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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA  
THE POLICY OF LEBANON IN THE WEB OF INTER - ARAB  
COLD WAR POLITICS 1951 - 60

by



GEORGE FARAH NASR

A THESIS  
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES  
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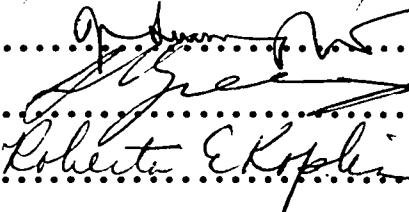
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## ABSTRACT

This dissertation is a study of Lebanon's foreign policy in the web of inter-Arab cold war politics 1951-60. During this decade there were three major rounds of cold war tension in the Arab World which left a pronounced impact on the regional states. The first round started in 1951 with the attempt of the Major Western Powers, the United States, the United Kingdom and France to establish a Middle East Allied Command. The second started with the establishment of the Baghdad Pact and the third with the Eisenhower Doctrine in 1957. In 1958, shortly after the subscription of Lebanon to the Eisenhower Doctrine, Lebanon experienced a crisis which was related to cold war tension in the area.

The object of this dissertation is to analyze and assess the trends of Lebanese foreign policy towards issues related to cold war tension prior to 1958 and then to find out whether there were any significant changes in the two year period following the Crisis, 1958-60.

This dissertation discusses the interaction between the Major Powers of the world, the development of cold war issues and traces them as they infiltrate the Arab World and subsequently the Lebanon. Similarly the development of Lebanon's foreign policy in the cold war context is analyzed and traced as it infiltrates the Arab World and the Major Powers.

It is hoped that this study would contribute primarily to a better understanding of Lebanon's foreign policy in the cold war context and that it would shed some light on some aspects of the cold war among the Arab States and the Major Powers.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS.

CHAPTER		<u>Page</u>
I	INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
	A. General Comment . . . . .	1
	B. The Structure of the Lebanese Political System . . . . .	4
	1. The Centrifugal Forces . . . . .	4
	2. The Centripetal Forces . . . . .	24
II	THE MIDDLE EAST DEFENCE PROPOSALS . . . . .	30
	A. Prelude. . . . .	30
	B. Egypt and the Proposals . . . . .	41
	C. A Survey of Public Reactions in Lebanon . . . . .	47
	D. The Government and the Middle East Command . . . . .	71
	E. Appraisal. . . . .	97
III	TRANSITIONAL PERIOD, 1952 - 53 . . . . .	106
	A. A Rapprochement Between The United States and Egypt. . . . .	106
	B. Lebanon Changes Leaders. . . . .	112
	C. President Chamoun Proceeds in the Footsteps of His Predecessor on Arab Affairs. . . . .	115
	D. Lebanon and the Cold War 1952 - 55 . . . . .	126
	1. A Cautious Start . . . . .	126
	2. The Dulles Visit . . . . .	132
	3. Aftermath. . . . .	141
IV	PRELUDE TO THE BAGHDAD PACT . . . . .	147
	A. Preliminary Measures . . . . .	147
	B. The Sarsank Talks. . . . .	151

	C.	The Iraqi - Egyptian Dispute at the Conference of Cairo . . . . .	159
	D.	The Role of Lebanon . . . . .	168
V		THE SULH CABINETS: JANUARY - SEPTEMBER 14, 1955 . . . . .	177
	A.	Reckoning With Nasser at Home . . . . .	177
	B.	Diplomatic Support to Iraq and Turkey . . . . .	181
	C.	Retreat . . . . .	192
VI		BALANCE AND CONFLICT . . . . .	202
	A.	The Karami Cabinet, September 19, 1955 to March 16, 1956. . . . .	202
	B.	The Yaffi Cabinet, March 19 - November 19, 1956 . . . . .	218
	1.	Relations With Syria and Egypt . . . . .	218
	2.	The Suez War and the Fall of the Cabinet. . . . .	237
VII		THE MAJOR POWERS AND THE REGIONAL COLD WAR. . . . .	241
	A.	A Disconcerted Start. . . . .	241
	B.	An Attempt to Resolve the Palestinian Question. . . . .	247
	C.	The Impact of Soviet Influence. . . . .	256
	D.	Anxiety in Lebanon. . . . .	261
VIII		LEBANON ALIGNED, MARCH 1957 - MAY 1958. . . . .	275
	A.	The United States Takes the Lead . . . . .	275
	B.	The Doctrine and the Arab States . . . . .	280
	C.	Lebanon and the Eisenhower Doctrine . . . . .	292
	1.	Lebanon Subscribes. . . . .	292
	2.	Lebanon and the Arab States . . . . .	299
	3.	Internal Repercussions . . . . .	304
	4.	The Impact of the United Arab Republic. . . . .	321



IX	THE CRISIS OF 1958: MAY 9 - SEPTEMBER 23. . . . .	328
	A. The Internal Dimensions of the Crisis . . . . .	328
	1. The Assassination of Naseeb al-Matni . . . . .	328
	2. The Parties to the Conflicts . . . . .	332
	3. The Avoidance of a Religious Massacre . . . . .	336
	4. Tactics of the Opposition. . . . .	340
	5. Internal Attempts for a Solution to the Crisis . . . . .	347
	B. The External Dimensions of the Crisis . . . . .	350
	1. From May 9 - July 15 . . . . .	350
	2. From July 15 - September 23 . . . . .	371
X	LEBANON REVERTS TO NON-ALIGNMENT . . . . .	381
	A. The Counter Insurrection . . . . .	381
	B. The Changing Arab World. . . . .	385
	C. The Policy of Lebanon Under Shehab . . . . .	394
XI	EVALUATION . . . . .	410
	A. Lebanon and The Middle East Allied Command Proposals, 1951. . . . .	410
	B. President Chamoun Continues the Policy of President Khoury, 1952 - 56 . . . . .	417
	C. President Chamoun Resorts to Alignment: 1957 - 58. . . . .	427
	D. The Solution . . . . .	430
	E. A Paradox in Lebanon's Arab Policy . . . . .	432
	LIST OF REFERENCES . . . . .	434
	Documents . . . . .	434
	Books. . . . .	436
	Articles and Periodicals . . . . .	439

Memoirs . . . . .	443
Newspapers . . . . .	443
Unpublished Material . . . . .	444
Other Sources . . . . .	445

## INTRODUCTION

### A. General Comment

This dissertation places the Lebanese political system at the center of the cold war map. The outer perimeter of this map consists of the global cold war system; its major actors being the major Western Powers - France, Britain and the United States on the one hand, and the Soviet Union supported by the Eastern European Powers on the other. Inside the outer perimeter there is another perimeter which denotes the regional system of the Arab States - the Arab League of which Lebanon is a member. At the center of the map is the political system of Lebanon with its various actors. For illustration it is possible to visualize the political map consisting of three circles within one another, the inner circle denoting the Lebanese system.

The purpose of this dissertation is to trace and analyze the course of Lebanese diplomacy in the web of inter-Arab cold war politics for a period of 9 years extending from 1951 to 1960. There were three major rounds of regional cold war tension during this decade manifested by: 1) the attempt to set up a Middle East Defense Organization; 2) the Baghdad Pact; and 3) the Eisenhower Doctrine. Each of these rounds originated at the global or universal level reaching Lebanon only after having filtered through the regional system and carried over with them traces of indigenous inter-Arab

problems. Similarly, the actors within the Lebanese system played their roles not without due concern about their own problems within the political system of Lebanon. Consequently, if one conceives of foreign affairs on the basis of an input-output process, it would be pertinent to examine the charges which these currents carry over as they filter in and out of each system.

In this chapter an attempt is made to introduce the Lebanese political system from the perspective of foreign affairs. Basically, the Lebanese political system could be generally classified as a liberal democracy. Although the democratic infra-structures in Lebanon are perhaps not as developed as in the more developed democracies of the Western World, yet the difference is a question of degree rather than kind. According to the criteria used by Almond and Coleman in distinction of one political system from another, Lebanon fits more in the category of liberal democratic states than in any other category.<sup>1</sup> The Lebanese citizen is granted by the Constitution the right to think, act, associate and vote freely. Since independence in 1943, he managed in large to measure to exercise these rights. In this respect Lebanon is unique among its Arab neighbours. In the 1940's Syria maintained a similar political system which facilitated the existence of a fraternal relationship between the two states. But since 1949 when Husni-al-Za'im performed the first military coup, Syria became involved in a series of coups and counter coups which destroyed the liberal democratic

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<sup>1</sup>G. Almond and J. Coleman, The Politics of the Developing Areas (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960), pp. 52-54.

structure of the state. Other Arab States such as Egypt, Jordan, Iraq and Saudi Arabia have been either arbitrary monarchies or military dictatorships. The liberal pluralistic nature of the Lebanese political system renders it more susceptible to political strains than arbitrary systems, for each vocal or non-vocal group is capable of exercising a certain amount of pressure on the decision-makers of the state. This phenomenon is of major importance in a state whose elements do not have a homogeneous outlook on many political issues, especially those related to other Arab States.

The fact that the roots of political power are widely dispersed in Lebanon, that no group, political party or sect maintains an overwhelming majority, and that the Lebanese do not as often respect the due process of law as in the more developed democracies, renders the country susceptible to hypertension on controversial issues. This tension sometimes creates partial paralysis on matters of foreign affairs, reduces the ability of the Government to act and weakens the position of the Lebanese diplomat, vis-a-vis his counterpart in other states. Therefore, the Lebanese governments often tried to dissociate themselves from issues which were subject to controversy between the Arab states and acted only half heartedly when involvement was necessary. Only on matters directly related and vital to national security has the government taken a firm stand. This weakness, manifested as it was with diversity in public opinion, encouraged some other Arab States, notably Syria and, after 1955, Egypt and to a lesser extent Iraq and Saudi Arabia, to treat Lebanon churlishly on the assumption that Lebanon could be

subdued. Precedent bears evidence that Lebanon could be and has often been discouraged but never totally subdued. This characteristic stems from the realities of the Lebanese political system, for as it is not too difficult to woo some groups to work for one party to a conflict, likewise it is not too difficult for another party to find sympathetic groups. Consequently they checkmate each other and end up realizing that no group is in a position to have its way. It is perhaps not by accident that Lebanon has not experienced a fundamental change in its political system or policy. There have been disturbances and sometimes adjustments towards new circumstances, but never a transformation which introduced a totally new policy or a different political system.

## B. The Structure of the Lebanese Political System

### 1. Centrifugal Forces

Broadly speaking the Lebanese public adheres to two major religions: Christianity and Islam. This is perhaps not a unique phenomenon, as it is well known that there are many states which have adherents to these religions among their citizens. The unique feature of Lebanon in this respect is that adherents of these religions are almost of equal number; thus neither one has been able to accept the status of a minority as the case is with regard to Christians in other Arab States or to Moslems in the Western countries. The last official count revealed that the Christians were in a slight majority<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup>al-Nahar, April 26, 1956. The Moslems believe that they are now in the majority.

Although 98 % of the Lebanese could be classified broadly as Christians and Moslems, they actually belong to more than 18 different sects none of which constitutes a majority. To illustrate, the following were the percentages of the largest sects as released by the Bureau of Vital Statistics in 1955:

Christians: Maronites 30%, Greek Orthodox 10%, Greek Catholics 6%,  
Total 46%.

Moslems: Sunni 22%, Shia 18 %, Druze 6%, Total 46%.

Other sects, all of which were Christians with the exception of a small Jewish minority and still smaller minorities of other faiths, make up the remaining 8%. Essentially, therefore, Lebanon from a sectarian perspective is a country of minorities.<sup>1</sup>

Lebanon consists of a narrow coastal strip about 120 miles in length and less than 50 miles in width for the most part rugged and mountainous. The rugged nature of the terrain with abundant water resources attracted Christians and heterodox Moslem Sects as a refuge from persecution.<sup>2</sup> It is perhaps not by accident that the Sunnis are concentrated in the coastal cities while the Christians and the Druze are concentrated in Mount Lebanon. Under the Millet System of the Ottoman Empire, these sects were allowed to preserve their social structure

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>William Polk, The Opening of The South (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1963), pp. 8-9.

and live according to the dictates of their faith.<sup>1</sup> The loyalty of the individual was to his sect which governed most aspects of his life and offered him protection from the threats of other sects.<sup>2</sup> Intermittently, when the Porte<sup>3</sup> weakened, these sects managed to exercise internal autonomy and on some occasions, due to their proximity to the coast, were quick to establish contacts, friendships and sometimes clandestine agreements with European Powers.<sup>4</sup>

Sectarian friction, which sometimes culminated in massacres as in 1845 and 1860, induced the governors of Lebanon to take into consideration the interests of the sects and to devise formulas which became institutionalized. The Mutassarrifiyah System of Mount Lebanon, which was established in the wake of the massacre of 1860, distributed administrative posts on a sectarian basis from the Higher Administrative Council to the council of the smallest village.<sup>5</sup> Similarly under the

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<sup>1</sup>Albert Hourani, Syria and Lebanon (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), pp. 63-64. See also George Kirk, A Short History of the Middle East (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd, 1955), pp. 18, 99.

<sup>2</sup>Labib Zuwiyyah Yamak, The Syrian Social Nationalist Party (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1966), p. 33.

<sup>3</sup>The Ottoman Government was known as the Porte.

<sup>4</sup>Yusuf al-Sawda, For the Cause of Lebanon (Beirut: The Cedars Press, 1924).

<sup>5</sup>Phillip Hitti, Lebanon in History (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1957), pp. 440-43. See also Anis Sayegh, Confessional Lebanon (Beirut: Dar al-Sira' al-Fikri, 1955), pp. 125-28.



Mandate, political appointments, laws and policies were not made without due consideration to sectarian factors.<sup>1</sup>

When the Lebanese Republic attained independence in 1943, the leaders of the National Government perfected certain traditions related to the distribution of posts among the various sects. These traditions constitute the unwritten Constitution of Lebanon usually referred to, in Arabic, as al-Mithaq al-Watani - the National Pact.<sup>2</sup> According to the National Pact, the President has to be a Maronite, the Prime Minister a Sunni, the Speaker of Parliament a Shi'i and the Vice-Speaker a Greek Orthodox.<sup>3</sup> Public posts should be distributed equitably among the sects and each of the major sects should be represented by a minister in the Cabinet.<sup>4</sup> Seats in Parliament should be distributed in the Moslem-Christian ratio of 5 to 6 and thereafter each sect should be given

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<sup>1</sup>See for example Electoral law January 2, 1934, Arrete No. 2/L.R.: Hellen Miller Davis, Constitutions, Electoral Laws, Treaties of States in the Near and Middle East (Durham N.C.: Duke University Press, 1953), pp, 186-201.

<sup>2</sup>Speech by Prime Minister Sulh in the House of Deputies, October 7, 1943. Lebanon, Official Gazette: Parliamentary Debates, 1st Extra-Ordinary Session, 3rd Meeting, October 7, 1943, pp. 11-17. George Dib, "Riad Sulh's Speech in the Lebanese Assembly: October, 1943," Middle East Forum, XXXIV (October, 1959), p. 6. Excerpts of speeches touching on the National Pact by President Khoury have been published in his memoirs: Bishara al-Khoury, Lebanese Facts (Dar'oun, Basil Brothers Press, 1961), II, pp. 291-92.

<sup>3</sup>Ralph Crow, "Religious Sectarianism in the Lebanese Political System," Journal of Politics, XXIV (August, 1962), pp. 504-05.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

an equitable number of seats in proportion to its ratio of the total population.<sup>1</sup> Since Independence the Moslems have challenged this arrangement intermittently, on the assumption that due to the higher emigration rate of Christians and the higher birth rate of Moslems, the Christian-Moslem ratio has changed in their favor. They, therefore, have asked for a census based on a new count of the population which they presumed would give them the Presidency, more seats in the legislature and additional posts in the administration.<sup>2</sup> The Christians have not agreed to a new count and have insisted that if it should be done, Lebanese emigrants abroad should be included, a prospect which has not been acceptable to the Moslems.<sup>3</sup> In addition to the basic argument about the Christian-Moslem ratio, each sect has frequently bickered with the others over its quota of public posts. The sectarian quota has been guarded with jealousy from the post of director-general down to the post of an office boy.

The electoral law in accordance with traditions under the Mandate, also takes sectarianism into consideration. Seats in every district are allocated to sects, but the citizen, regardless of his sect, is given the right to vote for Christian and Moslem candidates

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<sup>1</sup>Subhi Mahmasani, The Constitution and Democracy (Beirut: Dar al-'Ilm lil-Malayeen, 1952), p. 153.

<sup>2</sup>Refer for example to the views of Sheikh Nadim al-Jisr: al-Hayat, May 18, 1958, and to the views of Adnan al-Hakim, the leader of the Najjadah Party: al-Siassa, November 26, 1960.

<sup>3</sup>al-'Amal, August 2, 1954.

within the predetermined ratio--an ingenious formula which has worked in favor of moderate candidates, promoted national cohesion and reduced sectarian friction. Still, however, the complaint is often heard that by gerrymandering, a number of voters of a certain sect were severed from a certain constituency and added to another in order to disperse the electoral power of that sect and thus render it ineffective.<sup>1</sup> It is not the purpose of this work to verify the grievances of each sect; what is of importance is that such grievances exist and that they become acute in times of hypertension. These grievances often serve as a pretext for intervention in Lebanese internal affairs by foreign powers with ulterior motives.

Differences related to orientations towards external culture add to the complexity of sectarian life in Lebanon. Christians are on the whole more culturally and politically oriented towards the West than Moslems. Conversely, Moslems are more oriented towards the Arab World than Christians. The Christians started out with a positive attitude towards the West--a disposition which helped them accept Western culture more than other sects. Large Christian groups regarded themselves as the Eastern outpost of Western culture and some of their thinkers believed that the Middle East was the cradle of Western culture. Such attitudes produced a sense of cultural affiliation with the West which was lacking among the Moslems.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Refer to statement delivered by Saeb Salam, al-Siassa, June 11, 1957.

<sup>2</sup>Hisham Nashabi, "The Problems of the Lebanese Intellectual Today," Politics in Lebanon, ed. Leonard Binder (New York: John Wiley & Sons Inc., 1966), p. 260. Also Leonard Binder, "Political Change in Lebanon," Ibid., p. 296. For the views of Christian literary figures

Western culture in many ways conflicting with Islamic ethics and beliefs was not readily accepted by the Moslem population. In the 19th century they regarded the Ottoman Empire as their cultural milieu and in the 20th century, with the advance of nationalism, they focused their hopes on the Arab World. Consequently in contradistinction to the Christians who exerted pressure for close relations with the West, the Moslems strove for closer identification with the Arabs.<sup>1</sup>

Besides the cultural aspects there were also political reasons for the different orientations. The Christians realized that historically their independence from the dominantly Moslem interior was owed in large measure to the support of Western Powers. The Protocol of 1860 which designated Lebanon as an autonomous Sanjaq<sup>2</sup> in the Ottoman Empire was owed to the Western Powers.<sup>3</sup> The creation of Greater Lebanon, the annexation of the Four Qadas<sup>4</sup>--Beirut, Tripoli, Sidon and Hasbaya--was owed to France.<sup>5</sup> Inasmuch as these measures were a source of

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who regarded Lebanon as an extension of Western culture refer for example to: Michael Shiha, Lebanon, Its Personality and Presence (Beirut: The Lebanese Cenacle, 1962), pp. 153-86.

<sup>1</sup>Kamal Salibi, "The Lebanese Crisis in Perspective," The World Today, XIV (September, 1958), pp. 371-372.

<sup>2</sup>A Sanjaq under the Ottomans was an administrative unit smaller than a province but larger than a district.

<sup>3</sup>Anis Sayigh, op.cit., pp. 122-25.

<sup>4</sup>A district was known as a Qada.

<sup>5</sup>Zeine Zeine, The Struggle for Lebanese Independence (Beirut: Khayat's, 1960, p. 122.

gratification to the Christians, particularly the Maronites, they were also a source of anxiety to the Moslems, particularly the Sunnis, who detested their separation from a predominantly Moslem Syria.<sup>1</sup> Consequently, cultural and political differences over time culminated in the development of two nationalisms in Lebanon: Lebanese Nationalism and Arab Nationalism. Most Moslems adhered to the latter while most Christians adhered to the former.<sup>2</sup> These Nationalisms were necessarily diametrically opposed - the former seeking to preserve the independence of Lebanon and the latter seeking merger with the surrounding Arab States. Thus the different ideological orientations further increased sectarian tension and opened up new opportunities for outside intervention. Dissatisfied with their position within the system and motivated by unionist tendencies, the Moslems, particularly the Sunnis, were a potential source of violence always well disposed to the influence of the foremost Arab challenger to the status quo.<sup>3</sup> During the early years of the Mandate, they were largely under the influence of the Hashimites and particularly King Feisal who was the contender for the throne of Greater Syria.<sup>4</sup> During the latter years of the Mandate

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<sup>1</sup>Nafhat Nasr, "The Presidency of Lebanon," (Unpublished Master's Dissertation, Department of Political Science and Public Administration, American University of Beirut, 1960), p. 56.

<sup>2</sup>Sayigh, op.cit., pp. 132-36.

<sup>3</sup>Binder, op.cit., pp. 300, 311.

<sup>4</sup>Leila Meo, Lebanon: Improbable Nation (Bloomington Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1965), p. 48. See also Sayigh, op.cit., pp. 142-143.

and the early years after independence, they fell largely under the influence of Syria whose republican form of government appealed more to the mentality of the time than the monarchical systems of the Hashimites in Iraq and Jordan.<sup>1</sup> In the 1950's with the establishment of the Revolutionary Regime in Egypt, they shifted their hopes and aspirations to Cairo where Nasser adopted the Arab nationalist objective--unity from the Persian Gulf to the Atlantic Ocean.

These tendencies on the Moslem side were met with a counter-reaction on the Christian side, particularly the Maronites. The Christians countered the tendency to unite with Greater Syria under the throne of King Feisal by appealing to and supporting France.<sup>2</sup> During the early years of independence, they took care not to sever friendly ties with France despite the ill-feelings generated by the incidents on the eve of independence in 1943.<sup>3</sup> They also developed friendly relations with Arab States which were inclined to preserve the status quo - Egypt under the Monarchy and Saudi Arabia. The challenge from Syria under the liberal democratic Regime of President Quatly was not of sufficient dimensions to create a panic. The Christians could rely

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<sup>1</sup>Abdullah Kubrusi, We and Lebanon (Beirut: Lebanon Press, 1954), p. 73. See also Yamak, op.cit., p. 39.

<sup>2</sup>Zeine, op.cit., pp. 144-46. Sayigh, op.cit., pp. 140-41.

<sup>3</sup>Ziki al-Naqqash, Real and False Lebanon (Beirut: the Commercial Press and Publication Office, 1965), pp. 159-60.

on their own means to check it. In the 1950's when Nasser became the primary challenger to the status quo, the Christians countered by supporting collaboration with the Hashimites and later (after 1956) Saudi Arabia. Simultaneously they sought to strengthen political ties with the major Western Powers who exerted their influence against the expansionist influence of the Egyptian Government. Thus ideological differences between Christians and Moslems, particularly between Maronite Christians and Sunni Moslems, permitted foreign intervention in Lebanon and rendered the political system susceptible to pressure from the outside.

The intensity of ideological differences between the sects varies from one to another. On a spectrum of Lebanese Nationalism versus Arab Nationalism, the Maronites and the Sunnis occupy the opposite extremes.<sup>1</sup> The Greek Orthodox and the Shi'a are more moderate, but in acute sectarian conflicts they collaborate with their co-religionists. This was obviously the case in 1958 when the predominantly Shi'a, Ba'albek Hermel area, sided with the rebels while the predominantly Greek Orthodox Kura and Beirut-East, sided with the loyalists.

Historical and social conditions give a fairly adequate explanation for the moderate stand of the two sects: the Greek Orthodox and the Shi'a<sup>2</sup> The Greek Orthodox belong to the Eastern Church

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<sup>1</sup>Nashabi, op.cit., p. 258.

<sup>2</sup>Kamal Salibi, Modern History of Lebanon (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1965), pp. 169-70.

whose seat has been at Constantinople, the capital of the Porte. In contrast to the Maronites, they are not as heavily concentrated in Lebanon. Most of the Greek Orthodox Community in Lebanon inhabit the coastal cities and towns where they learned to live and compromise with the Sunnis. Greater numbers of Greek Orthodox live in other parts of the Arab World than in Lebanon and the Lebanese Greek Orthodox Community is directly supervised by the Patriarch in Damascus. Consequently, throughout history from the time of the Crusades up to the present they exhibited less hostility to the Sunnis than the Maronites. The behaviour of the Lebanese Greek Orthodox Community on the visit of the King-Crane Commission<sup>1</sup> in 1919 demonstrated that they were not as particular about the independence of Lebanon as the Maronites. A substantial number of their delegations opted before the Commission for unity with Syria under the throne of King Feisal.<sup>2</sup> Of late the majority of the few Christians who subscribed to parties which did not believe in Lebanon as a nation-state, have been adherents of the Greek Orthodox faith.

The Shi'a compare to the Sunnis in the same manner that the Greek Orthodox compare to the Maronites. As a heterodox Moslem sect and a smaller minority, the Shi'a were not as anxious as the Sunnis to lobby for union with Syria and to adopt an Arab nationalist

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<sup>1</sup>The King-Crane Commission was dispatched by President Wilson in accordance with the decisions of the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 to determine the political future of the people in Syria and Lebanon.

<sup>2</sup>Iskander Riyashi, The Presidents of Lebanon as I Knew Them (Beirut: The Commercial Press Office, 1961), p. 241.



ideology. For the most part a community of peasants and clans living in the remote and retarded regions of Lebanon, the Shi'a have been consistently the least developed and educated community. Located far from the urban centers, poor and substantially illiterate, they were not as exposed to Arab Nationalist indoctrination as the Sunnis who inhabited the nerve centers of the State, the cities. Having preserved, like other peasant communities elsewhere, a feudal structure, the Shi'a's political behaviour has been determined to a large extent by the attitude of their feudal leaders.<sup>1</sup> Recently, aristocratic families among the Shi'a lost most of their land-holdings, but they, nevertheless, continue to occupy a distinguished social position and to dominate political life in their communities. It is in the feudal structure of the Shi'a community and in the absence of an intense ideological indoctrination, that the key to the moderate attitude of the Shi'a lies. Their feudal leaders, usually their representatives in Parliament, confident of their feudal grip on their community, tend to determine their political position with the least possible ideological considerations. Traditional leaders of the Shi'a, such as the Hemadeh's, the Assa'ads and the Zeins, who exercise positions of influence in the ruling circles of Lebanon are not usually susceptible to radical ideas.<sup>2</sup>

Traditional leaders in a society with a feudal structure are more often disposed to be attracted by personal gains. It was related

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<sup>1</sup>Binder, op.cit., p. 300.

<sup>2</sup>Iskander Riyashi, Before and After (Beirut: al-Hayat Press, 1953), pp. 210-16.

that in 1919 French briberies were sufficient, in some cases, to convince some feudal leaders that their communities should opt for a French mandate before the King-Crane Commission.<sup>1</sup>

Recently with the development of the Shi'a community and with the extension of modern communication media to their outlying districts, the political feudal structure of the Shi'a community is disappearing. As the common Shi'a citizen is beginning to get ideologically oriented, the Shi'a community is steadily shifting towards the Arab nationalist pole. The South--a predominantly Shi'a district--is becoming one of the Pan-Arabist Ba'th party strongholds and President Nasser of Egypt is not without substantial following in Shi'a areas.

The fifth sectarian minority in Lebanon are the Druze. For the purpose of public posts distribution, the Druze are officially classified in Lebanon as Moslems. But in reality the Druze could be considered as a separate community. From what is known of their religious beliefs, whose basic tenets are kept a secret even from the Druze layman, the Druze dogma is remotely related to Islam.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the Druze have had a history of their own which is not without spells of Sunni persecution. As a minority which played an important role in the history of Mount Lebanon, the Druze are loyal to the sovereignty of Lebanon, but their foremost loyalty is to their community. The Druze are highly ethnocentric and feudal in social structure.<sup>3</sup> The fact that they are a minority which is not properly

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<sup>1</sup>Iskander Riyashi, Before and After (Beirut: al-Hayat Press, 1953), pp. 210-16.

<sup>2</sup>Henry Carnarvon, Recollection of the Druses of the Lebanon (London: John Murray, 1860), pp. 48-73.

<sup>3</sup>Yamak, op.cit., p. 29.

accepted as either Christian or Moslem may have contributed to their ethnocentricity. But of more importance in this respect is a religious belief that a Druze is such only by birth and that he is the only man who reincarnates after death.<sup>1</sup> This concept perhaps encouraged the Druzes to regard themselves as a separate people. All sects in Lebanon have a certain degree of ethnocentricity, but the Druze maintain a higher sense of solidarity than the rest. Communities whose ethnic loyalties supersede their national loyalty are liable to bypass the political system in their contact with the outside world if their communal interests are involved. Thus, for example, Kamal Jumblat, one of their leaders and a prominent member of the House of Deputies openly declared in 1954 that he intended to send reinforcements to the Druze community in Syria which rebelled against President Shishakly.<sup>2</sup> Similarly in the 1958 Crisis, Jumblat freely asked for and received armed reinforcements from the Druze community in Syria.<sup>3</sup>

Druze concern for communal security was founded in their early history when apostasy from Islam was considered a crime to be punished by death. Henceforth, they developed esoteric qualities which were

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<sup>1</sup>Hitti, op.cit., p. 44.

<sup>2</sup>Author's interview with Kazim al-Khalil in his office, Sa'idi Building, Bishara al-Khoury Street, Beirut, December 15, 1966.

<sup>3</sup>Nawaf and Nadia Karami, The Reality of the Lebanese Revolution (Beirut: Karama Press, 1959), pp. 152-54.

clearly expressed by the advice of their founder Hamzah Bun'Ali: "Bow down to every nation that passes over you, but keep me in your hearts."<sup>1</sup> Either because of religious dictum or because of some social factors, the Druze apparently have had a tendency more than other ethnic groups to accept the dominant power of the day provided that their communal life was not challenged. Thus for example, unlike the Sunnis, they did not boycott France on its advent to the Levant, although their traditional relationships with that power were not friendly.<sup>2</sup> More recently, the behavior of the Druze community in Israel tends to support this observation.

Political feudalism is not a particular characteristic of the Druze Community. The Shi'a, as mentioned above, and pockets of other more developed communities such as the Maronites of Zagharta, still have political feudalism. What is of special interest about the Druze is that their political feudalism has not been sufficiently weakened in relation to the development of their community. The Druze, for example, do not suffer the disadvantages of the Shi'a. They are not situated far from the Capital nor are they as illiterate or as poor. Most of them inhabit the districts of 'Aley and the Shuf, virtually suburbs of Beirut, with a standard of living above average and

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<sup>1</sup>Hourani, op.cit., p. 4.

