants of Greek colonists in Syria. They fled to Lebanon after the Greek Byzantine Empire lost control of Syria to the Arabs. The Greek Catholics live in many villages in both the southern and northern regions of Lebanon; the Greek Orthodox sect is located in the northern sites of Beirut and Kura.²

The Armenian Catholics and the Armenian Orthodox sect are two other Christian groups in Lebanon. After the massacres carried out against them by the Turks from 1915


²Ibid., pp. 126-128.
to 1918 and 1921 to 1922, the Armenians fled from their Turkish homeland in Asia Minor, and many of them settled in Lebanon. The 1932 estimates cited Armenian Christians as comprising 6 per cent of the Lebanese population.³

The smallest Christian sects in Lebanon are the Syrian Catholic, Syrian Orthodox, Latin, and Protestant groups. The Syrians arrived in Lebanon from Syria and Turkey after World War I. These Christian minorities were estimated in 1932 as constituting 2 per cent of Lebanon's population.⁴

The three Muslim sects in Lebanon are the Druze, the Shia, and the Sunni. The Druzes derive their name from Muhammad Ibn-Ismali al Darazi, a follower of the Fatimid Caliph in Cairo, al-Hakam (966-1021), who styled himself as the last prophet of God. As a result of their persecution at the hands of the Sunnis and the Shias, the Druzes came to Lebanon from Egypt in the eleventh century. They now reside in the southern region of the country and in the mountains near the Maronites. The Druzes were estimated as comprising 6 per cent of Lebanon's population in 1932.

The Shias, who are followers of Ali, are one of the two branches into which Islam was divided after the death of Muhammad as a result of a dispute concerning who would

⁴Ibid.
be named as his successor. After this split among the Muslims, the Shias were persecuted by the Sunni majority, and many of them fled to Lebanon. In 1932, they were estimated as constituting 20 per cent of the country's population. They now reside in southern Lebanon and in the Bekaa Valley at Lebanon's eastern border with Israel and Syria.\(^5\)

The Sunnis came to Lebanon following the Arab invasions in the seventh century. According to official estimates, they comprised 19 per cent of the country's population in 1932.\(^6\) The Sunnis live in Lebanon's coastal cities, especially Beirut and Tripoli.

The census of 1932 was the last official census conducted in Lebanon, and it is therefore very difficult to ascertain the current population percentages of the country's religious minorities. It is believed, however, that the size of the aggregate groups of Christians and Muslims in Lebanon is roughly the same.

This mosaic of religious sects living in such close proximity and the influence of religion in Lebanese life have caused a blurring of religious and secular concerns. The individual identifies with and is identified by others in terms of his family and his religious affiliation. The

\(^5\)Smith and others, pp. 131-132.

religious community takes the responsibility for education and charity, and, in accordance with the Ottoman Millet system which continues to function in Lebanon, it is the only party or power that exerts legal control over marriage, divorce, inheritance, and other personal affairs. Consequently, when it deals with such matters, the government encounters decisions that have already been made by religious authorities.

The autonomy of Lebanon's Christian and Muslim sects has persisted for hundreds of years. The coexistence that evolved between the two religions was sustained until, in the sixteenth century, Muslim Ottoman forces occupied the territory that today constitutes Lebanon. With the advent of Ottoman domination, the religious balance was altered in favor of the Muslims; under Ottoman rule, the Muslims enjoyed power while the Christians endured political and physical insecurity.

Lebanese Christians under Ottoman Rule

Pierre Gemayel, leader of the Christian Kataib Party in Lebanon, has commented upon the "fear complex" of Lebanese Christians:

7A Millet is a non-Muslim group or community in Turkey, organized under a religious head of its own who also exercises civil functions of importance. See Robert Crane Byerly, "Lebanon and Syria, the Protestant Millet," in Twentieth-Century Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Baker Book House, 1955), p. 649.
They [the Muslims] accuse us of this fear; they say that we have created it ourselves [and that we have] revived [it] and belabored [it]. They ignore that this has to do with a sentiment, a reflex which is the result of centuries of Ottoman domination and which is too deeply rooted for it to be caused by a simple rumor or by a campaign intelligently orchestrated by imperialism.⁸

Among Christians fear of Muslim domination has long been--and continues to be--a main ingredient of Lebanese politics. This fear derives from a specific historical experience which is usually recalled in times of crisis.

Under four centuries of Muslim rule (1516 to 1918), the Christians and the Jews in Lebanon were viewed as separate nations and dealt with as such. The Ottoman government acknowledged the diversity of religions and nationalities in the areas that it dominated, and the Millet system that the Ottomans implemented in Lebanon permitted Christians and Jews to maintain some elements of their communal life and social position. Although the pressure to Islamize was strong, the Christians were able to preserve their religious identity. Yet, their situation was uncertain. "In a state where everything depended on the caprice of the ruler and nobody's life and

property were safe," Albert Hourani comments, "the Christians and Jews were even more helpless than others." 9

The political system established by the Ottoman Turks was based upon religious identity and caused the Christian and Muslim groups in Lebanon to become closed communities. Each of them, in short, constituted its own world for its members and received absolute loyalty from them. Under Ottoman rule the Muslims were the predominant class in Lebanon. They exercised political power and had the security of greater numbers. Hourani states, "The Muslim Sunnis were distinguished. They had a great self-confidence and a sense of responsibility which the others lacked. They were all marginal, out of power and historical decision." 10 The French traveler Constantin Volney described the relations between the Muslims and Christians under Ottoman rule:

The people of Syria are in general either Muslims or Christians. This difference in cult has very negative effects on the civil state; calling each other infidels, rebels, and atheists, the partisans of Jesus Christ and those of Muhammad exhibit toward each other an aversion which resembles a sort of perpetual warfare. We gain an awareness of the extremes to which their prejudices have carried the people. The government, rather than intervening as a mediator in these troubles, foments

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10 Ibid., p. 22.
them because of its partiality. Faithful to the spirit of the Qur'an, it treats the Christians with a harshness which appears in a thousand forms.\textsuperscript{11}

In light of this treatment, it is not surprising that the Christians feared for their continued existence in Lebanon. By humiliating the Christians and depriving them of political participation in the government, the Ottomans made them a "ruled class" in both a political and a social sense.

The Christians were a target in many bloody incidents in 1841, 1845, and 1860. Massacres were carried out against them by the Druze Muslims with the implicit consent of the Muslim Turkish authorities, who encouraged the aggression of the Druzes by taking no action against them.\textsuperscript{12} As a result, the Christians sought assistance from European states to protect them from collective murder at the hands of the Druzes.

In response to the Lebanese Christian request, Great Britain, France, Austria, Russia, and Prussia successfully induced the Ottoman government to put an immediate end to the massacres. In 1840, the Ottomans sent Foreign Minister Shakib Effendi to Lebanon to settle the crisis and formulate


\textsuperscript{12}Vocke, p. 10.
new public administrative arrangements for the country's governance.

Before he left Constantinople, Effendi held a meeting with a number of European ambassadors in the Ottoman capital. In this meeting, he expressed his government's wish that the European consuls in Beirut should refrain from intervening in Lebanese affairs and at the same time assured the ambassadors that he was traveling to Lebanon to negotiate a fair compromise to settle the country's communal civil strife.

In Lebanon Effendi put into force measures intended to end the Muslim-Christian conflict. With the approval of the concerned European nations, the Ottoman authorities first disarmed the two warring parties and then partitioned Mount Lebanon into two provinces with separate administrative systems, divided by the Beirut-Damascus road. To the north the Christian province was ruled by a Christian governor; to the south the Muslim province was ruled by a Muslim governor. The overt hostilities between Muslims and Christians ceased, but only for approximately two decades, because the new system sparked a series of disagreements that contributed to the second outbreak of civil strife in Mount Lebanon in 1860.\textsuperscript{13}

The new conflict broke out in the north with a revolt led by Maronite and Druze peasants against their Christian and Muslim feudal lords; the rebellion then spread to the south. Because of their traditional obedience to their feudal families, however, the Druzes refused to continue cooperating with the Maronites, and a rift developed between the two groups. Thus, the revolt metamorphosed into a religious conflict along sectarian lines.\textsuperscript{14}

Following these events, the Druze Muslims again carried out massacres against the Christians with the tacit help of the Ottoman authorities. Initially, the hostilities primarily involved the Christians and the Druzes, but other Muslim sects also joined the conflict. The Sunnis and the Druzes united to battle the Christians in the towns of Zahle, Sidon, Hasbaiya, and Deir al-Qamar, and in these skirmishes 12,000 Lebanese Christians were killed.\textsuperscript{15}

After the European governments learned of the conflict, a French force of 8,000 soldiers landed in Beirut and put an end to the massacres. At the same time, Great Britain, Russia, Austria, and Prussia joined with France to set up a commission whose members met with the Ottomans in Constantinople to settle the conflict and put policies and procedures into effect to ensure that it would not be repeated in the future. The commission designated the

\textsuperscript{14}Vocke, p. 9. \textsuperscript{15}Ibid., p. 10.
Lebanese mountains as an autonomous region under a Christian governor, who would be appointed by the Ottoman authorities in Constantinople and directly responsible to them.

This political system, however, did little to reduce the existing communal differences and conflicts in Lebanon. Instead, it increased the desire of the Christians to establish a separate Lebanese national identity apart from the Arab world, which they saw as a Muslim sea that threatened to engulf them. Most importantly, the partition of Lebanon resulted from the imposition of the new system. The territories of the Bekaa Valley in the east and the cities of Beirut, Tripoli, and Sidon were isolated from the rest of Lebanon and placed under direct Ottoman control. These political and geographic arrangements continued until the autonomy of the Lebanese mountains was abolished by the Ottomans in 1914 and the nation of Greater Lebanon was formed in 1920.16

Greater Lebanon and the Lebanese Muslims

After the defeat of the Ottoman Empire by the Allies in World War I, Lebanon was placed under French protection. When the French army arrived in Beirut on October 7, 1918,

the Christians received them with open arms in the belief that they would save the country from the Muslim domination that it had sustained during the centuries of Ottoman rule.

The Christians and the French became allies; the Christians needed French protection against the Arab nationalists, and the French heeded the support of the Christians to enhance their position in carrying out the policy outlined in the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916, according to whose provisions Lebanon and Syria were placed under French control.

To counter the claims of the pan-Arab nationalists that Lebanon should be unified with Syria, the Maronites formed two delegations, one headed by the Maronite patriarch Elias el-Hoyek and the other by the Maronite archbishop of Beirut. In Paris these delegations sought the creation of a separate and enlarged Lebanon, to be placed under French protection. On November 10, 1919, French Prime Minister Georges Clemenceau gave the Maronite patriarchs a firm commitment of French support for their goals. Then, on April 28, 1920, the mandate for Syria and Lebanon was given to French at the San Remo Conference.¹⁷

The aims of the Maronites and other Lebanese Christians were realized on September 10, 1920, when the French

Commissioner, General Eugène Gouraud, announced the birth of Greater Lebanon, which included the mountains and the territories that had been isolated from Lebanon under Ottoman rule; the cities of Beirut, Tripoli, Sidon, and Tyre; the interior districts of Baalbeck; and the Bekaa Valley near the Syrian border.\textsuperscript{18}

The Lebanese Muslims were opposed to the establishment of the state of Greater Lebanon because they feared that it would deprive them of the privileges that they formerly enjoyed. Above all, their resentment resulted from the fact that they were not consulted regarding the proclamation of the new state. The Muslims argued that the agreement had been made exclusively between the Christians (particularly the Maronite patriarchate, who sent delegations to the peace conference in Paris) and the French. The following newspaper accounts succinctly express Muslim opposition to the new state:

\begin{quote}
Even if a simple Muslim expresses contentment with Greater Lebanon, God knows and they [those who try to breed this feeling] know that he is not contented. . . . Not a single Muslim accepts nor will he ever accept anything other than Syrian unity.\textsuperscript{19}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{18}Koury, p. 3.

If the present status quo [Greater Lebanon] stipulated by the Lebanese constitution of 1926 is maintained, half of the inhabitants of the Lebanese country will have their love extinguished in their hearts, instructing their children to hate it, telling them that they are strangers to it and that their real country extends beyond Lebanon where a beautiful flag flies--a flag that has sanctity, beauty, and history.20

The Lebanese Muslims were shocked by the establishment of Greater Lebanon and viewed it as a political entity dominated by the Christians. In effect, the Muslims were transformed from a "ruling class" under the Ottomans to a "ruled class" under the French mandate, thus changing places with the Christians.

Like the Ottomans, French authorities in Lebanon recognized the autonomous nature of the country's religious sects, thus reinforcing the pluralistic structure of Lebanese society. In April of 1936, the High French Commission issued a comprehensive decree defining the position of religious communities in matters of personal status and communal organization. Hourani states,

The decree gave explicit legal recognition to the historic communities. Their statutes were given the force of law and the application of them was placed under the protection of the law and the control of the public authorities. They were to enjoy corporate personality and to be represented in their relation with the public powers by their spiritual heads. Members of the communities would be obliged to conform to their statutes in matters of personal status and to civil law where the statutes of the communities were silent.21

20 Ibid.  
21 Hourani, pp. 64-65.
The French not only recognized the already-existing "historic communities" in Lebanon; they further subdivided the Muslims by giving official status to the Shias for the first time in order to weaken Muslim opposition to Greater Lebanon. H. A. R. Gibbes notes,

From then on, Shii leaders were encouraged by the French--as well as by shrewd Maronite politicians--to play a wider role in government as a means of bringing greater benefits to their community. The mandatory was careful, however, to back only those feudal leaders who were willing to cooperate with it. Still, support from both the French and the Maronites eventually helped the Shii leaders to become independent of Sunni influence and to come into their own politically.  

Since the Christians were more effectively organized than the Muslims when the state of Greater Lebanon was established by the French, the Muslims were motivated to organize themselves so that they could deal with the highly hierarchical and structured Christian churches. The Sunnis were encouraged by the French to establish a Supreme Islamic Council and office of the Grand Mufti.

To enable him to function on the same level as his counterparts in the Christian community, in 1926 the Sunnis in Lebanon invested their Mufti with extensive spiritual and temporal powers. The Muslim hierarchy became more centralized in accordance with the provisions of a law passed by the Lebanese parliament in 1955. This law

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named the Mufti as the religious leader of the Sunni Muslims in Lebanon and the representative of his sect before all Lebanese authorities. The Mufti also became the superior of all Sunni Muslim teachers and interpreters of the Qur'an in Lebanon. Finally, the law specified the procedure for the election of the Mufti by giving this right to an Islamic Electoral Assembly.\textsuperscript{23}

As stated earlier in this chapter, the Shia Muslims were not organized under Ottoman rule. Under the French mandate, the Shias were granted the right to form their own judicial system. In 1969, the Lebanese parliament passed a law establishing the Higher Islamic Shia Council.

A law defining the leading religious bodies of the Druze Muslims was passed in 1962. Its provisions recognized two Druze religious leaders called Shaykh Akl because the Druzes were divided into two clans. Later all of the Druzes agreed on one Shaykh Akl.\textsuperscript{24}

The Lebanese National Pact of 1943

Shortly before the French left the country in 1945-1946, the Lebanese people were divided into two parties regarding the establishment of a national identity.


\textsuperscript{24}Ibid., pp. 80-81.
Labib Zuwiyya Yamak describes this division among Lebanon's citizens:

On the one hand, there were those who believed that Lebanon formed a part of the Arab world ethnically, culturally, historically, and geographically and that the Lebanese were an integral part of the Arab nation. On the other hand, and taking the diametrically opposite point of view, were those who believed that Lebanon was geographically part of the Arab world in the general sense but that ethnically, historically, and even culturally it constituted a separate entity. The first group denied that Lebanon had any special mission that distinguished it from the rest of the Arab countries, while the second group viewed Lebanon not so much as the western frontier of the Arab east but as the eastern frontier of the Christian west, and moreover as a country with a special mission that was not compatible with nationalist aspirations of the Arab world.25

The Sunni Muslims comprised the majority of those advocating the Arab nationalist viewpoint, and the Maronite Christians formed the majority of those who supported the opposite position.

In the 1940s, a new political trend emerged among the Lebanese Sunni Muslim leadership represented by the Solh family, which began to call for a fully independent Arab Lebanon. This was a courageous step to take in the face of the opposition of extremists in both the Christian and Muslim communities. Among the Christians, a political party called the Lebanese National Bloc under the leadership

of ex-President Emile Eddeh insisted on close ties with France as a guarantee against the absorption of Lebanon by some pan-Arab state, the solution favored by extremist Sunni Muslims.

In 1943, Maronite Christian ex-President Bishara al-Khoury, leader of the Constitutional Bloc Party representing Lebanese Christians, reached an agreement with Sunni Muslim Prime Minister Riad al-Solh, who spoke for the Lebanese Muslims. The agreement was made on the basis that, although Lebanon was Arab, it possessed a "special character" that must be preserved in full independence. The understanding between Maronite President al-Khoury and Sunni Prime Minister al-Solh on behalf of both Christian and Muslim communities led to an unwritten agreement which is still known today as the National Pact (Almithaq Al-Watani) of 1943.²⁶

The basic aim of the National Pact was to maintain the independence of Lebanon as a distinct entity from the Arab world. It also required the Christians to forego seeking foreign protection or attempting to bring Lebanon under any foreign influence or control. Similarly, the Muslims were required to forego further attempts to bring Lebanon into any form of Arab union, which the Christians

opposed in the belief that joining such a union would cause Lebanon to be absorbed.