<sup>2</sup>Some of the Druze leaders such as Tawfiq Arslan participated in the Maronite Delegation to Paris in 1920 which lobbied for the independence of Lebanon from Syria. The Sunnis took no part in this delegation and, thereafter, boycotted the Government under the French Mandate until 1936. When, in 1922, a Sunni leader participated in the Government, the Sunnis assassinated him. Zeine, op.cit., p. 138; Meo, op.cit., pp. 50-52. Riyashi, Before and After, p. 35.

a good set of schools, roads and other media of communications. Yet, despite these advantages the Druze, probably due to authoritarian trends in their culture, continue to uphold political feudalism. For example, the Arslan family still dominates the district of 'Aley, and the Jumblats dominate the Druze of the Shuf. As a matter of fact, Emir Majeed Arslan, the head of the Yazbaky feudal faction and Kamal Jumblat, the head of the Jumblaty faction, have been consistently elected to Parliament since independence in 1943. Druze candidates of less aristocratic extraction have invariably failed to challenge them. There has been only one exception to this rule. In the national elections of 1957, Qahtan Hemadeh, a member of an aristocratic family of a supposedly lower standing than the Jumblats, succeeded against Kamal Jumblat with a small margin--less than 300 votes. This unprecedented incident was one of the reasons which led Kamal Jumblat to bypass the political system by extending his hand to Damascus and Cairo for assistance and triggered the 1958 Crisis.<sup>1</sup>

Another feature of the Lebanese political system which tends to perpetuate and reinforce the centrifugal forces is the existence of several political parties with irreconcilable ideologies. Many of these parties are at odds with each other as to what constitutes their nation-state or homeland. The Syrian Social Nationalist Party (known as the PPS) believes in a Syrian Nation which includes Kuwait, Iraq, Syria,

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<sup>1</sup>Kamal Jumblat, The Truth About the Lebanese Revolution (Beirut: The Arab Publication House, 1959), pp. 85-86.

Jordan, Cyprus, Palestine and Lebanon. The Ba'th Party, the Najjadah Party and the Arab Nationalist Movement, believe in a nation-state that extends from the Atlantic Ocean to the Persian Gulf. Among the major political parties in Lebanon only the Kata'ib believes in Lebanon as a nation-state. The Progressive Socialist Party is largely a Druze Party led by Kamal Jumblat. It started out by relying primarily on a social reform programme without any particular stress on what constitutes a national home. Nevertheless, in their early years, the late 1940's, the Progressive Socialists designed their reforms and programmes within the framework of Lebanese sovereignty. In the mid-fifties, however, when Arab nationalism started on its ascent, Kamal Jumblat, who was at the time at odds with the Regime, shifted positions and openly opted for Arab unity.<sup>1</sup>

The incompatible ideologies of the Lebanese parties constitute an additional strain on the Lebanese political system. Political parties which conceive of a nation-state that extends beyond the borders of Lebanon are liable to be influenced by other states which are encompassed within the proposed homeland. Thus, for example, the PPS collaborated directly with the Hashimites between 1955 and 1958. Similarly, the Ba'th Party, the Arab Nationalist Movement and the Najjadah Party served as fifth columns to other Arab States upholding a revolutionary ideology.

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<sup>1</sup>For a survey of the political parties in Lebanon see: Tawfiq al-Makdisi and Lucian George, Political Parties in Lebanon (Beirut: Catholic Press, 1959).

Furthermore, parties with an Arab nationalist ideology tend at times to serve as fifth columns to different Arab states in conflict, as for example was the case in 1963 when the Ba'th Party supported Syria and Iraq against the U.A.R. which maintained the allegiance of the Arab Nationalist Movement and the Najjadah Party. One other party which tends to work as a fifth column to foreign powers are the communists. They believe in no nation-state and maintain that they seek the interest of the working class which according to their strategy is often defined by the Soviet Union.

Parties and groups with a Lebanese ideology such as the Kata'ib, realizing that other parties uphold no Lebanese ideologies, treat them as aliens. Under acute circumstances as was the case in 1958, Lebanese Nationalists welcomed foreign assistance against their fellow citizens in the hope of "redeeming" the state from their subversive activities. When U.S. troops did not undertake to crush the rebellion by force some members of the Lebanese Nationalist circles expressed dissatisfaction. This negative disposition of the Lebanese Nationalists as against unionist parties, reinforces their attachments to Western Powers.

Lebanon since the dawn of history has been preoccupied and tormented between the influence of the West coming across the sea and the influence of the East coming across the hinterlands. Neither sphere has yet succeeded in dislodging the influence of the other permanently. To the naked eye of the tourist the influence of both the West and the Arab hinterlands is striking. As he moves in a few miles from the coastal strip of Lebanon to the Bika' valley, he observes that the architecture as

well as the costumes of the people change. On the Western Range, Mediterranean architecture prevails: houses with arches, balconies and red brick roof-tops. The costumes are Western. Beyond the Western Range, in the Bika' valley, the Arab robe and headdress begin to appear frequently while Mediterranean architecture begins to disappear. To the social scientist, however, there are more subtle and profound differences.

The village for example, serves more as a unit of identification on the Western Range than beyond. In the Bika', the clan begins to encroach on village identification. In Northern Bika', Hermel district, the encroachment is more striking. Arab costumes, mores and values tend to be more pronounced in the Bika' than they are on the Western Range where Western and in particular Mediterranean costumes prevail. To be accurate about Lebanon one has to speak in relative terms--in more or less--rather than in abstracts, for nowhere is the break between East and West complete. This cultural dualism between East and West penetrated to the depth of the average Lebanese individual creating conflicting attitudes and values often manifested by symptoms of "lostness, pre-  
tentiousness and despair."<sup>1</sup>

Yet to speak of the West and the East as being well integrated cultural units is an over simplification of reality. Western cultures although closely related when compared to non-Western cultures are actually distinct from one another. For example, the French, British and American educational systems differ in style as well as in

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<sup>1</sup>Hourani, op.cit., pp. 76, 91.



content.<sup>1</sup> American and British schools stress American and British cultures and use English as the media of communication. French schools stress French culture and use French as the media of communication. Consequently, graduates of different school systems develop different attitudes and profound attachments to particular cultures in the Western hemisphere. These cultural attachments influence the political orientation of the groups involved. Thus some social and political scientists in Lebanon sometimes use the terms Francophiles, Anglophiles and Arabophiles in describing and analysing the Lebanese social and political system. For example, the leadership of the Kata'ib Party and the Eddé Brothers graduates of the Jesuit University tend to be French-oriented; Charles Malik, a graduate of the American University of Beirut tends to be American oriented. Similarly, graduates of the recent Islamic Makassid College tend to be Arab-oriented.

When East versus Western influence is studied from a historical perspective the picture becomes even more complex, for cultures change over time and their influence ebbs and extends according to the dictates of the circumstances in different periods. Thus, for example, the influence of the Crusades in Lebanon promoted sectarianism. A few centuries later, the influence of Western Europe, homeland of the Crusades, promoted secularism. Invasions and waves of influence emanating from different sources have been sweeping Lebanon at a rapid rate which did not allow

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<sup>1</sup>Margaret Rilhac, "Lebanon at School," Middle East Forum (May, 1960), pp. 11-24.

the Lebanese people sufficient time to synthesize them into a new distinctive whole.<sup>1</sup> The lack of a strategic depth in the country, the small size of the community, the geographic location of the terrain--situated at a cross-road in the path of armies and commercial roots--did not allow Lebanon the means to develop either resistance or sufficient vitality to counter or mold these influences. Countries, unlike Lebanon, endowed with strategic depth, an isolated geographic position and a size of magnitude have been at an advantage in molding different cultures into a new distinctive whole. In this respect the United States of America is a striking example.

The different factors mentioned above ferment centrifugal forces which render the political system susceptible in large measure to outside influence. Having dealt at length with the centrifugal forces, it is pertinent to identify the forces which hold the system together.

## 2. The Centripetal Forces

Every political system needs consensus to sustain itself. In Lebanon, the consensus is in large measure of a negative quality. Sects, parties and groups with irreconcilable ideologies often express dissatisfaction with the existing political system; they, nevertheless, accept it on realization that the only alternative is a civil war whose consequences, besides the assured loss of life and property, are

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<sup>1</sup>Hourani, op.cit., pp. 15-40.

unpredictable. When a party or parties in the Lebanese political system forecast that a crisis would most probably end in their favor, they do not hesitate to initiate a conflict. For example, in 1958 one of the factors which contributed to the development of the Crisis was the assumption of Arab nationalists and sectarian Moslem elements that if the political system disintegrated, the United Arab Republic would swallow it.<sup>1</sup> Yet even in 1958 when the prospects of the U.A.R. as an embryo for a wider Arab unity seemed promising, pro-U.A.R. parties, sects and groups in Lebanon were not anxious to transform the Crisis into a civil war out of fear that the outcome after all might not be in their favor. Under usual circumstances conflicts within the political system persist, but at a lower level--the level of political orientation rather than that of the existence of the political system as such. Thus while tension between the Lebanese Nationalist groups and Arab Nationalists is permanent, violence is intermittent.

When revolutionary Arab States or the Arab World as a whole encounters a severe conflict with the West or a particular state in the West, tension is bound to rise in Lebanon. Under ordinary circumstances, in the absence of severe conflicts between the West and the Arab States, tension is bound to subside.

There are also positive elements in the Lebanese consensus. Below the irreconcilable differences on nationalism there is a diffuse consensus on nationality. The majority of the Lebanese, be they

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<sup>1</sup>Binder, op.cit., p. 309.

Christian or Moslem, Lebanese nationalists or Arab nationalists, meet on a diffuse level of Arab consciousness or identification. Thus, for example, on the eve of Lebanese independence in 1943, it was possible for the government to maintain a consensus on the identification of Lebanon as an Arab State. Similarly the participation of Lebanon in the Arab League and, thereafter, in different inter-Arab economic, political, legal and cultural treaties did not arouse any serious objections among the Lebanese nationalists. Conscious of a diffuse Arab identification, the Lebanese nationalists did not withhold support to the Arab cause in Palestine and to Arab peoples engaged in struggles for independence from Western colonial powers. The Lebanese nationalists, however, part company with the Arab nationalists on the degree of support due to other Arab peoples in their struggle for independence. While it is justifiable for the Arab nationalist to regard the cause of other Arab peoples as his own and support it without reservations, the Lebanese nationalist for ideological reasons maintains a distinction between Lebanese and non-Lebanese interests. Consequently, differences arose between the two groups on the degree or the intensity of Lebanese support to other Arab states.

There are also centripetal factors which are fermented by the existence of the political system. Regardless of his ideological orientation the Lebanese individual is still a citizen of the State. He is, therefore, bound to be affected by considerations as to what constitutes the interest of the State on the assumption that what accrues to the State would substantially affect his personal interest.

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The nature of the political system is bound in time to affect the attitude of the citizen. The existence of a liberal political system in Lebanon, uninterrupted since independence, promoted the concept of individual freedom to a larger degree than elsewhere in other Arab States. This reality creates a cohesive factor among many Lebanese some of whom would have had otherwise few reservations in uniting with other Arab States which do not secure an equal level of freedom.

Another factor which tends to reduce the centrifugal forces in Lebanon and indirectly promotes centripetalism is the non-committal character of a large margin of Lebanese citizens. The heritage of an insecure past under arbitrary government created in most of the Lebanese a tendency to avoid commitment to ideological parties which were regarded as traps depriving the individual of political freedom and of flexibility in critical circumstances.<sup>1</sup> As a result political parties remained limited in membership--a fact which reduced the centrifugal impact of their irreconcilable views on the political system. Memories of arbitrary government and experiences with a bureaucratic public service did not allow the Lebanese citizen to develop an adequate sense of civic consciousness.<sup>2</sup> He is prone to view governmental authority with suspicion and not to identify himself with it

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<sup>1</sup>Malcolm Kerr, "The 1960 Lebanese Parliamentary Elections", Middle Eastern Affairs, XI (October, 1960), pp. 266, 273.

<sup>2</sup>Clovis Maksoud, "Lebanon and Arab Nationalism," Politics in Lebanon ed. Leonard Binder, op.cit., pp. 243-49.

unless something in the nature of personal gain accrues to him.<sup>1</sup>

These particularistic attitudes on behalf of a wide margin of Lebanese citizenry coupled with a tradition of affective allegiance to persons rather than institutions, limited the representation of political parties, and consistently sent to parliament an overwhelming majority of independent deputies. Realizing that they derive a wide margin of power from particularistic rather than universal or national considerations, independent deputies, under usual circumstances, coalesce and part company on non-ideological grounds. Hence they more often than not dilute the impact of ideological incompatibility and indirectly help preserve the political system.

Under ordinary circumstances independent deputies of different sects tend to coalesce together, because competition under the Lebanese political system is restricted to candidates of the same sect. Under unusual circumstances when the political orientations of the different sects clash, the crossing of sectarian bars becomes more difficult. Such was the case between 1955 and 1958 when the West and the Arab world drifted apart creating a polarization between the sects which advanced sectarian demands over individual demands. Consequently, many a deputy who would have otherwise compromised with his colleagues of other sects felt bound to abide by the demands of his co-religionists.

No understanding of the Lebanese political system is complete

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<sup>1</sup>Kerr, op.cit., pp. 273, 266. See also Nicola Ziadeh, Syria and Lebanon (London: Ernest Ben Ltd., 1957), p. 208.

without adequate consideration of the presidential powers. The President by virtue of his constitutional powers and the informal powers which accrue to his office by the nature of the political system, dominates the political structure of the State. He is vested with the executive powers and, moreover, maintains formal as well as informal influence over the legislature. He is, for example, authorized to draft legislation and to suspend or dissolve the legislature. The House of Deputies, for the most part composed of independent members, is vulnerable to the President who could easily use his machinations to their disadvantage. Thus the President serves as a centripetal force in a political system riddled with factionalism and irreconcilable ideologies. His central powers contribute to the sustaining capacity of the political system in Lebanon.<sup>1</sup>

This introduction is not meant to set up a rigid analytic structure for the dissertation, but rather it is an attempt to introduce the readers to the political system of Lebanon whose policy in the web of inter-Arab Cold War Tension is under study. It is hoped that with the assistance of the introduction the readers would be more equipped for a better understanding of the policy under discussion.

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<sup>1</sup>Nicola Ziadeh, "The Lebanese Elections, 1960", The Middle East Journal, XIV (Autumn, 1960), pp. 367, 381. Kerr, op.cit., pp. 266-75. See also Mohammad Majzoub, The Plight of Democracy and Arabism in Lebanon (Beirut: Munaymih Press, 1957), pp. 32-33.

## Chapter II

### THE MIDDLE EAST DEFENSE PROPOSALS

#### A. Prelude.

In the wake of World War II, Western experience with communism in Greece, Eastern Europe, China, Korea and Indo-China led to a strategy of containment of communist expansion. As soon as provisions for the establishment of NATO were under way, the West began to consider its defensive position in the adjacent area, the Middle East.

Strategically, the Middle East constituted a crossroad between the three continents of Europe, Asia and Africa. Oil investments in the area returned substantial revenues in much needed hard currency,<sup>1</sup> and European industry depended to a large extent on a continuous supply of Middle East fuel.<sup>2</sup> Militarily, a power vacuum in the Middle East, in the event of war, would have given the Soviet armies an opportunity to surround NATO on the South-Eastern flank and an open door to the Mediterranean where they could have delivered blows to the rear lines of Western Europe.<sup>3</sup> Conversely, the West by organizing the defense of the

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<sup>1</sup>Emile Bustani, Doubts and Dynamite, p. 127. The name of the publisher, the date and the place of publication were not found.

<sup>2</sup>Royal Institute of International Affairs, The Middle East: A Political and Economic Survey, by Reader Bullard (3rd ed; London: Oxford University Press, 1958), pp. 57-63.

<sup>3</sup>Royal Institute of International Affairs, Survey of International Affairs, 1951, by Peter Calvocoressi (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), p. 253.



area would have exposed Soviet industry to bombardment and direct attack by land at points unguarded by "satellites".<sup>1</sup>

The political problems of the Middle East were different from those of Europe. At a time when the Western Powers were trying to align the Middle East with them against the Soviet Union, the region was beginning to revolt against Western colonialism. Iran was in a turbulent mood over its dispute with Britain on oil royalties which culminated in the nationalization of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company.<sup>2</sup> North Africa was experiencing violent uprisings against French colonialism.<sup>3</sup> The Anglo-Egyptian dispute over the Treaty of 1936, and the Condominium Agreement of 1899 was taking a turn for the worse.<sup>4</sup> In the Arab East, popular under-currents for the liquidation of British bases and the termination of colonial treaties were beginning to leave their marks on the ruling circles in Iraq and Jordan.<sup>5</sup> Such a situation

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>For a review of the events that took place in Iran concerning oil, see: Ibid., pp. 292-337.

<sup>3</sup>Council of Foreign Relations, The U.S. in World Affairs, by Richard Stebbins (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1952), pp. 289-90.

<sup>4</sup>Royal Institute of International Affairs, Survey of International Affairs, 1951, pp. 260-92.

<sup>5</sup>Review, for example, the debate in the Iraqi House of Deputies on the necessity of following in the footsteps of Iran on oil affairs and on the termination of the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty. In particular refer to the views of Fa'iq al-Samarra'i, the Vice President of the Party in Opposition, the Independence Party; and to the views of Nuri al-Sa'id, the Prime Minister. al-Hayat, April 13, 1951.

was hardly suitable for an Arab-Western alliance particularly as the people of the Arab World were pre-occupied with security measures against Israeli expansion and with ways and means for the elimination of colonial control.

In the midst of this simmering region, the Lebanese Government notwithstanding its anti-colonial policy in the Afro-Asian World and especially in the Arab World which ran counter to the policies of Britain and France, pursued a friendly policy towards the Western Camp, especially on cold war issues. A case in point was Lebanon's support to the U.S. in the Korean War, its persistence in refusing recognition to Red China and its pro-West policy on disarmament.<sup>1</sup> The Lebanese ambassador in Washington, Dr. Charles Malik, spoke frequently in and outside the United Nations in praise of Western civilization and against communism.<sup>2</sup> Malik under President Khoury wielded a substantial influence on Lebanese-Western relations.

Prior to 1951 the Western Powers had been relying on British bases for the defense of the area. Britain had had bases throughout the Arab East but none in Syria and Lebanon who emerged as independent

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<sup>1</sup>For the policy of Lebanon on the Korean War refer to the following: Yusif Salameh, Lebanon at the United Nations (Beirut: Dar Majallat Shi'r, 1965), pp. 33-39. See also al-Hayat, February 1 and 2, 1951. Only Lebanon and Iraq of the Arab States supported the United States on the Korean question. For comparison between the policies of the Arab States on that question see: al-Nahar, July 1 and July 11, 1950.

<sup>2</sup>Refer for example to the speech by Dr. Malik at the University of Oregon, and to his speech at the United Nations on "War and Peace": al-Nahar, June 17 and 24, 1950.

nations in 1943 and saw to it, not without British support, that French forces withdrew from their territories. In 1949, Ernest Bevin, the British Foreign Secretary, approached Lebanon requesting bases for Britain and the U.S. on Lebanese territories. Bevan justified his request on the assumption that a power vacuum existed between the Suez Canal and Turkey which had to be filled for the defense of the area. The Lebanese Government, however, discouraged the idea not so much out of objection to the principle of alignment as it was out of fear for the independence of Lebanon from the proposing colonial power. It was feared that the conclusion of a treaty granting bases to British forces on Lebanese territories would compromise Lebanese sovereignty. Furthermore, it was estimated that the public, in view of the recent struggle for independence, the frustrating experience in Palestine and the mounting movements in the Arab World for the suppression of treaties of a similar nature with Britain and France, would not have reacted favorably to the conclusion of a defense treaty with Britain. On the receipt of an answer in the negative from Lebanon, Britain did not pursue the matter any further, probably because it was still pre-occupied in arranging for the defense of Europe.<sup>1</sup>

But in 1951 with the arrangements for the defense of Europe underway, the Western Powers realizing that Britain could not undertake the defense of the Middle East singlehanded, decided to arrange for the

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<sup>1</sup>Bishara al-Khoury, Lebanese Facts (Dar'oun: Basil Brothers Press, 1960), III, pp. 335-36.

defense of the Middle East collectively. They commenced their activities in this respect by sending out emissaries to survey the political situation in the area and feel out the opinions of the various governments on alignment.

Britain, probably due to its leading role in the area, led the way by dispatching General Brian Robertson, Commander of British Forces - Middle East, on a tour of the Arab East. On February 5, 1951, President Khoury held a session with Robertson in which the President for the first time expressed his fundamental disposition towards alignment, delimited the basic interests of Lebanon and requested guarantees to those interests. President Khoury pointed out to the General that in view of Lebanon's traditional, cultural, economic and political ties with the West, he was prepared to allow Western forces entry to Lebanon in the event of a global war, and that he was willing to extend to these forces all the necessary facilities which the general requested. But in return for such a commitment the President demanded the following guarantees: that the armed forces of Israel should not be allowed entry to Lebanese territory; that the presence of Western forces should not lead to a change in the status quo among the Arab States or to the annexation of any one of these states to another; and that French forces should be excluded from Western forces dispatched to Lebanon. The General's answers were clear enough on some points but vague on others. He assured the President that Israel would be requested to extend to the Western forces the same facilities which were requested of Lebanon, but that the participation of Israel's army side by side with the Arab armies in defense of Arab lands was out of the

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question. That was clear enough. But on the maintenance of the status quo in the Arab World, the General was not as definite. "Developments in the far future," he said, "in about twelve years time, for example, are unpredictable. But the expected facilities do not amount to a change in the status quo." As to the return of the French armies to Lebanon, the General's answer was more military than political. "That is out of the question," he said, "the armies in question are not in a position to participate with the Allies outside the European Theatre." The President was not convinced, and said:

"Tradition and courtesy would undoubtedly lead to ask of these forces participation in the defense of the Middle East. Assurances in this respect are extremely vital and necessary."

At that point the British Ambassador intervened promising to give such assurances after his reference to his government.<sup>1</sup>

In order to avoid any possibility of misinterpreting his words to suit the colonial tradition of Britain, the President made it clear that the government was not willing to give any privileged position to foreign powers which would compromise the sovereignty of the state.

"The expected facilities cannot be laid down in a military agreement similar to those of Jordan and Iraq, because Lebanon has achieved full independence and does not desire to fall back substituting one mandate for another.

Preparation for such facilities if necessary cannot be done but by the Lebanese High Command. It alone shall undertake the organization of all bases, for they are purely

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 351-353.

Lebanese. The Command of the bases in any case even in war would be Lebanese.<sup>2</sup>

Robertson did not express any disagreement on these points.

He said:

"All this is accepted, especially that it is not requested of Lebanon to give any facilities except in a state of war or in the event of a Soviet attack on Turkey."<sup>1</sup>

The President ended the discussions by recommending that Britain should endeavor to improve its relations with the Arab States and in particular Egypt, denoting that such a step would be in the interest of all parties concerned.

On the first of March, the Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Fou'ad 'Ammoun, received the American Ambassador in Lebanon, Mr. Lowell Pinkerton, accompanied by Mr. G. Louis Jones, the Assistant Under-Secretary of State for Middle Eastern Affairs. The discussions touched again on the defense of the area. The American diplomats assured the Lebanese Government that Israel would not be a party to any defense project between the Arab States and the Western Powers. Fou'ad Ammoun was quite frank and specific in his discussions with the American diplomats on the maintenance of the status quo in the area, and in particular the Arab World. He wanted to know whether the United States was collaborating with Britain for the realization of the Greater Syria and/or the Fertile Crescent Projects which were upheld by the Hashimite Kingdoms of Jordan and Iraq.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 353.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

Lebanon feared and opposed these schemes and suspected that Britain was closely collaborating with the Hashimites in that respect. The American diplomats reminded 'Ammoun of the Tripartite Declaration which stated that Britain, the U.S. and France would oppose the violation of borders or armistice lines in the area both within and without the United Nations.<sup>1</sup> They denied that Britain was applying pressure on the U.S. to collaborate with it in implementing the Greater Syria or the Fertile Crescent Project. But they added, if some states were inclined to unite out of their own accord, the United States would not be in a position to oppose such inclinations. Thus they did not commit themselves to a definite stand in opposition to the Fertile Crescent Project or in other words, to the maintenance of the status quo in the Arab World.

This was not, however, the case with respect to the sovereignty and independence of Lebanon. On that point the Americans were definite and reassuring. They stated that whatever changes occurred on the regional level, the Tripartite Declaration would still be applicable. "If Britain and France may find themselves one day unwilling to abide by the terms of the Tripartite Declaration," they said, "the United States alone would apply it for the protection of Lebanon." Furthermore, added Mr. Pinkerton, the Government of the

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<sup>1</sup>Find the text of the declaration in the following sources: World Peace Foundation, Documents on American Relations, 1951 ed. Dennet & Turner (Princeton: University Press, 1953), XII, pp. 658-59. Mohammad Khalil, The Arab League & The Arab States (Beirut: Khayat, 1962) II, p. 621. Keesing's Contemporary Archives (Bristol: Keesing's Publication Ltd., 1950-52), VIII, p. 10812.

United States was ready on request by the Lebanese Government to hand in a written memorandum pledging to protect Lebanon against any aggression. On the question of excluding French forces from entry to Lebanon, the American diplomats did not commit themselves, but in view of the definite guarantees which were given in protection of Lebanese independence, it could be inferred that the U.S. would not have permitted the return of the French Mandate or any other form of French colonialism.<sup>1</sup> In concluding his report on the discussions, the Director-General, Fou'ad 'Ammoun made the following observation.

'Note that although the United States denied that it was under British pressure, it could still have been influenced by British policy in the East (meaning the Middle East) where Britain has got the leading role in matters of defense. However, Mr. Pinkerton intended to reassure us that the sovereignty of Lebanon would be preserved in the event<sup>2</sup> that Unity or the Fertile Crescent Project were realized.'

On the 24th of March, Mr. George McGhee, the American Under-Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs, arrived in Beirut for further talks with the President on the subject of alignment. Mr. McGhee was in the process of a fact-finding mission after having attended a conference of American diplomats in Ankara, where the regional policy of the United States was reviewed. The discussions between President Khoury and Mr. McGhee were quite amicable. There was an air of relaxation in the talks that was apparently missing in the discussions with Robertson a month before.

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<sup>1</sup>Refer to the report of Fou'ad 'Ammoun, the Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, dated March 1, 1951: Khoury op.cit., pp. 354-357.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.



McGhee opened up the discussion by complimenting Dr. Charles Malik and expressing gratitude for the policy of Lebanon on the Korean question. He then asked the President to give him his counsel on Middle Eastern affairs. President Khoury started out by reassuring McGhee of Lebanon's solidarity with the U.S. on questions related to the cold war. For example, the President stated, Lebanon exerted all the pressure it could muster to bring about Arab support on the Korean question, but unfortunately, only Lebanon and Iraq supported the West.<sup>1</sup>

In surveying the situation in the Arab World for Mr. McGhee, the President stressed again and again the solidarity of Lebanon with the West, people and government. This was not the case, however, in other Arab States. Egypt, he said, was anti-West, people and government; the Governments of Jordan and Iraq were pro-West but their people were drifting away from the West. The Arabs, he continued, regarded Britain's privileges in Iraq, Jordan and Egypt as colonial privileges. The U.S. was not regarded as a colonial power by the Arabs, but its record in Palestine had had a negative influence on them.<sup>2</sup>

The President then moved in to give his recommendations. He suggested that repatriation or adequate compensation to the Palestinian refugees and the withdrawal of British forces from Egypt would go a long way in restoring amicable relations between the Arabs and the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 357-58.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 358.

West. In this context the President pointed out that the support of Lebanon without Arab support would not be of much use to the Western Powers.<sup>1</sup>

The President then assessed the position of Turkey in the Arab World. He advised against giving Turkey a leading role in Arab affairs, for in his opinion, Turkey was unpopular among the Arabs due to its annexation of the districts of Alexandretta and Antioch in 1938 and its pro-Israeli policy since 1947.<sup>2</sup>

Finally the President reiterated the reservations and the requests which were asked of Robertson and Jones previously. Not much was recorded on what has been said by McGhee, and probably he did not say much because his visit was primarily to listen rather than to comment on Arab Affairs. President Khoury summed up his impressions with the following words: "Mr. McGhee approved of the comments and reservations made by the President and said that they were very reasonable."<sup>3</sup>

President Khoury's assessment of the situation in the Arab World had a lot of truth in it, but it should be interpreted also in the light of Lebanese objectives. In that light the assessment was very prudent. By stating that the peoples of Iraq and Jordan were

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

drifting away from the West while their governments were pro-West, the President served the purpose of the Lebanese Government in the sense that he undermined the position of those who upheld the Fertile Crescent Project and the Greater Syria Project. Similarly, the President undermined the position of Britain whose motives he suspected and whose colonialism in the Arab World he opposed. The President gave a rosy picture of Lebanon's solidarity with the West, but he nevertheless was quick to point out that Lebanon's solidarity would not be of much use unless the Western Powers acceded to some of the Arab demands. Thus he left a leeway for Lebanon not to accede to a defense project in the future if Arab circumstances did not permit such a step. A solution to the problem of the refugees and the withdrawal of British forces from Egypt, were the very minimum which could have been expected of the Western Powers in pursuit of Arab alignment. The President's discussions with Robertson, Jones and finally with McGhee left no doubt as to where the sympathy of Lebanon lay in the cold war. It was definitely with the West and for good reasons. With the visit of McGhee, the three major powers of the West terminated the phase of exploring the disposition of the regional governments on matters of defense. The next major move was made in October by submitting proposals for the defense of the Middle East. Egypt was chosen as the starting point.

B. Egypt and the Proposals.

In the course of 1951 while Western emissaries were touring

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the Middle East collecting information and feeling out the regional governments about the defense of the area, Egypt and Britain were negotiating, without success, the dissolution of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936 and the Condominium Agreements on the Sudan. By October 1951 after a prolonged period of negotiations, the ruling Wafd Party in Egypt resolved to cut negotiations and pursue other than conciliatory methods in conducting its relations with Britain.

On October 8, Prime Minister Mustafa Nahhas Pasha submitted two bills to the Egyptian parliament unilaterally abrogating the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty and the Condominium Agreement. In justifying this denunciation, Nahhas touched on two factors which had been for sometime largely responsible for anti-British feelings in Egypt: the rationing of arms and the anti-Arab policy of Britain in Palestine. In his opinion, Britain had failed to abide by the terms of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty on two grounds: It had failed to train, organize and equip the Egyptian army, and contrary to its commitments had assisted an enemy state (Israel) during the Palestinian War of 1948.<sup>1</sup>

The denunciation was favorably received in the Arab World, but Western circles were annoyed with what they described as Egyptian "intransigence." Naturally Britain objected: the next day the British Ambassador in Cairo issued a statement to the effect that there were no provisions under the Treaty which allowed for a unilateral abrogation.<sup>2</sup> In London, British Foreign Secretary Herbert Morrison

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<sup>1</sup>al-Hayat, October 9, 1951.

<sup>2</sup>Refer to the statement of the British Ambassador in al-Hayat, October 10, 1951.

declared that the British government did not recognize the legality of a unilateral denunciation of the 1936 Treaty and of the Condominium Agreements. "Britain would maintain her rights under those treaties," he said, "until the two parties arrive at a mutual agreement." He mentioned that new proposals were being made to Egypt which, he expected, would have a direct bearing on the improvement of Anglo-Egyptian relations.<sup>1</sup>

The British position was fully backed by France and the United States. An official spokesman of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs described the unilateral denunciation of the Treaty as "a tragic mistake."<sup>2</sup> Dean Acheson, U.S. Secretary of State, rebuked Egypt for having failed to abide by its international obligations suggesting that mutual agreement between the two parties was the only legal method for the revision of the Treaties. Acheson pointed out that shortly new defense proposals were to be submitted to Egypt, and that he was confident that the proposals would provide a basis for mutual agreement.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Statement by the British Foreign Secretary, Herbert Morrison: The Times (London), October 10, 1951, p. 4. See also Anthony Eden, Full Circle: Memoirs (London: Cassel & Co. Ltd., 1960), p. 229.