It was agreed in the Pact that the president of Lebanon must be a Maronite Christian, the prime minister a Sunni Muslim, and the speaker of the chamber of deputies a Shia Muslim. Greek Orthodox Christians would occupy the posts of vice-speaker and vice-premier, and either a Maronite Christian or a Greek Catholic Christian could serve as minister of foreign affairs. The minister of defense was to be a Druze Muslim.\(^2\)

The highest positions in the state were distributed on sectarian lines as a complement to articles in the constitution of 1926. Article 95 stated, "As a provisional measure and for the sake of justice and amity, the sects shall be equitably represented in the Ministry (Cabinet), provided such measures will not harm the general welfare of the state." Other articles in the constitution clearly outlined a consociational political system. Article 9, for example, explicitly gave Lebanon's religious sects the right to legislate and carry out laws related to the personal status of their members, although Article 53 gave the president the final word when it stated, "The president

of the Republic shall appoint and dismiss ministers from among whom he shall designate a Prime Minister."

The National Pact of 1943 represented a victory for the Christians and their advocacy of Greater Lebanon. The Pact was accepted by all of the Arab states in the Alexandria Protocol of October 7, 1944, when an explicit collective Arab guarantee was given for Lebanon's independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity. This clause was also incorporated in the Arab League Pact of March 22, 1945. It should be noted here that half of the twenty states that are currently members of the Arab League were represented in the League in 1945 and that most of them were not fully independent--Egypt was still receiving British protection, for example, and Syrian affairs continued to be administered by the French.

It is clear that the provisions of both the constitution of 1926 and the National Pact of 1943 not only reflected but reinforced the deep divisions within Lebanese society on the eve of independence. The balance of interests and sectarian harmony which the National Pact was intended to represent were alternately praised and condemned by members of both the Christian and Muslim communities. The Christians saw the Pact as a guarantee against the absorption of Lebanon in an Arab union and at

\[^28\text{Ibid.}, p. 496.\]  \[^29\text{Rondot}, p. 48.\]
the same time a safeguard for the political presence of which they had been deprived for hundreds of years under Ottoman rule. On the other hand, the Muslims were displeased with the Pact because it deprived them of the political influence that they enjoyed under the Ottomans and destroyed their dream of seeing Lebanon joined with Syria or a larger Arab union.

The signs of dissatisfaction with the National Pact were not long in coming. In a speech before parliament, Riadh al-Solh, the first prime minister of independent Lebanon, expressed his implicit opposition to the political compromise of the Pact and his wish that it be abrogated:

> The hour in which the abolishing of confession-alism becomes possible will be a blessed hour of full national awakening in the history of Lebanon. We shall do our utmost to reach this historical hour at the earliest possible moment, if God permits. And it is only natural that to organize this demands preparation and planning in many different directions.⁹⁰

Other Muslim political figures also objected strongly to the National Pact. During the Lebanese crisis of 1958, Adnan Hakim, leader of the Muslim an-Najjadeh Party, characterized the Pact as an unholy bargain among unprincipled politicians. He suggested that the Lebanese political system must be rebuilt, that the presidency must be rotated

between the Muslims and the Christians, and that the na-
tion should have closer ties with other Arab countries and
eventually merge with them in a larger Arab union.31

The split between the Muslim and Christian communities
that existed in Lebanon before independence and the formu-
lation of the National Pact obviously never disappeared,
but it was deepened and intensified in 1943. On the one
hand, the Christians wished to preserve the status quo, dis-
sociate themselves from the Arab world, and maintain the
independence of Lebanon; on the other, the Muslims wished
to do away with the status quo and enter into a close as-
sociation with the Arab world. The two communities once
again sought outside support, the Muslims from the Arab
states and the Christians from the West.

The Lebanese Crisis of 1958

The Lebanese crisis of 1958 was a direct result of
the internal split regarding the political line that Leba-
on must adopt interacting with rivalry among the great
powers and regional conflicts. The lingering aftereffects
of the first Arab-Israeli war of 1948 and the negative
response to the last years of colonialism in the Middle
East led to the Egyptian revolution of 1952 and the emer-
gence of the charismatic leader Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt.

31Crow, p. 518.
Nasser's ascent to power affected the delicate Muslim-Christian agreement in Lebanon. Nasser's popularity among Lebanese Muslims was high; in fact, he was more popular in Lebanon than any of the country's own Muslim leaders. These leaders could not convince Lebanese Muslims to stop calling for the unification of Lebanon with Egypt under Nasser or to support the continued existence of an independent Lebanon as outlined in the National Pact of 1943.

Under these conditions, because the Muslims broke the promise that they had made in the National Pact, it became increasingly difficult for the Lebanese Christians to uphold their side of the agreement and refrain from requesting foreign protection either in the form of military forces or by entering into treaties with the Western powers.

The Lebanese government under President Camile Chamoun supported the Baghdad Pact orchestrated by American Secretary of State John Foster Dulles in 1955, whose primary intent was to defend the Middle East against the Soviet Union. This Pact came to be viewed by Lebanese Christians as part of their link with the Western Christian world and an essential element in preserving the independence of Lebanon.

In the Suez war of 1956, President Chamoun refused to sever diplomatic relations with France and Great Britain in response to their invasion of Egypt, and subsequently
the government was charged by Lebanese Muslims with treason to Arab interests. Chamoun's acceptance of President Dwight D. Eisenhower's doctrine in March of 1957 further increased the antagonism of Egypt toward the Lebanese government.

Chamoun's actions earned him considerable political opposition and made him a target of the hostility of Lebanese Muslims. Their opposition to Chamoun was exploited and encouraged from outside Lebanon in an attempt to overthrow the government. In June of 1957, Lebanon's Muslim political leaders formed an opposition coalition, the National Front, whose purpose was to prepare for the parliamentary elections which were to be held later that summer. The results of those elections, however, did not favor the new coalition. President Chamoun, although armed with the support of the Eisenhower Doctrine, was accused of having tampered with the elections in order to bring his supporters into the parliament, making possible the passage of an amendment to the constitution which would enable him to be reelected.

After the defeat of the coalition's candidates, effective organized constitutional opposition to the Lebanese government dissipated. Politics in Lebanon is largely a personal affair; political bodies revolve around personal leadership—usually that of the head of a group, a notable personality in a city, or some other "strong man" or
Thus, it was easy for opposition leaders to induce their followers to create insurrections in Lebanon. Bridges were destroyed, roads were blocked, and later conditions became more serious as bombs were exploded in numerous locations in the capital city of Beirut.

After these violent incidents, it became clear that the problem in Lebanon had not been created merely by a president seeking reelection; rather, it was a destructive plot inspired from outside Lebanon against the country's legitimate political regime. President Eisenhower expressed this sentiment in a statement following the landing of U.S. Marines at Beirut on July 15, 1958. Eisenhower declared, "The president, Mr. Chamoun, has made clear that he does not seek reelection," and added, "Lebanon was the victim of indirect aggression from outside."

An important external event occurred on February 22, 1958, when Syria united with Egypt in the United Arab Republic headed by President Nasser. Although Lebanon sent an official letter of congratulation to Nasser on the establishment of the union, Lebanese Christians feared that

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their country might be swamped under the tidal wave of Arab nationalism.

Lebanese Muslim leaders hurried to Syria to offer their support to Nasser, who had come from Egypt to receive them, and in Lebanon itself Muslims staged demonstrations in the streets calling for their country to be included in the UAR. Terrorism and hostile acts against the Lebanese government increased.

A military explosion took place in Beirut and Lebanon as a whole on May 8, 1958, when Nassib Metni, a journalist opposed to President Chamoun, was assassinated. The dominant opinion in Lebanon was that Egypt was behind the killing and that it had been staged to arouse the passions of President Chamoun's opponents.\(^3\)

At the time of the assassination, President Nasser was visiting the Soviet Union. He sent a message of condolence from Volgograd (Stalingrad) to Beirut, stating, "Metni died a hero." He also threatened to change his place of residence temporarily from Egypt to Syria so that he could observe the situation in Lebanon carefully.\(^5\)

Soon after these developments, various types of military assistance, including men, began to be sent to the Lebanese Muslim rebels from Syria. The army remained neutral because its commander feared that a communal split

\(^3\) Vocke, p. 20. \(^5\) Ibid.
between the Christians and the Muslims would make conditions even worse.

In a plea to the Security Council of the United Nations, the Lebanese government accused the United Arab Republic of instigating and aiding a revolution against it. The United Nations responded to this declaration by sending observers to evaluate the situation and report to the Security Council. Their investigation, however, had no results, prompting U.S. Secretary of State Dulles to say that, if the United Nations was unable to protect Lebanon, "the United States would undertake to do so, and by force if necessary." Who was to define what was "necessary" was unclear. At least one American official at the U.S. embassy in Beirut felt that "President Chamoun at least assumed that this was his prerogative." 36

Meanwhile, a military coup d'état took place in Iraq on July 14, 1958. Because the officers who seized power in Iraq were supporters of Nasser, President Chamoun immediately sent an urgent message to Washington asking for American troops to save Lebanon, and a force of U.S. Marines landed at Beirut on July 15, 1958.

In his broadcast statement announcing this action, President Eisenhower described the events in Lebanon as a

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conspiracy in cooperation between external and internal
groups working against the independence of Lebanon and
stated that arms and men had entered Lebanon from the
Syrian province of the United Arab Republic. Eisenhower
said,

... this little country ... itself has for about
two months been subjected to civil strife. This has
been actively fomented by Soviet and Cairo broadcasts
and abetted and aided by substantial amounts of arms,
money, and personnel infiltrated into Lebanon across
the Syrian border.  

After the Marines landed in Beirut to help Lebanon
regain its stability, the United States undertook political
efforts to end the civil strife. President Eisenhower
sent a special envoy, Robert Murphy, to the Middle East,
and with his assistance a compromise was reached between
the Christian and Muslim communities in Lebanon.

According to the terms of the compromise, General Fuad
Chehab, the commander of the Lebanese army and a Maronite
Christian, succeeded President Chamoun in office with the
expiration of the latter's term on September 23, 1958.
Rashid Karami, one of the Muslim leaders who opposed the
president during the crisis, was appointed as prime
minister.  

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3Office of the Federal Register, p. 553.
3Adeed I. Dawisha, Syria and the Lebanese Crisis
The terms of the National Pact of 1943 remained unchanged after the resolution of the crisis. The status quo was maintained, as was Lebanon's territorial integrity and sovereignty. The country continued to receive arms and other support from the West as a guarantee for its independence. Kamal Salibi, a well-known Lebanese historian, has written,

It is, indeed, possible that the course of the history of the Arab Middle East would have been different had President Sham'un [Chamoun] and the Christian Lebanese not stood up to the Nasserist challenge, and had the United States not intervened militarily to secure the independence and territorial integrity of Lebanon at the time.\(^3\)

The story of the 1958 crisis in Lebanon can be summarized in terms of the continuing dispute between the Christian and Muslim communities regarding Arab nationalism and Arab unity. The Christians stressed Lebanese nationalism; to them Arab nationalism meant Islamic nationalism and the absorption of Lebanon in a larger Arab entity with a vast Muslim majority. This prospect alarmed the Christians because they feared that they would again become a dominated class, as they had been under Ottoman rule. Thus, the Christians took a strong stand against Nasser during the 1958 crisis when he succeeded in unifying Syria with Egypt.

On the other hand, the Muslims stressed Arab nationalism and advocated Arab unity. To them Lebanese nationalism meant that they would be a dominated class in modern Lebanon after centuries of enjoying more status under Ottoman rule. The Muslims preferred a unification of Lebanon with other Arab countries in which they would once again be the dominant class. In 1958, Lebanese Muslims participated in public demonstrations calling for Lebanon to be the third province, with Egypt and Syria, in the United Arab Republic under the leadership of Nasser.

Although the underlying aim of the 1958 Muslim revolt--the maintenance of the idea of Arab nationalism and the achievement of the ideal of Arab unity--were not achieved, an even more important defeat was the disappearance of any hope that a lasting political agreement might be reached in the country. This fact seemed to be unchangeable despite the determination of President Chehab to reconcile the Lebanese Muslims and Christians in a common stance regarding Lebanon and the Arab world.

In this sense, then, the 1958 civil war in Lebanon was a prelude to the country's later crises, beginning with the emergence of Palestinian guerrilla activity in Lebanon in 1967 and ending with the more severe civil war of 1975-1976.
CHAPTER II

THE PALESTINIANS IN LEBANON

After the first Arab-Israeli war that broke out in 1948 and led to the proclamation of the state of Israel, the Palestinian people fled from Palestine to the neighboring Arab countries, including Lebanon. The government of Lebanon had no choice but to receive and provide a haven for them, a state of affairs which, it was believed at that time, would be temporary. The Palestinian refugees were distributed among numerous camps scattered throughout the country. The number of Palestinians who entered Lebanon by the end of 1949 was estimated at 130,000.¹

The arrival of the Palestinians created a special problem in Lebanon because the vast majority of them were Muslims and their presence in the country upset the communal balance that had been worked out in the Lebanese National Pact of 1943. When President Nasser of Egypt emerged as the first Arab leader dedicating himself to the goal of liberating Palestine as one of the focal

¹W. de St. Aubin, "Peace and Refugees in the Middle East," The Middle East Journal, III (July, 1949), 251.
points of his pan-Arabist ideology, all of the Palestinians regarded him as a leader sent from above to restore what they had lost. Thus, during the Lebanese crisis of 1958, the Palestinians sided with the Lebanese opposition backed by Nasser, but their support had no influence upon conditions in Lebanon at that time because they had not yet developed an effective military and political organization.

The situation in Lebanon began to change in the mid-1960s, when the Palestinians living in the country became guerrillas carrying arms and participating in military exercises in their camps. The Palestinian armed presence reached its zenith in 1967 in response to the Arab defeat by Israel in the six-day war. When the sovereignty of the Lebanese state conflicted with the interests of the revolution, the result was the outbreak of the Lebanese-Palestinian military conflict.

The Emergence of the Palestinian Liberation Organization

In 1964, the Arab League, composed of all Arab heads of state, established the Palestinian Liberation Organization and its military arm, the Palestinian Liberation Army. Because Lebanon had the second largest number of Palestinian refugees living within its borders of all the nations of the Arab world (Jordan had the largest number of Palestinians), it was believed that it would become an active
center for Palestinian guerrilla activity. The nature of the Lebanese political system, which was based on a religious communal balance, prevented it from taking effective steps to restrict Palestinian military activity, as other Arab countries had done, despite its attempts to do so. The Lebanese intelligence agency during the term of President Chehab remembered the 1958 crisis and kept an eye on the Palestinian camps, but, after the emergence of the Palestinian Liberation Organization in 1964, the situation went out of control.

In principle, Chehab's successor, President Charles Helou, tried to limit Palestinian activities in Lebanon and forbade the Palestinians to establish military bases in the country. In addition, the Ministry of Defense made decisions prohibiting the Palestinians from carrying arms. President Helou's directives, however, were ignored by Ahmed Shuqairy, the Chairman of the PLO, who established a military camp in the Muslim village of Kayfun adjacent to Beirut and began training Palestinians there in the use of arms. Fearing an internal split between the Christians, who were opposed to the Palestinians, and the Muslims, who supported them, the Lebanese government refrained from taking any decisive action.²

The Lebanese authorities were at a loss in dealing with the Palestinians. Even if the government permitted them to establish training camps, it would not permit them to conduct military operations against Israel from bases in the southern area of the country for fear that a destabilization of the southern border would provoke hostile action by the Israelis, who refused to recognize that frontier as an international border as long as Israel and Lebanon remained formally at war. Therefore, in order to safeguard its border with Israel, the Lebanese government went to great lengths to prevent Palestinian guerrillas from infiltrating that area, and a number of military clashes took place between Palestinians and government security forces.

The Lebanese prevailed against the Palestinians until 1967, but after the six-day war Palestinian militancy increased, the organization of the guerrillas became more sophisticated, and Lebanese authorities began losing the battle to control guerrilla activity. After the Arab forces were defeated by Israel in 1967, the Arab governments were accused of being incapable of resisting Israel, which further increased the appeal of the Palestinian resistance to the Arab peoples. Arab public opinion favored the commando operations in which the Palestinians engaged

\[3\] Ibid., p. 27.
with the Israelis in the occupied territories. The popularity of the Palestinian guerrillas reached its height after the battle of Karameh in Jordan in 1968 between guerrilla forces and the Israeli army, which came to be viewed as a psychological victory for the Palestinians. With this battle, the Palestinian Liberation Organization became a major factor in the Middle East. Individuals throughout the Arab world became more sympathetic to the Palestinian movement than to their own governments, and this rise of the Palestinian resistance movement carried with it the seeds of division between the guerrillas and the existing Arab regimes, especially in the states that were openly confronting Israel--Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon. The Palestinians realized from the beginning that the Arab states would not tolerate guerrilla activities within their borders, but they were determined to recover the national Palestinian identity that they lost in 1948, to establish their own political and military organizations, and to initiate military operations against Israel regardless of the disapproval or opposition of any government.\(^4\)

In response, the Arab countries undertook various measures to deal with the Palestinians, according to their

individual circumstances. The Egyptian and Syrian governments placed stringent restrictions upon the activities of the Palestinians and tried to use Palestinian strength elsewhere for their own interests. In Jordan the government had difficulty in controlling Palestinian guerrilla activities, first, because Palestinians constituted two-thirds of the country's population and, second, because the political aims of the royal regime and the resistance movement were not the same. King Hussein's goal was to bring about Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank, which he regarded as part of his kingdom, whereas the Palestinians wished to regain control of all of Palestine and set up a government there under their own leadership rather than Jordanian rule.