<sup>2</sup>al-Hayat, October 10, 1951.

<sup>3</sup>Statement by the American Secretary of State, Dean Acheson: The Times (London), October 11, 1951, p. 6. See also U.S., Department of State, Bulletin, XXV (1951), pp. 702-03.

On October 13, the West unfolded what was in store for the defense of the Middle East. The British Ambassador on that day submitted to the Egyptian Government Proposals for an Allied Middle East Command. Shortly after his visit to the Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs, the representatives of other associated powers--the U.S., France and Turkey--presented themselves to the Minister and supported the Proposal.<sup>1</sup>

The Four Powers invited Egypt to participate with them on an equal basis in an Allied Middle East Command for the defense of the region against aggression from the outside. Under the Proposals Egypt was expected to provide Western forces with bases on its territory and to extend to these forces all the necessary facilities. In return for Egypt's participation Britain promised to relinquish the Treaty of 1936 and to withdraw all forces which were not designated to the Command from Egyptian territory.<sup>2</sup>

The Western Powers had obviously made a choice to use Egypt as a starting point in launching their defense project. This choice was based on strategic as well as political factors. Militarily, the Suez base was better equipped than any other base in the area for the concentration of large armies easily accessible to the West by multiple land and sea routes. It was sufficiently removed from the Soviet borders, thus

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<sup>1</sup>L'Orient, October 14, 1951.

<sup>2</sup>For the Text of the Proposals and their technical annexes: Mohammad Khalil, The Arab States and the Arab League, II (Beirut: Khayats, 1962), pp. 314-14; Royal Institute of International Affairs, Documents on International Affairs 1951, ed. Denise Folliot (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), pp. 425-27. U.S. Department of State, Bulletin, XXV, (1951), pp. 647-8.

safe from a sudden Soviet blitzkrieg and at the same time close enough to the Arab East for defensive purposes. Politically, the Western Powers expected that if Egypt joined the proposed defense organization, other Arab States would follow suit, for Egypt played a leading role in the Arab League. As far as the timing of the Proposals was concerned, it was estimated that Egypt's unilateral abrogation of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty prompted the Western Powers to advance the date, hoping that the proposals would solve the deadlock between the two countries.<sup>1</sup>

But, if the Western Powers had gauged Egypt's mood properly, they would have concluded that the timing was improper. For just as the Egyptians were beginning to celebrate the "courageous" step taken by their government, which they expected would lead to the evacuation of the canal zone, and at a time when Egyptian national temperament was gaining momentum and anti-Western feelings were reaching unprecedented heights, the Western Powers came in with proposals for alignment which demanded the stationing of foreign troops, including those of Britain on Egyptian territory. It was indeed difficult to imagine how under the circumstances the government of the Wafd or any other government in Egypt could accept the proposals. Acceptance of the Western Proposals then would have appeared to the public as a shameful retreat and a betrayal of Egypt's cause.

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<sup>1</sup>John Campbell, Defense of the Middle East (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958) pp. 39-40. See also Halford Hoskins, The Middle East (New York: MacMillan Company, 1954), pp. 73, 267-69.

The Egyptian Government did not give the Western Proposals the courtesy of study or consideration. Three days after the Four Powers handed in their defense proposals, the Egyptian Parliament (on October 15) passed by unanimity the Bills which were submitted by the government abrogating the Treaty and the Condominium Agreements.<sup>1</sup> Egypt was more concerned with the repeated Israeli border raids and with British occupation than with a prospective aggression by the Soviet Union which was thousands of miles away from Egyptian territories.<sup>2</sup> The proposing Powers did nothing to alleviate its fears. On the contrary, they met the Egyptian rejection by delivering firm warnings to the effect that Egypt would get nowhere with its national demands if it persisted in refusing the proposals. And just to drive the point home, Britain began to dispatch reinforcements to Suez only to be met by an increasing wave of anti-British violence which precipitated an exchange of what seemed like an endless series of protests and counter-protests by the two governments.

In the meantime the Proposing Powers were building their hopes on the Asiatic Arab states. They had already distributed a note on October 14 advising each member state of the Arab League of what had

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<sup>1</sup>al-Hayat, October 16, 1951.

<sup>2</sup>Refer to Statement by Mohammad Salah Uddine, the Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs, al-Hayat, October 12, 1951. See also RIIA, Survey of International Affairs, 1951, p. 259.

<sup>3</sup>The Times (London), October 18, 1951, p. 6, and October 23, 1951, p. 6.



been proposed to Egypt.<sup>1</sup>

C. A Survey of Public Reactions in Lebanon.

As soon as the Four Powers submitted their proposals to Egypt, the Lebanese press treated the subject extensively. al-'Amal, Beirut, Beirut al-Massa, al-Nahar, and al-Hayat, criticised Egypt's immediate and spontaneous rejection of the Four Power Proposals. al-'Amal estimated that a negative attitude towards the Four Power Proposals would put the Arab States in a disadvantageous position whereby Turkey and Israel would be the only regional participants in the Middle East Command.<sup>2</sup> Walid Tweini in al-Nahar warned that the negativist policy of the Arabs had led them from one debacle to another. Egypt should have the means to force British withdrawal, otherwise, it should reconsider its position.<sup>3</sup> Kamel Mroueh, likewise, criticised the spontaneous rejection of the Proposal; The Arab states should meet, articulate their demands and negotiate, he said. In his opinion the Arabs had no other alternative for most of them were already tied up to the Western Powers in one way or another. The Proposals provided them with an opportunity to solve their pending problems with the West.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>al-Hayat, October 14, 1951.

<sup>2</sup>"Of the Days Harvest: Our Principle Objective Should be the Improvement of Our Economic and National Conditions," al-'Amal, October 17, 1951.

<sup>3</sup>Walid Tweini, "Mutual Defense," al-Nahar, October 16, 1951.

<sup>4</sup>Kamel Mroueh, "Their Proposals," al-Hayat, October 16, 1951.

Muhieddhine Nusuli, a prominent journalist and politician, was also critical of Egyptian policy. "Egypt," he said, "should not say no as usual while it has nothing to make this 'no' effective in achieving national aspirations." Arguing that isolation was not possible, Nusuli advocated negotiations and asked of the Arab states to mediate between Egypt and the Western Powers because in his estimation, a conflict was not in the interest of either party.<sup>1</sup> The editorial views of the above-mentioned papers converged on the recognition that pending problems between the Arab States and the Western Powers had to be solved before alignment became feasible. What were these problems? al-'Amal, al-Nahar, al-Hayat and Beirut spoke of either colonial problems in general or referred to the Anglo-Egyptian dispute and the Palestinian Problem in particular. Abdullah al-Mashnouk, the editor of Beirut al-Massa was more elaborate than his colleagues in this respect. The Western Powers in his opinion had to fulfil the following requirements: settlement of the Palestinian problem in accordance with the resolutions of the United Nations which imposed partition, and compensation to Arab refugees who did not desire to return to the Israeli sector; withdrawal of foreign troops from Iraq, Jordan and Egypt, and the fulfilment of their national aspirations for sovereignty and independence. Having fulfilled these requirements, he continued, the Western Powers should guarantee the sovereignty of

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<sup>1</sup>Muhieddhine Nusuli, "The Attitude of the Arab League," Beirut, October 25, 1951.

the states of the region and refrain from allocating to one another spheres of influence. If these requirements could be met, alignment with the West would become feasible.<sup>1</sup>

Underlying the arguments of the five papers reviewed above was a common belief, rightly or wrongly held, that the Arabs were an integral part of the "free World" and that, therefore, in case of a world war, they would have to take sides with the West.

Khairi 'Awni al-Ka'ki, the editor of al-Sharq challenged this belief. How could this be possible, he argued, when these same powers "colonise" and "enslave" other peoples. He also was not convinced of a Soviet threat.

There are no reasons for animosity, dispute, or tense relations between the Arab World or the Arab peoples and the Soviet Union or the Soviet peoples. The Soviet Union did not colonise any part of the Arab World, nor did it have a hand in the making or the execution of the Balfour Declaration.<sup>2</sup>

He then tackled the question of alignment:

That the Arabs are badly in need of mutual defense is a matter that cannot be denied but with whom and against whom? Does it make sense for a human being to align himself with those who colonise his lands, occupy his territories and disperse his people against those who did not colonise his lands, occupy his territories and disperse his people? Isn't it more becoming of us, Arabs, to war, if war is necessary, for the liberation of our lands from Zionism, imperialism and occupation or else die in the cause of our struggle for liberty instead of dying for the cause of imperialistic interests which are guarded and preserved by the covetous

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<sup>1</sup>Abdallah al-Mashnouk, "Four Occupations," Beirut al-Massa, October 15, 1951.

<sup>2</sup>Khairi 'Awni al-Ka'ki, "Mutual Defense is Mutual Occupation," al-Sharq, October 16, 1951.

powers of the West? Yes, we Arabs are in need of a defense alliance, an alliance against our real enemies, those mentioned above [the Western Powers].<sup>1</sup>

Hanna Ghusn the editor of al-Diyar did not go to the extent of advocating a crusade against the West as al-Sharq did, but he, nevertheless, asked the Lebanese Government not to negotiate with the Western Powers. Ghusn maintained, as the Egyptian Government did, that the proposals were a device to perpetuate British occupation in Egypt. He argued: Since Egypt had refused the Proposals, Lebanon should do likewise in conformity with the principles of Arab solidarity and as a payment in debt to Egypt who supported the struggle of the Lebanese for independence in 1943.<sup>2</sup> Like most other editorialists, Fadhil Sa'id Akl in discussing the Four Power Proposals wrote about frustrated Arab aspirations for independence and about Arab grievances in Palestine. He concurred with Ghusn of al-Diyar that Lebanon in solidarity with Egypt should reject the proposals but he did not stop at that as Ghusn did. In the belief that Lebanon was incapable of withstanding the pressures of cold war politics, he advocated neutrality in style with Switzerland.<sup>3</sup>

While the Lebanese Press was occupied discussing alignment with the West and advocating policies varying from straight alignment

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Hanna Ghusn, "Why Was the Invitation Given to Egypt and What is the Position of Lebanon?" al-Diyar, October 16, 1951.

<sup>3</sup>"Lebanon and Mutual Defense," al-Bayraq, October 19, 1951.

to a relentless crusade against Western imperialism, the Western Powers took a step which apparently frightened even those who were previously sympathetic with the West. On October 26, Britain, France, the United States and Turkey issued a memorandum expressing regret for Egypt's rejection and announcing that they were going ahead in organizing the defense for the region. As Israel and the Arab States were concerned about the subject, the memorandum continued, they were invited to give their comments, if they had any, to the proposing powers.<sup>1</sup>

The tone of the memorandum was disturbing for it did not invite the Arab States to discuss or negotiate; it simply asked for their comments on a project that was to be implemented anyway with or without their consent. This offensive attitude aroused almost unanimous indignation in the press. Kamel Mroueh who had been following a positive attitude towards the proposals became severely critical of the Western Powers:

The Arab States accepted the memorandum of the Four Powers wisely and calmly. They took the right course in handling the question ..... consulted each other and asked the Political Committee of the Arab League to convene.

It grieves us that we did not find this good spirit in the behavior of the Western Powers. Since the Egyptian refusal they preened themselves, looked down upon us, turned their backs and stretched out their hand from behind, so that we found ourselves asking: Are these Great Powers eager to teach the World democracy or are they a bunch of hoodlums?

The West may succeed to impose its will on the Arab States; If mutual understanding is not possible it could establish a hundred defense organizations against our will. But it

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<sup>1</sup>al-Hayat, October 28, and October 30, 1951.

should not forget that the Arab peoples determine in large measure the failure or success of either an offensive or a defensive project. No matter how disdained they are, they could still be an effective factor in the hands of the enemy.

After all this, why is this intransigence? We are fed up with lessons of hatred and force. We are badly in need of friends who could treat us with a spirit of equality and justice and not of roughnecks waiting to fall upon us.<sup>1</sup>

Walid Tweini in al-Nahar described the new memorandum as "impudent".

It has escaped the Westerners who got used to the servility and the submission of the Arab peoples to power and hegemony, that the age of submission and servility is gone and that an occupation without the consent of the country will be of no use, for it will push the people into the hands of communism which at least attempts to hide its ambitions and true nature behind the principles of liberty and the right of the people for self determination.<sup>2</sup>

The strong toned memorandum facilitated the circulation of rumors that the Western Powers were about to occupy the region and that they had agreed among themselves as to the allocation of spheres of influence.<sup>3</sup> Such rumors motivated papers of a pronounced Maronite color such as al-'Amal and al-Bayraq to join al-Nahar and al-Hayat in criticising the West. These papers, however, were not as concerned as the others about the fate of the Arab World as a whole. Their concern was first and foremost focused on Lebanon, and as Lebanese nationalists, they were against any encroachment on the sovereignty of the State, even though it could have been from the Western Powers who were often described by them as "friendly". Pierre Gmayyil, the leader

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<sup>1</sup>Kamel Mroueh, "The Positive Negativism," al-Hayat, November 1, 1951.

<sup>2</sup>Walid Tweini, "Occupation by Consent or by Force," al-Nahar, October 27, 1951.

<sup>3</sup>al-'Amal, October 27, and 28, 1951.

of the Kata'ib Party, took an irrevocable stand against any possibility of landing foreign troops in the country. He wrote in al-'Amal, the mouthpiece of his party:

With respect to the rumors which were enhanced by the attitude of the Four Powers we declare:

The landing of a foreign army or a soldier of a foreign army of whatever nationality on our territories shall be considered as a declaration of animosity. Lebanon who knows its duty towards democracy and who sacrificed its sons during the last two wars for its sake; This Lebanon knows how to discharge its duties whenever necessary. It, however, deplors the use of the principles of liberty as an excuse for encroachment on its freedom and sovereignty and declares: the first step for the defense of true democracy in the East is in consolidating its independence and the independence of its neighbours.<sup>1</sup>

Al-Bayraq said almost the same thing but in a less offending tone.

Lebanon is not a military state, its limited potentialities, territories, population and resources do not allow it to engage in wars. It is, therefore, attached to the principles of the United Nations in as much as it is attached to its sovereignty and neutrality. It requests that no foreign troops in war footing disembark on its land regardless of their nationality and objective.<sup>2</sup>

While the moderate press was criticising the approach of the Four Proposing Powers and expressing suspicion of their motives, the radical press was using the memorandum as a further evidence of the hypothesis that the West was the first and foremost enemy of the Arab States. Al-Sharq on October 31 wrote:

The Western States in an attempt to prop up their democracy in the World are following a strange path which in fact

<sup>1</sup>Pierre Gmayyil, "Our Blood Is For Independence," al-'Amal, November 2, 1951.

<sup>2</sup>"Our Answer to the Four Powers: Lebanon Does Not Accept the Occupation of Its Territories and Is Attached to Arab Collaboration," al-Bayraq, October 29, 1951.

has little to do with democracy. They, in the Arab World, present a clear picture of the vices of Western democracy. They govern Morocco, Algeria and Tunis with powder and guns; dominate Libya as a master does his slave; impose their military presence over Egypt and the Sudan by force of dreaded arms; stand astride in Jordan and Iraq by virtue of the law of invasions and conquest; carve out of Palestine a national home for the scum of the earth and cast out hundreds of thousands of innocent peace loving men in all directions.

They do all this and more and then they hold up their heads without shame saying: We constitute the impregnable fortress of democracy, the sanctuary of the sacred liberties and the refuge of humanity and civilization.

This is Western democracy, a democracy that does not hesitate to impose its will on other peoples selfishly, and that does not respect the rights of the sovereign states in the Middle East, but which says loudly and clearly I shall do this and that etc.

May God protect us against this perverted democracy of the West.<sup>1</sup>

Clovis Maksoud writing in the leftist weekly al-Anba upheld the same views as al-Sharq. He addressed himself to a question which was asked by al-Sharq earlier:

If a defense project is necessary, then against whom should it be?

We know and everybody knows how badly we need a defense project against the British armies in Egypt, the French armies in Morocco and Tunis and the Anglo-American economic and political hegemony over many States.<sup>2</sup>

But unlike Khairi 'Awni al-Ka'ki in al-Sharq Maksoud was not simply content to criticise the Western Powers. He offered what seemed to him a positive solution to Lebanon in a polarized World: positive

<sup>1</sup>Khairi 'Awni al-ka'ki, "The Western Democracies," al-Sharq, October 31, 1951.

<sup>2</sup>Clovis Maksoud, "The Third Force and the Defense of the Middle East," al-Anba, October 26, 1951.



neutrality to be manifested by close collaboration with the Third World. Such a policy, he believed, would not only give security to Lebanon but would also constitute a contribution to World peace.<sup>1</sup>

Maksoud considered the firm toned memorandum of October 26 as an ultimatum given without regard to the integrity of the Arab States and their political circumstances. But it was apparent that inasmuch as he was annoyed with the firm tone of the Memorandum, he also welcomed it as an instrument which "unveiled," he said, "the pure imperialistic motives" of the Western Powers and "put the reactionary and conservative elements" of his country "in an embarrassing position."<sup>1</sup> Hard-pressed for an explanation as to why some of these elements which he considered as reactionary and conservative were criticising the Western Powers, Maksoud resorted to rationalization. The interests of these groups and those of the imperialistic powers were one and the same thing, he said. That some of them spoke against the defense alliance of the West indicated lack of co-ordination in their strategy.<sup>3</sup>

Maksoud and his fellow travellers of leftist inclinations had a touch of fanaticism in their thinking. They spoke of imperialism as the embodiment of the West, as something alive. They referred to it with the personal pronoun "she" and presented it as a tyrant against which the people, "the peace loving", were involved in a desperate struggle.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Clovis Maksoud, "The Defense of the Middle East Again and Again," al-Anba', November 2, 1951.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

In criticising the threatening tone of the Western Powers, Maksoud spoke thus:

When imperialism was blocked by an alert public and a sweeping popular tide against her project, [meaning the Allied Middle East Command], she threatened with occupation in the belief that such a threat would stem the tide, but she forgot or pretended to forget that the methods of the 19th century cannot be used in the age of the atom and the comprehensive Asiatic revolution.<sup>1</sup>

Rather than speaking in the name of a certain group, party or class, Maksoud appointed himself as the spokesman for the Lebanese people, but in this respect he was not different from others to the right such as Pierre Gmayyil who also posed as the spokesman for Lebanon and the Lebanese people. Such an aggressive attitude breeds intolerance, and surely enough, Maksoud's articles were not without concealed threats to the Government.

The Lebanese people in solidarity with the quest of Arab peoples against imperialism, request of the Government a rejection of this project [MEC] or else the existing gap between the people and Government would get larger. The people then would have to say the final and definite word.<sup>2</sup>

It is to be noted that in the paragraph quoted above, Maksoud, as in other writings and articles, identified himself with the Asiatic World, a world which, in his opinion, had nothing to do in relation to the West but the task of national liberation from the shackles of Western exploitation. Any accord, he said, between the spheres of the Third World (meaning Asia) such as the Arab World and either one of

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

the two World Camps was transitional. "Struggle in either the positive or the negative form against Middle East Defense Project is a patriotic duty to every Lebanese and Arab."<sup>1</sup>

The assumptions of Maksoud were therefore different from the assumptions of Tweini, Gmayyil and Muhieddine Nusili who believed that Lebanon and the Arab States were a part of the "free world". Only a few days before Maksoud wrote in al-Anba presenting the dichotomy between the Arab World and the West, Dr. Charles Malik spoke of a deep cultural affinity between them. Speaking at a reunion of Lebanese-Americans on October 18, Malik told George McGhee, the American Under-Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs, that the task of defending the Middle East should not be regarded only as assistance to developing nations, but also as the Americans regarded their assistance to Europe: a payment in debt for the contributions delivered in days past to Western culture. The roots of all cultures in the American and Europe, Malik argued, go back to Egypt, Palestine, Lebanon and the valley of the Tigris. Moreover, he asked: where would the Americans and the Europeans be now, had it not been for the culture that was passed to them by the Arabs during the Middle Ages?<sup>2</sup>

Malik predicted that the prospects of the defense project between the Arab States and the Western Powers were good, provided that just solutions could be found to the Egyptian question and that of the Palestinian refugees.<sup>3</sup> He thus believed and apparently shared this

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Speech by Charles Malik at a reunion of Americans of Lebanese Origin, October 7, 1951, al-Nahar, October 18, 1951.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

belief with the editors of al-Hayat, al-Nahar, Beirut and al-'Amal, that an accord between the Arab States and the West was essential and that discord was transitional. This concept was in direct contradiction to that of Maksoud who believed that discord was permanent and accord transitional. These different concepts were in large measure a manifestation of the chronic debate in Lebanon as to whether Lebanon should identify itself with the West or not.

The Western Powers, realizing that their high handed approach was not well received by the Governments and the peoples of the Arab World, delivered a joint statement to the Arab States on November 10 which was designed to alleviate fears arising out of concern for the sovereignty of the regional states. The Middle East Command, the statement stipulated "would not interfere in problems and disputes arising within the area".<sup>1</sup>

It will in no way affect existing arrangements relating to such matters, notably the Armistice agreements and the United States-United Kingdom-French Tripartite Declaration of May, 1950.

Requests for arms and equipment made by states in the area willing to join in its defense to sponsoring states in a position to assist in this connection will be filled by them to the extent possible following the co-ordination of such requests through the Middle East Command.

Movement of those troops placed under the command of the Supreme Allied Commander of the Middle East to or within the territories of states joining in the defense of the Middle East will be made only with the agreement of the state or states concerned and in full accord with their national independence and sovereignty.

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<sup>1</sup>RIIA, Documents on International Affairs, 1951, pp. 427-428. See also Khalil, op.cit., pp. 316-17, and U.S. Department of State, Bulletin, XXV (November 19, 1951), pp. 817-18.

All states joining in this enterprise will be associated individually in the command on the basis of equality.

Any facilities to the Middle East Command by states joining in the defense of the Middle East will be subject to specific agreements.

The Middle East Command naturally will not further the national interest of any particular state.<sup>1</sup>

Thus the Four Powers gave assurances to the regional states with regard to their sovereignty, the sanctity of their borders and a status of equality in the command. Aware of an unusual sensitivity in the Middle East towards the possibility of hegemony by greater powers, the Four Powers stated that the "task of the Middle East Command at the outset would be primarily one of planning and of providing for assistance in the form of advice and training." The object of the Command was to "provide for a progressive increase in the role of the regional states and to permit a proportionate decrease in the role played by outside powers." Moreover, the proposals were sugar-coated with promises of social and economic assistance.<sup>2</sup>

The new friendly tone of the Joint Statement and the assurances which were given by the Four Powers made a pronounced impact on the press. Papers such as al-'Amal, Beirut, al-Nahar, and al-Hayat, abandoned their offensive tone which was precipitated by the offending memorandum of October 26 and fell back on their original disposition advocating again negotiations.<sup>3</sup> Al-Sharq, however, was ill-disposed to give the Joint

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Refer to the following editorials: Muhieddine al-Nusuli, "The New Statement," Beirut, November 13, 1951. Kamil Mroueh, "Why Don't

Statement any consideration. Khairi 'Awni al-Ka'ki, its editor, ignored the Joint Statement altogether and continued to incite the populace against the West accusing those who advocated negotiations of being "traitors" or at best "pacifists."<sup>1</sup>

On November 21st the Soviet Union delivered a statement which was pointed at assuring the Arabs of its good will, that it did not entertain any ideas of aggression on them, that it helped them in achieving independence and that it was still helping them against Western colonialism. The proposed Middle East Command, it maintained, was designed to link the Arab States to the wheels of aggressive NATO. The statement ended by warning the Arab States of the grave consequences which could accrue to them if they chose to adhere to such an aggressive pact.<sup>2</sup>

The Soviet statement was well received by the radical press. Al-Sharq and al-Diyar used it as an evidence of Soviet good will and as a warning of the dangers involved in adhering to the Middle East Command. Some passing remarks were made reproaching the Soviet Union

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They Meet," al-Hayat, November 13, 1951; Ghassan Tweini, "Our Freedom and the Safety of the Free World." al-Nahar, November 13, 1951; "We Would Like to Know: Who Are We Defending and Does It Solve Our Problems?" al-'Amal, November 13, 1951; "Towards the Unknown," al-'Amal, November 14, 1951.

<sup>1</sup>Khairy 'Awni al-Ka'ki, "The Answer to Mutual Defense is Mutual Struggle," al-Sharq, November 13, 1951. Khairy 'Awni al-Ka'ki, "The Supporters of Mutual Occupation Are Either Traitors or Defeatists," al-Sharq, November 15, 1951.

<sup>2</sup>Find the text of the Memorandum in: Khalil, op.cit., pp. 317-19. The Soviet Statement was addressed to Egypt but similar copies were also handed to other Arab States. See al-Nahar, November 24, 1951.

for its record in Palestine, but they could have passed unnoticed among the many compliments.<sup>1</sup>

The moderate press on the other hand while acknowledging Soviet assistance on matters related to anti-colonialism and national sovereignty focused on Soviet shortcomings. Basil Dqaq, an editor of al-Hayat, criticised the Soviet Union for having failed to make tangible offers to the Arabs. "The Westerners," he maintained:

are offering economic and financial assistance, mutual security, and additional oil royalties. They are also hinting with the possibility of changing American policy, especially on the question of the refugees.<sup>2</sup>

What did the Soviet Union offer in return for non-alignment? "Why doesn't it offer the withdrawal of its recognition of Israel," he asked, and continued sarcastically:

The capitalist state created by capitalist Anglo-Saxons and by Soviet Communism the enemy of capitalism? Why didn't it veto the Security Council's decision which requested of Egypt to lift its blockade of the Canal against the ships of Israel?<sup>3</sup>

Daqaq was obviously concentrating on the soft spot of the Soviet's policy in the Arab World— their policy towards Israel. He concluded his editorial by reminding the readers that Israel "was established on two pillars one in Moscow and the other in London and Paris".<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Hanna Ghusn, "After the Soviet Memorandum," al-Diyar, November 26, 1951. See also Khairi 'Awni al-Ka'ki "The Soviet Memorandum," al-Sharq, November 25, 1951.

<sup>2</sup>Basil Daqaq, "Another Deficiency," al-Hayat, November 24, 1951.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

al-'Amal used similar tactics. While acknowledging Soviet assistance on the question of Lebanon's independence in 1943, it criticised the Soviet Union on its policy towards the establishment of Israel and described it as "dishonoring".<sup>1</sup>

Some of the criticisms made above about Soviet policy were justifiable. The Soviet Union could hardly give a reasonable justification, as far as the Arabs were concerned, for its assistance in the establishment of the state of Israel. Even though one could understand Soviet sympathy towards the Jews who suffered under the Nazis in World War II, no excuse could be given to the Soviets or others who ventured to settle the destituted Jews at the expense of the destitution of the Arabs of Palestine. However, the failure to use Soviet veto against the Security Council's decision requesting Egypt to lift the blockade on Israeli shipping in the Suez Canal, could hardly be used as a criticism of Soviet policy. The Soviet Union as a sea power did not desire to establish a precedent allowing Egypt to block an international waterway. But even though one could have justified the rightist press criticisms of Soviet policy on the Israeli question and the blockade of the Canal, it would have been still a problem to prove how the Western Powers fared any better on both counts.

The Western Powers certainly fared better on the level of giving tangible offers in return for alignment, while the Soviet Union failed to give any tangible offers for non-alignment save sweet

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<sup>1</sup>"What Could be Inferred from the Soviet Memorandum," al-'Amal, November 24, 1951.



words. But here again the absence of tangible offers could not be laid squarely on Soviet shoulders. It could be argued that Soviet policy under Stalin did not extend a hand of assistance to the "Third World." But on second thought, this argument loses a lot of validity when it is realized that in 1951 what was known as the "Third World" was still largely either occupied by or under the tutelage of the Western Powers. The Arab World in 1951 was still strictly a sphere of Western influence. Of all the Arab States at that time there were only two--Syria and Lebanon--who were not bound to the Western Powers by treaties. Under the circumstances, the Soviet Union was in no position to make tangible offers even if it wanted to do so, nor were the Arab States in a position to extend their hand to the Soviet Union.

It was reported that the Soviets, on the prodding of Arab critics, were considering the offer to the Arab States of non-aggression and friendship treaties in return for non-alignment.<sup>1</sup> But the Arab States were hardly in a position to accept such an offer. Commented Louis al-Haj in al-Nahar:

Any tendency among the Arab States towards non-alignment at a time when the Westerners consider the Middle East as a corner-stone in their defensive or offensive strategy, could only encourage the West to speed up violation of this non-alignment under the pretext of protecting its interests.

The non-alignment which could possibly save the Arabs is that which both camps would accept and guarantee; thus rendering the Arab States a neutral zone separating them from one another.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>al-Nahar, November 27, 1951.

<sup>2</sup>Louis al-Haj, "The Saving Log," al-Nahar, November 27, 1951.

There was no possibility, however, that the Western Powers could have tolerated Arab neutrality. "Egypt," read the preamble of the Four Power Proposals, "belongs to the free World and in consequence her defense and that of the Middle East in general is equally vital to other democratic nations."<sup>1</sup> The imperative tone of the preamble which was followed by the firm-toned memorandum of October 26 as well as other statements delivered by the Four Proposing Powers and other associated nations of the Commonwealth, left no doubt that the West regarded the Middle East as an integral part of the "free World."<sup>2</sup> There were no indications either that the Arab governments at the time were prone to accept neutrality. The Secretary General of the Arab League, Abdul Rahman Azzam Pasha, clarified the Arab point of view in this respect by stating at a press conference on January 1, 1952: "We are not in a position to be neutral between East and West, because we are definitely the enemies of Communism."<sup>3</sup>

While Azzam Pasha simply ruled out neutrality, some pro-West papers in Lebanon were going so far as to rule out non-commitment. Commented an anonymous writer in al-Hayat on November 18: While the

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<sup>1</sup>Refer to article one of the Four Power Proposals to Egypt. Khalil, op.cit. p. 314.

<sup>2</sup>Refer for example to the statement of Mr. Lincoln White, the Press Secretary of the State Department, October 30, 1951; and to the statement of Mr. Casey, the Foreign Minister of Australia: al-Hayat, October 31 and November 13, 1951.

<sup>3</sup>Statement by Azzam Pasha, al-Hayat, January 3, 1951.