The effective presence of Palestinian guerrillas in Lebanon first developed in October of 1968. At that time, the Palestinians began to infiltrate the southern area of Lebanon, established military bases, and, most important, engaged in major recruitment efforts among the men in Lebanon's Palestinian refugee camps in order to launch military campaigns against Israel through the Lebanese-Israeli border. The number of hostile incidents involving the Palestinians was estimated at ten per day, including both commando operations and full-fledged battles with
regular Israeli units across the entire length of the border between Israel and Lebanon (see Figure 1).

This increase in the Palestinian guerrillas' military forays into Israel led to an ever-widening fissure in the communal arrangement in Lebanon. The transformation of Palestinian refugee camps into impregnable military strongholds and of young Palestinian civilians into well-trained guerrillas inspired fear in Lebanese Christians. The Lebanese government repeatedly attempted to prevent or at least restrict these military activities, but all of its efforts were fruitless. The religious divisions between Lebanese Christians and Muslims worked to the benefit of the Palestinians, who knew how to manipulate their surroundings to their own advantage. For example, the Palestinians began to hold public funerals for fighters who were killed in skirmishes with the Israelis. The guerrillas who participated in the funeral marches wore their full battle dress and were followed by other Palestinians and their Lebanese Muslim supporters, demanding that all restrictions on Palestinian guerrilla activity be abandoned. In response to these demonstrations, Lebanese Prime Minister Abdullah al-Yafi, a Muslim, advocated the elimination of restraints.

Fig. 1—Lebanon and its environs*

on the Palestinian guerrillas. In making this statement, al-Yafi set a precedent for all of his Sunni Muslim successors.

The Israeli and Christian Response

On several occasions Israel asked the Lebanese government to put an end to the Palestinian guerrilla activity across the Lebanese-Israeli border, but, because Lebanese authorities were unable to control the guerrillas, Palestinian commandos continued to conduct military operations in Israel and from time to time even kidnapped Israeli nationals while returning to their bases in Lebanon. In response to these Palestinian activities, 200 Israeli paratroopers entered Lebanon on January 1, 1968. Using a loudspeaker, an Israeli officer directed an announcement in Arabic to Lebanese citizens in the southern villages: "You have been helping the commandos; we have come to take revenge." The Israeli troops then attacked the Lebanese army barracks in the frontier village of Bint Jubeil and took 21 prisoners, including ten Lebanese soldiers.⁶ Although indications suggested that the Palestinian guerrillas might be using Lebanese territory only as a passage in traveling from Syria, Israel regarded Lebanon as responsible for the attacks because, in any case and for

whatever purpose, its land was being used by the Palestinian guerrillas.\textsuperscript{7}

On December 28, 1968, an Israeli helicopter carrying commandos raided Beirut International Airport, destroying thirteen Lebanese civil aircraft valued at an estimated $43.1 million.\textsuperscript{8} Israeli officials declared that this action was carried out in response to the attack made by Palestinian guerrillas on an El-Al airliner in Athens on December 26 and the earlier hijacking of another Israeli airliner over Italy in July of 1968. Former Israeli Prime Minister Levi Eshkol justified the raid by declaring, "A state cannot harbor and encourage an armed force operating from its territory against a neighboring state and be considered immune from reaction."\textsuperscript{9}

In early August of 1969, for the first time Israel initiated air strikes against the Palestinian bases in southern Lebanon. Lebanese civilians were killed and wounded in these attacks. Israel issued an official warning: "Control the commandos or face serious

\textsuperscript{7}"Caught in the Middle," \textit{Time}, January 17, 1969, p. 28.


The Israeli attacks continued throughout the month of August. Israel's war planes conducted air raids in guerrilla bases on the Hermon slopes and in the villages near the Israeli-Lebanese border. On August 11, 1969, Israel launched an air attack on guerrilla bases in the southern area of Lebanon, from which the Palestinians had been making their raids against Israel. Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir declared, "This attack is directed at the Palestinian guerrillas, not against Lebanon."11 These actions were defended by an official Israeli spokesman, who announced that "Israel's right to safeguard her borders with Lebanon and weaken the guerrillas through retaliatory raids cannot be disputed."12 After the succession of Israeli air raids on Palestinian guerrilla bases in Lebanon in August of 1969, Prime Minister Meir said, "If the Lebanese authorities do not deal with the guerrillas, we shall have to do it."13

Meanwhile, another response to the Palestinian guerrilla activity began to emerge in Lebanon itself; this was the reaction of the Lebanese Christians, who believed that

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13"Mrs. Meir Warns Leaders in Beirut," p. 11.
their country would pay a high price for irresponsible Palestinian activities against Israel. In addition, the rapid growth of the Palestinian movement in Lebanon and the growing popularity of the guerrillas among the Lebanese Muslims created strong sentiment among Lebanese Christians and made them feel that they should move quickly before the communal balance of power of the country could be shifted entirely in favor of the Muslims. The first concrete step taken toward this end was the understanding reached among the Christian leaders in the country. Former President Chamoun, Chairman of the National Liberal Party; Pierre Gemayel, Chairman of the Lebanese Kataib Party; and Raymond Edde, Chairman of the National Bloc Party, met and established a Christian front called the Triple Alliance. Its aims were, first, to restrict Palestinian guerrilla activity, which was increasingly exposing the security and stability of Lebanon to danger by leading the nation into a confrontation with Israel, and, second, to challenge the Lebanese Muslims, who were beginning to forge an alliance with the Palestinian guerrillas in an attempt to reverse the basic power configuration in Lebanon in their favor.

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14 Amnon Kapeliuk, "Lebanon's Hour of Trial," New Outlook, XII (December, 1969), 8.
15 Salibi, pp. 34-35.
The Christian Triple Alliance was also supported by Saudi Arabia and Jordan, whose leaders saw in it a guarantee against the alarming prospect of a leftist Palestinian alliance with the Soviet Union and the world communist movement. Backed by Lebanese Christians and conservative Arab regimes, the Christian alliance began to toughen its position with regard to Palestinian activities in Lebanon and to urge the government and the army with more determination to take effective measures against the Palestinian guerrillas.

In the international setting Lebanese Christians went still further in their response to guerrilla activity when, in 1968, the Christian Kataib party headed by Pierre Gemayel called for Lebanon to become a neutral state like Switzerland. In the Kataib's view, Lebanon was trapped between two conflicting parties, the Arab nations and Israel. On the one hand, Lebanon shared a common language, traditions, and customs with its Arab neighbors; on the other hand, it shared a long common border with Israel. Since Lebanon had an unusual political structure and was militarily weak, it could not maintain an activist attitude on behalf of the Arabs. As a result, great pressure was exerted upon Lebanon by the Arab states and, more recently, by the Palestinian guerrillas, to adopt a more pro-Arab

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16 Ibid., p. 36.
attitude toward the Arab-Israeli conflict. The members of the Kataib party believed that, because Lebanon was communally divided, it could never become a confrontation state with Israel and the best solution to the dilemma was for Lebanon to become a neutral state whose integrity would be guaranteed by the great powers. According to the Kataib proposal, "Lebanon might continue to have an ideological attachment to the Arab cause, but she would refrain from giving it political expression and would provide no active political or military support to the Arabs."\(^{17}\)

Regarding the guerrillas as responsible for the continuing Israeli attacks on its territory, the government of Lebanon finally made a concentrated attempt to curb Palestinian activities in the country. The result of this action was the events of 1969.

The Lebanese-Palestinian Military Confrontation of 1969

A crisis occurred in Lebanon in the aftermath of the Israeli military raid on Beirut International Airport. The Lebanese army was condemned by the Muslim political parties for taking no retaliatory action against the Israelis; the army was accused of desiring to suppress the Palestinian guerrillas and prevent them from exercising their legitimate right to liberate Palestine instead of

\(^{17}\)Khan, pp. 535-536.
carrying out its duty to defend the country against the Israelis. But the army was defended by the Christian leaders of the Triple Alliance, who stated that the best way to protect Lebanon and preserve its integrity and independence was to eliminate the Palestinian activity which was provoking Israel's repeated attacks on the country. The Lebanese Muslims, on the other hand, believed that Israel needed no excuse to attack Lebanon because of her implicit intention to acquire its southern territory. The best way for Lebanon to face this Israeli threat, according to the Muslims, was to stand strongly behind the Palestinian guerrillas.  

Domestic problems escalated in Lebanon in 1969 with the advent of a general strike and popular demonstrations by the Lebanese Muslims in Beirut, Tripoli to the north, and Tyre to the south. The demonstrators demanded full support for the Palestinian guerrillas and condemned the current Lebanese political system, declaring that it was responsible for Lebanon's weakness in facing Israel. In the context of these events, Sunni Muslim Prime Minister Abdullah al-Yafi submitted his resignation to President Helou on January 8, 1969. The cabinet crisis lasted until January 23, when presidential appointee Rashid Karami succeeded in forming a new government.  

18Salibi, p. 38.  
19"Caught in the Middle," p. 27.
After the Israeli attack on Beirut International Airport, no Muslim prime minister could be unsympathetic to the widespread support for the Palestinian guerrillas among Lebanese Muslims. Prime Minister Karami, however, exercised great caution in dealing with the crisis; to satisfy the Muslims he announced that his government would support "the legitimate right of the Palestinian people to struggle for the liberation of their homeland," and to satisfy the Christians he stressed that his government would take a neutral position in the communal dispute. Karami's aim was to forestall a split among the people, but he did not explain how he would reconcile the two opposing views.

The conflict of opinions in Lebanon became more intense and shaped by sectarian influences when Christian political leaders began seeing in the actions of Lebanese Muslims more than mere support for the Palestinian cause. Since the Muslims' advocacy of freedom of Palestinian guerrilla activity was now linked with criticisms of the Lebanese political system, the Christians viewed it as an attitude of defiance toward the existing regime and toward their position in Lebanon or, in other words, a Muslim-Palestinian plan to overthrow the government and Islamize the country.

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{20}Salibi, p. 39.}
In April of 1969, the Palestinians began to unify their scattered military units in Lebanon, Jordan, and Syria under the umbrella of the leadership of the Palestinian Liberation Organization. This action led to an intensification in the military clashes that were already taking place between the guerrillas and the army in the southern region of Lebanon.

In an attempt to avoid the negative consequences of Palestinian activities against Israel, Lebanon began to restrict the movements of the guerrillas. In mid-April of 1969, a group of Palestinian guerrillas was stopped by eight Lebanese soldiers a mile from the Israeli border. The guerrillas opened fire, and all eight soldiers were wounded.

On April 23, 1969, Lebanese Muslims and Palestinians staged a riotous demonstration in the southern city of Sidon demanding full freedom for Palestinian guerrilla activity. The demonstrators attacked Lebanese police barricades, and security forces killed three demonstrators while trying to disperse the crowd. The rioting quickly spread to Beirut, the northern city of Tripoli, and Bar Elias in the Bekaa Valley in the east near the Syrian border, and the number of casualties rose to 17 dead and
150 wounded. A state of emergency was declared throughout the country.  

On April 24, another demonstration was staged by Palestinian refugees in the southern city of Tyre. The demonstrators again attacked the Lebanese army barracks in the city, and the resumption of hostilities between the Palestinians and Lebanese soldiers resulted in numerous casualties.

After this succession of demonstrations and bloody clashes, the Lebanese political crisis began to take on the configuration of the sharp religious divisions in the country. The Mufti, the highest religious leader of Lebanese Sunni Muslims, openly criticized the government for its policy of suppressing the Palestinian guerrillas.

The situation became more complicated when both the Christians and the Muslims pressed Prime Minister Karami to take a stand on the guerrilla question. Karami's response was, "The government cannot take any side without splitting the country." Then, unexpectedly, on April 25, 1969, Karami submitted his resignation to President Helou, creating another cabinet crisis that lasted for seven months.

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22 Kapeliuk, pp. 7-8.
23 Salibi, p. 40.
Karami's subsequent explanation of his surprising action was one of the frankest statements of the alternatives facing Lebanon ever made by a Lebanese political leader. Speaking of the internal divisions among the people regarding Palestinian guerrilla activity in Lebanon, Karami succinctly described the two opposing views: first, "we would allow commando activity regardless of consequences"; second, "there are those whose view is that the commandos represent a danger to Lebanon in their activities."\textsuperscript{25}

The clashes between the Lebanese army and the Palestinian guerrillas continued after Karami's resignation. During May of 1969, it was reported that new groups of Palestinian commandos backed by Syria crossed the Lebanese-Syrian border and marched to the Israeli border to carry out military operations. Fighting broke out between the guerrillas and a Lebanese army force that tried to prevent them from infiltrating into Israel, and one Lebanese soldier was killed.\textsuperscript{26}

Under pressure from Christian leaders, particularly the Maronite cardinal in Lebanon, President Helou made a televised statement to the Lebanese people on May 31, 1969, declaring that the rightful cause of the Palestinian refugees was supported by Lebanon but only within the

\textsuperscript{25}Wolf, p. 25.  \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{26}Khan, p. 531.
limits that would guarantee the independence, sovereignty, and security of the country. Helou said, "It is our duty not to provide the enemy with the pretext which it uses, under the guise of retaliatory action, to execute its expansionist plans at the expense of Lebanon." The president also stated that the continuing escalation of the crisis was due, not to Lebanon's failure to participate in the "noble cause of the Palestinian liberation but, rather, to the continued efforts of certain parties to impose exclusively upon Lebanon a fait accompli." ²⁷

Muslim religious leaders bitterly criticized President Helou for this speech, interpreting it as a reflection of the views of the Christians only and not of all the Lebanese people. In contrast, the Christians were pleased by the president's statement because it meant that the measures that the government had been taking against the Palestinian guerrillas would continue. Since Lebanese Muslims refused to form a new government committed to the policy outlined by President Helou, the country's political crisis remained unresolved. ²⁸ The president was left alone to deal with the dilemma after the resignation of Prime Minister Karami. "With Karami (a Muslim) more or less committed to support


²⁸Salibi, p. 274.
the position of the commandos, it was left to President Helou (a Christian) to try to stem the tide." In a statement on June 23, 1969, Helou insisted that "there should be no commando bases or training grounds in Lebanon, and that those already established should be removed."²⁹

Lebanon appeared to be completely divided at a sectarian level on the Palestinian guerrilla question, and the result was continuing armed clashes between the Lebanese army, supported by the Christians, and the Palestinian guerrillas, supported by the Muslims. Military skirmishes began to occur in the northern as well as the southern region, and, in August of 1969, one of the most serious confrontations to date took place between the Lebanese army and the Palestinian guerrillas in the A-Nahr a-Barad refugee camp near Tripoli.³⁰

The tension spread throughout the northern city of Tripoli and its environs, an area inhabited by an absolute Muslim majority. The Muslims stated a demonstration demanding that the Lebanese army stop fighting the guerrillas. The streets of Tripoli turned into a battlefield between the Muslims and the army. Karami, who had resigned as prime minister the previous April and was later asked

³⁰Kapeliuk, p. 8.
by the president to form a new government capable of facing the challenges of the time, was a native of Tripoli. When he saw his city's solidarity with the Palestinians, he demonstrated his sympathy for the Muslims by telling Helou that he had been unsuccessful in forming a new government and returning the presidential mandate. The situation in Lebanon had deteriorated during the months that had passed without a prime minister, but now it became still worse in the absence of any attempt to organize a new government.\(^3\)

Meanwhile, the intentions of the Lebanese Muslim-Palestinian alliance became clearer when Yasir Arafat, the Chairman of the Palestinian Liberation Organization, held a press conference in Syria in which he appealed to the . . . country's Arab Muslim inhabitants in Lebanon to topple the regime and install in its place one that can be depended upon not only to grant the guerrillas freedom of movement and action on its territory but that would also be capable of honoring its obligations.\(^3\)

It was at this point that Lebanese military officials decided to take matters into their own hands. On October 21, 1969, the army undertook massive military operations throughout the country with the intention of driving out the Palestinian guerrillas, or at least restricting their activities. During this confrontation, the guerrillas

\(^3\)Ibid., p. 9.

continuously received military aid across the Syrian border. Furthermore, Syria's government mobilized its regular army along the Syrian-Lebanese border and threatened to attack Lebanon in support of the Palestinians.33

The only option remaining for the Lebanese authorities was to direct the army to wage an open and final battle against the guerrillas to bring an end to the crisis, but the country was divided--the Christians opposing the guerrillas and the Muslims supporting them--and in that respect the army was a microcosm of Lebanon's population as a whole: "Half of the army is Moslem. These men are loyal now. But accusations that they have 'sold out' with an attack on commandos could shake the army's unity. Civil war, then, would loom."34

In light of these difficult circumstances, the full use of military means to resolve the crisis seemed to be quite impossible because a split in the army would result from such action. Therefore, to avoid the dissolution of the political entity of Lebanon, political negotiation was the only possible solution.

33Khan, p. 532.
34"Mideast's Latest Hot Spot," p. 31.
The Cairo Agreement of 1969

In 1969, Lebanon was on the verge of civil war. Some persons even found a parallel between the current situation and the 1958 civil war that had divided the country into two fighting camps of Christians and Muslims. Lebanon had no government, and it was politically divided between the Christians, who supported the president's policy of restricting Palestinian guerrilla activity and preserving Lebanon's special status in the Arab world, and the Muslims, who supported the prime minister's desire to give the Palestinian resistance full freedom of movement. In order to avoid the civil war that might lead to the full destruction of the country, President Helou found himself obliged to accept a political solution which might save the artificial unity of the people. Therefore, he announced his acceptance of the mediation that President Nasser of Egypt had been offering since the beginning of the crisis.35

Immediately after this announcement, Nasser sent his personal representative, Hassan Sabri el-Khuli, to Amman, Damascus, and Beirut in a campaign to reach a compromise that would end the conflict between the Lebanese government and the Palestinian guerrillas.36 After el-Khuli completed his mission, President Helou sent a delegation headed by

35Kapeliuk, p. 12.  
36Rejwan, pp. 18-19.
the commander of the army, General Emile Boustany, to Cairo to meet a Palestinian delegation headed by Yasir Arafat. The two delegations held a closed meeting in the presence of the Egyptian Ministers of Foreign Affairs and War.³⁷

In Cairo, on November 3, 1969, General Boustany and Chairman Arafat announced, in the name of the Lebanese government and the Palestinian resistance, that they had reached an accord, which later came to be known as the Cairo Agreement. This Agreement granted the Palestinian guerrillas the right of autonomous security and administrative control in the Palestinian refugee camps within Lebanon and the right to use those camps as bases and install weapons in them. Palestinian civilians in Lebanon were authorized to participate in the Palestinian revolution through armed struggle. Guerrilla movements were permitted passage, in certain designated border areas and through certain designated corridors, for operations in Israel. The movement of Palestinian commandos to and from the Lebanese-Israeli border was to be facilitated, and the supply route to the Arkoub region in southern Lebanon, the so-called Arafat Trail, was to be kept open.³⁸

³⁸Ibid., p. 55.
In return, a promise was given by the Palestinian guerrillas that the lawless members of their organization would be controlled and that they would not interfere in Lebanese affairs. The Palestinians also agreed to cooperate with Lebanese authorities in dealing with any trouble that might arise between the two parties. Finally, the Palestinians recognized that the "Lebanese civil and military authorities will continue to exercise their full rights and responsibilities in all Lebanese regions in all circumstances."\textsuperscript{39}

Lebanese Christians regarded the Cairo Agreement as a betrayal of Lebanon's sovereignty. During the months of the crisis, the leaders of the Christian Triple Alliance had exerted their utmost efforts to prevent the Muslims from overthrowing the Lebanese regime by using the guerrillas as a bridge and to make public the involvement of Syria in Lebanon's internal affairs.\textsuperscript{40}

The Christians' initial opposition to the Cairo Agreement decreased somewhat, however, when Christian leaders realized that Lebanon was embroiled in its most explosive crisis since 1958, and this compelled them to take a moderate stand on the Agreement if unpredictable consequences were to be avoided. Yet, the conflicting parties perceived that a final settlement on the question of the

\textsuperscript{39}Ibid., pp. 55-56. \textsuperscript{40}Entelis, p. 345.
Palestinian presence in Lebanon had not been reached, and both sides prepared themselves for the next round.

Israel intensified its raids against southern Lebanon in response to the Cairo Agreement, confirming the prediction that Pierre Gemayel, Chairman of the Christian Kataib party, had made earlier, namely, that, if the southern area was not forcibly occupied by Israel, at best the Israeli raids would intimidate the inhabitants and prompt them to flee from the region, resulting in a Lebanese refugee problem in addition to the already existing difficulties created by the Palestinian refugees. In short, the Cairo Agreement constituted a net gain for the Palestinian resistance movement at the expense of Lebanon and its independent existence.

On November 25, 1969, the Lebanese crisis ended when Rashid Karami announced the formation of a new cabinet. But, shortly afterward, the citizens began to suspect that this development was a temporary armistice rather than a final solution. In March of 1970, fears again arose that a Christian-Muslim civil war might break out in the wake of the armed confrontations that were taking place between Lebanese Christian militias and Palestinian guerrillas, and again the new crisis was resolved through Arab mediation. Indeed, the Christian-Palestinian

\[\text{\footnotesize\cite{Ibid., p. 343. Dorsey, p. 19. Salibi, p. 46.}}\]
clashes in the first quarter of 1970 suggested that the Cairo Agreement was only a cease-fire in a continuing conflict, and individuals and groups both inside and outside Lebanon were anticipating the renewal of overt hostilities in the near future.
CHAPTER III

LEBANON AS THE SOLE BASE OF THE PALESTINIAN LIBERATION ORGANIZATION

The period between 1970 and 1973 was a very challenging time for the Lebanese government and was rightly viewed by most observers as contributing directly to the civil war of 1975-1976. During these four years, Lebanon was transformed from one of several Arab countries hosting Palestinian guerrillas to the Palestinians' sole base in the Middle East. The Cairo Agreement of 1969 that was intended to stabilize conditions in Lebanon by establishing specific rules governing and regulating the relations between Lebanese authorities and the Palestinian Liberation Organization was no longer effective after 1970. After the Palestinian guerrillas were driven out of Jordan in 1970-1971 by the Jordanian army, they infiltrated Lebanon, which then became their single base for military activities against Israel. The Cairo Agreement theoretically remained in force, but in actuality it collapsed under the huge increase in numbers of Palestinian guerrillas, who began to escalate their military forays against Israel without heeding the provisions of their joint agreement with the Lebanese government.
Israel increased its continuing attacks on guerrilla bases and refugee camps within Lebanon in an attempt to force the Lebanese government to curb the guerrillas' activities. When Lebanese authorities moved to restrict those activities and thus put an end to Israeli reprisals, however, the country again became a stage for renewed bloody confrontations between the army and the guerrillas, similar to the events of 1969. Predictably, the people split into two opposing blocs at a communal level, and the earlier impasse was repeated. Due to these internal divisions, the Lebanese government failed, unlike the regime in Jordan, to curb the activities of the Palestinian guerrillas, and the outcome was the signing of a new agreement between Lebanese authorities and the Palestinian Liberation Organization.

The Impact of the Jordanian Civil War

Warned by Israel in the aftermath of successive guerrilla operations across the Israeli-Jordanian border that it would tolerate no more such acts of Palestinian aggression, during the first quarter of 1970 King Hussein acted to curb Palestinian activities in Jordanian territory. The Jordanian army began to apply strict controls at the Israeli-Jordanian frontier to prevent any Palestinian infiltration from Jordan into Israel. Major clashes
followed in mid-June of 1970 between the Jordanian army and Palestinian guerrilla forces.

A strong reaction to these events in Jordan took place in Lebanon, whose Palestinian population was the second largest in the Middle East. On June 12, 1970, a crowd of some 3,000 Lebanese Muslims and Palestinians demonstrated in Beirut in support of the guerrillas, shouting, "Death to Hussein!" and "We want a republic!" They set fire to the Royal Jordanian Embassy in Beirut and raised the Palestinian flag over its roof. About half of the building was gutted, and the demonstrators prevented Lebanese firemen from extinguishing the blaze. While attempting to save documents from the embassy, the Jordanian ambassador suffered burns on his hands and other parts of his body.¹

In response to this disturbance, the Lebanese authorities announced the implementation of measures intended to control the expected expressions of Palestinian opposition to developments in Jordan. A government order prohibited the carrying of arms in Lebanese towns and villages by any commandos who were not members of the PLO, as officially recognized by Lebanon in the Cairo Agreement of 1969.

Furthermore, even PLO members were not permitted to carry weapons except while on duty and after giving previous notification to the Lebanese government.²

Despite these regulations, the Palestinian guerrillas continued their military activities across the Lebanese border with Israel. In return, on August 27, 1970, Israeli commandos landed in a helicopter outside the southern town of Shebaa and blew up a number of houses that were suspected of being havens for Palestinian guerrillas. Some reporters stated that this Israeli attack destroyed the homes of 10,000 Lebanese villagers and farmers in Shebaa, Kfar Shouba, Kfar Hammam, and Rashaya Fakhar.³

Holding the Palestinian guerrillas responsible for Israel's retaliatory action, the Lebanese government attempted to curb their military activities by ordering the army to prevent any Palestinian infiltration from Lebanese territory into Israel and at the same time continued to observe the military confrontation in Jordan between the Jordanian government and the Palestinians and remained alert for possible repercussions among the commandos.


stationed in the southern area of the country, who had engaged in earlier clashes with the Lebanese army.  

Meanwhile, the bloody confrontation in Jordan intensified, and so did the Palestinian agitation in Lebanon. On September 18, 1970, in open violation of the Cairo Agreement, Palestinian students accompanied by armed guerrillas staged several demonstrations at the Jordanian embassy in Beirut to protest Jordan's actions against the Palestinian guerrillas within its borders.  

The escalation of Palestinian activity in Lebanon paralleled the escalation of the armed conflict in Jordan. It was obvious from the beginning that the effects of the civil strife in Jordan would be felt in Lebanon, where the heated domestic controversy over whether to permit the guerrillas to use the south as a base for military operations had almost resulted in civil war in 1969.  

The Jordanian crisis produced negative economic as well as political and social consequences in Lebanon. On September 19, 1970, about 300 Palestinian employees struck the United Nations Relief and Works Agency in  

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Beirut, protesting the measures that had been taken against the guerrillas in Jordan. Lebanese Muslims announced a general strike in the northern coastal city of Tripoli in support of the Palestinian guerrillas in Jordan.\(^7\)

Contrary to the terms of the Cairo Agreement, in September of 1970, the guerrillas transferred their public relations headquarters from Jordan to Lebanon, arguing that the absence of freedom of the press in Jordan had hindered their activities. The Palestinians upset relations between Lebanon and the conservative Arab countries by publishing calls for the citizens of those nations to overthrow their existing regimes and replace them with governments sympathetic to the Arab Palestinian revolution. On September 22, 1970, the Palestinians issued a statement demanding that King Hussein of Jordan abdicate. "Our revolutionaries are determined to continue the fighting until the throne of the great butcher is crushed." A guerrilla spokesman in Beirut declared, "There will be no stop to the fighting until complete victory."\(^8\)

In order to focus international attention upon the events that were transpiring in Jordan, the Palestinian guerrillas began to escalate their military operations


from Lebanese territory, hoping to coerce King Hussein into reducing the military pressure on the Palestinians in Jordan. The Lebanese government tried to reach an understanding with the guerrillas to suspend their military operations in the country, but without success. ³

In late September of 1970, the civil war in Jordan ended in a crushing defeat for the Palestinian guerrillas at the hands of the Jordanian army. As a result, conditions in Lebanon worsened when tens of thousands of Palestinians, many of them members of radical guerrilla groups, sought refuge with their families in Lebanon. Most of these Palestinians crossed the Lebanese border illegally. ¹⁰

When Egyptian President Nasser died on September 28, 1970, Palestinians wearing military uniforms and bearing arms mourned his passing in the streets of Beirut. They began to fire their weapons into the air as an expression of their sorrow, and at least nine persons on the scene were killed and several more were wounded. In such events as these the agreements governing guerrilla operations in Lebanon were technically violated.


Life in Lebanon was severely disrupted during the Jordanian civil war. For example, hundreds of automobiles were forcibly seized by Palestinian guerrillas to be used to transport their comrades to Jordan to participate in the fighting against the government there.\textsuperscript{11} After many similar occurrences, the Lebanese government warned the Palestinian leadership that it could no longer tolerate such actions, lest violent clashes similar to those in Jordan be duplicated in Lebanon. In response, Yasir Arafat traveled to Lebanon from Jordan to discuss the issue in the hopes of resolving differences between the parties to the conflict. After the meeting, Arafat declared that the talks took place "in an atmosphere of mutual understanding."\textsuperscript{12}

The Palestinian response to the continued armed confrontation in Jordan persisted in Lebanon despite Arafat's consultation with Lebanese authorities. Three months later, in mid-April of 1971, Palestinian guerrillas hijacked five phosphate-laden trucks belonging to the Jordanian government en route from Jordan, took them to the complex of Palestinian refugee camps in the southern area of Lebanon,


\textsuperscript{12}Herbert C. Tobin and Robert J. Fraser, editors, \textit{Keesing's Contemporary Archives}, XVII (Bristol, England, Keesing's Publications Ltd., 1970), 23843.
and set fire to them. Lebanese newspaper accounts described this incident as the most serious challenge to law and order since President Suleiman Franjieh's inauguration on September 23, 1970.\textsuperscript{13}

The greatest impact of the Jordanian civil war on Lebanon was the transfer of the Palestinian press from Jordan to Lebanon because all statements related to guerrilla operations against Israel, whether across the Lebanese-Israeli border or in any other location, would now be issued in Lebanon. Israel thus came to view Lebanon as responsible for every hostile act on the part of the Palestinian guerrillas, regardless of where it might have taken place.\textsuperscript{14}

After driving the guerrillas out of the capital city of Amman to the rural areas of Jordan in 1970, King Hussein resumed his battle against them, launching, in mid-1971, the major and final military offensive against the Palestinians which put an end to their organized power in Jordan. Consequently, the rest of the guerrillas entered Lebanon--most significantly, the top Palestinian leadership, including Yasir Arafat himself. "There they were to make


their presence felt in the tragic civil war that gripped that country a few years later."\textsuperscript{15}

Seeking revenge for their defeat, the guerrillas increased their military activity within Lebanon, but this time against Jordanian rather than Israeli targets. A time bomb hidden in a suitcase exploded at Beirut International Airport on October 6, 1971, minutes before it was to be placed aboard a Jordanian airliner. The Jordanian newspaper \textit{Al-Rai}, speaking for the government, threatened that Jordan might discontinue all flights to Lebanon if the government did not take stronger security measures against the Palestinian guerrillas to protect Jordanian aircraft.\textsuperscript{16}

After this incident, Lebanese authorities decided to deal more firmly with what was known in Lebanon at that time as the "political underground." Guerrilla groups were engaging in activities that not only threatened the country's domestic security but also impaired its relations with the surrounding Arab countries. President Franjieh declared that the government would mobilize every resource at its disposal to curb the elements that were seeking to damage Lebanon's relations with other Arab states. An


official statement was issued by the Lebanese government in Beirut warning all Palestinian groups to stop their abductions of Lebanese citizens, Palestinians, policemen, and Lebanese army officers. 17

Despite all governmental measures to temper the side-effects of the Jordanian civil war in Lebanon, Lebanese-Palestinian relations continued to deteriorate. An Iraqi military plane landed at Beirut International Airport bearing 35 armed guerrillas who were flying to Jordan to participate in the fighting there, and 43 Palestinian guerrillas in another Iraqi war plane landed at the airport and attempted to debark to travel to the Iraqi embassy in the city. President Franjieh gave orders prohibiting the guerrillas from leaving the airport, saying, "Under the Cairo Agreement sponsored last year by President Nasser of Egypt to end fighting between the Lebanese government and the Palestinian guerrillas, armed guerrillas were banned from Beirut and especially from its airport." After the guerrillas were informed that they could not enter the city, they seized a ranking Lebanese security officer and refused to release him until they were permitted to leave the airport; Lebanese authorities then arrested the crew of

the war plane. Finally, Arab diplomats mediated in the dispute, the security officer was freed, and the guerrillas returned to Iraq.\textsuperscript{18}

Lebanese-Palestinian relations worsened still more when a Lebanese officer and three soldiers were killed by a mine near the Lebanese-Israeli border. They were praised as martyrs by the Lebanese press, and a thorough investigation into their deaths was demanded. The Lebanese newspaper \textit{Lisan al-Hal} reported that "initial investigations had shown that the mine had been planted some time ago by the guerrillas."\textsuperscript{19}

The 1970-1971 civil war in Jordan intensified Christian fears in Lebanon. Following the collective move of Palestinian guerrillas from Jordan to Lebanese territory, the Christian militias began to arm themselves for the conflict that they believed was certain to take place in the future--one in which they could not depend upon the support of the Lebanese army, given the fact that "its own internal cleavages mirrored those of the country in general."\textsuperscript{20} According to one study, during the five years


\textsuperscript{20}Michael Hudson, "The Palestinian Factor in the Lebanese Civil War," \textit{The Middle East Journal}, XXXII (Summer, 1978), 265.
following the outbreak of the Jordanian civil war in 1970, Lebanese Christians were already arming themselves rapidly; were well equipped with M-16 rifles, Czech M-58 rifles, and other small weapons; and were conducting exercises in their use.²¹

Guerrilla military operations against Israel continued in 1972 and early in 1973. The most sanguinary of these were the attacks on Lod Airport on May 30, 1972, in which a large group of Puerto Rican pilgrims to the Christian holy places in Israel were killed, and on the Israeli Olympic team in Munich, West Germany on September 5, 1972, in which almost all the members of the team were murdered.²² In return, the Israelis made retaliatory raids on towns and villages in southern Lebanon and against Palestinian military bases in Lebanese territory, further increasing the difficulties faced by the government. These accumulated problems coalesced in a political crisis early in April of 1973.