Arab States were reluctant to join the Middle East Command in solidarity with Egypt; Britain had been allowed to increase its forces at Suez beyond what it could have done under normal circumstances, Jordan received additional British Forces in Aqaba, and Saudi Arabia left no doubt as to where it would stand in a World conflict. Why then, he asked, should the Arab States maintain this facade of solidarity with Egypt when they were actually supporting the West? He concluded by asking for negotiations in the expectation that the Western Powers were prone to give in on the national demands of the Arabs and on their requests for armaments from Western arsenals.<sup>1</sup>

But to what extent were the Western Powers prepared to give in to Arab demands? They were ready to sell the Arabs arms, but no more than was necessary for internal security. Arms beyond that limit conflicted with their policy of sustaining Israel and with their commitments under the Tripartite Declaration in upholding the sanctity of the Armistice Lines. There were indications that offers similar to those presented earlier to Egypt would be made to Jordan and Iraq, i.e. substitute the MEC for the termination of older treaties with Jordan and Iraq. There was, moreover, the possibility of getting assistance from the Western Powers for the settlement of the Palestinian refugees.<sup>2</sup> Such possibilities constituted to the moderates another step forward in the struggle of Arab peoples towards sovereignty. To the radical Arab

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<sup>1</sup>"In the Arab States There Is a Gap Called Armaments," al-Hayat, November 18, 1951.

<sup>2</sup>al-Hayat, November 24, 1951.

nationalists, however, such a step constituted another clandestine design for the perpetuation of Western imperialism. The radicals were not looking for a settlement of the refugee question nor for the substitution of the MEC for British bases. What they were looking for was the total withdrawal of the Western Powers from Arab Territories and a chance to fall on Israel in the hope of restoring the Arab character of Palestine. This much they were determined to do without regard to the cost involved; and the Western Powers certainly helped them maintain such views by resisting nationalistic aspirations in the Arab World.

The views of political parties in Lebanon were no less controversial than the press towards the Western Powers and the prospective Middle East Command. The attitude of the Arab nationalist National Appeal Party was in the negative. The negative views of the party arose from giving precedence to Arab considerations over Lebanese considerations. It was the record of the Western Powers in Palestine, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan and North Africa which prompted the negative attitude towards the West. The party made no distinction between the interests of Lebanon as a sovereign state and those of other Arab peoples. Consequently, in solidarity with other Arab peoples (outside Lebanon) struggling against imperialism, the leadership of the party requested the government to reject the Proposals.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Review the declarations made by the President of the National Appeal Party, Dr. Edmund Rabbat, and the declaration made by the Council of the Deans of the Party as published by al-Bayraq, October 15, and November 3, 1951.

The Progressive Socialist Party also rejected the Proposals, but its motivations were slightly different from the National Appeal Party. Over and above nationalistic motivations sympathising with the sufferings of other Arab peoples under colonial control, the Progressive Socialists had leftist leanings which left pronounced marks on their attitude towards the West. In the belief that a "third force" could prevent a clash between the Soviet Camp and the West, and that such a force was capable of preserving the interests of Lebanon, the leaders of the party advocated the development of close attachments to the non-aligned Powers.<sup>1</sup> The Communists, realizing that the prospects of alignment with the Soviet Union were almost non-existent, advocated non-alignment. Under the disguise of the "Supporters of Peace," they launched a demonstration on November 7 which was quickly dispersed by the Security forces.<sup>2</sup>

At the other end of the spectrum stood the Kata'ib and the PPS leaning towards a positive attitude and advocating negotiations but for different reasons. Unlike the National Appeal Party, the Kata'ib was primarily motivated by considerations related to the interests of Lebanon. al-'Amal, the press organ of the party, always made a clear distinction between the interests of Lebanon and those of other Arab States. The West, al-'Amal argued, could assist us economically,

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<sup>1</sup>Review the declaration of the Administrative Council of the Progressive Socialist Party, issued on October 31st and published in: al-Nahar, November 2, 1951 and al-Bayraq, November 3, 1951.

<sup>2</sup>al-Hayat, November 8, 1951.

socially, and politically.<sup>1</sup>

The PPS was not motivated by Lebanese considerations as much as it was motivated by animosity towards Egypt and Communism. Egypt did not constitute a part of the PPS homeland and the Communists were its most hated enemies. The PPS held the view that neutrality in a bipolarized World was not possible, and, even if possible, immoral.

Attitudes towards the Western Powers were influenced to a certain degree by latent sectarian orientations. At close observation, demonstrations which took place in sympathy with Egypt and against the West suggest that reactions to the prospective Middle East Command were not without a sectarian color. Demonstrations took place in Lebanon on three occasions: October 13, 21, and 23. The demonstration on October 13 started from the Omari Mosque in Beirut and that of October 21 started from the Mansuri Mosque in Tripoli. On both occasions the demonstrations were triggered by excited sheikhs who deplored the attitude of the Western Powers towards Egypt.<sup>2</sup>

The demonstrations on the 23rd of October were of wider dimensions. They started from colleges and were led by students. The banners and the placards which were carried by the demonstrators as well as the slogans which they chanted indicated that their hostility

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<sup>1</sup>The Kata'ib Party issued no official declarations with respect to the Middle East Command, but it has been assumed that al-'Amal, its daily paper, expressed the views of the Party in its editorial columns. Review the following editorials: "Our Fundamental Duty Is to Strengthen Our Economic and National Foundations," al-'Amal October 17, 1951; "Lebanon Should Take a Position in the Light of Its Interest," al-'Amal October 26, 1951; "The Solution Which Guarantees Our Future and Sovereignty," al-'Amal October 21, 1951; "Spontaneous Policies Have Been and Still Are the Causes of Our Confusion," al-'Amal, November 2, 1951.

<sup>2</sup>al-Nahar, October 13, and 23, 1951.

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<sup>2</sup>al-Nahar, October 13, and 23, 1951.

to the Western Powers was derived from Arab nationalist leanings.

And here again the student demonstrations were not without a sectarian color.<sup>1</sup>

The demonstrations took place in Moslem towns such as Tripoli, Tyre, Sidon and in the Moslem quarters of Beirut such as Basta, Mazra'a and Museitbeh or in mixed quarters such as Ras Beirut. In contrast, Christian towns such as Batrun, Zahleh and Byblos and Christian quarters in Beirut remained quiet. While the students of Moslem colleges such as the Makasid took to the streets and led the demonstrations, students of Christian colleges, the Freres, the Hikmeh and the Jesuit University pursued their studies as usual. The students of national colleges and those of the American University split up into factions, some for and some against the demonstrations. There were to be sure Christian participants either in support of Arab nationalism or because of their leftist leanings, but the majority were undoubtedly predominantly Moslem.<sup>2</sup>

The moderates, regardless of their sectarian color, were not impressed with these extremist attitudes and among those unimpressed

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<sup>1</sup>The flag raised by the demonstrators was the green, black and white colors of the Arab nationalists. Some of the placards read: "Its Your Turn Now - Iraq, Down With the Anglo-American-French Imperialism, Long Live the Revolution of The Nile Valley, We Give Our Life For The Redemption of Egypt, We Detest British Agression, Long Live The National Youth," al-Bayraq, October 25, 1951.

<sup>2</sup>For a review of the events on October 23 look up the following papers: al-Hayat, October 24 and 25, 1951; al-'Amal, October 24 and 25, 1951; al-Bayraq, October 25, 1951.



were important Islamic public figures such as 'Abdulla al-Yaffi, the Prime Minister; Kamil Mroueh, the editor of the influential daily al-Hayat; Muhieddine Nusuli, the editor of Beirut; and the Shia' deputy from the Ba'albek-Hermel district, Ibrahim Haydar.<sup>1</sup> But perhaps of more importance was the displeasure of Christian groups who, although sympathetic with Egypt, were not ready to jeopardize Lebanese-Western friendly relations in Egypt's cause. Thus, for example, the Maronite Patriarch, Antoun Areeda, in the context of denying rumors to the effect that he advocated non-alignment and rejection of the Middle East Command Proposals, stressed the traditional friendly relations between Lebanon and the Western Powers. The Patriarch was of the opinion that Lebanon should maintain close relations with the Western Powers and that since it was weak and in a delicate position, "it should welcome all assistance for the preservation of its independence and sovereignty," an indirect reference to the effect that the Western Powers intended to do just that.<sup>2</sup>

Thus underlying the different attitudes towards the Western Powers and their proposed Middle East Command, as advocated by individuals, groups and political parties for different reasons, lay a layer of different Christian-Moslem orientations overlapping on the margins

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<sup>1</sup>The views of 'Abdallah al-Yaffi on the demonstrations were registered in "Lebanon, Official Gazette: Parliamentary Debates, the Second Session, Third Meeting, October 23, 1951, p. 583. The views of Kamil Mroueh were given in an editorial: Kamil Mroueh, "The Hundred Guineas," al-Hyat, November 15, 1951. Look up the view of Ibrahim Haydar in: al-Hayat, November 14, 1951.

<sup>2</sup>The Statement of the Patriarch was published by; al-Bayraq, November 25, 1951.

like the colors of a rainbow, but nevertheless, distinct and clear; the Christians were less susceptible to extremism against the West than the Moslems and had a weaker sense of affiliation with the Arabs. Adherents of both religions tended to meet on sympathy towards Egypt and towards other Arab peoples who were striving to lift the yoke of Western imperialism, but when such questions touched on fundamental relations between the West and Lebanon they tended to drift apart.

D. The Government and the Middle East Command.

The Proposals of the Four Powers did not come as a surprise to the Lebanese Government. The visit of General Brian Robertson in February 1950, which was closely followed in March by the visit of George McGhee, had already served notice to the Lebanese Government and other Arab States that a defense project for the Middle East was in the making; but it was not known then how this project was to be designed or implemented. Lebanese diplomacy, however, kept abreast of the developments in Western capitals. When on October 13 the Four Powers submitted their Proposals for a Middle East Command to Egypt, the Lebanese Government had already been informed by its Ambassador in the U.S., Dr. Charles Malik, about the features of the Project. It was also expecting that the Proposals would be submitted first to Egypt and had already received an explanation from the American government as to why such a step was necessary.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Refer to cable by Charles Malik to the President, Khoury, op.cit., p. 418.

But if the Lebanese Government was not caught by surprise, it was ill-prepared to act effectively on such a crucial question. President Khoury at the time was involved in domestic problems and the country was passing a period of instability. About a year earlier President Khoury had duly and legally managed to rally enough support in Parliament to succeed himself, but his parliamentary support did not reflect a popular consensus in that respect. Most of the political parties were against his Regime. The PPS Party, after having attempted a rebellion in 1949, was banned and persecuted. The Progressive Socialist Party was leading the Opposition against the Regime not so much for questions of principle as it was for what was interpreted by Kamal Jumblat as a bias by the authorities against him and in favor of his arch Druze rival, Majeed Arslan.<sup>1</sup> Under President Khoury, Majeed Arslan was almost always given the cabinet post allocated to the Druze and treated as the spokesman of that community in government circles. The Kata'ib Party was not on friendly terms with the Regime either. Its repeated failures in elections were rightly or wrongly attributed to the bias of the authorities and ultimately to the bias of President Khoury.<sup>2</sup> The National Appeal Party, closely associated with the Sulh family and in particular Riad al-Sulh, was alienated when President Khoury asked Riad al-Sulh to resign the Premiership. The significance of the

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<sup>1</sup> Author's interview with Ghassan Tweini at the headquarters of al-Nahar, Hamra Street, August 1967.

<sup>2</sup> "Martha, Martha," al-'Amal, May 7, 1950. See also an open letter by Pierre Gmayyil to President Khoury, al-'Amal, June 18, 1950.

alienation of these parties was not so much for their voting power as it was for their capacity to agitate and indulge in violence.

What was perhaps more important than the opposition of the parties was a general feeling of discontent in the Sunni community. Powerful elements in that community resented the sacking of Riad al-Sulh, the most powerful Sunni figure at the time. Unfriendly feelings towards the Khoury family were further reinforced on the assassination of Riad al-Sulh on June 16, 1951. Although Sulh was assassinated by the PPS Party who was no less the mortal enemy of President Khoury, the President's failure to avenge his death by persecuting members of the already banned party was interpreted by many Sunnis as an act of hostility.

In 1951 the country had not fully recovered from economic dislocations arising from the rupture of economic union with Syria --the Lebanese pound lost 5 percent of its value, unemployment increased, Lebanese investments in Syria were curtailed and symptoms of depression created a general mood of discontent.<sup>1</sup> The political over-tones of the rupture of economic relations with Syria were perhaps more important than the economic consequences. Powerful elements in the Sunni community agitated against the rupture of economic union with Syria, delivered protests to the Government and exerted pressure on the

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<sup>1</sup>Anis Naja, "Economic Relations Between Syria and Lebanon," The Journal of The Chamber of Industry and Commerce, (October 1951), pp. 35-37.

Lebanese authorities to re-establish unity on Syria's terms. Delegations of businessmen, largely Sunni in membership, were shuttling back and forth to Damascus not so much for negotiations as for the co-ordination of their activities with the Syrian authorities.<sup>1</sup> Christian elements, notably the Kata'ib in suspicion of unionist tendencies among the Sunni's, countered by accusing others of disloyalty to the state and exerting pressure on the Government not to give in to Syria's terms for reunion. Under the circumstances, the Government, in view of the instability in the country, could ill afford to take an early decision on the Middle East Command. It was necessary to give it time until the reactions on the domestic front and the Arab front crystalized.

This necessity arose not so much out of overwhelming Arab Power as much as out of a residual weakness in the political system itself. The multitude of individuals, the large number of groups and the several parties which constituted the Lebanese polity tended to coalesce and split up in different combinations on different issues. Because of a weak sense of identification and sometimes the absence of identification between the majority of the populace and the government, discontented individuals, groups and political parties were prone to look for and receive assistance from outside the political system.

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<sup>1</sup>al-Hayat, June 21, 1951. See also the press conference held by Charles Helou, January 23, 1953. al-Nahar, January 24, 1953.

<sup>2</sup>al-Hayat, July 4, 1951. See also Speeches by Joseph Shader and Hamid Franjieh in the House of Deputies: Lebanon, Official Gazette, First Extra-Ordinary Session, the Sixth Meeting, July 3, 1951. p. 145.

It was basically this phenomenon which rendered the government hypersensitive about the reactions on the domestic front and the reactions in neighbouring Arab States.

The reactions towards the Middle East Command, as elaborated above in the preceding section, were controversial. For different reasons some people chose a positive attitude towards the Western Powers in general and the Middle East Command in particular while others chose a negative attitude. In the estimation of President Khoury, the majority of the Lebanese were in favor of collaboration with the West in a defense project.<sup>1</sup> Evidently in a free homogeneous democratic system the Government could have easily sustained a public stand for the Middle East Command supported by the majority. But President Khoury preferred to avoid a public stand and resorted to secret diplomacy. Why was it that he behaved in this manner?

The answer lies more in the nature of the political system than in the personal characteristics of President Khoury. The Lebanese polity was free enough to allow for controversy, but it was not homogeneous enough to restrict all opposition to the due process of law. The minorities in opposition were likely to resort to violence if and when the government took an open and a clear stand in favor of the Middle East Command. Such activities create a serious threat to

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<sup>1</sup>Khoury, op.cit., p. 358.

the Regime on support from outside the country mainly from the Arab States and in particular Syria. The majority could have very well sustained a policy in favor of the Middle East Command, but to what extent was this majority prepared to sustain the Regime of President Khoury? The Indications were that some elements of the majority would have quite happily watched the defeat of President Khoury by those who opposed the Middle East Command. For example, the PPS Party, deputy in opposition Camille Chamoun, deputy in opposition Emile Bustani, all pro-West on the Middle East Command, were at the same time among the most ardent enemies of President Khoury. The President could not, therefore, expect them to support him in a showdown between the Regime and its enemies on the Middle East Command even though they were for alignment. Thus he preferred not to allow the authorities to give any statement on the Middle East Command until further developments.

The absence of official statements about the Middle East Command exposed the Government to the criticism that it failed to formulate a policy towards a crucial question which involved the country and the area as a whole.<sup>1</sup> But at the same time the Government was noting that criticisms from the radicals and pro-West sources were diametrically opposed. Although the policy of the state was not officially revealed, the radicals were accusing the Government of bias towards the West and

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<sup>1</sup>"Extemporaneous Politics Have Been and Still Are the Cause of Our Confusion," al-'Amal, November 2, 1951.

of having offered Egypt nothing but verbal support.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, pro-West elements were likewise accusing it of having gone too far in appeasing Egypt to the detriment of vital Lebanese interests.<sup>2</sup> These controversial criticism if anything encouraged the authorities to stay the course of secret diplomacy. Throughout October and November, while the press and the public were debating the Middle East Command, the Government did not table the proposals of the Middle East Command on the agenda of the House of Deputies. The deputies, on becoming restless about the silence of the Government took the initiative themselves and on November 13 passed a motion from the floor to schedule the Middle East Command on the agenda for discussion.<sup>3</sup> On November 20 when the topic came up for discussion, the Government has rallied enough support to suppress it. Premier Yaffi refused discussion on the grounds that the Government was still consulting with other Arab States and that information on the defense project was incomplete.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See for example the views of deputy Ali Bazzi: Lebanon, Official Gazette, 2nd Ordinary Session, 3rd Meeting, October 23, 1951, p. 578.

<sup>2</sup>"We Derive Our Attitude From The Higher Interests Of Lebanon," al-'Amal, October 21, 1951.

<sup>3</sup>The motion was introduced by deputies Emile Bustani and Hashim al-Huseini. It was passed by unanimity. Lebanon, Official Gazette, 2nd Ordinary Session, 8th Meeting, November 13, 1951, p. 803.

<sup>4</sup>Lebanon, Official Gazette, 2nd Ordinary Session, 10th Meeting, November 20, 1951, pp. 833-35.



In the meanwhile President Khoury had formed an advisory council composed of members of the cabinet, the speaker and ex-speakers of the House of Deputies, and ex-ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defense.<sup>1</sup> The members of the Council were among the most influential leaders in public life, and wielded substantial influence in the House of Deputies. Moreover, due to the nature of the portfolios which they held at one time or another, these leaders were in a position to give the Government enlightened advice on matters of foreign affairs and defense. The Advisory Council convened on two occasions. The first was on October 29 after Lebanon had received the second memorandum from the Four Powers denoting that they were going ahead with the Middle East Command and that Lebanon, the Arab States and Israel were requested to deliver their comments on the Command if they wished to do so. The second occasion was on November 10 when the Council discussed the developments related to the Middle East Command in the light of the joint statement which was delivered by the Four Powers on that same day.<sup>2</sup>

The Council constituted more or less an exclusive club whose members alternated in and out of office holding the most revered portfolios in the state. By keeping them informed of the developments and asking for their advice, the President was undoubtedly trying to remove the issue of the Middle East Command from the realm of

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<sup>1</sup>Khoury, op.cit., p. 426. See also al-Nahar, November, 1951.

<sup>2</sup>Khoury, op.cit., pp. 425, 427, 431.

partisan politics.<sup>1</sup>

By suppressing the question in the House of Deputies while at the same time deliberating at length on the Middle East Command with an Advisory Council, the Government demonstrated clearly a phenomenon of political life in the country: The Legislature was not strong enough to match what was expected of it by the constitution as the supreme decision-making body in the state. The executive with the association of a limited number of individuals had the capacity to deny the House of Deputies the opportunity to discuss a crucial question such as the MEC which involved matters vital to the security of the state.<sup>2</sup>

While the Government was trying to avoid any comments in public about the Middle East Command, official spokesmen were repeatedly giving statements in support of Egypt's national demands.<sup>3</sup> There was no risk

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<sup>1</sup>Muhieddine Nusuli, "One Front," Beirut, October 31, 1951. The members of the Advisory Council were: Alfred Naqqash, Ahmed al-Assa'd 'Abdullah al-Yaffi, Charles Helou, Philip Takla, Rashid Baydoun, Sabri Hemadeh, Habib Abu Shahlah, Sami al-Sulh, Sa'di al-Munla, Hussein al-Uweini, Majeed Arslan, Kamil Chamoun, Hameed Franjeh, Henry Phar'aoun and Sa'eb Salam.

<sup>2</sup>Ghassan Tweini, "On The Margin Of The Constitution," al-Nahar, November 20, 1951. Review also the parliamentary debates: Lebanon, Official Gazette, 2nd Ordinary Session, November 20, 1951, pp. 832-35.

<sup>3</sup>See for example the statement of Foreign Minister Helou: al-'Amal, October 16, 1951, p. 3. On October 18, the House of Deputies passed a motion by unanimity in support of Egypt to which the Government subscribed. The motion was cabled to Egypt and read thus:

The House of Deputies sends brotherly and appreciative greetings to Egypt - King, Parliament, Government and people; and declares Lebanon's support to Egypt in its great struggle for independence and its endeavor for the realization of its national objectives. The House asks the Government to work in co-ordination with other Arab States in support of Egypt's righteous holy cause.

The text of the cable as published by the Official Gazette, 2nd Ordinary Session, 8th Meeting, October 18, 1951, p. 557.

involved on the domestic front in that respect, for there was a consensus in the country among anti-West and pro-West factions in support of Egypt's quest for independence. Similarly, the Arab States were unanimously in agreement over the necessity of achieving full independence for Egypt. But if the Government was careful not to offend Egypt, the Lebanese people, and the Arab States on the question of Egyptian demands for full sovereignty, it was likewise careful not to offend the Western Powers who wielded substantial influence in the country and in various parts of the Arab World. Thus all statements delivered in support of Egypt's quest for independence had no reference to Britain. When on the 25th of October the students demonstrated against the Western Powers who sponsored the Middle East Command project, the Government quickly suppressed them under the pretext that subversive elements infiltrated their ranks.<sup>1</sup> There was, however, another and perhaps a more important reason for the suppression; the Government did not desire to allow violent activities in the country of which the Western Powers could take offense. President Khoury in his memoirs hinted in several places about the magnitude of intervention by the embassies of the Three Major Western Powers in Lebanese internal affairs.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>al-'Amal, October 24 and 25, 1951. See also Lebanon, Official Gazette, 2nd Ordinary Session, 4th Meeting, October 25, 1951, pp. 915-917.

<sup>2</sup>Khoury, op.cit., pp. 320, 426, 436, 450, 471.

While the Government was trying as much as possible to freeze<sup>81</sup> the internal repercussions which were fermented by the Middle East Command Proposals, consultations were being held with other Arab States.<sup>1</sup> The Syrian Government was divided over the issue of alignment. One faction under the leadership of Faidhi al-Atassi, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, was against the proposed alliance holding that approval constituted a betrayal to Egypt. Another faction under Prime Minister Hassan al-Hakeem held that an attitude in the negative towards the West was not in the interest of the Arab States.<sup>2</sup> The proposed alliance, Hakeem maintained, would be a guarantee to Syria and the Arab States against Israeli aggression.<sup>3</sup> The conflicting views of the two factions precipitated a cabinet crisis which culminated in the resignation of Prime Minister Hakeem on November 7.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, it was estimated that Faris al-Khoury, a distinguished Syrian politician and an old hand in diplomacy, backed up by Abib Shishakli, The Syrian Chief of Staff, would be able to exercise a moderating influence on the anti-Western faction in the Government.

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<sup>1</sup> al-'Amal, October 18, 1951. al-Hayat, October 16, 1951. al-Hayat, October 20, 1951. See statement by Premier Yaffi on the necessity of holding consultations with other Arab States before a decision is taken on the Middle East Command. al-Nahar, November 7, 1951, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> al-Hayat, October 25, 1951, The views of Hassan al-Hakeem were reported in al-Hayat, November 3, 1951.

<sup>3</sup> Hassan al-Hakeem was also reported to have said: "Egypt should have consulted other Arab States in accordance with the Arab League Charter." Jerusalem Post, November 7, 1951, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> al-Nahar, November 8, 1951.

The position of Saudi Arabia was well known. Saudi Arabia was closely associated with the United States and had leased an air base to the U.S. at Dhahran a year earlier. Moreover, Crown Prince Sa'ud 'Abdul 'Aziz Sa'ud, had stated early in October to the correspondent of an American newspaper, the Cleveland Plain Dealer, that in case of a war between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, Saudi Arabia would take the side of the U.S., thus leaving no doubt about the inclinations of his country on questions of alignment.<sup>1</sup>

The Hashimite Kingdoms of Iraq and Jordan had little choice indeed, for they were both tied up by treaty commitments to Britain and provided accommodations for British forces on their territories.<sup>2</sup>

The Government of Saudi Arabia, Prime Minister Hassan al-Hakeem of Syria, Prime Minister Abul Huda of Jordan and Prime Minister Nuri-al Sa'id of Iraq, had communicated to President Khoury their disapproval of Egypt's immediate and outright rejection of the Proposals, but they were at the same time careful not to state publicly what they thought of Egypt's attitude. They feared reprisal by Arab nationalist public opinion in their countries.<sup>3</sup>

The Lebanese Government had no objection to the principle

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<sup>1</sup>For the declaration of Prince Sa'ud see al-Nahar, October 16, 1951.

<sup>2</sup>For the disposition of Iraq see the report of the Middle East News Agency, al-Nahar, October 18, 1951. For a summary on the position of the Arab States see: Campbell, Defense of the Middle East, op.cit., p. 46.

<sup>3</sup>Khoury, op.cit., pp. 429-30.

of alignment. Lebanon was far too committed to the West economically, culturally, politically and in almost every conceivable way to entertain neutrality. Soviet-Lebanese relations were almost of no consequence, and Soviet culture and way of life, contrary to those of the West, were hardly known in the country. Lebanon as a small country in a sphere of Western influence was hardly in a position to sustain a neutral policy against the will of the Western Powers. It was estimated that in case of a world war Lebanon reluctantly would have to take the side of the West; "so why not opt for alignment," President Khoury argued, "and derive some credit for our support."<sup>1</sup>

But while the Lebanese authorities were inclined towards alignment in principle, they were not ready to join the Middle East Command or any other defense project without having assurances to the effect that Lebanese demands and interests would be fulfilled. The demands which were asked of the sponsors of the Middle East Command were the following: a guarantee for the independence and sovereignty of Lebanon; the exclusion of Israel from the Middle East Command Organization; assurances that the Command would not change the status quo in the Arab World, that it would not compromise the sovereignty of Lebanon nor any other Arab State; assurances that all participants in the Command would be on equal footing, that the Command would not become operative on Lebanese territories except in a state of war, and

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<sup>1</sup>See message by President Khoury to King Abdul Aziz Sa'ud of Saudi Arabia: Ibid., pp. 422-23.

finally that Lebanese troops would not be asked to operate outside the Lebanese domain.<sup>1</sup>

Other finer points were also taken up with the British and American Ambassadors in Beirut. The role of each sponsor in the proposed alliance was investigated. The Government and in particular President Khoury was not enthusiastic about the prospects of Turkish and French participation. Turkey's past record in the Arab World and in particular Lebanon was not encouraging. It was still suspected of harboring expansionist ambitions in Norther Syria and the Mosul area in Iraq.<sup>2</sup> France was also suspected of harboring ambitions in Syria and Lebanon, out of which it had been dislodged only too recently. President Khoury would have preferred not to allow French troops on Lebanese territory, but if such a step was necessary then he had to have sufficient guarantees that they would depart when the time came. Britain and the U.S. were his best bet for such guarantees; Britain for its traditional and uneasy relationship with France in the Arab East and the U.S. for the absence of a colonial record in the area.

But if Britain could be relied upon to checkmate Turkish and French ambitions, it could not be relied upon to checkmate the

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<sup>1</sup>The demands were accumulated from different sources, refer to the following: al-Hayat, November 4, 1951. "The Various Points of View on the Middle East Command: A Survey and a Critique," al-Anba', November 9, 1951, al-Hayat, October 31, 1951.

<sup>2</sup>See cable by Ambassador Charles Malik to President Khoury: Khoury, op.cit., p. 418.

ambitions of the Hashimites its closest allies if and when an opportunity presented itself in the future. The U.S. was, therefore, viewed as the best guarantee for the security of Lebanon and no efforts were spared to cultivate close relations with it. Accordingly, deputy Habib Abu Shahla, a close associate of President Khoury, several times a minister and once speaker of the House of Deputies, was requested to feel out the American Ambassador on the possibility of having Lebanon as the exclusive domain of American troops in the event of war or in the event that occupation became inevitable. The American Ambassador could not give a definite statement in that respect. He reminded his visitor that the high command of the Middle East Allied Command would be in British hands and that at the beginning American troops would be in the minority. Nevertheless, he continued, the American Government would see to it that there would be enough troops in Lebanon so as to insure its security.<sup>1</sup>

The discussions with the ambassadors of the sponsoring powers were preliminary and tentative. They were more or less of a prospective nature designed to feel out the attitudes of the various parties concerned. Final commitments in view of the common political and strategic interests in the area had to have the joint approval of the Four Sponsors after having passed clearance in Washington, London, Paris and Ankara.

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<sup>1</sup>al-Bayrak, November 25, 1951.



Lebanese expectations of the sponsoring powers suffered a temporary setback on October 26 when it was reported that the United States, Britain, France and Turkey delivered a joint memorandum to the effect that they were going ahead in organizing the Middle East Command with or without the approval of the Arab States and that Israel was invited to participate.<sup>1</sup> President Khoury, on the receipt of the Memorandum, convened the Advisory Council on October 29 for consultations. The minutes of the meeting were not disclosed. The communique which was issued on that occasion simply stated that after consultations the meeting was adjourned on the understanding that it would be resumed again on the receipt of further information.<sup>2</sup>

In the meantime, President Khoury requested the presence of the British Ambassador and expressed his dissatisfaction with the attitude of the proposing powers. The Memorandum, he said, did not give any guarantees for our independence and contrary to previous promises contemplated the participation of Israel. "In short," he continued,

the Four Powers did not treat the Arab States as sovereign states should be treated. We are faced with two alternatives: either to say we have no comments on a defense program which has not been laid down yet; or to say we don't accept to be addressed in this manner. If it is a question of coercion then there is no need for communiques nor for an exchange of answers back and forth. Might is capable of doing whatever it desires, but I should like to remind you in this respect

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<sup>1</sup> al-Hayat, October 28, 30, 1951.

<sup>2</sup> The text of the Communique was published in: al-Bayrak, November 1, 1951.

that such an attitude contradicts the Charter of the United Nations and we are members of that organization entitled to a status of equality with the major powers.<sup>1</sup>

The official answer to the Memorandum, however, did not have the offensive tone with which the President addressed the British Ambassador. In giving his briefs on the draft memorandum in answer to the Four Powers, the President instructed his subordinates:

It is necessary to avoid any expressions or measures which could invite occupation; inquire about the dimensions of the defense project in peace and in war; stress on the necessity of having full and adequate guarantees for our independence and sovereignty; express reservations with regard to Israel who is still in a state of war with the Arab States.<sup>2</sup>

Although the Lebanese Government was displeased with the attitude of the Four Powers, it did not desire to offend them out of fear that a dispute might culminate in reprisal.

It did not take the Four Sponsoring Powers long to realize that an offensive attitude was not rewarding. On November 1, the British Ambassador in Beirut delivered a note to President Khoury containing: appreciation for his moderate stand on Arab affairs; assurances to the effect that the Middle East Command was not related to Egyptian national demands and that it did not impose on the Arabs co-operation with the State of Israel. The note ended by notifying the government that within a short period the specific terms of the Middle East Command would be spelled out, and that in the meanwhile

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<sup>1</sup>Khoury, op.cit., pp. 425-26.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 427.

the Arab States could postpone a definite decision on the matter.<sup>1</sup> Britain was probably afraid that if it pressed the Arab States for an early decision, the answer would have been most probably in the negative.