The Lebanese-Palestinian Military Confrontation of 1973

Following a Palestinian attack on the Israeli embassy in Cyprus on April 9, 1973, Israeli commando units landed


on the Beirut seashore in a helicopter on the following day and assassinated three top Palestinian guerrilla leaders--Kamal Adwan, the director of Palestinian operations in the Israeli-occupied territories; Kamal Nasser, the poet and official spokesman of the Palestinian Liberation Organization; and Youssef Najjar, the guerrilla leader responsible for liaison with the Lebanese authorities--in their homes. In the course of the attack nine civilians were killed and a Lebanese officer and two Lebanese security agents were wounded. Regarding them as responsible for the Israeli attack, guerrillas opened fire on Lebanese policemen who hurried to the site to investigate. The police officers returned the Palestinians' fire, and two guerrillas were wounded.\(^2^3\)

An Israeli military spokesman declared that this incident would be followed by other similar attacks in Lebanese territory in reprisal for Arab guerrilla terrorist activities. The Israeli chief of general staff, General David Elazar, declared, "We don't believe that with one operation and one single blow it is possible to stop such [guerrilla] activity." He reiterated previous warnings that Lebanon must put an end to the guerrilla activity within its borders, adding, "The Lebanese government has to draw

conclusions from this operation, because there is no possibility of honoring the sovereignty of Lebanon and its capital when there is complete freedom for terrorist activity, bases, and command on Lebanese territory." When asked whether the Israeli commando raid was a direct reprisal for the Palestinian attack on an Israeli airliner and the residence of the Israeli ambassador in Cyprus, Elazar stated, "The reason for this attack was the intensification of terrorist activity in Europe and other places during the last month."24

Demonstrations spread throughout Lebanon, especially in the Muslim sector of Beirut, where thousands of persons went into the streets to protest the Israeli attack on the Palestinian guerrillas. Muslim Prime Minister Saeb Salam submitted his resignation to President Franjieh after an emergency cabinet meeting held on the same day. Salam had called for the dismissal of the Christian army commander-in-chief, General Iskander Ghanem, but President Franjieh refused to accede to Salam's demand.25

The bodies of the three slain Palestinian leaders were buried on April 13. More than 100,000 people attended

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the funeral. The participants began shouting, "The army to the border with Israel" and "Full freedom for the revolution"—in other words, the right for Palestinians to attack Israel from Lebanese territory. Guerrillas exercised full control during the funeral, and no Lebanese policemen or troops were present. Some foreign correspondents were arrested and interrogated by the guerrillas in their camps. On that day President Franjieh accepted the resignation of Prime Minister Salam and began to search for his successor. Accusing the United States of standing behind Israel in the attack, Yasir Arafat threatened that the Palestinians would have their revenge. "The commando movement will take its time, but when vengeance comes it will be big." Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Dayan warned on the same day that Israel would continue to consider Lebanon responsible for all Palestinian guerrilla activity originating from Lebanese territory. "We cannot free Lebanon of its responsibility as a state for actions of the terrorists running their operations from its territory, and we don't intend to act against terrorists only on a personal basis."26

Subsequent to Arafat's threat of revenge for the Israeli execution of Palestinian leaders, guerrillas burned

the American-owned oil company at Zahrani near Sidon on April 13, 1973. On April 18, President Franjieh chose Amin al-Hafiz to replace Saeb Salam as prime minister. After conducting an investigation of the Israeli raid, the Lebanese authorities issued a statement commenting that "at the beginning internal security forces, police, and gendarmes who rushed to the scene were confused." In addition, according to the statement, army personnel initially thought that the attack was a dispute among the Palestinians and "the Palestinians thought they were being attacked by Lebanese security forces."27

The army's explanatory statement, however, did not defuse the growing tensions in Lebanon, and fighting broke out between the Lebanese army and the Palestinians on May 2, 1973, after two army officers were kidnapped by the guerrillas. The Palestinians insisted that they would not free the abducted officers until the army released three guerrillas who had been arrested at Beirut International Airport after 22 pounds of dynamite were found in their luggage. Battles between the army and the guerrillas spread throughout the country, especially around the Shatila and Bourj al-Barajneh refugee camps in Beirut. Lebanese government estimates indicated that 12 soldiers and 19 guerrillas

were killed and 40 soldiers and 89 guerrillas were wounded in these skirmishes. In a meeting between Prime Minister al-Hafiz and PLO Chairman Arafat, an agreement was reached stating that both parties would withdraw to their original positions before the outbreak of the fighting. This cease-fire collapsed almost immediately, however, and hostilities were resumed on the following day. The army occupied the Dbayeh refugee camp and arrested and jailed 300 Palestinian guerrillas. When Beirut International Airport was bombed by the guerrillas and forced to close, the army responded by carrying out raids in air force jets in the Palestinian camps adjacent to the airport at Shatila and Bourj al-Barajneh. In Syria, in a message obviously directed toward Lebanese Muslims, the PLO "appealed to the Lebanese people to stop the fighting." 29

In view of the actions of the Palestinians, Lebanese President Franjieh faced a difficult predicament: he either had to use all of his power against the Palestinians or order the army to withdraw to its barracks, thereby risking a more dangerous confrontation in the streets between the Christians who opposed the guerrillas and the Muslims who supported them. This situation contained the seeds of possible civil war for Lebanon. In fact, the signs of war began to appear when the Christian Kataib Party headed by Gemayel

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29 Ibid., p. 20.
mobilized its militia forces in the Christian sector of Beirut and prepared to join the fighting against the Palestinians.\(^3\)

A cease-fire agreement signed on May 3 by al-Hafiz and Arafat was broken as soon as the new exchanges of fire broke out between Lebanese soldiers and Palestinian guerrillas, notably in Beirut. In a broadcast statement, Lebanese President Franjieh said that the Palestinians "must not behave like an army of occupation" and that law and order must be maintained. He further declared that no country had done more for the Palestinians than Lebanon. During a meeting of the president, the prime minister, and the chiefs of the army and security forces at the president's palace, guerrilla rockets were fired nearby, but their probable target was the home of the American ambassador rather than the palace itself; in any case, no one was injured in the attack. The Lebanese government tried to reach a new cease-fire agreement with PLO Chairman Arafat, but the situation remained out of control as Muslim support for the guerrillas became increasingly apparent. Muslim leader Kamal Jumblatt declared that there were "suspicious elements" in the Lebanese government, which he accused of desiring to smash the guerrillas, and called for

a general strike in support of the Palestinians in Lebanon. After Jumblatt's statement, both Christian and Muslim political parties mobilized their militias in their sectors of Beirut and throughout the country as a precautionary measure to prepare themselves for any communal fighting that might break out between Christians and Muslims.\(^{31}\)

Internal security became more unstable, and a dangerous turn of events occurred on May 4, 1973, when 4,000 to 5,000 Palestinian guerrillas equipped with heavy arms and backed by Syria crossed the Lebanese-Syrian border and initiated a battle with the Lebanese army. After occupying four villages near Rashayyah, the guerrillas were forced by the army to withdraw into Syria. Israel warned, "It will become our problem if the Syrians intervene militarily and decide to stay there." Palestinian broadcasts from Cairo accused the Lebanese president of carrying out "an American-Israeli plot to liquidate the guerrilla movement." In response to this statement and to the Palestinian infiltration from Syria, after an emergency meeting held to discuss these developments, President Franjieh declared, "I do not think any sister Arab country has given the Palestinians more than Lebanon." He also said that the Lebanese owed the Palestinians "residence and hospitality"

as a duty, not as a favor, and that Lebanon welcomed "co-
ordination to serve a common cause," but that "the exis-
tence of an occupation army in Lebanon is something no
Lebanese can accept."32

To enhance their military position, the Palestinians
brought new guerrilla forces into Lebanon across the
Lebanese-Syrian border. These guerrillas attacked Lebanese
garrisons at the towns of Hasbaya and Rashayyah, about 25
and 15 miles south of Beirut. 33

The arrival of the new guerrilla forces from Syria
prompted Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir to warn on May
6 that, if the Syrian troops joined the guerrillas in Leba-
on, "We will also have to see that we are protected." 
Inside Lebanon, the Muslim opposition to the Lebanese
president began to grow, and bitter criticism was directed
at the conduct of the army in the crisis. The Muslims
also accused the president of provoking the fighting and
serving Christian interests. These hostile statements
convinced President Franjieh that he must pursue a policy
that was carefully balanced with regard to the mosaic of
religious communities in Lebanon. "Muslim premier Amin

32"Lebanese Jets Strafe Palestinian Guerrillas," The

33John K. Cooley, "Lebanon and Guerrillas Fight on One
Hand, Talk on Other," The Christian Science Monitor, May
Hafiz had threatened to resign repeatedly in the past few days, apparently in disagreement with the tough 'crackdown-on-the-guerrillas' policy briefly advocated by the Christian president and his Christian army commander." Under the Muslim pressure represented by Prime Minister al-Hafiz, on May 7 a new cease-fire was arranged between the Lebanese army and the Palestinian guerrillas before violence threatened to develop from the tension of sectarian strife.³⁴

A single hour after the cease-fire agreement was reached, however, it was broken when the two opposing parties began to exchange heavy fire in Beirut. President Franjieh called for an emergency cabinet meeting under his direction to discuss the continuing fighting. After the meeting, Prime Minister al-Hafiz declared a state of emergency in the country, "in view of the presence of subversive elements who are interfering with the country's security." It was obvious that the government desired at any price to avoid worsening the situation for fear of igniting open hostilities between the two religious communities in the country.³⁵

Conditions did not change after the state of emergency was declared. Armed confrontations continued on the


following day, and Lebanese air force jets were brought in to join the battle at the Bourj al-Barajneh refugee camp in Beirut. The Lebanese army and the Palestinian resistance agreed to establish a mutual "hotline," but, despite their efforts, the fighting spread to the southern region of Lebanon as well. The situation became more complicated after Prime Minister al-Hafiz submitted his resignation on May 8, but it was refused by President Franjieh. The greatest danger was possible intervention by Syria or Libya in support of the guerrillas. From its radio station in Syria the PLO called on guerrillas in Lebanon to resist the "imperialist plot . . . being executed by the Lebanese authorities" and to form "suicide squads to attack the aggressors." In a clear appeal to the country's Muslims, Syrian government statements broadcast to the Lebanese people asked them to "stand firm at the side of the guerrillas."^36

Syria then closed its frontier with Lebanon to bring economic pressure to bear upon its neighbor by cutting off its access to the Arab world. At the same time guerrillas continued to enter Lebanon from Syria. Seeking to stop the Palestinian infiltration, the Lebanese army used jet fighters to make several retaliatory raids on guerrilla

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positions near the Lebanese-Syrian border. On the political front, an army official denounced the release of rumors in the Palestinian refugee camps in Beirut in favor of "sectarian sedition," which could lead to tension between Lebanese Christians and Muslims. A clear indication of the split concerning the Palestinian question in Lebanon appeared when Zaher Khatib, a Muslim Lebanese parliamentary deputy, was stopped at an army roadblock and found to be carrying weapons to the Palestinians. Colonel Muammar Qaddafi of Libya urged the guerrillas to occupy Beirut International Airport and promised to send them all the jet fighters they needed if they captured the facility. The guerrillas quickly moved to take over the airport, but they were forced to retreat. Shortly after this incident, Libyan government radio announced that a public offer made by Qaddafi to send troops and volunteers to fight in support of the Palestinians had been warmly accepted by Yasir Arafat on behalf of the Palestinian Liberation Organization.37

Responding to the stances taken by Syria and Libya, Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban said during an official visit to Washington, D.C. that he hoped that Lebanon, like Jordan, would impose its sovereignty over the Palestinian

commandos within its borders. Recalling that the Jordanian authorities had found it necessary to "put the Palestinian commandos out of action in their territory," Eban added, "The Lebanese must have reached the same conclusion." He stated that the Lebanese government was making "an effort . . . to assert its sovereignty over its own capital" and warned, "If the Syrians move into Lebanon and face us on a new border, we shall consider ourselves free to act."\textsuperscript{38} A statement on May 9 by Defense Minister Moshe Dayan further emphasized Israel's position on Syria's support of the Palestinians in Lebanon: "The Israeli government might be obliged to act if the Syrian army entered Lebanon and endangered Israel's borders."\textsuperscript{39}

Indications were in evidence that the Israelis intended to act on their warnings, if necessary. Lebanese ambassadors to various foreign countries informed President Franjieh that Israel would intervene in the conflict if the Lebanese army '"retreated' in the present confrontation.'\textsuperscript{40} At the same time, inside Lebanon Muslims were charging that the Christian president and his Christian


\textsuperscript{39} Tobin and Fraser, p. 25932.

army commander were guilty of offenses bordering upon waging war against the Palestinians and all Muslims in Lebanon. Franjieh justified his tough stand by saying that, as president, he alone was responsible for upholding Lebanon's national sovereignty and the country's constitution. The president also defended his position to his Arab critics by reminding them that Egypt, Jordan, Syria, and Iraq had all "cracked down" on the guerrillas even more harshly and that they therefore should not condemn his actions.  

The fighting continued in this tension-filled atmosphere. Lebanese jets struck at guerrillas in the Rashayyah area, fire was exchanged along the 50-mile stretch of road between Rashayyah and Baalbeck in the Bekaa Valley, and firing was also reported in the northern Arida area near the Lebanese-Syrian border. At last, however, on May 11, under intense Muslim pressure and with the aid of Arab diplomatic efforts, a cease-fire agreement was reached.

The Milkart Protocol of 1973
As has been made clear throughout this paper, the Muslim half of the Lebanese population sympathized with the Palestinian guerrillas, and the Christian half opposed

them. Given this division, the risk that internal fighting would erupt into civil war was one of the major factors constantly facing President Franjieh in his dealings with the Palestinians. In addition, because both Franjieh and army commander General Ghanem were Christians, after Muslim Prime Minister al-Hafiz's resignation, the president's hard line on the Palestinian question was suspected of being religiously motivated. Indeed, something of a Muslim vacuum existed around Franjieh.

In view of this deep domestic communal split and the support given to the Palestinian guerrillas by Lebanese Muslims throughout the long conflict, the president realized that the only option remaining to him if communal civil war was to be avoided was to undertake a compromise with the guerrillas similar to that made in 1969. Therefore, on May 17, 1973, Lebanese army and guerrilla negotiators initiated discussions to settle the crisis. The two most critical issues to be resolved were the government's desire to place all Palestinian refugee camps in the country under Lebanese rather than guerrilla security controls and the removal of heavy weapons from the camps. The negotiations were slow. Lebanese President Franjieh insisted that heavy weapons be removed from the Palestinian refugee camps surrounding the capital city of Beirut, that the military training of guerrillas within Palestinian camps
be terminated, and that the guerrillas accept Lebanese sovereignty over all Palestinians living in the country.

Palestinian negotiators refused these conditions, and the president declared that national sovereignty must be exercised over all parts of Lebanon, including the Palestinian refugee camps. Kataib Party Chairman Gemayel further demanded that three Palestinian refugee camps—Dbayeh, Tal Zattar, and Bourj al-Barajneh—be closed because of their repeated participation in the fighting against the Lebanese army, but none of these proposals received sufficient support to be imposed upon the guerrillas, who remained in control of all of the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon.42

After two days of negotiation, an accord was reached between the army and guerrilla representatives, and a new protocol was added to the Cairo Agreement of 1969. When the meetings were concluded, a guerrilla leader privately asserted, "We got what we wanted, and more."43

It was agreed in the accord, which later came to be known as the Milkart Protocol, in reference to the hotel at which the meetings were held, that a high-level joint committee would be formed to supervise the cease-fire, that


Lebanese-Palestinian patrols would remain in constant touch with their commanders to stop any outbreaks of fighting, and that Lebanese and Palestinian forces would be separated.\(^h\)

The terms of the Milkart Protocol were not immediately published. On May 18, 1973, the Iraqi news agency quoted an internal PLO circular which summed up the points of the agreement as follows: (1) respect for and application of the Cairo Agreement and its supplements; (2) cessation of all military manifestations and the return of the army to its barracks; (3) abolition of the state of emergency after the formation of a new government within the next few days; (4) termination of the information campaign against the revolution; (5) no restrictions on the presence of weapons in the Palestinian refugee camps; (6) recognition of the right of the Palestinian resistance to carry out military exercises; (7) no distinction between Palestinians residing in Lebanon and other Palestinians living in Lebanon and bestowal of all the rights of residents on the latter group; (8) release of all detained Palestinians and Lebanese supporters of the Palestinian revolution; (9) release of all confiscated weapons; (10) formation of a supreme committee to deal with all outstanding issues and with any

\(^h\) "Randal, "Lebanese Jets Attack Guerrillas in North," p. 24."
hostilities that might break out in the future; (11) withdrawal of the Palestinian Liberation Army's 5,000-man Yarmuk Brigade and other guerrillas who had entered Lebanon from Syria at the height of the fighting (this withdrawal was in fact completed on May 18); (12) the carrying of arms and wearing of uniforms by guerrillas inside refugee camps only; (13) banning of the setting up of roadblocks, making arrests, and conducting interrogations by guerrilla commandos; and (14) joint Lebanese army and guerrilla inspection teams to ensure that no heavy weapons were stored in the refugee camps.\textsuperscript{45}

In the eyes of some observers, the provisions of the Milkart Protocol constituted a Palestinian victory over the Lebanese government because most of the clauses of the agreement were concessions made by the Lebanese authorities to the PLO rather than vice versa. One of the major problems in conducting such negotiations in Lebanon was the reluctance of Lebanese Muslim leaders to support any measures that their pro-Palestinian followers would view as a betrayal of the Palestinian cause. President Franjieh could count on substantial backing from the Christians, "But in the country's political system, based on a balance of power between Christians and Muslims, any policy toward

\textsuperscript{45}Sobel, p. 157.
the Palestinians that does not lead to a division of national opinion must be based on a compromise."\(^4\)\(^5\)

Two days after the agreement was signed, on May 21, 1973, the Palestinian guerrillas made it clear that the Protocol meant nothing to them when Salah Khalaf, Arafat's second in command in the PLO, declared that the guerrillas would not withdraw from the populated areas of Lebanon and would not agree to the prohibition of heavy weapons in the refugee camps. This response by the guerrillas to the Milkart Protocol indicated that the agreement was no more than a face-saving device for both sides to put an end to their protracted conflict. By now, the mutual mistrust of the Lebanese authorities and the Palestinians was deeply entrenched, and, again, both sides were preparing for the next stage in their recurring confrontation.

CHAPTER IV

THE OUTBREAK OF THE LEBANESE CIVIL
WAR: 1975-1976

It was clear from the beginning that the fragile Lebanese social and political system could not endure in the face of the continuing Lebanese-Palestinian military conflict. In spite of the utmost efforts exerted by Lebanese authorities to bring the civil strife under control, no improvements occurred in 1973 and 1974. In January of 1975, Israel mounted an attack against the Palestinian guerrilla bases in the southern area of Lebanon, and, when the Lebanese army moved to stop Palestinian activities across the Lebanese-Israeli border, clashes broke out between the soldiers and the guerrillas and the army barracks in the southern city of Tyre came under Palestinian fire. Shortly after this incident, a statement was issued by Christian leader Gemayel asking the PLO "to put an end to the anarchy prevailing among its dissident groups." Gemayel's evaluation of the Palestinian intervention in Lebanon was valid in that guerrilla involvement in Lebanese domestic affairs

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on the side of the Muslims had widened the internal split between Lebanese Christians and Muslims, and it deprived the people of the opportunity to sit down together in a purely Lebanese atmosphere to discuss their own problems. As a result, the possibility of a reconciliation between the two Lebanese parties became ever more remote.

Former President Camile Chamoun supported Gemayel's position, denounced guerrilla activities in Lebanon, and asked the government to use the most drastic measures at its disposal against them. This statement was interpreted by the Muslims as evidence of the Christian determination to deal ruthlessly with the guerrillas. Muslim leaders responded to the sentiments of Gemayel and Chamoun by accusing the government and the Christian army commander of cooperating with the Christian political parties to take over political and military control in Lebanon. The Muslims demanded the reorganization of the army on the grounds that it had yielded absolutely to the will of the Christian presidency. These demands were sufficient to arouse the emotions of the Lebanese Christians, who staged demonstrations in the streets in support of the army.2

The situation worsened when all of Lebanon's Muslim leaders voiced a vote of no confidence in the government.

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and insisted that equality between Christians and Muslims be instituted in the army by the formation of a command council incorporating identical numbers of high-ranking officers from both communities. Lebanon's Christian leaders refused to accede to these demands, and the stage was set for a new period of serious civil strife.

Lebanese Christians versus Palestinians

On Sunday, April 13, 1975, civil war broke out in Lebanon. In the morning of that day a group of Palestinian guerrillas in an automobile drove past a recently-built church in the Christian suburb of Ain al-Rummaneh, where Kataib Party Chairman Gemayel was attending a service consecrating the new place of worship; opened fire on the crowd; and killed four men, including Gemayel's bodyguard. The assailants then fled to the Muslim sector of Beirut. A few hours later, a bus carrying Palestinian guerrillas through the Ain al-Rummaneh suburb en route to the Tal Zattar refugee camp came under fire from persons who were believed to be members of a Christian militia, and all of its 26 passengers were killed.³

On the evening of May 13, Lebanon's Muslim political leaders called a meeting of their parties to discuss the situation. In a subsequent statement these leaders

demanded that the government dissolve the Kataib Party and expel its two representatives from the cabinet. Meanwhile, fighting had already broken out in various sections of Beirut.⁴

The Islamic Council in Lebanon, which included the country’s current prime minister and all former Muslim prime ministers and other cabinet ministers, then held a meeting to discuss these incidents. The Council condemned the Christian militias, holding them responsible for the violence:

The Council expresses its repugnance as regards the bloody massacre which resulted from the criminal incidents of Ain al-Rummaneh and condemns it because, in its premeditated criminal character which aimed at unarmed innocent people [the Palestinian riders of the bus], [the massacre] indicates that its executors were carrying out a criminal plot to strike at Lebanon and cause civil strife in a manner which would benefit the Zionist enemy and the plots of its friends. The phalangist incidents, which came following a series of challenges against the Palestinians, should be investigated in such a manner as to reveal those responsible [for the massacre] and expose them to the Lebanese people and the patriotic public opinion and to punish them on both political and legal levels.⁵

The Muslim position was thus defined in the Council’s statement. In response, Kataib Chairman Gemayel described the issues in his party’s newspaper, Al-Amal:

⁴Salibi, p. 99.

We have reached a situation in Lebanon in which the state is overcome. The state has renounced its responsibilities and sovereignty, and this has given rise to unofficial mini-states and armies which are undisciplined and whose identities are not known. Worse, there are certain areas in Lebanese territory and in the hearts of towns which are outside the framework of every authority, even the authority of the resistance movement.

We do not accept that there should be any authority above the authority of the Lebanese state. We do not accept that there should be areas outside the authority of the Lebanese state. I emphasize that, had the law been applied justly and rightly to all, we would not have reached the current situation, which is due to the application of the law to one group and failure to apply it to others.6

The incidents at Ain al-Rummaneh were followed by terrorist acts perpetrated by Palestinian guerrillas and Lebanese Muslims against Christians in the suburbs of al-Chiah and Harat Huraik, where churches and homes, shops, and automobiles belonging to Christians were destroyed and robberies, murders, and other crimes were committed.7

The fighting spread beyond Beirut to several other cities and counties in Lebanon, notably to the northern city of Tripoli. All of the cease-fire agreements reached between the conflicting parties were broken, and an atmosphere of apprehension was constantly maintained among the


7Salibi, p. 99.
people. Mutual accusations between the Christians and the Palestinians were the norm.  

The Muslim political parties went further when Kamal Jumblatt, Chairman of the Socialist Progressive Party, threatened to boycott any cabinet that included members of the Kataib Party. In response to Jumblatt's threat, all of Lebanon's Christian cabinet ministers resigned, causing the resignation of Prime Minister Rashid al-Solh—and, therefore, the dissolution of the entire government—on May 15, 1975.

The political tension in Lebanon increased when the guerrillas demanded the arrest of some of the Kataib Party members whom they considered to be responsible for the deaths at Ain al-Rummaneh. The cabinet of Prime Minister al-Solh's government resigned, and attempts to name a new Muslim prime minister failed. The fighting persisted, accompanied by acts of robbery, kidnapping, and murder.

On the political front, Lebanese Christian leaders, including the Maronite cardinal, made it clear that no government could be formed if the Kataib Party was excluded from it. In an effort to solve this complex

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8Ibid., pp. 99-100.


10Bulloch, p. 78.
problem, on May 23, 1975, President Franjieh named a military government headed by former Muslim Brigadier Nur al-Din al-Rif'ai. This decision was welcomed by the Christians and opposed by the Muslims, who viewed the selection of a frail elderly Muslim military officer as an attempt to weaken Lebanon's Muslim premiership. Furthermore, the Muslims believed that, through the creation of a military government, the army could be used as a repressive force against the Muslims and the Palestinian guerrillas. This opposition to the military government manifested itself in armed clashes initiated by the Muslims and Palestinians and the erection of more military barricades.\textsuperscript{11} Only two days after the formation of the military government, Nur al-Din al-Rif'ai was forced to resign, and on May 28 Rashid Karami was asked by President Franjieh to assemble a new cabinet. Karami, however, faced strong opposition from both Christian Kataibs and Muslim socialists, who insisted on exercising a mutual veto, each group refusing to participate in the cabinet if the other group was included in it. Thus, the country was deprived of even a minimal government to administer daily civil service functions.

\textsuperscript{11}Salibi, p. 109.
The Lebanese Muslim-Palestinian Alliance

During this crisis, the stand of the Muslims toward the Lebanese political system crystallized. Hussein al-Quwatli, the director of the Higher Muslim Sunni Council, summarized the Muslim position:

There exists a very clear stand in Islam, namely that the real Muslim cannot stand aloof as regards the state, and consequently his stand as regards the ruler and the rule cannot be a passive one, one which accepts half-solutions. For either the ruler will be Muslim [the ruler of Lebanon is a Christian] and the rule Islamic, and he [the true Muslim] will agree to it and support it, or the ruler will be non-Muslim and the rule non-Islamic [the current Lebanese political system] and he will reject it and he will work to annul it, peacefully or forcefully, explicitly or implicitly. This is a clear stand because it is one of principle, and, furthermore, it is the basis of the Islamic faith. ... Any concessions made by a Muslim as regards this stand, or part of it, is necessarily an abjuration of Islam. For, according to the thinkers of Islam, the erection of the Islamic state and the self-government of Muslims constitute an important part of Islam, where "no Islam exists without it."\(^\text{12}\)

Given the intensity of this sentiment, Lebanese Muslims preferred to support the Palestinian guerrillas, who meanwhile began to train them in the use of various types of heavy and light weapons in their refugee camps and to supply them with arms. It was claimed by Yasir Arafat that the guerrillas in Lebanon enjoyed the support of the

\(^{12}\text{Khuayri, p. 141.}\)
Muslim community and were thus obliged to give that community at least a limited degree of support in return.\textsuperscript{13}

This limited support was transformed into more complete cooperation when the Muslims and Palestinians began to fight side by side against the Christians from June 23, 1975 onward. Recurring skirmishes took place in the adjacent and densely-populated suburbs of Ain al-Rummaneh (Christian) and al-Shiyyah (Muslim).

Prime Minister Karami succeeded in forming a government on June 30, after the Christian leader Gemayel and the Muslim leader Jumblatt agreed to stay out of the cabinet. The short-term truce that followed was used by both sides to import more arms to prepare for new rounds of fighting.\textsuperscript{14}

The problems of the new government were profound, for no agreement could be reached among the cabinet members or, more seriously, between the president and his prime minister. In spite of the dire political problems and tragic violence besetting Lebanon, President Franjieh and Prime Minister Karami never communicated during the first few months after the formation of the new government. Moreover, Tony Franjieh, the president's son, announced the establishment of the "Zgharta Liberation Army" and

\textsuperscript{13}Sirriyeh, p. 85.  \textsuperscript{14}Salibi, p. 113.
began to arm and train this private military unit in preparation for future skirmishes with the Muslim militias in the prime minister's home city of Tripoli.\textsuperscript{15}

The incapacity of the government and the Muslim insistence on isolating the Christian Kataib Party prompted the Christians to reconsider their position toward the current political system and their relations with the Muslims. The Christians felt that the Lebanese government had begun to collapse when the Palestinian guerrillas entered the country. They also believed that the communal balance established in the National Pact of 1943 had been upset in favor of the Muslims as a result of the huge number of Palestinians in the country and that, therefore, the National Pact itself was no longer beneficial to the Christians. In the Christian view, the insistence on excluding the Kataibs from participation in any new government that might be formed was tantamount to the Muslims' intention of excluding the entire Christian community from its rightful place in the life of the country.\textsuperscript{16}

In view of these circumstances, the Christians began advancing the idea of partitioning Lebanon and establishing

\textsuperscript{15}Ibid., p. 120.

a separate Christian state. In order to secure the needed international support for this proposal, in June of 1975 they sent three delegations to the United States, France, and the Vatican, but the delegations failed to achieve their objective. In Washington the U.S. administration informed the Lebanese Christian delegation of its unwillingness to intervene militarily in Lebanon, reiterating the stand that it had taken in the crisis of 1958 and its firm opposition to any partition of the country. The French government made it clear that its new relations with the Arab countries precluded any support of a separate Christian state in the area. In the Vatican the pope made the Christian delegation understand that it was impossible for him to endanger the position of the millions of Christians living throughout the Arab world by supporting the partition of Lebanon. 17

The military preparation in Lebanon culminated in the renewal of hostilities on August 24, 1975, in Zahleh, a Christian city in the Bekaa Valley near the Syrian border. The fighting rapidly spread to all of the surrounding Muslim counties, which joined in attacking the Christian city. At the same time, military clashes also broke out in the north between the Muslim city of Tripoli, supported by Palestinian guerrillas, and the Christian town of

17Ibid., pp. 51-52.
Zgharta; even heavy artillery came to be used in this struggle. Most of the Christians living in Tripoli fled the city.

After intervention by the army, the fighting between Muslim Tripoli and Christian Zgharta ceased. In an attempt to satisfy the Muslims while calming the explosive situation in the country, President Franjieh finally agreed to remove his close friend General Iskander Ghanem as commander of the army and replaced him with General Hanna Sa'id. The Muslims, however, continued to distrust the army, seeing it as a pro-Christian organization. The Muslim opposition resulted in a call for a general strike in Beirut on September 15, 1975, in protest of the death of 13 Muslim militiamen who were killed in Tripoli in the fighting against the army.\(^\text{18}\)

In the Christian suburb of Ain al-Rummaneh Christian militias began to bomb the heart of Beirut. This intensification of fighting by the Christians was regarded as a clear indication that they had determined not to yield to the Muslim demand that the entire Lebanese political system be amended or to remain silent about the unlawful actions being committed daily by the Palestinian guerrillas, who had, in effect, established a state within the state. The Christian actions were also viewed by the Muslims

\(^{18}\)Salibi, pp. 123-124.
as a pressure tactic to compel the army to intervene in the fighting in the country and settle once and for all the Palestinian dispute that divided Lebanon. The Muslim reaction to the Christians' military escalation was a refusal to accept intervention by the army until it was reorganized in such a way as to equalize the numbers of Muslim and Christian commanding officers.

Communal battles spread throughout Lebanon, from Sidon in the south to Tripoli in the north and Zahleh in the east. The social situation also deteriorated when thousands of Lebanese families were forced under the intensity of the fighting to flee from the country to Syria and Jordan in search of a temporary refuge.

The civil war in Lebanon prompted Syria to send Foreign Minister Abdel Halim al-Khaddam to Beirut to attempt to bring an end to the fighting. Al-Khaddam arrived in Lebanon on September 19, 1975 and remained there until September 25. During his stay he helped the Lebanese government to form a "Committee for National Dialogue and Reconciliation," which was to include the country's Christian and Muslim leaders. The Syrian efforts were successful for a time, but fighting soon broke out again.

In order to alleviate the pressure on their comrades in Beirut, the Christian militiamen in Zahleh launched an

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19 Ibid., p. 127.
offensive against the neighboring Muslim counties in the Bekaa Valley. The fighting became more intense when new units of Palestinian guerrillas entered Lebanon from Syria to join the battle against the Christians in Zahleh.\textsuperscript{20} Israel responded with a warning to Syria against intervention in Lebanon.

After the issuance of the Israeli statement, the hostilities ceased and each of the warring parties entered a period of reevaluation of the political and military situation. A higher coordination committee was set up to supervise the newly-announced cease-fire. Most of the Christian and Muslim leaders were included in this committee, which was authorized to arrest any militiamen who violated the cease-fire agreement. Pierre Gemayel made it clear in the first committee meeting that Lebanese Christians were no longer willing to tolerate the open anti-Christian alliance between the Muslims and the Palestinians and reiterated that the Christians were still seriously considering a partition of the country. In response, Muslim Prime Minister Karami expressed his desire to preserve Christian-Muslim coexistence but only on the condition that the status of the two groups be equal in every way.\textsuperscript{21}

\textsuperscript{20} Bulloch, p. 86.

The Muslims had long complained that the Lebanese president was like a dictator who held all power in his hands while the prime minister was merely his clerk. They demanded that the prime minister be elected by the parliament and insisted that the number of parliamentary seats assigned to Christians and Muslims be equal instead of 54 to 45 in favor of the Christians. In short, the Muslims demanded that the Christian domination in the key institutions of the country be terminated. The religious leader of the Sunni Muslims in Lebanon announced that, if Christians continued to insist on special privileges in the Lebanese political system, the result might be the breakdown of the nation.²²

As in the past, the current truce was used by the warring parties to import more weapons into Lebanon. Throughout the civil conflict Muslims and Palestinians received military supplies from the Arab countries, notably Syria, Iraq, and Libya; the Christians received arms from the United States, France, and England. Whereas the Muslim-Palestinian alliance was given weapons by Lebanon's Arab neighbors, however, the Christians were obliged to buy them.²³


²³David Binder, "Foreign Arms Expected to Prolong Lebanon Strife," The New York Times, November 18, 1975, p. 3.
These continuing military preparations by the parties to the conflict, accompanied by the gradual escalation of the intensity of fighting, made the Arab countries fear the possibility of a partition of Lebanon. Concern about such a partition was expressed in several quarters. Syrian Foreign Minister al-Khaddam said, "If Lebanon is subject to division, we shall face this as the most serious plot the Arab nation is facing and shall stand by Lebanon with all our means to foil this plot." Then-Crown Prince Fahd of Saudi Arabia took a firm stand against the partition of Lebanon between Christians and Muslims when he stated that, if a Christian state was established on the "debris of the present coexistence among Lebanese communities," it would lead to "serious consequences" in the Lebanese-Saudi relationship.

These warnings had no effect upon the continuation of the armed conflict in Lebanon. The Christians pursued their military activity to achieve their goals by preserving the current political system and the independence and sovereignty of Lebanon, and the Muslims, supported by the Palestinians, continued their battle to impose by force a

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reconstitution of the Lebanese political system and gain full freedom for Palestinian guerrilla activity in the country.