On November 10, with the receipt of the Four Sponsoring Powers Joint Statement on the specifications and the nature of the Middle East Command, most of the official apprehensions towards the intentions of the Western Powers were removed. The declaration hinged on the preservation of the status quo in the area, guaranteed the territorial sovereignty of the regional states, assured all participants in the command of equal status, promised financial and economic assistance, and hinted that requests for arms on approval by the High Commander would be reviewed sympathetically by the Sponsoring Powers.<sup>2</sup>

The Joint Statement was well received by the Government especially since it was followed by assurances from Britain that the independence of Lebanon was guaranteed.<sup>3</sup> The Advisory Council convened again on the 10th of November, but its counsel was divided.

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<sup>1</sup>Khoury, op.cit., pp. 428-29. The note which was delivered to President Khoury reflected the beginning of a change in the attitude of the major Western Powers towards the Arab States. This change was further clarified by a joint statement on November 10.

<sup>2</sup>Supra, pp. 57-58. Reference to Israel was dropped.

<sup>3</sup>Khoury, op.cit., p. 429.

One group advocated that Lebanon should drop all reservations on the project, for the policy of the Sponsoring Powers as expressed by the Joint Statement promoted the primary objectives of Lebanese policy: maintenance of the status quo in the region and the preservation of the territorial sovereignty of the Arab States.<sup>1</sup> Another group counseled caution maintaining that the assurances in the Joint Statement were not enough and requesting further inquiries into the meaning of certain phrases. Above all, it was argued, an early positive decision was bound to undermine Egypt's position. Why not postpone a final decision until the forthcoming meeting of the Arab League Political Committee in Paris where Nuri al-Sai'd would undertake reconciliation between Britain and Egypt. A decision in the light of the discussions in Paris, it was argued, would be more rewarding.<sup>2</sup>

The conflict between Egypt and the sponsors of the Middle East Command constituted a dilemma to the Lebanese authorities. If they approved of alignment or opened up negotiations towards that end, Egypt would be alienated, and if they rejected the Western Proposals, France, Britain and the U.S. would retaliate. Lebanon was not capable of withstanding the pressures of either party. The only way out of the dilemma was to resolve it by reconciliation, but Lebanon was not secure enough to assume that role officially without incurring serious damage in the process. President Khoury declined a request from the

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<sup>1</sup>al-Hayat, November 13, 1951.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

British Government to act in that capacity officially.<sup>1</sup> Unofficially, however, Lebanese diplomacy sought reconciliation. The Sponsoring Powers were urged to give in to Egyptian national demands and to seek a solution to the Palestinian Problem. Moreover, they were counseled for a better understanding of the hopes and aspirations of the Arab peoples.<sup>2</sup>

Meanwhile Egypt was counseled to keep the door open for negotiations with Britain. The Lebanese Government maintained that Egypt in view of its commitments under the Covenant of the Arab League and the Treaty of Joint Defense and Economic co-operation, had no right to reject unilaterally a regional defense project such as the Middle East Command without consulting the Arab States.<sup>3</sup> Such consultations were the more necessary since Egypt had asked of the Arab States not to accede to the proposed Command without consulting with them first.<sup>4</sup> Accordingly Lebanon counseled Egypt to postpone a final decision on the Middle East Command and requested a meeting of the Arab League

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<sup>1</sup>Khoury, op.cit., p. 420.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. Refer also to the speech of Foreign Minister, Helou, at the U.N. General Assembly. Beirut, November 23, 1951. Refer also to speech made by Dr. Charles Malik at a reunion of American Lebanese in reply to George McGhee, al-Ahrar, October 1, 1951.

<sup>3</sup>Iraq maintained the same views; See the report of the Middle East New Agency, al-Nahar, October 18, 1951.

<sup>4</sup>Khoury, op.cit., p. 422-23.

Political Committee to discuss the issue.<sup>1</sup> Similar requests were made by Syria and Iraq.<sup>2</sup> Egypt, however, did not respond to such requests out of fear that the Arab States would undermine its position.<sup>3</sup>

In a further effort towards reconciliation, President Khoury asked for the intervention of King Sa'ud on October 23. King Sa'ud was an ideal mediator, for he was closely associated with Egypt in a common cause against the ambitions of the Hashimites and at the same time a close friend of the United States. President Khoury in a letter to Sa'ud expressed disappointment with Egypt's behavior: its unilateral rejection of the Middle East Command, its disregard for the Arab States and its "short-sighted" policy. He argued for an understanding with the West.

Isn't it preferable to arrange for a mutual defense project in agreement with the Western Powers on the basis of equality after having taken the necessary guarantees for our sovereignty, and to resolve the problems of the Arabs in a satisfactory way especially the problem of Palestine, instead of having to put up with a military occupation of unknown consequences during war or thereafter.

Could his Majesty the King explain these facts to whom it may concern before the situation degenerates irretrievably.

Is it possible for his Majesty without official reconciliation to contact Egypt, the Western Powers and other Arab States so as to determine this principle first and then to build for the future in its light before the matter slips from the hands of the governments into the hands of the blind street.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>al-Amal, October 18, 1951.

<sup>2</sup>al-'Amal, October 18, 1951.

<sup>3</sup>"Egypt Beware of the Arab League," al-Sharq, October 26, 1951.

<sup>4</sup>See message by President Khoury to King 'Abdul 'Aziz of Saudi Arabia: Khoury op.cit., pp. 422-23.

King Sa'ud answered on the 29th of October. He declined the use of his good offices on the grounds that the Anglo-Egyptian dispute was too severe to lend itself to reconciliation. Like President Khoury, the King disapproved of the methods which Egypt used for the attainment of its national demands, and, likewise, disapproved of the unreconciliatory attitude of Britain and the U.S.; which he described as "our friends."<sup>1</sup>

On the eve of November 10, the Lebanese Government having received the Joint Statement of the Four Powers, requested the Arab League Political Committee to meet in Paris.<sup>2</sup> Egypt could hardly excuse itself as it had done before, because the Arab States had already dispatched delegations to the French Capital to participate in the United Nations General Assembly debates in that city.

President Khoury's inclinations and the line of policy that he wanted to pursue in Paris were apparent from the composition of the delegation that was dispatched. Foreign Minister Helou, was appointed as the head of the delegation and Dr. Charles Malik, the ambassador of Lebanon to the U.S. was ranked as second-in-command. Malik's appointment was neither coincidental nor according to protocol. Two other members nominated for the delegation, Dr. Fuad Ammoun, the Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,

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<sup>1</sup> See message by King Abdul Azziz of Saudi Arabia to President Khoury: Ibid., p. 424.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 429.

and Ahmed al-Da'ouk, the Lebanese Ambassador to France, should have had seniority over Malik; the former for his higher office and the latter for his age and his post in the French capital. 'Ammoun and Da'ouk protested. Khoury, nevertheless, ignored their protests and allowed them to drop from the delegation. The President was keen on preserving good relations with the U.S. and "Malik had close contacts with the U.S. delegation to the U.N. General Assembly in Paris.<sup>1</sup>

Malik's appointment was not without consequence. In Paris he declined to introduce the Moroccan Question to the U.N. General Assembly and tried to convince the delegations of the Arab States that it was not in their interest to do so either. He argued that if the Arab States did not raise the question they might win France to their side in the Anglo-Egyptian dispute and create a better atmosphere for negotiating the Middle East Command. However, Malik did not succeed nor were his views appealing to some members of the Lebanese Delegation.<sup>2</sup> It was reported that Malik got into a heated argument with Jamil Mekkawi, the Ambassador of Lebanon to Geneva and a junior member of the delegation, on the Moroccan Question. Malik maintained that Lebanon should not go to the extreme in offending France so that the interests of the many thousand Lebanese immigrants in French Africa could be preserved. Mekkawa, on the other hand, thought that Arab

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 430. See also Beirut, November 7, 8, 1951.

<sup>2</sup>al-Diyar, December 6, 1951.



identity was more important than considerations related to the immigrants.<sup>1</sup> It is pertinent to note in this context that Malik was a Lebanese nationalist and a Christian while Mekkawi was a Sunni and a previous member of the Islamic-oriented Arab nationalist Najjadah Party.

Having failed to win the approval of the Arab delegations, the Lebanese Delegates did not raise the Moroccan Question themselves, but endorsed the general policy of the Arabs. Nevertheless, they made every possible move to dissociate themselves from Arab extremism. Malik and Helou spoke in Parisian circles of the traditional friendship between Lebanon and France. When the Syrian delegate, Ahmed al-Shukayri, and the Iraqi delegate, Fadhil al-Jamali, delivered vehement criticisms of French policy in North Africa and in particular Morocco, both Helou and Malik were absent. Even the mild speech for Lebanon was not delivered by either Helou or Malik, but by a junior member of the Lebanese Delegation, Bahij Takeiuddine.<sup>2</sup>

The council of Lebanon on the Moroccan Question was only one of the various methods used in the cause of bringing about a rapprochement between the Arabs and the major Western Powers. Other steps involved unofficial attempts for reconciliation between Eden, the British Foreign Minister, and Mohammad Salahuddine of Egypt, who were both available in Paris. Salahuddine was urged to postpone a final

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<sup>1</sup>al-Diyar, December 13, 1951.

<sup>2</sup>al-Diyar, November 25, 1951.

rejection of the Middle East Command, and Eden, in the meanwhile, was counseled to give concessions on Egyptian national demands and on the Palestinian Question.<sup>1</sup> Lebanon did not carry enough weight with either party to bring about a solution to the dispute. Its efforts were not, however, totally wasted. The moderate policy of Lebanon was probably instrumental in promoting the vested interests of the Western Powers in the sovereignty of the state. It is perhaps significant to note that while Lebanese diplomats were attempting reconciliation between Egypt and Britain, Anthony Eden reaffirmed what had been already affirmed by diplomatic channels, that the sovereignty of Lebanon was guaranteed. He was, moreover, interpreted as having given assurances to the effect that French military presence in the Levant would not pose a threat to the independence of Lebanon.<sup>2</sup>

The Asiatic Arab delegations to Paris, with the exception of Syria whose position was equivocal, followed a similar policy. They counseled Egypt to retreat from its former position (rejection of the Middle East Command) and recommended postponement until a satisfactory solution could be found to the Anglo-Egyptian dispute. Nuri al-Sa'id, after several meetings with Anthony Eden and Mohammad Salahuddine, proposed as a solution the removal of the British base at Suez from the Western bank of the Canal to Sinai--a sparsely inhabited

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<sup>1</sup>al-Hayat, November 4 and November 16, 1951. It was also reported by U.N. sources in Paris that Lebanon and Iraq were inclined to join the Middle East Command. Jerusalem Post, November 26, 1951, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>See Statement by Prime Minister Yaffi on November 15, 1951. al-Hayat, November 16, 1951.

desert territory--but his proposals were not accepted.<sup>1</sup>

When the Arab League Political Committee tried to draft a Communique about the discussions in Paris, Egypt and the other Arab States reached a dead end. Mohammad Salahuddine, the Egyptian Foreign Minister, presented a draft which included a denunciation of the proposed Middle East Command, but the Hashimites and Saudi Arabia would not endorse it.<sup>2</sup>

Lebanon maintained the position that whatever the Arab States agreed on, it would endorse.<sup>3</sup> This position was typical of Lebanon's policy in a showdown between Arab States in disagreement. It was actually a policy of disengagement rather than neutrality, for Lebanon like the Asiatic Arab States, had counseled Egyptian postponement. Egypt did not postpone and Lebanon did not endorse, but instead of standing up to Egypt as the Hashimites did, it used Arab disagreement as a pretext to relieve itself of endorsement. In this way it simultaneously avoided offense to Egypt, the Hashimites and the Major Western Powers, thus dodging the disturbances which any party was capable of inflicting on its internal front.

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<sup>1</sup>al-Nahar, December 31, 1951.

<sup>2</sup>Khoury, op.cit., p. 432.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

By the end of November, in recognition that all attempts for reconciliation were futile, discussions were allowed to lapse. The Arab States which were inclined to join the Middle East Command did not deem it feasible to join a defense pact with the Western Powers while the Anglo-Egyptian dispute was getting worse than before. During the month of November, the situation in the Suez Zone had deteriorated into a state of undeclared war.<sup>1</sup> Each clash between Egyptians and British forces precipitated a wave of anti-Western reactions throughout the Arab World. Under the circumstances, the Arab Governments could ill-afford to alienate Egypt by adhering to the Middle East Command. It was feared that such action would arouse the indignation of nationalist public opinion. Lebanon was no exception.

#### E. Appraisal

The demands which were asked of the Four Powers, Britain, the United States, France and Turkey by the Lebanese Government were focused on matters related to national security. Three sources of threat to national security were envisaged by President Khoury: the Arab States, Israel, and France. The preservation of the status quo in the Arab World was a matter of vital importance to the security of Lebanon. Syria had always entertained latent motives for the annexation of Lebanon and the Hashimite Kingdom of Jordan and Iraq openly supported the Greater Syria and the Fertile Crescent projects both

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<sup>1</sup>Halford Haskins, The Middle East (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1957), p. 74.

of which involved Lebanon.

In the interest of national security, the Lebanese authorities pursued a policy of checks and balances in the Arab World. In opposition to the Hashimite schemes, they collaborated closely with Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Syria. Whenever the Syrians over-played their hands in Lebanese affairs, the Lebanese authorities asked Saudi Arabia and Egypt to intervene on their behalf in the interest of solidifying the anti-Hashimite front.

The Lebanese authorities also envisaged in Israel another source of threat to their security. To counter balance this threat Lebanon relied and co-operated with the Arab States. It would suffice for our purposes in this context to mention that Lebanon participated in the Arab Israeli war in 1948 and acceded to the Arab collective security pact on June 7, 1951. Arab support against Israel was, however, insufficient. In 1948 Israel ended up by occupying several border villages despite Arab support, but its forces were quickly dislodged by the intervention of the three Major Western Powers and the Vatican. Since that date the Israeli threat had been always a factor which dictated a certain measure of good relations between Lebanon and the Western powers.

Lebanon's interest did not, however, coincide with the policies of the three Major Western Powers in every respect. Britain's close association with the Hashimites, whose ambitions Lebanon feared, was counter-balanced by preserving close and friendly relations with France. The French Government opposed the extension of British

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influence into its ex-mandates, Syria and Lebanon. But while French support was useful as a counter-balance to Britain, likewise British support was needed as a precaution against the return of French influence to the Levant. In that logic Bishara al-Khoury was meticulously bent on keeping French and British influence in Lebanon on equal footing so that the two Powers could check each other and in the process preserve the sovereignty of the State.

Lebanese diplomacy could not afford, however, to rely on a permanent balance between France and Britain. The possibility that the two powers might at a certain point in time arrive at an accord whereby they might divide the region into spheres of influence could not be ruled out. The colonial tradition of Britain and France needed a counter-balance which was found in the U.S., the largest of the Western Powers, which had no colonial tradition to speak of, and certainly none in the Arab World. Accordingly, President Khoury developed close relations with that state.

When in 1951 the three Major Western Powers in conjunction with Turkey sought the alignment of the Middle Eastern States, the Lebanese authorities wanted to learn about their disposition with respect to the above-mentioned matters which were vital to their security. The three Major Western Powers had already issued the Tripartite Declaration in May 1950, an instrument in which they declared their opposition to the violation of borders and armistice lines in the area. This declaration was, therefore, essentially an instrument of the status quo, the objective which Lebanese diplomacy strove to preserve. Lebanese fears about the sovereignty of the State were further reduced

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when on November 10, the Four Proposing Powers issued a joint state- 100  
ment which did not only guarantee the security of the participant  
States but also presented the Middle East Command in such a way as to  
exclude any possibility of changing the status quo in the area by the  
use of force. Britain and the United States, moreover, gave explicit  
guarantees for the preservation of Lebanon's independence against  
any threat emanating from Israel and France. The United States  
assured the Lebanese authorities that whatever might happen with regard  
to the Greater Syria or the Fertile Crescent projects the sover-  
eignty of Lebanon would be guaranteed. The United States indeed  
went far enough to state that it was willing to give the Lebanese  
authorities such assurances in written form on demand.

On recognition that the proposing powers had met most of the  
primary demands of Lebanon, the Lebanese authorities became well  
disposed to open up negotiations for the conclusion of a defense  
alliance. This disposition did not dictate any radical shift in  
Lebanese foreign policy. Lebanese foreign policy had been previously  
supporting the Western Powers in matters related to the Cold War  
between East and West such as disarmament and the Korean Question.

Beside these positive aspects which encouraged Lebanon to  
accept the idea of alignment with the West, there were also negative  
factors which if ignored would have caused serious damage to Lebanon's  
well-being in every respect. The Lebanese authorities could hardly  
ignore the fact that they were living in a region which was largely  
a sphere of Western influence.

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Any offensive attitude towards the three Major Powers would have entailed reprisals on the regional level which Lebanon could have hardly sustained. But perhaps of more importance than the regional reprisals were the direct economic and political measures, which the Western Powers could have brought to bear on Lebanon. It was obvious, for example, that the three Major Western Powers could have crippled the Lebanese economy, which in large measure thrived on services between the Western World and the Arab World. Other methods of political pressure involved intervention in Lebanese internal affairs. There was first the possibility of alienating Christian public opinion and/or Lebanese nationalist public opinion if and when Lebanon severed its relations with the Western Powers. The Statement of the Maronite Patriarch and the character of the demonstrations which took place against the Middle East Command Proposals were forewarnings as to the potential existence of this possibility. There was, moreover, the potentiality of having a close collaboration between the enemies of the Regime and the embassies of the three Major Western Powers. If the characteristics of the Lebanese political system as stated in the introduction are borne in mind, the repercussions of a collaboration between the embassies of the three Major Powers and the enemies of the Government would become obvious. President Khoury, in the fall of 1951, was experiencing difficulties on the internal front. An offensive attitude towards the Western Powers could have been crucial to his political career.

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In view of the above-mentioned factors, be they potential or actual, positive or negative, the Lebanese government was not in a position to reject the Middle East Command Proposals.

But if the Lebanese Government found good reasons not to reject the Middle East Defense Proposals and not to offend the three Western Major Powers, it had also to reckon with other realities which dictated against a unilateral participation in a defense alliance with the Western Powers without the concurrence of the Arab States or at least the actual participation of some of them. The participation of other Arab States did not materialize due to the existence of circumstances which could not be surmounted by the Arab States or the Western Powers at that time. The Arab peoples in the early fifties were revolting against the colonialism of Britain and France in their regions. They had also suffered a defeat at the hands of the Israelis of which the Western Powers could not absolve themselves. Their first and foremost concern was in emancipating themselves from British and French imperialism which were a going concern, rather than in undertaking precautions against a prospective Soviet invasion which they had not experienced.

The Western Powers realized these circumstances and the anti-Western currents which they fermented. But none of them was ready to accept a total withdrawal of Western military forces from the Middle East. Such a withdrawal would have constituted a power vacuum which would have weakened the strategic position of the Western Powers against the Soviet Union and dislodged other vested British and French colonial interests in the Arab World. The Anglo-Egyptian dispute was only a

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phenomenon of all-embrasive conflict between the Arabs and the West. If Britain was going to give in to Egypt while Mussadiq had seemingly succeeded in dislodging Britain from Persia, it was feared that other Arab States would follow suit and accept nothing short of dislodging the Western Powers from their territories. The solution to the Egyptian question was found by replacing the outmoded Anglo-Egyptian Treaty with a more modern collective defense treaty which would have not only perpetuated the existence of British forces on Egyptian Territories, but would have, likewise, introduced other foreign forces with them. To the Western Powers such an arrangement constituted a suitable precedent in dealing with other colonial disputes in the area as they erupted. But to the Egyptians who were not concerned about the Soviet threat, the Middle East Command Proposals constituted a perpetuation of colonialism. This view was more or less shared with radical Arab public opinion everywhere.

While the Lebanese Government could not entirely reject the Proposals of the Western Powers, it could not accept unilateral entry into the Middle East Command out of fear of Egyptian retaliation. The Egyptian Government by articulating radical Arab public opinion had succeeded in inhibiting other Arab governments from negotiating alignment with the Proposing Powers. Egypt actually captured the Arab orbit of which Lebanon was a member. Had the Lebanese Government opened up negotiations on the Middle East Command, it would have risked retaliation not only from Egypt, but probably also from Syria, and surely from radical quarters throughout the Arab World.

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Public opinion in Lebanon was not totally radical, a substantial portion of the press advocated a solution of the Arab-Western problems within the framework of an anti-Soviet bloc, which was in principle on similar lines with what the West was trying to do. But there was also a radical public in Lebanon advocating solidarity with Egypt and an uncompromising attitude towards the Western Powers. The Government could hardly ignore that sector of public opinion as it was apparent that it enjoyed substantial support in Islamic quarters. Consequently, it could be said that inasmuch as the Government was prudent by not rejecting the Middle East Command Proposals, it was also prudent by laying a condition on their acceptance, the concurrence of the Arab States, a concurrence which was not forthcoming because of Egypt.

Lebanon was actually a part of two orbits, the Western orbit and the Arab orbit, and as such all conflicts between the Arabs and the Western Powers were not in its interest. Its interest was, therefore, in reconciliation, and the Government did try to resolve outstanding problems between the Western Powers and the Arab World. It advised, for example, a better understanding of the Arabs in Western circles and urged the Western Powers to give in to Egypt's national demands and to advance a just solution to the problem of the Palestinian refugees. On the other hand, Egypt was told that it had no right to reject the Middle East Command Proposals without reference to other Arab States and advised to make a distinction between its national demands and the Middle East Command Proposals. It was also advised to postpone a flat

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rejection of the Middle East Command Proposals pending the solution of the Anglo-Egyptian dispute. Egypt, however, did not heed the advice of the Lebanese authorities, nor was such advice necessarily in Egypt's best interest. In the first place a distinction between its national demands and the Middle East Command Proposal was more theoretical than real, because the rejection of the Proposals was used by Egypt as a leverage for the attainment of its national demands. Secondly, if Egypt had postponed a definite decision in the negative against the Proposals, it would have given other Arab States the opportunity to join the Middle East Command, and thus contributed to its isolation. Britain on the other hand, was using its forces in the Canal Zone as a leverage to bring about Egypt's participation in the Command. In brief, the Lebanese Government could hardly reconcile conflicts of such magnitude between the Arabs and the West, for they were the result of circumstances beyond the scope of Lebanese diplomacy. The safest course for Lebanon was to sit on the sidelines offending neither party, for they both had the capacity to inflict on it irreparable damage.

## Chapter III

### TRANSITIONAL PERIOD

1952 - 55

#### A. Rapprochement Between the United States and Egypt.

With the lapse of the discussions of the Arab League Political Committee in Paris and the termination of the unsuccessful mediation of Nuri al-Sa'id between Egypt and Britain, the Middle East Command Proposals were shelved temporarily. Egypt had scored a point against the Western Powers in general and against Britain in particular. It had succeeded in stalling the alignment of the Arab States with the Western Camp by capitalizing on the motives of radical Arab Nationalists in the Arab World. Its basic point that no discussion on alignment should commence without the withdrawal of British forces from the Canal Zone and the termination of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936 was grudgingly heeded by the rest of the Arab States. Accordingly Egypt acquired additional power in its dispute with Britain. The British government, realizing the implications, attempted to carry on with the Middle East Command without the Arab States in the hope that eventually those Arab States who were well disposed towards alignment would be tempted to join. It distributed a note to that effect to the six non-Arab associated powers, Turkey, France, South Africa, New Zealand, Australia and the United States.<sup>1</sup> But it could not carry on with the project, mainly due to the hesitation of the United States with

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<sup>1</sup>al-Hayat, August 9, 1962.

became a blunt opposition after the revolution of the 23rd of July (1952) in Egypt. The American Government was not convinced that a regional defense project could succeed without the participation of the regional states, nor was it impressed with British attempts to preserve colonial privileges in the Arab World. The new American attitude was expressed by Michael McDermott, Press Secretary of the State Department, who, in reference to the British note circulated to the Six Powers, delivered a statement to the effect that the American Government wanted the participation of regional states in the proposed Middle East Command and that if Britain did not intend to consult these states on its new project, the American Government desired to do so.<sup>1</sup> In the meanwhile it was reported that the American Government was in favor of discarding the British Middle East Command Proposals and replacing them with a new collective self defense scheme in which the regional states would undertake a major part.<sup>2</sup>

The new attitude of the United States was to some extent influenced by its expectations about the new military regime in Egypt in whose hands the American Government envisaged a better future for Egypt and an improvement in Egyptian - Western relations.<sup>3</sup> The Egyptian Government

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<sup>1</sup>The New York Times, August 7, 1952, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup>al-Hayat, August 9, 1952.

<sup>3</sup>Report by the New York Times special correspondent Walter H. Wagoner: The New York Times, August 8, 1951, p. 3.

was beginning to deliver statements which actually did not rule out future co-operation on matters of defense between Egypt and the West, pending the solution of the Anglo-Egyptian dispute. General Naguib, the leader of the Military Junta in Egypt, declared on August 7, that Egypt was in need of armaments which he hoped could be purchased from the United States, where Egyptian airmen and officers were in training, or from any other power of the West which he described as "democratic."<sup>1</sup> Three days later, Premier Ali Maher, who was installed in office by the Military Junta, stated to the correspondent of the French daily, Le Monde, that the new regime in Egypt was bent on eradicating corruption, establishing social justice, and combatting communism. He added that Egypt was hoping for a peaceful settlement with Britain. With reference to a question about Egypt and Middle East Defense, the Prime Minister said:

The realization of national objectives and the participation of Egypt in the burden of defense for peace are among the most important questions under consideration by the Government. It is still early, however, to speak of these matters in detail.<sup>2</sup>

These statements regarding the purchase of armaments from the Western Powers, the combatting of Communism, the hope for a peaceful settlement with Britain and the serious consideration of Egypt's participation in defense schemes brought favorable reactions from the American Government as well as from some quarters of the American press. For example, the weekly publication of the United States Information Service in Lebanon gave adequate and favorable coverage to the reforms

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<sup>1</sup>The New York Times, August 8, 1952, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>al-Hayat, August 10, 1952.

which the new Egyptian regime was trying to introduce, to General Naguib's statement on the receipt of American equipment and to his intention of purchasing further military equipment from the Western Powers, especially the United States.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, the New York Herald Tribune, in a commentary on the defense of the Middle East praised the new regime in Egypt and criticized in rather severe terms the policy of Britain which was designed, it said, to organize the defense of the Middle East without the participation of the Arab States. It argued that the defense of the Middle East concerned Egypt more than Britain, and that the participation of Egypt under the new regime in the organization of this defense would have an important strategic and moral significance.<sup>2</sup> Such comments were well received in Egypt. Radio Cairo, for example, broadcast the commentary of the New York Herald Tribune stressing the prominent role which Egypt could play if it chose to participate in a defense organization for the Middle East.<sup>3</sup> The new regime in Egypt at the start was apparently trying to secure American assistance against Britain by acting as if it was prone to consider alignment in case a settlement over the Anglo-Egyptian dispute could be reached.

After the Eisenhower Administration took over on January 20, 1953, the United States began to exercise some pressure on Britain to

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.



give in to Egypt's national demands in the hope that a settlement would bring about the much desired defense project for the Middle East. The British Ambassador in Cairo reported to Foreign Secretary Eden some time after the installment of the Eisenhower Administration and the appointment of Henry Byroade as U.S. Ambassador in Cairo, that American policy in general seemed to be conditioned by a belief that Egypt was the victim of British colonialism. United States policy, he continued, was motivated by a desire for a quick solution to the Anglo-Egyptian dispute in the expectation of an improvement in Egyptian-Western relations. The Ambassador concluded with the remark that the United States desired to save its popularity in Egypt by steering away from the British position.<sup>1</sup> Britain, however, resisted American pressure by holding on to its rights acquired under the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty. When Secretary Dulles was dispatched to the Middle East, his efforts for a solution of the Anglo-Egyptian dispute were obstructed with a strong statement of Prime Minister Churchill in the House of Commons to the effect that Britain did not envisage a solution to the Anglo-Egyptian dispute without Egypt acceding to British terms. He warned that British troops, 89,000 strong, would strike on intervention by Egypt in Suez.<sup>2</sup> In what seemed like a deliberate attempt to provoke

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<sup>1</sup>Anthony Eden, Full Circle: Memoirs (London: Cassell and Co. Ltd. 1960), p. 256.

<sup>2</sup>Britain, Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, DXV (May 1953) p. 891.

the Arabs, the Prime Minister stated:

Ever since the Balfour Declaration of 1917, I have been a faithful supporter of the Zionist cause... When I look back over the work they have done in building up a nation... I feel that it is the duty of Britain to see that they get fair play and that the pledges made to them by successive British Governments are fulfilled. Fortunately for them they have formed the best army in the Levant and as the House will remember, they successfully repulsed the combined attack which was made upon them by their neighbours four years ago. Nothing that we shall do in the supply of aircraft to this part of the world will be allowed to place Israel at an unfair disadvantage.<sup>1</sup>

There were good reasons to believe that Churchill's statement was partially meant to thwart the mission of the American Secretary of State to the Middle East, for on arrival in Egypt, Mr. Dulles faced an anti-British press campaign in which Britain's allies were not spared. The American Government, however, held to its course pressing on Britain to open up negotiations with Egypt and encouraging the Egyptian government to come to terms with Britain by promising financial and military aid.<sup>2</sup>

On April 27, 1953, Britain and Egypt opened negotiations and on October 9, 1954, after having resolved the Sudanese Question, they reached an agreement which provided for the dissolution of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936. Under the terms of the Agreement, Britain would withdraw its forces from Suez provided that it would have the right to reoccupy the base in case of an attack on either Turkey and/or

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Royal Institute of International Affairs, Survey of International Affairs, 1954, eds. Coral Bell, F. C. Benham (London: Oxford University Press, 1957), p. 198.

the Arab States during a five-year period. Britain, in the meanwhile, was allowed to have 800 civilian technicians to assist the Egyptians in the maintenance of the base so that it could be immediately used in case of war.<sup>1</sup> This solution was on similar lines to what had been suggested by the American Secretary of State a year before on arrival in Egypt. On that occasion, Mr. Dulles expressed hope for a solution to the Anglo-Egyptian dispute consistent with Egyptian sovereign rights. He envisaged a phased withdrawal of British troops provided that arrangement could be made for the maintenance of the base to keep it on war footing.<sup>2</sup> Shortly after the conclusion of the Anglo-Egyptian agreement, Egypt received from the United States forty million dollars in loans and grants.<sup>3</sup>

#### B. Lebanon Changes Leaders.

This rapprochement gave the Lebanese a breathing spell during which they shifted attention to the internal affairs of the state. The Spring of 1952 marked a steady decline in President Khoury's political position. He had served for a six year period extending from 1943 to 1949 and then renewed his term for another six years. The renewal was done duly and legally; he managed to surmount the constitution, which did not allow the President to succeed himself,

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<sup>1</sup>Council of Foreign Relations, Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1954, ed. Peter V. Curl (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1955), pp. 391-93.

<sup>2</sup>Royal Institute of International Affairs, Documents On International Affairs, 1953, ed. Denise Folliot (London: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 341.

<sup>3</sup>RIIA, Survey of International Affairs, 1954, p. 198.

by passing through the House of Deputies a constitutional law which made an exception for President Khoury and granted him the right to run again for office.<sup>1</sup> But the legality and the political wisdom of this action were totally different matters. Politically speaking, the renewal of President Khoury's term in office implied that his opponents would have to stay isolated and without influence in governmental affairs for another six years. This implication arose from the nature of the political system in Lebanon where the President dominated the political structure of the state.

In 1952, the "Socialist Front", a small minority in the House, in a desperate attempt to dislodge the President resorted to undemocratic methods.<sup>2</sup> They incited the people to violence charging corruption, nepotism and favoritism in the administration.<sup>3</sup> In this task the "Socialist Front" was assisted by a substantial portion of the influential press in Lebanon which published articles and editorials not only criticising the Government but also calling for violence and insulting the President personally.<sup>4</sup> Such actions were in violation

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<sup>1</sup>Find the text of the constitutional law, the report of the Parliamentary Administrative and Legal Committee and the names of those deputies who passed the Law in: Khoury, op.cit., pp. 507-512. The law which allowed President Khoury to run again for office was in conformity with Article 77 of the Constitution.

<sup>2</sup>The Socialist Front had nothing of socialism but the name only which was probably adopted on the insistence of Kamal Jumblat who was the only socialist member. The members of the Front were Camille Chamoun, Kamal Jumblat, Anwar al-Khateeb, 'Abdallah al-Hajj, Emile Bustani, Ghassan Tweini and Pierre Eddeh.

<sup>3</sup>Refer for example to the famous editorial by Kamal Jumblat, "The Foreigner Installed Them in Office and the People Should Throw Them Out," al-Nahar, July 5, 1952; al-Nida, July 6, 1952.

<sup>4</sup>See for example the editorial, "The Free Court," al-Nida, July 6, 1952.

of the law, but when the authorities used legal and sometimes illegal methods against the violators, the opposition retaliated by accusing those in power of dictatorship and oppression.<sup>1</sup>

The "Socialist Front" received good assistance from the political parties in Lebanon, the Kata'ib, the Najjadah, the PPS, the Progressive Socialists, and the National Appeal Party, who were not satisfied with their power position under President Khoury. These parties did not have a significant voting power but they, nevertheless, had a significant capacity for violence which was crucial in critical circumstances.

Perhaps of more importance than the opposition of the parties was a general feeling of alienation among the Sunni Community which lost accord with President Khoury on the sacking of its outstanding political leader Riyadh al-Sulh from the Premiership and on the disruption of economic union between Syria and Lebanon.<sup>2</sup>

The Crisis ensued when the "Socialist Front" prevailed on Prime Minister Sami al-Sulh, who was already aware that his community strongly disapproved of President Khoury, to submit his resignation. On September 9, Premier Sulh suddenly resigned his office after having delivered a speech in the House elaborating on the theme of the

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<sup>1</sup>See for example the speeches delivered by the deputies in opposition at Deir al-Qamar, al-Nida August 19, 1952; and the declaration of the deputies in opposition to the people, "Save Yourself," al-Nida, September 13, 1952.

<sup>2</sup>It was for example the deputies from Tripoli who opened up the battle for the President's resignation in the House of Deputies. al-Hayat, September 19, 1952. These deputies were also agitating for the re-establishment of economic unity with Syria.

opposition that the administration was riddled with favoritism, nepotism and corruption. He added for the record, however, that all these deficiencies were not of his making, implying that the President was responsible.<sup>1</sup> Thereafter, President Khoury could not find a Sunni leader who was willing to accept the Premiership.<sup>2</sup> With the loss of law and order in the country, President Khoury's power position was substantially weakened. On September 18, after a general strike in the city of Beirut which lasted for three days, the President resigned while the majority of the deputies were still on his side.<sup>3</sup> He was succeeded by a deputy in opposition, Camille Nimr Chamoun, on September 24, 1952.<sup>4</sup>

C. President Chamoun Proceeds in the Footsteps of His Predecessor on Arab Affairs.

The fall of Bishara al-Khoury and the succession of President Chamoun did not create any substantial change in the nature of the political system; and as such did not involve a fundamental change in the basic tenets of Lebanese foreign policy which were in large measure designed to avoid major confrontations between the various

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<sup>1</sup>al-Nida', September 10, 1952. The speech by Premier Sulh prompted Sheikh Salim al-Khoury, the President's brother to deliver in a press conference some documents indicting some members of the opposition and some loyalists who were waivering in their loyalty with corruption. al-Hayat, September 12, 1952.

<sup>2</sup>Khoury, op.cit., pp. 468-79.

<sup>3</sup>al-Hayat, September 19, 1952.

<sup>4</sup>al-Nida', September 24, 1952.

groups in the country with different and sometimes conflicting orientations.

Lebanon under President Chamoun continued, as under President Khoury, to aspire for stronger economic relations with the Arab States. This trend was promoted under President Chamoun in an effort to lift the slight depression and unemployment which befell the country on economic separation from Syria.<sup>1</sup> A few days after the succession of President Chamoun, the government submitted to some Arab States a project for the establishment of an economic common market among the neighbouring states of the Arab East which had been prepared by the administration under President Khoury. The countries involved in the project were Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and Jordan. The project requested a gradual lifting of tariffs on goods produced by the member states, the free movement of capital and labor, the facilitation of transit trade and the establishment of a special council to supervise the implementation of these measures.<sup>2</sup> Besides the motive for profit, it could be predicted that the Lebanese authorities might have intended to neutralize the political impact of an economic union with Syria by involving the Hashimites.

The project, however, did not materialize due to inter-Arab rivalries. Syria under President Shishakli was in the anti-Hashimite camp. Fearing the political implications of a common market with

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<sup>1</sup>Camille Chamoun, Crise Au Moyen Orient (Paris: Gallimond, 1963), p. 251.

<sup>2</sup>al-Hayat, September 26, 1952.

Iraq and Jordan, it requested the entry of Saudi Arabia which in turn requested the entry of Egypt. Iraq was willing to accept the entry of Saudi Arabia, but objected to the participation of Egypt. Thus the project was dropped.<sup>1</sup>

While the Syrians were obstructing the economic unity of the Arab East, they were pressing for the re-establishment of economic union with Lebanon. Throughout the Winter of 1953 negotiations for economic unity were carried out, but they culminated in a limited economic agreement on April 6, 1953 which was no more than an extension of the bilateral agreement reached under President Khoury a year before on February 4, 1952.<sup>2</sup>

The attempt under President Chamoun to establish economic union faltered for the same reasons which existed under President Khoury. Syria was demanding economic union on the basis of a controlled economy with high tariffs, a quota system and the prohibition of a wide range of imports classified by austere Syrian standards as luxuries. Lebanon on the other hand was requesting a common market based on a free export-import movement with low tariffs. The root of the conflict was that Syrian economic planning centered on the protection and development of the industrial and agricultural sectors whereas Lebanese economic planning centered on the protection and development of the services sector in view of the limited resources in industry and agriculture. The services sector

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<sup>1</sup> al-Hayat, September 27, 1952. See also statement by Hamid Franjieh, deputy from the Zgharta and Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee of Foreign Affairs. Lebanon, Official Gazette, 1st Ordinary Session, 4th Meeting, April 25, 1954, p. 308.

<sup>2</sup> al-Hayat, April 6, 1953.



constituted more than two thirds of the national income.<sup>1</sup>

Political factors were also partly responsible for the failure of the negotiations. The Lebanese Government suspected Syrian motives especially under Shishakli who was not without ambitions in Lebanon. The inconsiderate attitude of some Syrian officials aggravated these suspicions. For instance, the Syrian Minister of National Economy, Mohammad Sa'id al-Zaim, visited Tripoli on December 1, 1959, the memorial day of Abdul Hamid Karami, where he indulged with other Tripolitians well known for their secessionist tendencies in criticising the Lebanese Government and openly calling for the unity of the two states.<sup>2</sup> About a week later, January 6, 1953, the Syrian Government suddenly closed the borders while the Syrian official broadcasting station criticised Lebanon's attitude on the question of economic union and protested the asylum granted to Salahuddine al-Bitar and Akram al-Hourani, two Syrian politicians who used the press media in Lebanon to criticise the Syrian Government.<sup>3</sup> Such actions, coupled with reports that Syria was secretly promoting and collaborating with secessionist groups in Lebanon,<sup>4</sup> were not conducive to an atmosphere of mutual trust and, therefore, hindered rather than promoted the

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<sup>1</sup> al-Hayat, November 29, 1952.

<sup>2</sup> al-Hayat, December 2 and 4, 1952.

<sup>3</sup> al-Hayat, January 8, 1953.

<sup>4</sup> al-Hayat, December 2, 1952.

prospects for economic unity.

The pressures which were exerted by some Sunni circles on Syria's behalf<sup>1</sup> were counter-balanced by pressures exerted by some Maronite groups in the opposite direction.<sup>2</sup> The impact of these cross currents, in the words of John Skaff, Chairman of the Joint Parliamentary Economic and Financial Committee, was that they "inhibited the Lebanese delegation from taking clear cut decisions."<sup>3</sup> This situation, he said, was not in the interest of either Syria or Lebanon and certainly not in the interest of taking positive and far reaching measures towards the re-establishment of economic union.<sup>4</sup>

While negotiations were being carried out with Syria, the Lebanese Government did not neglect the development of closer relations with other Arab States. During the second week of March 1953, on the visit of President Chamoun to Baghdad, Lebanon and Iraq signed an agreement which removed restrictions on the movement of capital, labor and the withdrawal of profits between the two countries. There were, moreover, provisions for the facilitation of transit trade. Attempts

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<sup>1</sup>Refer for example to the demands requested of the President by the predominantly Sunni Chamber of Commerce in Tripoli on November 28, 1952. al-Hayat, November 29, 1952. See also statement by Hashim al-Husseini deputy from Tripoli: Lebanon, The Official Gazette, 2nd Extra-Ordinary Session, 11th Meeting, February 12, 1953, pp. 348-49.

<sup>2</sup>Refer to statement by Charles Helou, Maronite deputy from Beirut, Ibid., p. 347. Refer also to statement by Hamid Franjeh, Maronite deputy from Zgharta: Lebanon, The Official Gazette, 1st Ordinary Session, 4th Meeting, April 25, 1954, p. 307.

<sup>3</sup>Statement of John Skaff, Catholic Deputy from Zahleh: Lebanon, The Official Gazette, 2nd Extra-Ordinary Session, 11th Meeting, February 12, 1953, p. 350.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

by both Lebanon and Iraq to include Syria as a third party to this agreement did not succeed.<sup>1</sup>

A month later on the visit of President Chamoun to Cairo another economic agreement was concluded between Lebanon and Egypt. The Agreement was an attempt to reduce the damage inflicted on the Lebanese economy due to the austerity measures passed by the new Egyptian revolutionary regime. It permitted Lebanese citizens to withdraw some of the proceeds of their investments in Egypt, arranged for the withdrawal of Lebanese capital by payments in Egyptian cotton and allowed Egyptian tourists to visit Lebanon carrying 200 Egyptian Pounds only.<sup>2</sup>

The Lebanese - Egyptian agreement and the Lebanese - Syrian agreement were less far reaching than the economic agreement concluded with Iraq which provided for the free movement of capital and labor. This discrepancy was the beginning of a trend towards closer economic ties with the monarchies of the Arab East and the gradual reduction of vested economic interests in the militant republics of Syria and Egypt.

Despite the failure of the ambitious common market project which was submitted by the Lebanese Government, the Lebanese authorities continued to strive for closer economic relations with the Arab World.

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<sup>1</sup>Statement by George Hakim, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and National Economy, in Baghdad, March 30, 1953: al-Hayat, March 31, 1953.

<sup>2</sup>al-Hayat, April 26, 1953. See also statement by George Hakim, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and National Economy: al-Hayat, April 28, 1953.

It was in major part due to Lebanese initiative that an Arab economic convention convened in Beirut on May 25, 1953 which led a few months later to the conclusion of a multilateral agreement facilitating trade and providing for lower tariffs on goods produced by any one of the parties concerned.<sup>1</sup> The results attained were not up to the expectations of Lebanon, but they were, nevertheless, enthusiastically approved by the Lebanese parliament in the hope that inter-Arab rivalries would not obstruct the implementation of the agreement.<sup>2</sup> The conclusion of these agreements and other cultural and extradition treaties, serve as evidence that Lebanon under President Chamoun continued to pursue a policy of fraternal co-operation in economic, social, and cultural matters with the Arab States.

President Chamoun did not deviate either from the policy of his predecessor on the promotion of inter-Arab political co-operation. The policy programs of the various cabinets under President Chamoun, as under President Khoury, invariably pledged to promote inter-Arab co-operation, to uphold Arab rights in Palestine and to extend support to other Arabs engaged in struggles for independence.<sup>3</sup> Such a policy constituted a basic tenet of Lebanese diplomacy which was not liable to

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<sup>1</sup>The Agreement was ratified by Presidential Decree 2575 and approved by the House of Deputies on September 11, 1953. The Official Gazette, 1st Extra-Ordinary Session, the 5th Meeting, September 11, 1953, p. 128.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 157-61.

<sup>3</sup>Refer to the policy programs of the various cabinets in the period extending from September 1952 to July 1955: John Malha, A Collection of Cabinet Programs (Beirut: Khayat, 1965), pp. 121-70.

change with the succession of Presidents because it was homogeneously supported by the Lebanese regardless of their political color or ideology. This homogeneity was clearly demonstrated on January 16, 1952 with the unanimous approval by the House of Deputies of a cable to France protesting French actions in Morocco.<sup>1</sup> A similar phenomenon had appeared in 1951 when the House protested British actions in Egypt.<sup>2</sup>

There were, however, limitations to Lebanese-Arab co-operation. The policy of the Government was that such co-operation should not involve any compromise of the sovereignty. This attitude could be detected by the absence of the term often used by non-Lebanese Arab statesmen, "Arab nation", from Lebanese official terminology. Lebanese cabinets often followed up their pledge of inter-Arab co-operation with the qualifying phrase "within the framework of the Arab League", thereby implying that the sovereignty of the state would not be compromised.<sup>3</sup>

This policy was applied on two occasions in the period extending from 1952 to 1955. The first was in September 1952 when Fuad Ammoun, the Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, declined to approve of an Egyptian amendment of the Arab League

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<sup>1</sup>Lebanon, The Official Gazette, 2nd Ordinary Session, 5th Meeting, January 16, 1952, pp. 492-94. The following was the official text of the cable: "The Lebanese House of Deputies protests the French aggression on the Tunisians and the Moroccans and requests the government to deliver this protest to the ambassador of France and to the United Nations."

<sup>2</sup>Supra., p. 79.

<sup>3</sup>See for example the policy programs of the Cabinets submitted by Khalid Shebab and Sa'eb Salam: John Malha, op.cit., pp. 126-141.

Charter requesting that decisions passed by majority vote should bind all members.<sup>1</sup> The second was in January 1954 when Prime Minister Yaffi declined to approve of Iraqi proposals for an Arab Federation to be carried out in stages, starting with contiguous countries having similar economic, social and cultural conditions.<sup>2</sup> Prime Minister Yaffi on that occasion made it clear that Lebanon was in no position to approve any other form of unity except economic unity.<sup>3</sup>

Here again Lebanon under President Chamoun did not depart from the limitations imposed on Lebanese-Arab collaboration under President Khoury. In 1951 Premier Riad al-Sulh had taken an identical attitude towards proposals submitted by Premier Nazim al-Kudsi of Syria requesting an Arab Federation.<sup>4</sup> Riad al-Sulh expressed himself thus:

Lebanon, who welcomes anything that contributes to the improvement of brotherly relations among the Arab States cannot but declare a frank clear reservation concerning this project. We prefer to leave our status as it is fortified with this agreement (The National Pact) which I believe is not only for the good of Lebanon and its interests, but also in the interest of all Arab Governments and before anything else Arabism.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>al-Hayat, September 21, 1952.

<sup>2</sup>Find the Text of the Iraqi Proposals in: Khalil, op.cit., pp. 47-49.

<sup>3</sup>Arab World, January 14, 1954, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup>Find the text in: Khalil, op.cit., pp. 40-46.

<sup>5</sup>This paragraph was translated by the author from a quotation in a lecture delivered by Fuad 'Ammoun, the Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Fuad 'Ammoun, "The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Policy of Lebanon," Studies About the Government of Lebanon, eds. George Grassmuck, Raja Hemadeh (Beirut: American University of Beirut,

While Syria, Egypt and Iraq submitted at one time or another their own versions for Arab unity which were more or less designed to suit the circumstances of the proposing country, Lebanon regardless of the proposing country and the circumstances declined to approve of projects related to Arab unity. This stability or continuity in Lebanese policy leads to the conclusion that official Lebanon, in contrast to its Arab neighbours, has reservation towards the principle of unity as such.

This disposition arose from fundamental factors related to the structure of the state. The most important was the National Pact which was evoked by Premier Riad al-Sulh in declining the Arab Federation proposed by Premier Kudsi of Syria. The National Pact was a compromise between Christian and Moslem leaders of the National Government on the eve of independence in 1943 to the effect that Christians should relinquish the French Mandate and that Moslems should relinquish the struggle for Arab unity; thus both should uphold the independence of Lebanon.<sup>1</sup> Although various parties and groups in Lebanon persisted in advocating union with the neighbouring Arab States in one form or another, it was realized that any departure from the National Pact would have exposed the country to the hazards of a sectarian civil war. Perhaps the diatribes which ensued in the press during the month of

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Department of Public Administration, 1956), p. 288. It appeared in slightly different wording in: Khoury, op.cit., p. 350.

<sup>1</sup>Speech by Riad al-Sulh, Prime Minister, in the Lebanese House of Deputies: Lebanon, The Official Gazette, October 17, 1943, p. 13. See also George Dib, "Riad al-Sulh's Speech in the Lebanese Assembly: October 1943," Middle East Forum, XXXV (October, 1959), p. 6.

January, 1954, on consideration of the Iraqi Project for an Arab Federation, served as a vivid reminder to Premier Yaffi and other officials of the hazards involved in such projects.<sup>1</sup> Fortunately for Lebanon none of the above-mentioned projects acquired sufficient support in the Arab League, for if any one of them had been carried beyond the stage of proposals, the security of the state would have been endangered by a combination of external and internal pressure.

The attitude of Lebanon towards Arab unity projects was, moreover, influenced to a large extent by a realistic appraisal of Arab circumstances. The authorities in Lebanon could not disregard the discrepancies in the economic, social and cultural conditions prevailing in the various Arab States, nor could they disregard the different political systems which were sometimes radically different from one another. It was this type of appraisal which led Fuad 'Ammoun, the Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to conclude in a lecture delivered at the American University of Beirut in 1955, that Arab Unity was based on "imagination and unfounded emotions."<sup>2</sup> Whether Fuad 'Ammoun's conclusion was justified or not is a debatable question. What is undebatable, however, was that the Lebanese authorities made a realistic appraisal of the difficulties involved.

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<sup>1</sup>The diatribes were not devoid of sectarian color. Refer to the views of Pierre Gmayyil, the Maronite leader of the Kata'ib Party and to those of Muhieddine Nusuli, the Sunni editor and owner of the daily paper Beirut: See also the Arab World, January 13, 1954, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup>'Ammoun, op.cit., pp. 287-90.



in Arab Unity Projects and that such considerations were discouraging. The alternative for Lebanon, as Fuad "Ammoun stated, was in closer co-operation among the Arab States in all fields within the framework of the Arab League. Towards that objective Lebanon preached the elimination of inter-Arab feuds and rivalries.<sup>1</sup>

This was in essence the policy of the status quo which was followed by President Khoury---the policy of a small state whose sense of security emanated in large measure from the maintenance of an internal balance between the sects and an external balance between the Arab States. The ideal to Lebanon was the achievement of a fraternal regional community of Arab States undisturbed by fundamental disputes. If that was not possible, a balance between the conflicting parties was regarded as the least harmful alternative. If one holds the preservation of the sovereignty of the state as the ultimate objective, the attitude of Lebanon towards Arab unity was prudent, for as long as the Arab States maintained covert ambitions in Lebanon any merger between two or more of the Arab States would have ultimately posed a threat to the sovereignty of Lebanon.

#### D. Lebanon and the Cold War 1952 - 55.

##### 1. A Cautious Start:

The new regime of President Chamoun did not start out with any particular policy towards alignment. The various cabinets under

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<sup>1</sup>, Ammoun, op.cit., pp. 287-90.

President Chamoun continued to declare in their policy programs their interest in preserving friendly relations with the Western Powers but there was no reference as to the necessity of alignment.<sup>1</sup> The question of alignment was temporarily shelved during the Autumn of 1952 and the Winter of 1953 in both Lebanon and the Western circles, for Lebanon as well as the United States was largely pre-occupied with problems related to changes in leadership. In the early Spring of 1953 the question of alignment moved again into the forefront of regional politics as it was apparent that the new Republican Administration in the United States desired a fresh start in the Middle East and was dispatching the new Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, on a fact-finding mission to the area.

President Chamoun in anticipation of the forthcoming Dulles visit, directed Lebanese policy in two directions. The first was directed towards the removal of inter-Arab disputes and the second *was* towards agreement on a concerted realistic policy which could be negotiated with the American Secretary of State on his visit to the Middle East. Ambassador Malik had already informed the Government that the new Republican Administration in the United States intended to treat Arab problems with justice and that if the Arabs were good enough to present the American government with reasonable and realistic

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<sup>1</sup>Review the Cabinets Policy Programs for the period extending from September 30, 1952 to July 1955. John Malha, *op.cit.*, pp. 121-70.

demands, the Arabs could expect the realization of such demands.<sup>1</sup>

In pursuit of the above-mentioned objectives, President Chamoun in February, March, and April, 1953, visited Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Egypt respectively. In Riyad and Baghdad he concentrated, among other things, on reconciling the traditional feud between the ruling house of Sa'ud and the ruling Hashimites in Iraq. He discovered, however, that the feud was far too deep-seated to lend itself to his personal mediation. Prince Regent Abdul Ilah of Iraq, as the President found out, was still entertaining ambitions for the throne of Saudi Arabia, which the Sa'uds usurped from his grandfather, Sherif Hussein.<sup>2</sup>

Besides attending to the Hashimite - Saudi feud, the President felt out the Iraqi government on the possibility of reconciling Iraqi - Egyptian differences. Although the military government in Egypt was behaving in a manner which did not preclude the possibility of future alignment with the Western Powers, its basic disposition towards the West for the time being did not change substantially, from that of its predecessor, the Government of the Wafd Party. Egypt was still bent on postponing all discussions for alignment until the solution of the Anglo-Egyptian dispute, and in the meanwhile was requesting armaments for the Arab Collective Security Pact. Iraq, due to the proximity of its northern borders to the Soviet Union and the pressing need for the termination of the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of 1930,

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<sup>1</sup>Speech by the Ambassador of Lebanon to the United States, Charles Malik, delivered at a luncheon in Beirut, February 26, 1953. al-Hayat, March 1, 1953.

<sup>2</sup>Camille Chamoun, Crise au Moyen-Orient, (Paris: Gallimard, 1963), pp. 255-66.

viewed the discussions of alignment as an urgent matter which could not be postponed indefinitely and left to the whims of the Egyptian government. The logic of the Iraqi government towards Egypt could be summarized as follows: if Egypt regarded the Anglo-Egyptian dispute as a private matter, it had no right to ask of the Arab States postponement of all negotiations towards alignment until the solution of its dispute with Britain could be found. If Egypt, on the other hand, still requested the postponement of Arab - Western negotiations on alignment as a gesture of Arab solidarity, then its dispute with Britain was no longer a private matter and as such the Arab States should have been allowed to participate in its resolution. But in either case, the Iraqi authorities would still have extended support to Egypt on its national demands.<sup>1</sup>

The Iraqi disposition was fundamentally similar to that which was expressed by President Khoury to King Abdul-Aziz Sa'ud in October 1951 when the Middle East Command proposals were under discussion.<sup>2</sup> The disposition of President Chamoun was not yet clearly expressed, but there were indications that the Lebanese Government was not in disagreement with the logic of Iraq. A few days before the departure of President Chamoun to Baghdad, Ambassador Malik, who was recalled from the United States for consultations, delivered a public speech in Beirut advocating Arab-Turkish alignment,

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<sup>1</sup>Statement by Tawfiq al-Sweidi, the Iraqi Minister of Foreign Affairs: al-Hayat, March 28, 1953. Statement by Fadhil al-Jamali, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs in Iraq: al-Hayat, March 1, 1953.

<sup>2</sup>Khoury, op.cit., pp. 422-23.

stating in his usual forceful manner that "such an alignment was not only dictated by sheer interest but was likewise a historical and a military necessity." Malik in the same breath criticised international communism and laid the responsibility for world tension squarely on Soviet shoulders. He maintained that the new administration in the U.S. intended to be positive and just towards the Arabs, and criticized Arab leaders for their pre-occupation with "trivial matters" while other leaders were moving towards "wider horizons".<sup>1</sup> President Chamour, on departure from Baghdad did not seem apprehensive about Malik's mode of thinking. In a press interview, the President welcomed Turkish-Arab collaboration and indicated that Arab-American co-operation was highly probable on the basis of the new American initiative.<sup>2</sup>

Such announcements, especially on Arab-Turkish collaboration, coupled with frequent consultations between Beirut and Baghdad, the visit of Charles Malik to Baghdad during the first week of March which was followed by the visit of President Chamoun and the conclusion of a far reaching economic treaty, aroused the anxiety of the Egyptian government which, it was reported, issued an invitation to President Chamoun to visit Cairo while he was still in Iraq.<sup>3</sup>

A month later, in April, President Chamoun visited Egypt. Among other things the President carried with him proposals for an Arab summit conference to be held before the arrival of Secretary Dulles in the following month. The object of the conference was to sort out

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<sup>1</sup>Speech by Malik on February 26, delivered at a luncheon in Beirut. al-Hayat, March 1, 1953.

<sup>2</sup>Statement by President Chamoun: al-Hayat, March 29, 1953.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

Arab differences and present the American Secretary of State with a concerted "realistic" Arab policy.<sup>1</sup> Before the departure of the President and his party to Egypt, the Foreign Affairs Parliamentary Committee summoned Foreign Minister Hakim and requested him to ask of Egypt the intervention of the Arab States in the Anglo-Egyptian dispute. If Egypt refused, the members of the Committee were reported to have said, the Arab States would then be free to pursue the question of alignment separately. Minister Hakim informed the Committee that Lebanon had already requested the intervention of the Arab States in the Anglo-Egyptian negotiations but that he would undertake to remind the Egyptian authorities of this request on his forthcoming visit to Cairo.<sup>2</sup>

The mission of the President to Egypt in terms of an Arab Summit Conference was inconclusive. Egypt accepted the idea of a Summit Conference provided that the question of alignment would not be placed on the agenda. It, moreover, rejected the idea of Arab intervention in the Anglo-Egyptian dispute reportedly because the Egyptian authorities mistrusted Iraq and Jordan due to their British affiliations. All that the President could do in this respect was to get a promise from Egypt to keep the Arab Governments informed about developments. The disposition of Egypt conflicted with the demands of Iraq, which was bent on discussing alignment as well as the Anglo-Egyptian dispute as part and parcel of a general Arab policy. In view of these radical

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<sup>1</sup> al-Hayat, April 22, 1953.

<sup>2</sup> Report by Salim Hatoum, the special correspondent of al-Hayat on parliamentary affairs: al-Hayat, April 3, 1953.

differences the Summit Conference was ruled out.<sup>1</sup>

In Egypt, President Chamoun did not speak of any possible Arab-Turkish collaboration as he had done in Iraq. Instead, he spoke of strengthening the Arab Collective Security Pact, a point which was often stressed by Egypt. There was one point, however, on which the President was consistent. In both Baghdad and Cairo, he expressed interest in promoting Arab-Western collaboration provided that Arab demands were fulfilled. But he did not mention what these demands were.<sup>2</sup> It could be predicted, however, with certainty that whatever demands the President had in mind, a solution of the Anglo-Egyptian dispute to the satisfaction of Egypt ranked top in priority. He picked the opportunity of visiting Egypt to express repeatedly Lebanon's unequivocal support of Egyptian national demands.<sup>3</sup>

## 2. The Dulles Visit.

When Secretary Dulles commenced his visit to the Middle East on May 9, the Arab States were still short of agreement on a concerted policy which could be submitted to and negotiated with the visiting Secretary of State. Dulles arrived in Lebanon on May 16 and departed the next day, but neither he nor the Lebanese authorities divulged anything about the talks which took place. In view of the fact-finding nature of this mission, the talks in all probability did not

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<sup>1</sup> al-Hayat, April 28, 1953.

<sup>2</sup> Statement by President Chamoun to Walter Collins in Cairo. al-Hayat, April 22, 1953.

<sup>3</sup> Speech by President Chamoun to the Lebanese community in Egypt. al-Nahar, April 28, 1953. See also Chamoun, op.cit., p. 254.

center on any particular point or project.

On the basis of the newspaper reports and the memorandum which was submitted to the Secretary by the Foreign Affairs Parliamentary Committee, the demands of the Lebanese government were not unreasonable. They included: requests for the repatriation of the Palestinian refugees and assistance in the rehabilitation of those who for one reason or another could not be repatriated; the implementation of the United Nations Resolutions on Palestine (including the 1947 Partition Resolution) or a reconsideration of the Armistice lines with the object of repatriating some refugees. The American Secretary of State was urged to lend assistance for the solution of the Anglo-Egyptian dispute in accordance with Egypt's national demands and was counseled to develop a better understanding of the colonial questions in the Arab World for the improvement of Arab-Western relations in general.<sup>1</sup>

Although the content of the talks with the American Secretary of State were secret, the disposition of the Government towards the objectives of the United States in the area-- peace with Israel and the establishment of a defense organization<sup>2</sup>-- could be predicted with a

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<sup>1</sup>These demands were aggregated from the memorandum submitted by the Lebanese Parliamentary Committee of Foreign Affairs to the American Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles: al-'Amal, May 19, 1953, and from reports on the discussions between the Lebanese authorities and the American Secretary of State: al-Hayat, May 17, 1953.

<sup>2</sup>The following quotation from the speech of Secretary Dulles before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the House Foreign Affairs Committee asserts that these were among the major objectives of the United States in the area: "We also seek authority to undertake limited military aid programs to the countries of the Near East, which will contribute to their internal security and will assist in promoting plans for peace between Israel and the Arab Nations, and in establishing a regional defense organization." U.S. Department of State, Bulletin, XXVII, (May 25, 1953), p. 738.



high degree of certainty. None of the various statements delivered by Lebanese officials on various occasions mentioned anywhere the possibility of peace with Israel. Take, for example, the following statements delivered by Ambassador Malik and Prime Minister Sa'eb Salam a few days before the arrival of the American Secretary of State. Pro-West Ambassador Malik, in an interview with the special correspondent of the Damascus daily al-Bin'a, stated on May 7: "We shouldn't think of concluding peace with Israel."<sup>1</sup>

Prime Minister Sa'eb Salam, who was less inclined towards the West than Malik, expressed himself before the anti-Dulles demonstrators in Beirut with the following words:

Be sure that there won't be any peace with Israel nor would there be a mutual defense pact [with the Western Powers] but a mutual Arab security pact.<sup>2</sup>

If Malik and Salam, who occupied diametrical positions on a pro-West anti-West dimension, concurred on ruling out the possibility of peace with Israel, there could be little doubt that Lebanese officialdom was homogeneous in this respect.