Syria and the Lebanese Conflict

In anticipation of the possible impact that the continued Lebanese civil war might have on Syria, that country's president, Hafez al-Asad, began to exert his utmost efforts to settle the conflict. On December 3, 1975, he invited Pierre Gemayel to travel to Syria for discussions of methods of stabilizing conditions in Lebanon. On December 6, during Gemayel's visit to Syria, four Christian militiamen were killed by Muslims and Palestinian guerrillas. To avenge their deaths, the Christians killed a group of Lebanese Muslims and Palestinians. These developments not only hindered Syria's mediation activities but again raised the issue of the partition of Lebanon. Most Lebanese Christians began to express their preference for that option openly as an alternative to the changes demanded in the Lebanese political system by the Muslims. Père Charbel Kassis, the head of the Lebanese monastic orders, delivered to the French envoy former premier Couve de Murville, during his visit to Lebanon at the behest of the French government in a mediatory mission between Christians and Muslims, a memorandum in which he stated that coexistence between Christians and Muslims had failed and
demanded the establishment of a smaller Christian state in Lebanon whose independence would be guaranteed by the Western powers.\(^{26}\)

Despite the new cease-fire announced on December 11, 1975, after a wave of kidnappings and murders committed by both sides the fighting escalated and the volume of losses in lives, money, and destruction of property reached unprecedented heights. Nearly 5,000 people were killed during the first eight months of the fighting, convincing many Lebanese citizens that a compromise was no longer possible and that partition was the only solution to the conflict.\(^{27}\)

The first indications of partition began to appear as the capital of Beirut was split into two sectors. This religious division made itself felt throughout the country, and both Christians and Muslims began to emigrate to areas inhabited predominantly by their own people. A political analyst living in Beirut during this period described the situation as follows:

The city, to begin with, had lost its unity as an urban complex. It now consisted of two separate and distinct residential sectors--a Christian sector to the east and a predominantly Muslim sector to the west--between which regular communication had become difficult, and in some respects


\(^{27}\)Ibid.
hardly possible. Between the two residential sectors of the city stretched a no-man's-land consisting of the downtown area and its immediate peripheries—an area which was now abandoned to the armed men and snipers of the various warring factions. For the first time since the start of the civil war, the city made no haste to reopen despite repeated reassurances from the government, which were in many cases blatantly unrealistic.

Like Beirut, the whole Lebanese republic had been left with the lines of confessional division clearly marked. A considerable emigration of Christians from Muslim areas and of Muslims from Christian areas had already taken place. In theory, the Lebanese republic as a political entity was still there, wielding sovereign jurisdiction over a country whose territorial integrity was legally intact. All but legally, however, the country had fallen apart, and it needed a tremendous effort of will and imagination by all the sides concerned to put it together again.28

The new cease-fire of December 11, 1975 was only one of a series that punctuated the fighting, which broke out anew when the Christian militias launched an offensive against the three Palestinian refugee camps of Tal Zattar, Jisr al-Pasha, and Dbayeh. These camps fell to the Christian forces, and their populations were driven into the Muslim western sector of Beirut. With the renewed escalation of the conflict, all of Lebanon's Muslim leaders demanded the resignation of President Franjieh, an action interpreted by the Christians as evidence of a Muslim-Palestinian plot to dominate Lebanon.29


In a further effort to prevent the Muslims and Palestinians from gaining control over the country, the Christian militias continued their battle by attacking the Muslim suburbs of Karantina and Maslakh on the coastal road between Beirut and Dora in the northern Christian region of Lebanon. In retaliation, Muslim militias and Palestinian guerrillas attacked the Christian coastal cities of Damour and Sadiyyat in the south. The two cities fell to the Muslim-Palestinian alliance on January 20, 1976, and their inhabitants were forced to flee by sea to the predominantly Christian coastal city of Jonieh to the north. Massacres were carried out by both sides in the areas which they conquered.\(^3\)

Communal hostilities continued as the Muslim militias and their Palestinian guerrilla allies in the Muslim city of Tripoli launched an offensive against the Christian city of Zgharta. The Muslim-Palestinian alliance then broadened its sphere of military operations, encircling the Christian city of Zahleh in the Bekaa Valley after reinforcements in the form of new units of Palestinian guerrillas arrived from Syria. At the same time many Christian villages and towns in the northern region of Akkar were also attacked by the Muslims and Palestinians.\(^3\)

\(^3\)Barry Came, "Slaughterhouse Two," *Newsweek*, February 2, 1976, p. 35.

\(^3\)Salibi, p. 153.
This intensification of military action was paralleled by political escalation of the conflict. On January 18, 1976, Prime Minister Karami submitted his resignation, causing a new governmental crisis in the divided country, and many observers feared that this time the internal instability in Lebanon would spread throughout the Middle East.

Syria continued its efforts to bring about an end to the war and kept in touch with President Franjieh throughout the crisis. After the onset of intensified fighting, Syria sent a delegation of three senior officials--Foreign Minister al-Khaddam, Army Chief of Staff Major General Hikmat Shihabi, and Air Marshal Naji Jamil--to discuss methods of imposing a lasting cease-fire in Lebanon with Franjieh.

Some Christians, however, were suspicious of Syria's role as mediator, and, in December of 1975, it was suggested that Syria might be playing a double game by publicly calling for a cease-fire while privately allowing the Muslim-Palestinian alliance to win its first military victory. Lending credence to this belief was the fact that the leftists in Lebanon showed no sign of running
out of ammunition, although as a rule it was doled out by the PLO and Syria quite parsimoniously. The Syrians had always believed that both their country and Lebanon were integral parts of "Greater Syria" and that the divisions between the two nations were artificially created by the French. Most importantly, Syria did not have an embassy in Lebanon and repeatedly refused Lebanon's requests to establish diplomatic relations between their two countries. There were no restrictions on movement between Syria and Lebanon, and, therefore, if Syria was not behind the scene in the Lebanese crisis, it at least actively exploited the events in Lebanon in the hopes of realizing its aspirations there.

On January 22, 1976, President Franjieh announced that an agreement had been reached between the Christian and Muslim communities. The settlement would grant some Muslim demands for a greater share of power in political participation, but at the same time the current position of the Christians in Lebanon would be maintained. It was agreed that a higher military commission would be formed, composed of Lebanese, Syrian, and Palestinian officers, in order to carry out the terms of the agreement and maintain

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the cease-fire. A Syrian statement was issued in Damascus which assured the Christians and Muslims in Lebanon that Syria was a neutral mediator in their conflict.33

Despite these hopeful developments, however, a few days later the Lebanese army began to split into Christian and Muslim factions. A Lebanese Muslim officer, Lieutenant Ahmed Khatib, led the breakaway movement, proclaiming himself head of the "Lebanese Arab Army." He secured the barracks in the predominantly Muslim areas of Lebanon and seized their stores of heavy and light weapons. Almost all of the Muslim officers and soldiers in the Lebanese army joined Khatib with their equipment.34 With the disintegration of the army as the Christian officers and soldiers joined the Christian militias and the Muslim officers and soldiers joined the Muslim-Palestinian alliance, Lebanon was now de facto partitioned.

President Franjieh once again traveled to Syria on February 7, 1976, after receiving an urgent invitation to do so from Syrian President al-Asad. The two chief executives discussed the Lebanese crisis in depth. President Franjieh was assured by al-Asad that Syria would guarantee the Palestinian guerrillas' compliance with the past

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34Bulloch, p. 115.
agreements made with the Lebanese government. The political reforms demanded by the Muslims, such as equal representation and power in the parliament and the army's hierarchy of command, were also discussed. After returning to Lebanon on February 14, President Franjieh announced publicly that he concurred with President al-Asad on the proposed political reforms, giving the Muslims a greater share in the political system while preserving the position of the Christians, and the regulation of Palestinian guerrilla activity in Lebanon. It was agreed that the presidency would continue to be held by a Christian and that the distribution of top governmental posts between Christians and Muslims would remain as specified in the National Pact of 1943. Some amendments would be made, however; seats in parliament would be equally divided between Christians and Muslims instead of six to five in favor of the former, and the Muslim prime minister would be elected by the parliament rather than appointed by the president.35

These political arrangements encountered obstacles, however, when the Christians and President Franjieh insisted that the new agreement be set down in writing, unlike the National Pact of 1943, and that all Muslim leaders sign a provision stating that Lebanon's president was to be a Maronite Christian in perpetuity. The Muslim leaders

35Salibi, p. 163.
objected strongly to this requirement, and former Prime Minister Saeb Salam declared, "I will have my arm cut off first before I sign a written charter."36

Some of Lebanon's Christian leaders objected to the president's program of political reforms as well, especially the designation of Lebanon as an "Arab" country. They believed that Lebanon must continue to be molded by Christian characteristics because it had more in common with the Western Christian countries than with its Arab neighbors.37

The leader of the breakaway Lebanese Arab Army, Lieutenant Khatib, rejected the Syrian-sponsored list of political reforms proposed by President Franjieh on the grounds that it did not provide a fundamental solution to the Lebanese crisis, "and the minor reforms it proposes are not commensurate with the sacrifice that has been made." He added, "In any case the civil war is not over as neither side has achieved what it wanted." Khatib objected to the suggested reform program because it reserved the presidency and the post of commander-in-chief


of the army for Christians, and he demanded that those two posts be rotated between Christians and Muslims.\(^3^8\)

Regardless of Muslim opposition to the proposed political reforms, the Syrian delegation announced that Lebanon's presidency would continue to be held by the Christians, and Syrian President al-Asad assured Christian leader Gemayel that Syria would force the Palestinian guerrillas to fulfill the terms of their agreements with the Lebanese government, namely, the Cairo Agreement of 1969 and the Milkart Protocol of 1973.\(^3^9\)

Fearing a renewal of hostilities, the Syrian government ordered its delegation to remain in Lebanon to continue its mediation efforts and to assemble the Palestinian guerrilla leaders with the senior officers of the Lebanese army in order to regulate the activities of the Palestinian resistance in Lebanon.\(^4^0\) During this period, however, Muslim soldiers continued to desert the army and join the "Lebanese Arab Army" headed by Khatib, who was supported by both Lebanese Muslim leaders and Palestinian guerrillas. Military skirmishes flared up in cities throughout the

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\(^3^8\) Bulloch, p. 118.


country. Syria's attempts to stabilize conditions in Lebanon were ultimately unsuccessful, especially with the complete split of the Lebanese army on March 11, 1976, when Brigadier General Abdel Aziz al-Ahdab staged what was later to be called a "television coup" by proclaiming himself the military governor of Lebanon before television cameras. Al-Ahdab demanded the resignations of President Franjieh and Prime Minister Karami within 24 hours and called upon the parliament to meet in seven days to elect a new president. Franjieh ignored this military coup because only a part of the army stood against him, and in the meantime he asked Syrian President al-Asad to resume his country's mediation.

In response to Franjieh's request, al-Asad invited all Lebanese Christian and Muslim leaders to come to Syria to discuss new solutions to the conflict. The Muslim militias and Palestinian guerrillas escalated the fighting along the line separating the eastern Christian and western Muslim sectors of Beirut. After a surge of violent clashes throughout the country, the Lebanese cabinet met in the presidential palace under President Franjieh on March 22, 1976, and agreed to accept a Syrian plan which included an amendment to the Lebanese constitution allowing the
parliament to elect a new president before the normal election date of August 17, 1976.41

The Muslim-Palestinian alliance continued its military actions, and President Franjieh told President al-Asad in a telephone conversation that he would ask Syrian or "other foreign troops" to intervene in Lebanon if the fighting did not stop. Prompted by the gravity of this statement, Syria intensified its attempts to resolve the Lebanese crisis, but its efforts were ignored by the Muslim militias and Palestinian guerrillas.42

The executive committee of the Palestinian Liberation Organization held a meeting under Yasir Arafat and in a communique "stressed the necessity of complete unity with the national movement and the Lebanese masses" [Muslims].43 This communique was then put into action with a call for all Muslims and Palestinians to join the fighting against the Christians. Christians throughout Lebanon prepared to defend themselves and were urged in an emotional statement by Pierre Gemayel to join the Christian militias:


Our people and our army are dispersed, our institutions disintegrating, and our land occupied. There is no legislature, no judiciary, no sovereignty, no security, and no freedom. Ruin and destruction spread over villages and cities, towns and mountains. I appeal to you all, men and women, to unite for the homeland. Perform your holy duty of defending the homeland which faces disintegration. 44

When the situation in Lebanon reached this point, the superpowers at last took action to prevent the fighting from spreading throughout the Middle East. Under the pressure placed upon it by the United States through its special envoy to Lebanon, Dean Brown, and the Soviet Union through its diplomats, the Muslim-Palestinian alliance was forced to accept the truce proposed by Syria. 45 Yet another cease-fire—more than the twentieth in less than a year—was declared on April 2, 1976. On April 10, the Lebanese parliament met and passed a constitutional amendment authorizing the election of a new president before the expiration of President Franjieh’s term on September 23, 1976. 46

The truce negotiated by Syria was not fully respected, for the Muslim-Palestinian alliance insisted on continued hostilities until Lebanon's political regime was changed. The Christians' fear that the Muslims intended to overthrow

44 Bulloch, p. 126.


46 James M. Markham, "Lebanese Set Talks to Replace President," The New York Times, April 7, 1976, p. 3.
the government was confirmed when the Palestinian guerrilla leader Georges Habash called for "the need to build a new structure in Lebanon, in all Lebanese institutions, to replace the old structure, which is based on confession-alism" and, to the distress and anger of the Maronite Christians, the establishment of a progressive, nationalist, democratic government.47

The End of the Lebanese Civil War

In a step intended to end the fighting, the Lebanese parliament met on May 8, 1976, during a siege of bombing and continuous violence, and elected Elias Sarkis as the successor to President Sulieman Franjieh. It was assumed that President Franjieh would agree to resign before the end of his term on September 23 and step down in favor of the president-elect, but he refused to do so and as a result military clashes escalated in the mountains and other areas of the country. The Muslims and Palestinians were determined to continue fighting until President-Elect Sarkis agreed to their political demands. When Muslim leader Kamal Jumblatt was asked whether the civil war would continue, he answered, "I don't know" but stated

that peace was possible if Sarkis would "agree to our political reforms."  

The communal fighting became intense around Beirut and in the Lebanese mountains when the Christian militias undertook a major offensive to recover their lost territory. This Christian escalation of hostilities frightened the Palestinian guerrillas, who viewed it as an initiative to control their presence in Lebanon. At the end of May the Syrians made a final decision to put an end to the Lebanese civil war at any price, and, on June 1, 1976, the Syrian army entered Lebanon, supported by the United States, as a last resort to force all of the parties in the conflict to permanently terminate hostilities. At the same time Syria was warned by the United States not to bring more troops into Lebanon than the number agreed to by Israel.

This Syrian intervention constituted the final phase of the civil war in Lebanon, although fighting did not end until six months later. The Muslims and the Palestinians

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formed a unified military command and began to engage the marching Syrian soldiers, and clashes broke out in Sidon, Tripoli, and the Bekaa Valley. The Syrian forces, however, overcame all military resistance and advanced to the periphery of Beirut. Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and other Arab countries then asked Syria to withdraw its troops from Lebanon and called for the formation of an Arab peacekeeping force. On June 16, 1976, the American ambassador to Lebanon, Francis E. Meloy, Jr.; the economic counselor at the American embassy, Robert O. Warning; and their Lebanese chauffeur, Zuheir Moghrabi, were killed in the Muslim western sector of Beirut en route to a meeting with President-Elect Sarkis in the Christian eastern sector.51 The immediate response of the United States was the evacuation of all American citizens residing in Lebanon, beginning two days after the murders.

As fighting in Lebanon persisted in spite of the presence of Syrian troops in the country, the Christians continued to consider the possibility of forming a separate Christian state, which would be possible with Israeli and U.S. support. They were aware, however, that the United States was not ready to accept the partition of Lebanon.

and therefore hoped that the Lebanese people would at last be united under the leadership of President-Elect Sarkis, who was to take office on September 23.\textsuperscript{52} The fighting in Lebanon continued, however, even after President Sarkis's inauguration, and on September 28 the Syrian army initiated an intensified military attack on the Muslim-Palestinian alliance in the mountains to the east of Beirut.

Alarmed by these developments, on October 15, 1976, King Khalid of Saudi Arabia called for a meeting of President Sarkis, President al-Asad of Syria, President Anwar el-Sadat of Egypt, Prince Sabah al-Sabah of Kuwait, and Yasir Arafat, to be held in Riyadh. On the following day, a summit conference was held among all of these invited leaders, and a statement was issued by Saudi Crown Prince Fahd announcing a peace plan for Lebanon approved by the conferees, including a cease-fire to begin on October 21, 1976, and the formation of a 30,000-man Arab peacekeeping force.

The Arab leaders' apprehension at the threat to Middle Eastern stability posed by the Lebanese civil war prompted them to come to a rapid consensus, formulating the terms of their proposed peace plan in only two days. It was also agreed that Syrian President al-Asad would make

\textsuperscript{52}\textit{U.S. Department of State, "United States Reaffirms Commitment to Integrity and Unity of Lebanon," Bulletin 75 (October 11, 1976), pp. 459-460.}
no further attempts to destroy or contain the Palestinian Liberation Organization in Lebanon or to curb guerrilla activity across the Lebanese-Israeli border. President Sadat agreed to the proviso that Palestinian guerrilla activity in Lebanon be confined to the level described in the Cairo Agreement of 1969. Finally, the responsibility for persuading the Christian leaders in Lebanon to stop agitating for the partition of the country and to agree to the political reforms which the government would implement to achieve the goal of national reconciliation was left to Lebanese President Sarkis. The decisions made in Riyadh were ratified by the Arab League in Cairo on October 26, in the presence of the Arab countries' foreign ministers. The 30,000-man Arab peace-keeping force, predominantly Syrian in composition, was placed under the command of President Sarkis.

On the same day, October 26, the PLO announced that it had begun to withdraw its guerrillas from all of the positions that they captured in the Lebanese mountains during the civil war to the southern region of Lebanon. Later, Syrian troops replaced the Palestinians in those positions.53

On October 28, the head of the PLO's political department, Farouq Kaddoumi, announced that, in conjunction with the advance of Syrian peace-keeping troops, the guerrillas were withdrawing from other positions in the north and in the Bekaa Valley to the east. After the Palestinians ceased fighting, the Muslim militias had no alternative but to yield to the Syrian soldiers, who were now carrying the banner of the Arab League. The Syrian troops began to move along the coast road through Christian- and Muslim-held areas toward Beirut, entering the city on November 10. By November 15, the entire capital was under the control of Syrian troops.\(^5\)\(^4\)

With the Syrian occupation of Beirut, which had always been the fulcrum of the conflict in Lebanon, the civil war was, for all practical purposes, ended. Yet another chapter in Lebanon's schismatic and turbulent history had ended, albeit only through the intervention of external actors.