Salam's statement on ruling out the possibility of concluding a defense pact with the West was, however, hardly representative of official Lebanon because it conflicted with previous statements delivered by Malik which bluntly recommended the conclusion of a defense pact, and, moreover, contradicted the spirit of President Chamoun's

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<sup>1</sup>al-Nahar, May 7, 1953.

<sup>2</sup>al-Hayat, May 17, 1953.

statements in Iraq and Egypt which were not opposed to alliances. Official Lebanon in all probability was not requested to give any commitments due to the fact-finding nature of the Dulles mission,<sup>1</sup> and probably would not have given such commitments even if requested to do so in view of what was still an unclarified Arab position. It is suspected, however, in view of the pro-West inclinations of the President and other high ranking influential officials such as Ambassador Malik, that the Lebanese authorities or some of them were not opposed to the idea of alliances provided that such demands as those presented to Secretary Dulles were implemented. The memorandum submitted to Dulles by the Foreign Affairs Parliamentary Committee was perhaps more representative of the attitude of official Lebanon towards alliances than the statement of Salam when it was suggested that the Arab Collective Security Pact should be taken as a basis for organizing the defense of the region.<sup>2</sup> If one takes into consideration the traditional policy of Lebanon which was based on avoiding unnecessary offense towards Arab States in conflict and/or the Western Powers, and which hinged on reconciling such conflicts whenever possible, the idea that the memorandum of the Foreign Affairs Parliamentary Committee represented the official attitude of Lebanon becomes highly probable. On consideration that Iraq

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<sup>1</sup>Dulles on departure from the United States, May 9, defined the nature of his mission thus: "As I have already said, I shall not bring with me specific plans or programs, nor do I intend to ask of the governments I visit for any decisions. I shall listen intently to what I am told and consider the problems brought to my attention with utmost interest and sympathy." U.S. Department of State, Bulletin, XXVIII (May 18, 1953), p. 708.

<sup>2</sup>al-'Amal, May 19, 1953.

as well as the Western Powers were demanding alignment while Egypt was demanding a build up of the Arab Collective Security Pact, the disposition of Lebanon as suggested by the Foreign Affairs Parliamentary Committee was the ideal reconciliatory position.

This reconciliatory position was, moreover, suggested by the overall impression of the American authorities and the Lebanese authorities about the role of Lebanon as a moderating influence in Arab-Western relations and as a useful bridge for more understanding between the two spheres on the diplomatic as well as on the broader, but nevertheless quite important, cultural level.<sup>1</sup>

Lebanon was, however, neither politically nor culturally homogeneous enough to play an active reconciliatory role without inviting internal tension. This was perhaps demonstrated by the variety of public reactions on the visit of Dulles which were similar to those experienced two years before upon consideration of the Middle East Command Proposals. There were student-led demonstrations shouting anti-American slogans, warning against peace with Israel and advocating non-alignment. As usual the demonstrators were heavily Arab-nationalist and Islamic in color.<sup>2</sup> The press as well as political personalities varied in their

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<sup>1</sup>Such was the theme of the speeches exchanged by Ambassador Malik and President Eisenhower on the occasion of presenting the Ambassador's credentials. al-Nahar, May 6, 1953. It was also the impression gathered by Mr. Dulles from his discussions with President Chamoun. Dulles broadcast to the nation: U.S. Department of State, Bulletin, XXVIII, (June 15, 1953), p. 832.

<sup>2</sup>The following are samples of the placards carried by the demonstrators: "Non-alignment between the two camps is a national necessity; Long live the Arab nation; We shall destroy peace with Israel; Traitor is he who accepts peace with Israel; Morocco is the grave of France." al-Hayat, May 17, 1953.

reactions from an outright rejection of any Western-Arab rapprochement to a straight-forward call for alignment. The deputy from Shuf, Kamal Jumblat, as well as the daily al-Telegraph were of the opinion that Dulles was visiting the Arab States as if he was visiting mandates.<sup>1</sup> Having reviewed the current struggle in the Arab World against colonialism and denoted the strong ties between the U.S. and the colonial powers, they concluded by warning the Arabs not to participate in defense projects which would turn their countries into battle fields for the "imperialists."<sup>2</sup> On the other extreme stood, for example, the deputy from Ba'albek, Ibrahim Haydar and the daily Beirut criticising the negative attitude of the Arabs, presenting reasonable demands to the Secretary of State, and advocating alignment as a means for the achievement of national interests and as a contribution to the defense of democratic principles which, they believed, the Arabs as well as Lebanon shared with the Western World.<sup>3</sup>

Most other dailies, al-Nahar, al-'Amal, al-Hayat, al-Nida, Sada Lubnan, Beirut al-Massa, welcomed Dulles in the expectation that the anti-Arab bias of the Truman administration would be eliminated. They presented a variety of demands related to Arab rights in Palestine, the Anglo-Egyptian dispute and other colonial questions in the Arab

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<sup>1</sup>Refer to the editorial of al-Telegraph as reproduced by the Daily Star, May 17, 1953.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Statement by Ibrahim Haydar, the Deputy from Ba'albek-Hermel: al-Hayat, May 17, 1953. See also the editorial of Beirut as reproduced by al-Jareeda, May 17, 1953.

World. But none of them touched on anything positive which the Arabs could give in return other than the vague promise that, upon the fulfilment of such demands, Arab-Western relations would improve.<sup>1</sup>

Dulles upon his return to the U.S. was apparently willing to heed some of the demands which were presented to him in Lebanon. In a broadcast to the nation, the American Secretary of State spoke about the necessity of increasing financial and technical assistance to the Arab States and about assistance to the refugees. He gave a good account of the new revolutionary regime in Egypt and acknowledged, for the first time, Egyptian sovereignty over the Canal. Speaking of General Naguib, Dulles said:

He is a popular hero, and I could readily see why. He and his associates are determined to provide Egypt with a vigorous government which will truly serve the people. Also they seek to end the stationing of British troops and exercise of British authority at Suez base.<sup>2</sup>

He went on to recommend provisions for experienced administrative and technical personnel to keep the base in operating efficiency and concluded with the remark: "I am convinced that there is nothing irreconcilable between international concern and Egyptian sovereignty."

The major departure from the policy of President Truman was on colonial issues, where the Secretary of State made it clear that the United States was determined to dissociate itself from the colonial policy of its European allies.

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<sup>1</sup>The editorials of the above mentioned papers were either reproduced or surveyed by al-Jareeda, May 17, 1953.

<sup>2</sup>U.S. Department of State, Bulletin, XXVIII (June 15, 1953), p. 832.

Most of the peoples of the Near East and South Asia are deeply concerned about political independence for themselves and others. They are suspicious of the colonial powers. The United States too is suspect, because it is reasoned, our NATO alliance with France and Britain requires us to preserve the old colonial interests of our allies. I am convinced that the United States' policy has become unnecessarily ambiguous in this matter . . . Without breaking from the framework of Western unity, we can pursue our traditional dedication to political liberty. In reality, the Western Powers can gain rather than lose, from an orderly development of self-government.<sup>1</sup>

The American Secretary of State noted, perhaps with regret, the disinclination of the Arab League countries to join in a regional defense organization.

The Middle East defense organization is a future rather than an immediate possibility. Many of the Arab League countries are so engrossed with their quarrels with Israel or with Great Britain or France that they pay little heed to the menace of Soviet Communism. However, there is more concern where the Soviet Union is near. In general, the northern tier of nations shows awareness of the danger.<sup>2</sup>

The American Secretary of State was apparently willing to heed Lebanese advice about strengthening the Arab Collective Security Pact and using it as a basis for a wider regional defense pact.

There is a vague desire to have a collective security system. But no such system can be imposed from without. It should be designed and grow from within out of a sense of common destiny and common danger.

While awaiting the creation of a security association, the United States can usefully help strengthen the interrelated defense of those countries which want strength, not against each other or the West, but to resist the common threat to all free peoples.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 834.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 835.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

The United States was apparently willing to deliver some arms to the Arab States, but not to break the balance between Israel and the Arab States. It was the Arab-Israeli question which constituted the major obstacle for the United States in the area. Dulles took a neutral stand on this question. Speaking of mutual Arab-Israeli fears, the American Secretary of State reaffirmed the United States' commitments under the Tripartite Declaration and encouraged both sides to reduce tension promising U.S. assistance in this respect.

. . . the United States will not hesitate by every appropriate means to use its influence to promote a step-by-step reduction of tension in the area and the conclusion of ultimate peace.<sup>1</sup>

Dulles did not, however, mention the terms of the peace he was seeking. By neglecting to mention the right of the refugees for repatriation or the possibility of reconsidering the Armistice Lines in accordance with the United Nations resolutions, the American Secretary of State gave the impression that he was seeking peace on the basis of the status quo which was exactly what Israel was striving for.

The broadcast of Dulles to the American nation was on the whole well received in Lebanon, but his disposition towards the Arab-Israeli conflict was criticised.<sup>2</sup> There were still no indications that the American Secretary of State was willing to help recover some of the lost Arab rights in Palestine.<sup>3</sup> The responsibility of the United States

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 834.

<sup>2</sup>Kamel Mroueh, "After the Speech of Dulles," al-Hayat, June 4, 1953.

<sup>3</sup>See for example, Basil Daqaq, "We Expected More Than That," al-Hayat, June 4, 1953.

in that respect arose from the convictions of the Arabs that the United States under Truman contributed to the loss of Palestine and the establishment of the State of Israel.

### 3. Aftermath.

The period extending from June 1953 to June 1954, was not consequential in terms of cold war tension in the area. But by June 1954 on the drawing of a draft agreement providing for the withdrawal of British troops from Suez,<sup>1</sup> the Western Powers, particularly Britain and the United States, began to increase their activities towards alignment. With the Anglo-Egyptian dispute well on its way towards a final solution, the Western Powers shifted attention towards the second and perhaps more important obstacle, the Arab-Israeli conflict. The Arab-Israeli conflict had two major aspects: the refugees, and the state of war between Israel and the Arab States. For the solution of the refugee problem the United States proposed to finance what was called the Johnston Plan, a joint irrigation project on the River Jordan for the benefit of Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and Israel. It was believed that the development of the project would help in the way of providing settlement for the refugees. The project would help in the way of providing settlement for the refugees. The project was, however, unacceptable to the Lebanese Government as well as to other Arab States for several reasons: firstly, about 50% of the water was allocated to Israel; secondly, the main water reservoir was designated in Lake Tiberius which would have put the water resources of the Arabs at the mercy of the Israelis; thirdly, Israel planned to irrigate the Negev Desert to provide space for additional immigrants, thus arousing Arab fears of further Israeli expansion; fourthly, Israel was demanding the utilization of the Litani

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<sup>1</sup>The text of the draft which was initialled by Britain and Egypt is in: Middle East Journal, VIII (Autumn, 1954), p. 460.



River in Lebanon, a prospect which frightened the Lebanese Government; fifthly, the Arabs did not accept to sit on a joint Arab-Israeli board for the supervision of the project. The project, from a political point of view, would have drawn the Arabs one step further towards the conclusions of peace with Israel without actually reclaiming some of the lost Arab rights in Palestine.<sup>1</sup>

The United States used diplomatic pressure against Lebanon to get its approval of the project, and for a while threatened to withdraw American technical and economic aid (six million dollars in all), but Lebanon withstood the pressure.<sup>2</sup> While the negotiations for the Johnston Plan were still proceeding, Israel mounted a series of border raids, especially against Jordan. The Israeli raids were reportedly coupled with British and American pressure on Jordan to conclude peace with Israel. This prospect frightened the Lebanese Government, for it was reasoned that if Jordan concluded peace with Israel, the next in line would be Lebanon.<sup>3</sup>

The Lebanese Government reacted against the mounting pressure on Jordan by co-ordinating its military and diplomatic potentials with the Arab States. A note was also delivered to Britain, the United States and France reminding them of their commitments under the

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<sup>1</sup>Don Peretz "Development of the Jordan Valley Waters," Middle East Journal, IX (August, 1955), pp. 397-412. Arab Palestine Office, Commentary of Water Development in the Jordan Valley Region, (Beirut, June 1954).

<sup>2</sup>Statement by Premier Yaffi, Beirut, December 2, 1953. Refer also to the reports on the discussions between Prime Minister Yaffi and Erick Johnston, special emissary of President Eisenhower, al-Nahar, October 24, 1953.

<sup>3</sup>al-Nahar, October 29, 1953.

Tripartite Declaration.<sup>1</sup> Such measures were, however, hardly sufficient for the security of Lebanon.

On June 20, Pro-West Deputies Ghassan Tweini, Hamid Franjeh and Emile Bustani cross-examined Premier Yaffi in parliament. They were quick to point out that the Arab Collective Security Pact was hardly more than ink on paper, that the Lebanese Army was ill-equipped and that the Tripartite Declaration could hardly be relied upon indefinitely, for there was no agreement between Lebanon and the Western Powers dictating the application of the Declaration in case of war. Having pointed out what they thought were shortcomings of Lebanese diplomacy, they suggested several measures for the improvement of the security of the State: buy additional equipment for the army from the United States; get active in reconciling the conflict between France and the Arabs in North Africa; strengthen the Arab Collective Security Pact; work for the improvement of Arab-Turkish relations; take a clear stand on the global cold war tension so that you could count on the support of your friends, and, if necessary, conclude a defense agreement with the United States.<sup>2</sup>

Premier Yaffi promised to build up the armed forces and to do all what he could to strengthen the Arab Collective Security Pact. He told the House that the Government had already raised the question of

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<sup>1</sup>Statement by Lebanese Minister of Foreign Affairs, Alfred Nakkash: Lebanon, Official Gazette. 2nd Ordinary Session, 15th Meeting, January 15, 1953, pp. 1073-75.

<sup>2</sup>Lebanon, Official Gazette, 1st Ordinary Session, 12th Meeting, July 20, 1954, pp. 1299-1302, 1303. See also al-Jareeda, July 6, 1954.

improving Arab-Turkish relations at the Arab League and declared that it was also seeking an opportunity to reconcile the Arab-French conflict in North Africa. But, on the question of alignment, Premier Yaffi did not make a direct comment. His only observation was that Lebanon could not subscribe fully to the Tripartite Declaration because such an action would imply the recognition of the status quo with Israel.<sup>1</sup>

That the Government was reserved on the question of alignment was not surprising, for while pro-West circles were pressing on the authorities in that direction, radical groups in Lebanon were not standing idle. Shortly after the conclusion of a defense agreement between Turkey and Pakistan (April 2, 1954), and the declaration of the United States that it was dispatching armaments to Iraq in accordance with a military agreement, student-led demonstrations broke out in Beirut which were of the same nature as those which broke out in 1951 and in May 1953 on the visit of Dulles.<sup>2</sup> Radical press media such as al-Telegraph and al-Sharq confronted those who were advocating alignment by arguing that Western armaments could not possibly be used against Israel, because the Major Western Powers were Israel's protectors.<sup>3</sup>

The misunderstanding between those advocating alignment and

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<sup>1</sup>Statement by Prime Minister Yaffi, Lebanon, Official Gazette, 1st Ordinary Session, 12th Meeting, July 20, 1954, pp. 1300-1301. See also al-Nahar, September 29, 1954; Arab World, June 14, 1954, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup>See parliamentary debates; Lebanon, Official Gazette, 1st Ordinary Session, 15th Meeting, April 30, 1954, pp. 327-340.

<sup>3</sup>al-Telegraph, July 6, 1954; al-Sharq, July 13, 1954.

those who were against it arose in part from the different objectives of the two groups. The radicals were assuming that Lebanon would have to join an Arab offensive against Israel in the future. With that objective in mind, it was pertinent to expect that the Western Powers under the Tripartite Declaration would prohibit the use of their armaments against Israel.<sup>1</sup> But if the objective was to defend the state against Israel, as the pro-Western circles were assuming, the Western Powers would have in all probability allowed the use of their armaments for defensive purposes. The reason being the same, the preservation of the status quo as expressed in the Tripartite Declaration.

The predicament for the Government was that if it pursued a policy of alignment with the Western Powers, as pro-West circles in Lebanon were advocating, it would have invited the hostility of the radical Arab nationalists at home and elsewhere in the Arab World on the grounds that it broke the solidarity of Arab ranks. Lebanon could hardly afford a unilateral position of that sort because its Arabism was often doubted due to its Christian color. On the other hand, if it preserved the presumed solidarity of Arab ranks, as the radicals were demanding, by relying for security on the Arab Collective Security Pact, it could not but reckon with the reality that the Pact was short of armaments and torn by inter-Arab rivalries.

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<sup>1</sup>The Ambassador of the United States to Iraq, Waldemar Gallman, mentioned in his book a classic example of how the United States pressed on Iraq not to use American arms in a prospective offensive against Israel. Waldemar Gallman, Iraq Under General Nuri (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1964), pp. 191-92.

As a result of this predicament Lebanese foreign policy suffered from vagueness and contradictions. While the authorities recognized that the Arab Collective Security Pact was insufficient as a measure of security, they did not venture to conclude a defense agreement with the Western Powers. Whenever there was tension on the Arab-Israeli borders they were quick to request the application of the Tripartite Declaration, and yet in public they did not consider the Tripartite Declaration as binding on Lebanon. From where did Lebanon then derive its security?

The security of Lebanon apparently arose more from the limitations which the authorities imposed on themselves rather than from any particular arrangement with other powers. These limitations consisted of: declining a leading role in the Arab World, avoiding intervention in the internal affairs of Arab States, avoiding being a party to inter-Arab conflicts whenever possible, and maintaining a friendly but non-committal attitude towards the Western Powers. Fortunately for Lebanon such a policy was still feasible in 1954. But in 1955 with the entry of Iraq into the Baghdad Pact, Lebanon started to experience additional difficulties in carrying out its traditional policy.

## Chapter IV

### PRELUDE TO THE BAGHDAD PACT

#### A. Preliminary Measures.

The Spring of 1954 witnessed renewed efforts for alignment in the Middle East. The new round commenced on April 2, 1954 with the conclusion of a Turco-Pakistani defense agreement which was quickly followed on May 19 with an aid agreement between the United States and Pakistan. News reports to the effect that Iraq was preparing to join Turkey and Pakistan seemed confirmed with the announcement on April 25, that Iraq would receive military aid from the United States.<sup>1</sup>

While Pakistan and Turkey were arranging for their joint defense, the British and the American ambassadors in Baghdad were conducting negotiations with the Prime Minister of Iraq, Nuri al-Sa'id, for the entry of Iraq. Al-Sa'id agreed in principle to join with Turkey and Pakistan, but he was not willing to take that step without assurances that the United States and Britain would be directly connected with the proposed Pact. Their indirect commitment through Turkey's membership in NATO was insufficient from the Prime Minister's point of view. He, moreover, wanted to make sure that Iran was scheduled to join in and that Iraq was to receive a substantial quantity of war material.<sup>2</sup>

As it turned out, the United States obliged by promising military

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<sup>1</sup>Patrick Seale, The Struggle for Syria (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 189.

<sup>2</sup>Waldemar Gallman, Iraq Under General Nuri (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1964), pp. 30-31.

equipment to Iraq, but it did not promise to join the Proposed Pact for reasons which are dealt with in Chapter VII. It was Britain who obliged by promising direct adherence to the proposed Pact. Britain regarded the Middle East as its sphere of influence and as such, it had to play a leading role in the defense of the area. Moreover, the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of 1930, which granted Britain the right to maintain military bases in Iraq, was due to expire in 1957. An attempt to renew the Treaty in 1948 precipitated anti-British demonstrations in Baghdad which induced Britain to drop the attempt. Under the circumstances a new Pact with Iraq seemed an ideal method to discard the unpopular Anglo-Iraqi Treaty and still maintain British military presence in that country.<sup>1</sup>

But in order to give the proposed pact good prospects in the Arab World, it was necessary to terminate what seemed by that time a chronic Anglo-Egyptian dispute over the Suez base. Accordingly, while the groundwork was being prepared for the Baghdad Pact, Britain took steady steps towards a final settlement with Egypt. The month of July, 1954, witnessed a rapid improvement in Anglo-Egyptian relations: Britain, on July 9, announced the release of 10 million pounds which were frozen in Egyptian sterling accounts in London; on July 11, British and Egyptian negotiators re-opened talks regarding the Suez base which had been deadlocked for several months; Egypt on the same day announced the removal of almost all restrictions on imports from the sterling area; and on July 23, the British Government announced that it was sending War

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 189-90.

Secretary Anthony Head to Cairo for top level talks regarding the proposed British withdrawal from the Suez base. The final step was taken on July 27 when it was announced that an accord, entitled the "Heads of Agreement" was initialled between Egypt and Britain providing for the withdrawal of 83,000 British troops stationed at Suez on condition that they would be permitted to re-occupy the base in case of aggression on Turkey or any Arab State. Thereafter the Western Powers began to extend economic assistance to Egypt.<sup>1</sup>

The Western Powers were obviously hoping that the realization of Egyptian national demands and the corresponding improvement in Egyptian-Western relations would culminate either in a new Egyptian inclination towards alignment or at least in the neutralization of Egypt, thus permitting other Arab States inclined towards alignment to do so without having to put up with the opposition of the most prominent member of the Arab League. It was apparent, however, that Egypt would not live up to the expectations of the Western Powers. On June 22, a correspondent of al-Jareeda, Basim al-Jisr, had an interview with Salah Salem, the Egyptian Minister of National Guidance, which demonstrated clearly that Egypt did not budge from its previous negative attitude towards alignment. Salem criticised the policy of Iraq, by advocating that advanced bases for the Western Powers in the Arab States would not give protection but destruction to the states involved. The Western Powers, he said, in case of a war could not possibly block a Soviet offensive

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<sup>1</sup>"Developments of the Quarter: Comment and Chronology," The Middle East Journal, VIII (July, 1954), p. 449.



on such advanced lines. Their advanced bases would be used for the delivery of a devastating blow to the Soviet Union, but the real counter-offensive would take place at the rear lines. Salem, moreover, was of the opinion that logistics required the participation of Israel in a defense alliance. He assumed that the Western Powers as a first step would link Israel with the defense alliance through Turkey and then move on to liquidate the Palestinian question. Accordingly, Salem concluded that those Arabs who advocate a defensive Pact with the Western Powers were either "charlatans or fools."<sup>1</sup>

On the next day, June 23, Nasser expressed a similar opinion to the same correspondent, Basim al-Jisr. The Western Powers having failed to align Egypt, he said, directed their efforts towards other Arab States. If those states accepted alignment, the Arab League would be destroyed and each Arab State would be singled out and subdued separately. Egypt would not sit cross armed when such doings took place. Egypt will strive to organize its defense and that of other Arab States to offset the Israeli danger.<sup>2</sup>

While Egyptian officials were delivering statements against alliances, the Egyptian broadcasting station was agitating against Iraq. On June 4, Radio Cairo in a program called the "Voice of the Arabs" had this to say:

"Every Arab now realizes the glaring fact that the West wants to settle in our lands forever. The West wants to remain the master of the World so that it may colonise, enslave and exploit it. The West will give Iraq military

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<sup>1</sup>al-Jareeda, June 22, 1954.

<sup>2</sup>al-Jareeda, June 23, 1955.

equipment, but what for? Is it to strengthen proud Iraq so that it may liquidate the step-daughter of imperialism and the principal enemy of the Arabs, Israel? No, it is to lead her to "death in the front lines of the next World War in order to immortalize the Western colonization of Iraq."<sup>1</sup>

B. The Sarsank Talks.

The diatribe between Egypt and Iraq over alignment brought Salam to Sarsank, a summer resort in Northern Iraq, on August 18 hoping that Egyptian-Iraqi difference could be sorted out by talking Iraq out of its determination to join a defense alliance. Nuri al-Sa'id opened up the discussion by elaborating on the sources of insecurity to Iraq. He noted that the Soviet Union was less than 400 miles from his northern borders and that Turkey has always entertained ambitions in the oil-rich Mosul area which it might try to annex in a similar manner to what was done to Alexandretta, in 1938. As a measure of security, he concluded, Iraq was in need of armaments which could not be possibly obtained without an alliance with the Western Powers. He estimated that with the improved power position of Iraq, the chances of serving the Palestinian Cause would be promoted.<sup>2</sup>

But while Nuri al-Sa'id's main concern was about the Soviet Union, Salem's worry focused on the Western Powers. To a certain extent this was natural: Iraq was in a geographical proximity to the Soviet Union, but Egypt was more than 1800 miles away. Salem said:

"We had made alliances in the past for example our Treaty with Great Britain in 1936. But the powerful

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<sup>1</sup>Seale, op.cit., p. 197.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 201-202.

partner had exploited the Treaty to limit the freedom of the weak partner. In all the twenty years of the alliance, the British had only helped us create a force of some 10,000 - 20,000 men equipped with rifles for parades. They had never helped us build up a real army fit for war. They had sent us military missions which, instead of training our troops, had themselves become the real commanders and interfered in our internal affairs. The British Ambassador was the real power in the country; he could dismiss cabinets and appoint ministers."

"The British had, in fact, interfered in every branch of our lives. I told them that our people still remembered this interference and knew why it was so. It was simply that the British were more powerful than we were and that they had interests in the area. In such an alliance there could be no question of real independence."<sup>1</sup>

"In reply to Nuri's fear about Turkish designs on Mosul, I merely said that if the West gave Turkey its support, there was little that Iraq could do. Conversely, if the West did not want Turkey to acquire Mosul, she could never do so."

"As for communism, I told Nuri frankly that his policy of making pacts with the West was the best way of strengthening the communist underground in Iraq. Not only would his policy induce the communists to redouble their activities inside the country, but it would also allow them to represent the Government as the puppets in the hands of the Great Powers and with this argument, win over the nationalists to their side."

"Your nationalists are much the same as ours, I told them. They are sick of British interference with their internal affairs. They will inevitably be influenced by communist propoganda. The problem in Iraq is how to secure the confidence of the nationalists, because if you lose their confidence you will have lost the battle inside your country."<sup>2</sup>

"Consider Israel, I added: our people know that Israel could have never been established without Western help. How can we now convince them to join forces with those who allowed Israel to become a source of continuous aggression against us."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 202.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 203.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 204.

"In conclusion, I told them that we in Egypt had decided that it would be far better to have a transitional period free from all foreign obligations during which we could observe how we were treated by Britain and the West. If they treated us as sovereign states, then we might in the future change our minds. But we were resolved at present to refuse all ties with the Great Powers. We aimed at full, unconditional independence."<sup>1</sup>

"They then asked how could they strengthen their army if they adopted our policies and, in reply, I made certain proposals. I said: Let us call all Arab countries to a conference and together set up a real defense organization. If Cairo and Baghdad agree to this all others will follow. If we, in fact set up a purely Arab Pact in this decisive region of the World, with a combined headquarters, a common defense strategy, and joint plans for training, building roads, aerodromes, and so on. . . . If we then went together, as one unit, to the Western Powers and said to them: Here is a regional organization in accordance with Articles 51 and 52 of the U.N. Charter. You have many interests in the area. We want you to help this organization by giving it arms so that it may repel aggression from any quarter. Our people would not be suspicious of a purely Arab organization of this sort.

But if after we had done all this the West refused to give us arms, we should have to think again. But you may be sure that uniting in such a workable organization would give us tremendous power. At present the West is playing us off against each other."<sup>2</sup>

Prime Minister Sa'id concurred with Salem on the necessity of reconsidering the Arab Collective Security Pact with the object of creating a stronger regional organization, but he also convinced Salem that it would be necessary for Iraq and Egypt to consult separately with the United States and Britain on that project. These preliminary consultations were to be followed by joint discussions with

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 202.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 203.

Britain and the United States, and thereafter, the Arab States would be asked to convene for a final arrangement. Nuri al-Sa'id promised to visit Cairo around the middle of September for further talks with Premier Nasser.<sup>1</sup>

Salah Salem in fact started out by consulting the Chargé d'Affaires of Britain and the U.S. right there, in Baghdad, (the Ambassadors were absent), and informed them that he would get in touch with their Ambassadors in Cairo. But on his return to the Egyptian capital, Salem was rebuked by Nasser for having agreed to consult Britain and the United States "on a matter purely within our prerogative rights."<sup>2</sup>

The news about a split in the Egyptian Junta over the necessity of consulting with Britain and the United States reached Nuri al-Sa'id but he, nevertheless, in what seemed like a last measure to retrieve an accord between Iraq and Egypt, visited Cairo on September 15 as he had promised.<sup>3</sup> There his suspicions of Nasser's attitude were confirmed. Nuri al-Sa'id focused in Cairo as he did a month earlier at Sarsank

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 204-05. Refer also to the Sarsank talks as presented by Prime Minister Nuri al-Sa'id to the Iraqi House of Deputies on February 6, 1955. Iraq, the Directorate of Guidance and Public Broadcasts, Facts About Arab Politics Discussed By The Iraqi House Of Deputies (Baghdad: The Government Press, 1955), p. 10.

<sup>2</sup>Seale, op.cit., pp. 205-06.

<sup>3</sup>Speech by Nuri al-Sa'id in the Iraqi House of Deputies: Iraq, The Directorate of Guidance and Public Broadcasts, op.cit., pp. 4-5.

on armaments as the following dialogue shows:

al-Sa'id:

'From whom can we obtain arms if there is no link between the British and the Collective Security Pact.'<sup>1</sup>

Nasser:

"So the purpose is British participation in the Collective Security Pact . . . contact with the British will lead to one of these replies: either the conclusion of bilateral agreements between the Arab countries and Britain; or the admission of Britain and Turkey to the Arab Collective Security Pact. We must not only think about defense against foreign aggression. We must equally consider the question of safeguarding our independence from the designs of imperialism. Our intention is to conclude the evacuation agreement, and we feel that matters will not crystallize until two years after the evacuation of Egypt. We want to enjoy our independence and exercise our minds at a time when we are independent."<sup>2</sup>

al-Sa'id:

"Iraq cannot possibly do anything to conflict with Egypt's plan to secure independence . . . but the Collective Security Pact is mere ink on paper."<sup>3</sup>

"I cannot depend on the Arabs to defend my country. If I tell my people and my foreign friends that I am going to depend on the Syrian, Saudi, and the Lebanese armies to defend Iraq, they will say: Nuri you are a fool. The only way to defend my country is to make an alliance with the West. I well understand your suspicions of Britain, but I am going ahead right away."<sup>4</sup>

Nasser:

"Well Nuri, I gave you my advice. You are of course free to do whatever you may wish. We shall continue with our policy

<sup>1</sup>Seale, op.cit., p. 207.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 208.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

and the future will judge between us."<sup>1</sup>

Nuri al-Sa'id must have felt disillusioned with Egypt after this encounter. For a number of years he had been persuaded reluctantly to postpone his plans awaiting a solution of the Anglo-Egyptian dispute, and now that a tentative agreement on British withdrawal had been reached, Nasser was still asking for two years to reach a final decision on alignment. He, therefore, departed from Egypt to London and "right away", as he told Nasser, proceeded to lay the groundwork for the conclusion of a defense pact. In London his suspicions of Turkey's ambitions in Mosul were alleviated as he was given assurances that the Western Powers, Turkey's allies, would not approve of them. On his way back to Iraq he stopped at Istanbul from October 8 to 19 where he worked out with Premier Adnan Menderes and Fuad Koprulu, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the principles for a Turco-Iraqi defense treaty.<sup>3</sup> Egypt, which got wind of an unusual Turkish-Iraqi rapprochement, directed its radio programs with the object of forestalling an accord between the Arab States and the Western Powers. Some of these broadcasts attacked alignment directly:

"Recently, the leader of the Egyptian revolution, Jamal

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Gallman, op.cit., p. 27.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 26. See also, Iraq, the Directorate of Guidance and Public Broadcasts, op.cit., pp. 14-15.