\(^5\)\(^4\)Dawisha, pp. 164-165.
CONCLUSION

The modern political system of Lebanon shares many characteristics with those of other communally divided countries such as Cyprus, Nigeria, Belgium, and Ethiopia. The continuing instability in Lebanon since it gained independence in 1943 attests to the shortcomings in its system-building, notably the incapacity of its political institutions to take hold and adapt to changing conditions and demands. This study supports Samuel Huntington's contention that the political instability in Asia, Africa, and Latin America is the result of "the rapid social change and the rapid mobilization of new groups into politics coupled with slow development of political institutions," or, in other words, "the lag in the development of political institutions behind social and economic change." To Huntington, successful institutionalization means the development of governing institutions that embody new sources of legitimacy, participatory institutions providing channels for relating the newly participant groups to the governing institutions, and bureaucratic institutions that provide structures for the discharge of those
administrative functions that modern society requires of its political system.¹

The lack of fundamental consensus between its principal communities has paralyzed Lebanon, leaving it incapable of coping with either domestic or foreign demands in the post-independence period. Both internal and external factors have contributed to the long series of conflicts in Lebanon. A key internal factor since the proclamation of an independent Lebanon has been the persisting chasm between the Christians, who were dedicated to preserving the institutional status quo that gave them the upper hand in determining political and social issues, and the Muslims, who took it upon themselves to change the status quo by using all possible means to restore the status quo ante of the Ottoman era.

The circumstances of Lebanon's founding contributed to its subsequent difficulties. When Syria and Mount Lebanon came under the French mandate in 1922, as in so many other cases of post-World War II independence, an outside power shaped their future. France enlarged the political boundaries of Mount Lebanon to include the areas around the coastal cities of Sidon, Tyre, and Tripoli, as well as the Bekaa Valley in the east. The

territory thus added was predominantly Muslim, and the repercussions of its annexation were far-reaching. According to Philip Hitti, "The addition . . . almost doubled the area of the country and increased its population by about one-half, over 200,000 predominantly Muslims . . . What the country gained in area it lost in cohesion. It lost its internal equilibrium."²

Contemporary Muslim leaders in Lebanon first sought to join Syria, but they failed. Therefore, when they accepted the subsequent establishment of the state of Lebanon, they were not wholly satisfied. They agreed to the National Pact of 1943, which gave preeminence to the Christians, because they had no other option. Eager to see the end of the French mandate at a time when most of the Arab countries were not yet independent, the Muslims saw acceptance of the new entity of Lebanon as the best way of attaining their objective.

In 1943, the political system of Lebanon was above all designed to regulate the behavior of the various religious sects within one political community. Seeking to control communal conflict and to rapidly create a national identity, the elites from the Christian and Muslim communities reached an accord that later had extensive negative consequences. As Nordlinger perceptively observes, "Efforts to

regulate conflict by creating a national identity in a short period of time will not only be unsuccessful, they will more than likely lead to widespread violence."³

Lebanon continues to be a mosaic of sectarian groups who have diverse and conflicting interests and lack central values or a sense of community. Cultural variation between the Christians and the Muslims clearly leads to different reactions to the same issues.

The usual processes of system-building in Lebanon have been unsuccessful and have, in fact, further exacerbated the nation's problems. Political socialization, for example, has reflected and perpetuated the country's internal divisions. Its task is characteristically the maximization of role consensus and the minimization of role conflict through the fostering of political integration and the development of "a body of shared knowledge about political matters as well as a set of shared political values and attitudes."⁴ Since political socialization takes place within communities, however, in Lebanon it has not fulfilled its purpose.

³Eric A. Nordlinger, Conflict Regulation in Divided Societies (Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University, Center for International Affairs, 1977), p. 117.

Another common technique of system-building is social mobilization, the process by which major clusters of old social, economic, and psychological commitments are eroded or broken and individuals become available for new patterns of socialization and behavior. Karl Deutsch describes the general pattern in terms that are highly applicable to the Lebanese case:

Other things assumed equal, the stage of rapid social mobilization may be expected, therefore, to promote the consolidation of states whose peoples already share the same language, culture, and major social institutions; while the same process may tend to strain or destroy the unity of states whose population is already divided into several groups with different languages or cultures or basic ways of life.  

Noting that the process of social mobilization can adversely affect system-building, Walker Connor writes, "Social mobilization and communication tend to increase cultural awareness and to exacerbate interethnic conflict." Connor points out that, when social mobilization is fast and assimilation is slow, the diverse ethnic and religious groups in the society will tend to be disaggregated instead of integrated into a single people.

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6 Walker Connor, "Nation-Building or Nation-Destroying," World Politics, XXIV (April, 1972), 326-328.
Examples in Ethiopia abound, where social mobilization resulted in conflicts between the Ethiopians and the inhabitants of the Arab regions of Eritrea and the Ogaden desert. When these two groups began to interact in recent times, they came to dislike each other because of their increased awareness of their religious and ethnic differences. The conflict of the two communities in Ethiopia intensified the country's internal divisions as each sought to promote its own interests rather than working for national unity.

The social changes that have taken place in Lebanon since independence outstripped the development and capacity of its existing political institutions. Increasing literacy among the Muslims, the rise of Arab nationalism with Nasser's coming to power in 1952, and the changing conditions in the Arab world after all of the Arab states became independent led to the creation of a new Muslim generation who refused to accept the political arrangements to which Lebanese Muslim leaders had agreed in 1943. The young Muslims demanded that Lebanon's political institutions be replaced with new ones and that the posts of president and commander-in-chief of the army be rotated between Christians and Muslims. Lebanon's communally-based political system was unable to meet these new Muslim demands, and as a result it could not secure new sources of legitimacy. When the Muslims failed to win political
participation as equals, they looked for other means to alter the status quo, one of which was their alliance with the Palestinians.

The Palestinian guerrillas found that it was in their interest to gain the support of half of the Lebanese people. They claimed that they needed Muslim support to avoid being driven out of Lebanon, as they had been out of Jordan in 1970 and 1971. The Palestinian guerrillas were confident that a Muslim state would be more hospitable to them and their interests than a Christian-controlled regime.

Lebanese Christians were concerned about the future intentions of the Palestinians, who had already almost established a state within a state, fearing that they might be planning to make Lebanon their homeland. The Christian apprehensions were substantiated by statements such as that of guerrilla leader Georges Habash, who declared during the civil war, "It did not matter if Lebanon was partitioned; we shall liberate the other half [the Christian section] later."

The Lebanese problem is similar to those in other communally-divided societies yet different from them. Unlike other communal disagreements, the Lebanese conflict has been prolonged but remains unresolved. In contrast,

the strife in Cyprus between Christian Greek and Muslim Turkish Cypriots was quickly settled for the time being when Turkey intervened militarily in favor of the Muslims on the island and the country was divided to end the fighting. The Hindu-Muslim communal conflict which took place in India shortly after that nation won its independence in 1947 was resolved when the country was partitioned with the creation of the Muslim state of Pakistan in that same year.

Communal problems also exist in other countries such as Northern Ireland, Belgium, Nigeria, and Canada. With the exception of Northern Ireland, where serious religious conflict continues unresolved, the governments of these nations have been able to keep their communal difficulties under control by various means. Belgium, for example, was divided into three regions: the Flemish, the Walloon, and between them the capital city of Brussels. The population was divided into Dutch- and French-speaking groups, thereby incorporating the residents of Brussels into one or the other cultural community. Thus, Belgium could be regarded as a federal entity consisting of three units.

Oftentimes the seeming instability of many political systems is mitigated by the stability of their bureaucracies—in Italy, despite recurring crises, administrative institutions have continued to operate. In Lebanon,
however, this has not been the case because, like the other branches of the government, the bureaucracy was established at a communal level and was thus fragmented by communal conflicts. During the civil war of 1975-1976, most of Lebanon's governmental departments ceased to function. For example, Christian employees and citizens were unable to travel to administrative departments in Muslim areas to monitor their interests, and, by the same token, the Muslims were unable to go to departments in Christian sectors.

Typically, armies have an important and efficient role to play in Third World politics, and they are viewed as a guarantee of the security and stability of their countries. In contrast, the army in Lebanon has been very weak since the country achieved independence in 1943. The army's inability to take its rightful and expected position in Lebanese society by controlling continuing communal divisions and maintaining internal stability stems from its communal structure. According to Nordlinger, "the military cohesiveness is weak when two or more communal segments are represented in the officer corps."⁸ In Lebanon, the entire army, as well as its officer corps in particular, was composed of virtually equal numbers of Christians.

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and Muslims. The officers were a more cohesive group than
the civilian political elite as a whole due to their com-
mon training and socialization, national symbols, distinc-
tive functions, equal treatment, and segregation from
civilians. On the other hand, however, the officers' values were shaped within their communal environments,
and their adult identities were partly defined in terms of inherited communal characteristics, nor were they by
any means entirely isolated from civilian life.

When civilians are involved in an intense communal conflict, the army's officer corps may be divided along identical lines as their communal attachments override the importance that they assign to military cohesiveness and national unity. Therefore, the Lebanese government refrained from assigning security missions to the army in the continuing communal conflict. Furthermore, during the 1958 crisis, the commander-in-chief refused to involve the army in the civil war. Because many of Lebanon's top-ranking military officers were Christians, the Muslims accused the army of being biased against them and of acting as an arm of the Christian presidency; as a result, the Muslim prime ministers always refused to entrust the army with carrying out any security mission.

Unlike many of the other political systems beset by internal divisions, Lebanon has had to deal with problems
almost from its inception. The Palestinian refugees who sought shelter in Lebanon in 1948 and who later, as shown in this study, were transformed into a force of well-trained and highly armed guerrillas, eventually came to constitute a virtual state within the Lebanese state.

Long before the civil war of 1975-1976, the sovereignty of Lebanon was compromised with the rise of the de facto Palestinian guerrilla state, which the Lebanese system recognized in the Cairo Agreement of 1969. Unlike Jordan in the early 1970s, Lebanon was unable to restrict the destabilizing Palestinian guerrilla activity within its borders because of the absence of basic consensus among the people. The Muslims were always reluctant to support the Lebanese government in taking any decisive measures to curb the guerrillas in the country. Since they were dissatisfied with the existing Lebanese political system, the Muslims sided with President Nasser of Egypt when he emerged, after the Suez Canal crisis of 1956, as the champion of the Muslim Arab world; they hoped that Nasser would either assist them to take over power in Lebanon or to unify the country with a larger Muslim Arab state.

After Nasser's death in 1970, Lebanese Muslims transferred their allegiance to the Palestinian guerrillas, whom they had come to regard as their own army. They sided with the Palestinians because they wanted to use
the available Palestinian military machine to seize political power from the Christians. Muslim leader Kamal Jumblatt voiced this desire during his meeting with Syrian President Hafez al-Asad in Damascus on March 28, 1976: "Let us chastise them [Lebanese Christians]; the issue will have to be resolved militarily, and high time, too, for they [the Christians] have ruled us all these 140 years."

The resolution of the Christian-Muslim conflict in Lebanon is subject to many factors. First, no Arab country wishes to intervene and partition the country in favor of the Lebanese Muslims because a partition in Lebanon might set a precedent of fragmentation throughout the Arab world. Such potential fissures are many: between Muslims and Christians in Egypt and in Sudan, between Shia Muslims and Sunni Muslims in Iraq, and so on. Second, the United States and conservative Arab countries such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Sudan, and Morocco oppose partition because its results could be a pro-Soviet Muslim-Palestinian state in the Middle East. Third, a domestic factor stems from the special nature of Lebanese Christians, particularly the Maronites, who are determined to preserve the position that they attained in this century after hundreds of years of persecution under the Ottomans. In contrast to their counterparts in other Arab countries, the Lebanese

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9Dawisha, p. 128.
Christians tend to see themselves as the last defenders of "free" Christendom in the East, and they therefore refuse to become nothing more than a ruled minority under a Muslim regime like the other Christians in neighboring Arab countries. Late President-Elect Bashir Gemayel expressed this sentiment as follows:

The younger generation of Lebanese Christians want to survive as independent human beings in a free democratic state, not as subjects, as dhimmis (a protected community), under Islamic rule or as third-class citizens in a communist "people's democracy" ruled by Palestinians. The determination of the young Lebanese Christians to defend their freedom and their Christian values gives them considerable political strength in their difficult struggle for survival.\(^\text{10}\)

The founding of Israel in 1948, which led to the coming of the Palestinians to Lebanon, and the civil war in Jordan in 1970-1971, which resulted in the Palestinian defeat in that country and the entry of thousands more guerrillas and their leaders and the transformation of Lebanon into their sole base, added special dimensions to the Lebanese conflict. The presence of the guerrillas made Lebanon's problems more complicated and difficult to resolve because of Palestinian interference in Lebanese domestic affairs. Thus, Lebanon's religious strife became interrelated with the Palestinian conflict, and the latter problem had to be settled before the former could be

resolved—as long as the Palestinian problem continued, the Palestinians would remain in Lebanon; as long as the Palestinians were in the country, the Lebanese religious controversy would be unabated because the Muslims would go on supporting the Palestinians and depending upon them to shift the Lebanese balance of power in their favor and the Christians would maintain their opposition to the Palestinians and refuse to come to an understanding with the Muslims under the barrels of Palestinian guns.

The communal conflict in Lebanon crystallized as a political rather than a social issue for several reasons. First, both wealth and poverty exist in both communities. Second, the focus of the intense communal strife during the 1975-1976 civil war was centered primarily between the two poorest suburbs in Beirut, Christian Ain al-Rummaneh and Muslim Al-Shiyyah. Moreover, the true nature of the conflict could easily be ascertained from a statement made by Hussein Quwatli, the director of the Higher Muslim Council in Lebanon during the civil war. The Lebanese problem, he said,

... can be summed up in the change from a "Muslim rule" to a "Christian Maronite rule" in Lebanon. This is the essence of the problem, the issue around which the fighting occurred, and the complex point in the dialogue which is taking place. And [the shift from Muslim rule to Christian rule] is simmering in the religious and social subconscious, which is still with both of us [Muslims and Christians], and which the observer could see in the
behavior of the fighters during the battles, who executed identity-card killings (killing of people according to their religious denomination, which is included on the Lebanese citizenship card). . . .

In the Muslims' opinion, Syria's mediation in the war in 1976 was undertaken for the benefit of Lebanese Christians, but in actuality the Syrian motivation may have been more complex. Syria might have feared that, if the Christians were pushed too far by the Muslims and Palestinians, they would partition Lebanon with the support of Israel. Thus, the emergence of another "Israel," in effect, could create further problems, especially for a bordering country like Syria. According to Syrian President al-Asad,

Such a solution will never come about except through the partition of Lebanon, and this through violence and repression. There will be a state created for those repressed people [Christians] in which the predominant feeling will be one of bitter resentment. One generation after another will feel the same in view of the injustice that has been inflicted upon them [Christians]. They will lose all faith in Arab values. They will lose faith in Islam. . . . The state which will thus be created will very frankly be more dangerous and more hostile to the Arabs than Israel itself.  

Second, Syria may have intervened in Lebanon with the aim of transforming it into a confrontation state with Israel by extending the Syrian front to include the Lebanese-Israeli border.

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12 Dawisha, p. 128.
All efforts made by the commanding officers to avert a split within the ranks of the army were unsuccessful. Nordlinger has described the impact of religious divisions on the Lebanese army in the civil war of 1975-1976:

At the outset of the civil war that began in 1975, the army managed to avoid involvement in the fighting. But the Muslim officers deserted to join their own communal militiamen, followed shortly by the total disintegration of the Lebanese army. An army that remained above an intense communal conflict for some thirty years, largely because the predominantly Christian officer corps found itself under Christian-dominated governments, was quickly pulled apart when the communal conflict turned into civil war.\textsuperscript{13}

With the disintegration of the army, no other institution in Lebanon was able to contain the conflict.

During the civil war the authority of the presidency was impaired and could not prevent the Muslims and Palestinians from tearing the country apart. The Christian command of the army was powerless, and Lebanese Christians looked to their militias for defense. In fact, the Muslims gained a greater advantage from the army than did the Christians since Muslim officers took most of the army's military equipment with them when they deserted.

The new generation of Lebanese Muslims is opposed to the National Pact of 1943, and its members have made clear that they will no longer accept what they regard as the Christian "privilege" of holding Lebanon's presidency

\textsuperscript{13}Nordlinger, \textit{Soldiers in Politics}, p. 40.
and the highest command posts in the army. The Christians, on the other hand, argue that these provisions in the National Pact are not "privileges" but "guarantees"—that is, guarantees of safety in a Muslim Arab world. Moreover, the National Pact, which stipulated that the Muslims would cease to call for the unification of Lebanon with a larger Arab state, did not deter them from demanding unification with Egypt and Syria under President Nasser in 1958. As a result, the Christians have felt no obligation to maintain their adherence to the National Pact by refraining from seeking outside aid during their conflicts with the Muslims and the Palestinians.

If Lebanon is to survive and the violence between its Christian and Muslim citizens is to end, new types of political arrangements may have to be sought. A communal federal system might be implemented, granting each of Lebanon's religious communities autonomy through a separate administration, similar to that of an individual state government in the United States of America, under the umbrella of the federal government. Another possible alternative is confederalism, which would allow Lebanese Christians and Muslims to work together in different areas of their social and political life, especially the economic sphere. In short, intense efforts toward compromise and cooperation must be mounted by all of the parties in Lebanon's
longstanding communal conflict if the specter of partition is to be dispelled.
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