Abdul Nasser, said that he is against participation of any Arab country in any defense alliance such as that concluded between Turkey and Pakistan. The participation of any Arab State in the Turkish - Pakistani Pact will provoke the Arabs. . . . no alliances with imperialism, foreigners or non-Arabs."<sup>1</sup>

Some other broadcasts struck at joint ventures between the Arab States and the Western Powers. Consider for example the following commentary by the "Voice of the Arabs" about the oil:

"Contemplate the fate of this wealth in the hands of others and in the interest of people who challenge your objectives and exploit your peoples. Iraq produces 2.3 million tons monthly, Saudi Arabia 3.4 million etc. . . . In Libya, which sold herself in return for 5 million pounds, rivers of black gold overflowed, not to improve the conditions of her people or to raise their standard of living but so that affluence may prevail in 'friendly' Britain.

The big powers rushed for this vital black fluid. Behind this rush were imperialistic agreements. The Arab rulers awarded the imperialist companies an abundance of rights and concessions at the expense of the peoples who struggled and continue to struggle against them."<sup>1</sup>

Such broadcasts clearly irritated the Western Powers and the Arab Governments as well. They strikingly demonstrated that the new revolutionary regime in Egypt did not only brush aside the sanctity of the sovereign Arab States, but was likewise bent on dictating to them what they ought to do and what they should not do. Such an aggressive attitude did not appeal to Arab rulers of the traditional style such as Nuri al-Sa'id, who despite their frequent bickerings, observed certain limits of courtesy between them. Egypt's attitude if anything reinforced

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<sup>1</sup>U.S. Information Service, Foreign Broadcasts, No. 171, September 2, 1954.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., No. 175, September 9, 1954.



the determination of Nuri al-Sa'id to go on with his plans. While the Egyptian radio and press were trying to forestall an Arab-Western accord, radio Iraq was broadcasting a series of decrees allowing the authorities to withdraw citizenship from active communists.<sup>1</sup> This was one of the steps in execution of what was agreed upon in Istanbul with regard to combatting internal communism.

The Autumn of 1954 and the early Winter of 1955 witnessed a steady deterioration in Soviet-Iraqi diplomatic relations which were already at the low level of Chargé d'Affaires, and a steady improvement in Iraqi-Turkish relations. At close observation the events which took place between Iraq and the Soviet Union on the one hand, and Iraq and Turkey on the other, indicated that they were closely interrelated and part of a general Iraqi policy. This was borne out by the timing of events, for when Iraq withdrew its Chargé d'Affaires from Moscow, Premier Nuri al-Sa'id of Iraq was paying an official visit to the Turkish Government. Similarly on January 3, 1955, when the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs summoned the Soviet Chargé d'Affaires in Baghdad and informed him that the Iraqi Government had decided to sever diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, a Turkish delegation headed by Premier Menderes and the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Fuad Koprulu, was visiting Iraq.<sup>2</sup>

Shortly after the Soviet Chargé d'Affaires left for Moscow, a Turkish - Iraqi Communique was issued on January 12, 1955, announcing

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., No. 171, September 1, 1954.

<sup>2</sup>al-Nahar, January 4, 1955.

that Iraq and Turkey intended to draw up, as soon as possible, and without delay, a treaty of mutual defense against all types of aggression on either one of them from within or without the region.<sup>1</sup> This Communique commenced a new round of cold war tension in the Arab World, for it was clear that a treaty of mutual defense with Turkey, a member of NATO, would amount to an alignment with the Western Powers against the Soviet Union. In view of the joint commitments of the Arab States under the Protocol and the Charter of the Arab League, and in view of the Arab Collective Security Pact, an alignment between Iraq and the Western Powers would have linked the members of the Arab League to the Western Camp.

C Iraqi-Egyptian Dispute at the Conference of Cairo.

Foremost among those who reacted violently against the proposed Turco-Israeli Treaty, was Egypt. The Egyptian Government, realizing the implications of the prospective Turco-Iraqi Treaty, summoned the Arab States for a conference in Cairo on January 22, 1955.

As the Arab delegations convened, it was clear that Egypt and Iraq had unreconcilable views about the policy which the Arab World should follow in the cold war context. The Iraqi delegation led by Fadhil al-Jamali based Iraqi policy on the assumption that it was neither feasible nor moral to keep out of the global cold war which involved the Major Powers and the destiny of civilization.<sup>2</sup> Iraq opted for the West and

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<sup>1</sup>The text of the Communique is in: al-Nahar, January 14, 1955.

<sup>2</sup>See speech by Dr. Fadhil al-Jamali to the Iraqi House of Deputies February 6, 1955. Royal Institute of International Affairs, Documents on International Affairs (1955), ed. Noble Frankland (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 319. Iraq, Directorate of Guidance and Public Broadcasts, Facts About Arab Politics Discussed by the Iraqi House of Deputies (Baghdad: Government Press), 1955, p. 33.

proceeded to build its policy accordingly. In order to face up to the communist threat, the Iraqi delegates argued, it was necessary to obtain armaments and to join in regional organizations designed not only to combat the communist danger from without, but also to eliminate communist subversion from within.<sup>1</sup> This was especially important to Iraq in view of its proximity to the Soviet borders. Iraq was asking for the right to co-operate with its neighbours Turkey and Iran in the context of a regional organization.<sup>2</sup> The Iraqi delegates pointed out that since the days of Feisal the First, Iraq had consistently co-operated closely with Iran and Turkey. It had concluded a treaty of friendship with Iran and Turkey in 1922, the Treaty of Sa'd Abad in 1937 and a treaty of friendship and co-operation with Turkey in 1946.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, the proposed Treaty with Turkey, the Iraqi delegates concluded, was simply a continuation of the traditional policy of friendship and co-operation between Iraq and its neighbours. Jamali further argued that the proposed treaty was justified under Articles 51 and 52 of the U.N. Charter which provided for the right of individual or collective self-defense and for regional arrangements related to the maintenance of international peace and security.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>RIIA, Documents on International Affairs, 1955, p. 319. Also Iraq, Directorate of Guidance and Public Broadcasts, op.cit., p. 34.

<sup>2</sup>Iraq, Directorate of Guidance and Public Broadcasts, op.cit., p. 29.

<sup>3</sup>Refer to the Report of Prime Minister Sami al-Sulh to the nation about the Arab League Conference in Cairo: al-Nahar and al-Jareeda, February 8, 1955. See also Salem's report about the Arab League Conference in Cairo: al-Jareeda, February 10, 1955: Also Statement by Fadhil al-Jamali, al-Jareeda, February 16, 1955.

<sup>4</sup>RIIA, Documents on International Affairs: 1955, p. 318. Iraq, Directorate of Guidance and Public Broadcasts, op.cit., p. 33.

The Iraqi delegates were critical of the negative policy of the Arab States which, in their opinion, would have led to isolation and weakness.<sup>1</sup> In Iraq's opinion, the Arab States could not possibly seek successfully either armaments or assistance from the Western Powers without offering something in return.<sup>2</sup> It was maintained that since the Arabs were not ready to collaborate with the communists, their only sources of armaments were the Western Powers and that Arab-Western co-operation was the only feasible way to obtain armaments direly needed by the Arabs. Moreover, the Iraqi Government believed that Arab-Western collaboration on the international front would facilitate the use of Western diplomacy to alleviate injustices which the Western Powers inflicted on the Arabs in the past.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, it was expected that a policy of Arab-Western co-operation would have given adequate protection against Israel, and might have led to a satisfactory solution of the Palestinian problem as far as the Arabs were concerned.

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<sup>1</sup>RIIA, Documents On International Affairs: 1955, pp. 319-20. Iraq, Directorate of Guidance and Public Broadcasts, op.cit., p. 34.

<sup>2</sup>RIIA, Documents On International Affairs: 1955, p. 319. Iraq, Directorate of Guidance and Public Broadcasts, op.cit., pp. 33-34.

<sup>3</sup>Refer to report by Sami al-Sulh to the nation about the Arab League Conference in Cairo: al-Nahar, February 8, 1955. See also Gibran Hayek "Ten Days in the Revolutionary Country," al-Jareeda, February 12, 1955; RIIA, Documents on International Affairs: 1955, p. 319.

<sup>4</sup>RIIA, Documents On International Affairs: 1955, p. 320. Iraq, Directorate of Guidance and Public Broadcasts, op.cit., pp. 34-35.

Dr. Jamali, having explained the major lines of the policy of Iraq, proceeded to defend Turkey from an Arab point of view. He reminded the delegates that Turkey in 1947 voted against the partition of Palestine and persuaded Greece to withstand Western pressure and vote for the Arabs as well.<sup>1</sup> He told the Conference that Turkey was willing to assist the Arab States against an Israeli aggression and to support the implementation of the U.N. 1947 Partition Resolution.<sup>2</sup>

In the opinion of the Iraqi Government, Iraq under Article II of the Arab Collective Security Pact, Article VII and paragraph 2 of Article IX of the Arab League Charter had the right to conclude a special agreement with a neighbouring state.<sup>3</sup> The Arab States were assured that Iraq still considered itself committed to the provisions of the Arab League Charter and other treaties signed under auspices of the Arab League.<sup>4</sup>

Egypt, in contrast to Iraq, did not take a position with regard to the global cold war. It was three months later, in April, 1955, at the

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<sup>1</sup>RIIA, Documents on International Affairs: 1955, p. 320. Iraq, Directorate of Guidance and Public Broadcasts, op.cit., p. 36.

<sup>2</sup>Report by Sami al-Sulh to the Nation, al-Nahar, February 8, 1955.

<sup>3</sup>RIIA, Documents on International Affairs: 1955, p. 320.

<sup>4</sup>Sami al-Sulh, Memoirs of Sami al-Sulh (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr Press, 1960), pp. 239-40.

Conference of Bandung, that Egypt for the first time adopted a policy of "positive" neutrality. At the Conference of Cairo, Egypt concerned itself with the problems of the Arab World, primarily with colonialism and the Question of Palestine.

Egypt maintained that the Arab States should rely primarily on themselves to provide for the defense as well as for the economic and cultural development of the Arab World.<sup>1</sup> The Charter of the Arab League, the Arab Collective Security Pact, and other treaties concluded among the Arab States under the auspices of the Arab League provided, from the Egyptian point of view, ample machinery for the attainment of Arab objectives including those related to matters of defense. Therefore the Egyptian delegation concluded, if the Arab States unify their foreign policy and co-ordinate their defense arrangements within the framework of the Arab League, they could impose themselves on the West and purchase the necessary armaments from Western arsenals on their own terms.<sup>2</sup>

It was argued that a military alliance between Iraq and Turkey was an expansion of military commitments to all the signatories of the Arab Collective Security Pact.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, the Egyptian delegation

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<sup>1</sup>Refer to Statement by Salah Salem, Egyptian Minister of National Guidance, at a press conference in Cairo, February 7, 1955: RIIA, Documents On International Affairs: 1955, pp. 223-224.

<sup>2</sup>Report by Salah Salem about the Arab League Conference in Cairo: al-Jareeda, February 2, 1955. See also report by Sami al-Sulh to the Nation, al-Nahar, February 8, 1955; RIIA, Documents on International Affairs: 1955, p. 323.

<sup>3</sup>Report by Sami al-Sulh to the Nation: al-Nahar, February 8, 1955. See also Gibran Hayek, "Ten Days in the Revolutionary Country," al-Jareeda, February 10, 1955.

concluded, Iraq had no right to conclude such an alliance without the prior concurrence of the Arab States.<sup>1</sup> The Egyptian delegation maintained that if Iraq signed an alliance with Turkey without the concurrence of other Arab States, it would have violated its commitments under the Charter of the Arab League, the Arab Collective Security Pact, and the recommendation of the Arab Foreign Ministers which was made in Cairo in December 1954.<sup>2</sup> The recommendation stated that the foreign policy of the Arab States precluded the conclusion of alliances with foreign powers.<sup>3</sup>

The Egyptian delegation maintained that Turkish guarantees against Israeli aggression and Turkish promises to support the implementation of the U.N. Partition Resolutions were of no real value. The Western Powers, they continued, have already given guarantees against an Israeli aggression under the Tripartite Declaration. If for one reason or another they failed to deter an Israeli aggression, Turkey would not be in a position to assist the Arabs.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, the Egyptians argued, as long as the Western Powers were not ready to implement the Partition Resolution, Turkey's promises of bringing about a just solution to the question of Palestine would not be useful.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid. See also RIIA, Documents On International Affairs, 1955, p. 314.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Sulh, op.cit., p. 239. See also Lebanon, Official Gazette, First Ordinary Session, Second Meeting, April 19, 1956, pp. 1199.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Report by Sami al-Sulh to the Nation, al-Nahar, February 8, 1955.

The Egyptian Government contended that the proposed Turkish-Iraqi alliance would weaken the solidarity of the Arab States and lead to a new Turkish domination over the Arab World.<sup>1</sup> Likewise, the Egyptian delegation believed that linking the Arab World to the wheels of Western alliances would improve the capability of the colonial powers to hold on to their colonial and imperialistic privileges in the Arab World. Above all, the Egyptian delegation alleged, Iraq by advocating an alliance with the West was taking the first step towards the liquidation of Arab rights in Palestine.<sup>2</sup>

These were the main lines of the Iraqi and Egyptian arguments at the Conference of Cairo. Their significance was that they represented two schools in the Arab World: the pro-West school advocating that Arab-Western collaboration would contribute to a just solution of Arab problems; and the independent school holding that Arab-Western collaboration would only aggravate Arab problems, and that the only course left for the Arabs was total reliance on their own resources for the alleviation of their grievances.

Each school had its followers in every Arab State including Lebanon. The followers of the pro-Western school were motivated mainly by the tradition of Arab-Western relations and by fear of communism as a system and a way of life. Their opponents of the independent school were motivated by suspicion of the West which was nurtured by the Western

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>RIIA, Documents On International Affairs, 1955, p. 317.



colonial record and the heritage of medieval Christian-Islamic rivalry. Both schools stood for Arab rights in Palestine and for the liquidation of colonial controls and privileges in the Arab World, but they differed as to the means necessary for the achievement of these objectives. The independents were radicals, seeking to force concessions on the West through revolutionary means. The pro-West were moderates seeking concessions from the West through co-operation.

Al-Sa'id's inclinations towards a defense alliance with the Western Powers had merits in terms of Iraq's national interests. The alliance provided a peaceful method for the resolution of the unpopular Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of 1930, alleviated fears of Turkish ambitions in Mosul and, moreover, provided for an adequate deterrent against a Soviet threat from the North-West. Had Nuri al-Sa'id followed the Egyptian approach, he would have had to put up with popular resistance and confusion for a number of years in order to realize a British military withdrawal from Iraq which could have left his country vulnerable to Turkey and the Soviet Union. Therefore, in terms of national security and the realization of national demands, Nuri al-Sa'id had several reasons to opt for an alliance with the Western Powers.

Furthermore, a successful leading role in the introduction of a defense alliance with the Western Powers would have promoted Iraq's chances in annexing neighbouring Syria if and when an opportunity presented itself.

Cairo's approach in terms of power politics was less attractive than that of Iraq. To start with the Arab Collective Security Pact, on which

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Egypt was relying, was hardly sufficient to cope with Israel, to speak nothing of Turkish aggression or still more strikingly a Soviet aggression. Taking into consideration the polarization of international politics in 1955, neither Nuri al-Sa'id nor any other statesman could have ruled out the possibility of a Soviet attack on Iraq in case of a world war. The Egyptian motto, self-reliance, was useful for the morale and self-confidence of emergent peoples such as the Arabs, but the Egyptian government seems to have had expectations beyond Arab capacity. The Egyptian promise that at some point in the near future, they could dispatch four divisions to participate in the defense of Iraq against a Soviet attack,<sup>1</sup> and the belief that the Arabs were capable, presumably under Egyptian leadership, of extracting substantial quantities of armaments from the Western Powers without offering concession in return, reflected the over-confident mood of the Egyptian Junta. It was difficult to visualize how Egypt and the Arab States could extract war equipment without commitments. The Egyptians were primarily relying on agitation to force concessions, but what had escaped the Egyptian government, was that agitation had its limits and that if it was not coupled with any positive gestures it could bring about hostility rather than concessions.

Coupled with this over-confident mood there was a streak of fatalism in the official Egyptian mode of thinking. This was quite apparent in the Egyptian arguments refuting the benefits to be derived from co-operation with Turkey. With regard to Turkey's assistance

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<sup>1</sup>Iraq, Directorate of Guidance and Public Broadcasts, op.cit., p. 37.

against Israel, the Egyptians argued thus: If the Western Powers observed the Tripartite Declaration, Israel would not commit aggression, and if they did not, Turkey would not be able to help. A similar logic was used with regard to Turkish ambitions in Mosul: If the Western Powers permitted Turkey to annex Mosul, Iraq would not be in a position to resist, and if they did not, Turkey would not venture to do it. The Egyptians by presenting this line of thought resigned the fate of the Arabs in large measure to the whims of the Western Powers without giving adequate attention as to ways and means whereby the Western Powers would have vested interests in opposing either an Israeli or a Turkish aggression.

But while Egyptian officials did not give adequate consideration to complex factors of power politics, they certainly succeeded in capturing a prevalent revolutionary mood in the Arab World which was created in days past from injustices suffered at the hands of the Western Powers and magnified recently by an emergent wave of nationalism. It was this prevalent mood which escaped the older statesman Nuri al-Sa'id whose mode of thinking was in large measure shaped in the 1920's.

#### D. The Role of Lebanon.<sup>1</sup>

The Lebanese Government, like other Arab Governments, was caught up in the web of the irreconcilable Iraqi-Egyptian dispute. The ambitions of Egypt posed a dilemma to the Arab States who desired to pursue

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<sup>1</sup>In contrast to the previous section which dealt with the substance of the Iraqi-Egyptian arguments at the Conference of Cairo, this section deals with the diplomatic maneuvers, the dispositions of the various Arab States and primarily the role of Lebanon in that same Conference.

a neutral course and to dissociate themselves from the conflict. Egypt was demanding from the Arab States no less than straight alignment against Iraq. Any position falling short of that demand was considered by the Egyptian Government as unfriendly. On the other hand, compliance with Egyptian demands would have amounted to a clear cut anti-Iraqi policy. In either case a conflict with either Egypt or Iraq could not be avoided.

The Arab States had noted that the forthcoming Arab Conference scheduled for the 22nd of January, at Cairo, was unusual. Egypt as the host Government issued invitations to all the Arab States with the exception of Iraq,<sup>1</sup> which was subjected to a violent radio and press campaign from Cairo. This behavior created the impression that the Egyptian Government was bent on holding more of a trial for Iraq than a discussion of Iraqi policy.<sup>2</sup>

A few days before the Conference was scheduled to convene, Nuri al-Sa'id, the Prime Minister of Iraq, dispatched a special envoy, Fadhil al-Jamali, to Jordan, Syria and Lebanon on a mission to explain the policy of Iraq and to demand of these governments a boycott of the Egyptian-sponsored Conference.<sup>3</sup> He was evidently seeking to deal a blow to Nasser's prestige, and bidding for time to sign officially the proposed Turco-Iraqi Agreement.

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<sup>1</sup>Sulh, op.cit., p. 246.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>al-Nahar, January 20 and 21, 1955. See also Sulh, op.cit., p. 238.

The Jordanian Government held conflicting views on the question of alliances which was then championed by Iraq. The King was inclined to support the new policy of Iraq, but his Prime Minister, Tawfic Abul-Huda, and his Minister of Foreign Affairs, Walid Salah, were against it.<sup>1</sup> In Syria the Cabinet as well as the Presidency were in the hands of the People's Party which was traditionally oriented towards Iraq. When Jamali arrived in Beirut on January 20, after his tour of Jordan and Syria, he was under the impression that if Lebanon agreed to a boycott of the Cairo Conference Jordan and Syria would follow suit.<sup>2</sup>

President Chamoun was willing to accept the Iraqi suggestion of boycotting the Conference, but Prime Minister Sami al-Sulh was not of the same opinion.<sup>3</sup> Premier Sulh facing the joint pressure of the President and the Iraqi diplomats threatened to tender his resignation if he was not allowed to attend the Conference.<sup>4</sup> The President was thus faced with two alternatives; either create a cabinet crisis, or allow Sulh to attend the Conference. He chose the latter course. With the departure of the Lebanese delegation under Sami al-Sulh to Cairo, Jamali realized

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<sup>1</sup>Report by Salah Salem about the Arab League Conference in Cairo, al-Jareeda, February 8 and 9, 1955. Also RIIA, Documents on International Affairs, 1955, p. 234. Walid Salah turned out to be a member of the Ba'th Party who later defected to Syria.

<sup>2</sup>Sulh, op.cit., p. 238.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

that his efforts to boycott the Conference had failed.

The persistence of Premier Sulh about going to Cairo was more an effort to avoid open confrontation with the Egyptian Government than a design to oppose the substance of Iraqi policy. But with the polarization of Iraq and Egypt it was almost impossible to make any move without offending one or the other party to the dispute. In conducting Lebanese diplomacy at Cairo, the Prime Minister had many factors to consider. He was aware that President Chamoun was inclined towards Iraq and that by insisting on attending the Conference he had already strained the patience of the President to the limits.<sup>1</sup> He had also to consider the opinion of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Alfred Naqqash, who shared President Chamoun's pro-Iraqi inclinations.<sup>2</sup> Likewise, the Premier had to consider the recommendations of the Foreign Affairs Parliamentary Committee. The Committee had recommended, in traditional Lebanese fashion, that the Government should strive to achieve an understanding among the parties to the dispute, and that in case a compromise could not be achieved, the Lebanese delegation should endeavor to suspend the talks until a solution to the dispute could be found.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>On one occasion Alfred Naqqash opposed Premier Sulh in the presence of other Arab delegates when the latter supported the Egyptian proposals. As a result the Lebanese delegation withdrew for consultation never again extending support to Egypt. Refer to report by Salah Salem, al-Jareeda, February 8, 1955.

<sup>3</sup>Sulh, op.cit., p. 238. See also report by Sami al-Sulh to the nation, al-Jareeda, February 8, 1955.

The actual Lebanese policy at Cairo amounted to what had been recommended by the Foreign Affairs Committee.<sup>1</sup> On arrival, Premier Sulh, together with Premier Khoury of Syria, proceeded to prepare for a compromise. They demanded of the Egyptian Government the suspension of radio and press campaigns and the extension of an official invitation to Iraq in parity with other Arab Governments.<sup>2</sup> The Egyptian Government did not extend an invitation, but agreed to the wishes of the majority of the conferees that Premier Sulh be authorized to extend an invitation to Iraq on behalf of the Conference.<sup>3</sup> Sami al-Sulh immediately got in touch with the Iraqi Government, and President Chamoun, with the assistance of the British Ambassador in Beirut, undertook to convince Jamali that it was in the best interest of Iraq to be represented at the Conference.<sup>4</sup> It was argued that if Iraq did not attend, Egypt would be in a better position to influence the delegations in Cairo.<sup>5</sup> Nuri al-Sa'id was ill-disposed to attend, for Egyptian radio and press media had already attacked him personally, but he consented reluctantly to send a delegation

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<sup>1</sup>Sulh, op.cit., p. 242.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 246.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>See Cable No. 9 from Fadhil al-Jamali to Nuri al-Sa'id: The Government of Iraq, Iraqi Trials: 1958, IV (Baghdad: Government Press, 1959), p. 1133.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

under the leadership of Fadhil al-Jamali. The atmosphere, due to Egyptian intransigence, was not conducive to a compromise despite the efforts of the Lebanese and Syrian delegations. Premier Sulh reported that the voice of the Iraqi delegates could hardly be heard among the shoutings and interruptions of the Egyptian and Saudi delegates.<sup>1</sup> Egypt, against the advice of Lebanon, continued to wage a war of words against the Iraqi Government. While the Iraqi delegation was in Cairo, al-Ahram, a leading Egyptian paper, headlined: "The Conspiracy of Iraq and Turkey on the Arab States" and addressed the Premier of Iraq by his first name, "Nuri", for derogation.<sup>2</sup> Radio Cairo, in a program called "the Voice of the Arabs", described Premier Sa'id in such derogatory terms as "traitor", "tail of the imperialists", and "servant of Britain".<sup>3</sup>

Most of the Arab States including Lebanon agreed with Egypt in principle, that any defense commitments by Iraq would be tantamount to additional military commitments by the Arab States in view of their mutual military obligations under the Charter of the Arab League and the Arab Collective Security Pact.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, it was concluded, Iraq would

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<sup>1</sup>Sulh, op.cit., p. 246.

<sup>2</sup>al-Nahar, January 28, 1955.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Report by Salah Salem: al-Jareeda, February 8, 1955. See also Sulh, op.cit., p. 248. RIIA, Documents On International Affairs: 1955, p. 235.



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<sup>1</sup>Sulh, op.cit., p. 246.

<sup>2</sup>al-Nahar, January 28, 1955.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Report by Salah Salem: al-Jareeda, February 8, 1955. See also Sulh, op.cit., p. 248. RIIA, Documents On International Affairs: 1955, p. 235.

have to acquire the approval of the majority of the Arab States on questions regarding alliances with non-Arab States, but when proposals were submitted to this effect, Iraq refused to accept them.<sup>1</sup> The Lebanese delegation, on instructions from President Chamoun refused to endorse the proposals under the pretext that further efforts should be made to bridge the gap between Iraq and Egypt.<sup>2</sup> In reality President Chamoun and Premier Sulh were opposing the isolation of Iraq.<sup>3</sup>

In order to resolve the deadlock, Lebanon proposed the suspension of the talks in Cairo and their resumption on February 10 in Beirut. It was argued that no agreement could be reached without the presence of Nuri al-Sa'id and that Premier Sa'id would not come to Cairo but might accept an invitation to a neutral capital.<sup>4</sup> The Lebanese proposals were accepted in principle.

In preparation for a conference in Beirut, President Chamoun proposed to Premier Sa'id the following: That Iraq postpones the signature of the prospective Turco-Iraqi agreement for four months in order to provide an opportunity for fruitful contacts between Egypt and

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Report by Sami al-Sulh to the nation, al-Jareeda, February 8, 1955. Also al-Ahram, February 22, 1955.

<sup>3</sup>Cable from Burhanuddine Bash A'Yan, Iraqi Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, to Premier Sa'id: Government of Iraq, Iraqi Trials: 1958, p. 1395.

<sup>4</sup>Report by Sami al-Sulh to the Nation, al-Jareeda, February 8, 1955.

the Arab States on the one hand, and Egypt and Turkey on the other; and that the heads of the Arab States agree to hold a meeting in Beirut which would prepare the ground work for a final conference in Cairo.<sup>1</sup>

Premier Nuri al-Sa'id accepted the invitation of the President, but he would not agree to the suggestion of postponing the signature of the Turco-Iraqi Treaty.<sup>2</sup> Nasser, on the other hand, agreed to come to Beirut on condition that Iraq would be prepared to discuss the Turco-Iraqi alliance in principle and that it would be prepared to accept the decision of the majority.<sup>3</sup> These conditions were not acceptable to Premier Sa'id.<sup>4</sup> Having failed to mediate between Iraq and Egypt, the President asked the Lebanese delegation to return home on February 6.<sup>5</sup> The conference at Cairo was a failure. Egypt could not pass a resolution against Iraq due to the joint opposition of Lebanon and Syria.

Lebanon's reconciliatory policy at the Conference was unsatisfactory to both Egypt and Iraq. Egypt held Lebanon responsible for obstructing its efforts to pass a resolution against Iraq.<sup>6</sup> Adnan Menderes,

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<sup>1</sup>Camille Chamoun, Crise Au Moyen-Orient: Memoirs (Paris; Gallimard, 1963), p. 265.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. p. 265.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 265. Also al-Ahram, February 5, 1955.

<sup>4</sup>Chamoun, op.cit., p. 265.

<sup>5</sup>al-Nahar, February 6, 1955.

<sup>6</sup>al-Ahram, February 3, 1955.

the Premier of Turkey, who had visited Lebanon on January 14, rebuked the Lebanese Government for having failed to fulfill its promise of extending support to the prospective Turco-Iraqi alliance within the Arab League.<sup>1</sup> Iraq expressed its dissatisfaction with the attitude of Premier Sulh.<sup>2</sup> Thus Lebanon emerged from the Conference tarnished with criticism from both parties.

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<sup>1</sup>See the Statement of Hamid Franjieh in Parliament on the discussion between Menderes and the Ambassador of Lebanon to Italy, Joseph Abu Khater: al-Nahar, February 9, 1955.

<sup>2</sup>Cable by Burhanuddine Bash A'Yan: Government of Iraq, Iraqi Trials: 1958, IV, p. 1133.

## Chapter V

### THE SULH CABINETS

JANUARY - SEPTEMBER 14, 1955

#### A. Reckoning With Nasser At Home.

While the Arab delegations were convening in Cairo, the Egyptian Government was activating elements sympathetic with its policy throughout the Arab World. On the return of the Arab delegations to their countries, they had to face the pressure of pro-Egyptian elements at home.

In Jordan, Prime Minister Abul-Huda faced the combined pressure of the Arab nationalists, who were largely Palestinians living on the west bank of the Jordan River, the Ba'th Party, and other splinter groups with Egyptian leanings. The Palestinians in Jordan had only a few key posts in the administration, but their number, about half of the total population was large enough to bring to bear considerable pressure on the Government. On the whole the Palestinians in Jordan, as in other Arab lands, were discontented with the record of the Western Powers in Palestine which, they believed, amounted to the loss of their homeland to the Zionists. In Nasser they found the leader who was trying to stand up to the West. They believed that his nationalistic appeals would culminate in a stronger Arab World or nation which, they hoped, would lead to the liberation of their homeland.

On February 9, in a statement before the Jordanian Parliament, the Prime Minister was actually placating these elements when he stated that the Jordanian Government at the Cairo Conference supported Egypt

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178

and opposed the prospective Turco-Iraqi alliance.<sup>1</sup> Abul-Huda went on to say that the British Government was not ready to consider any proposals for the adjustment of the Anglo-Jordanian Treaty until satisfactory defense arrangements were made with other Arab States (meaning Iraq).<sup>2</sup> Evidently, the Prime Minister was trying to discredit both Iraq and Britain by creating the impression that Iraqi policy was a manifestation of British imperial designs.

The statement of Abul-Huda was certainly a cause for concern in pro-West circles, but the situation in Jordan was not yet alarming. Facing Abul-Huda and the Nasserites were the Hashimites under the leadership of the King. They still had control of most of the key posts in the Government and were well entrenched in the army. The Hashimites and the Loyal Bedouin Clans of the Eastern Bank were more than an even match for the unarmed Palestinians who were constantly under the observation of the Jordanian security cadres.

But even disregarding the internal balance in Jordan, the implementation of a pro-Egypt policy would have posed grave problems to the Jordanians. With a 600 kilometer border with Israel and an annual budget deficit amounting to 12 million pounds sterling, Jordan was hardly in a position to ignore British protection and financial assistance. Egypt was neither militarily nor financially capable of stepping in to replace Britain.

In Syria the task of the Nasserites was considerably less difficult. Neither Britain nor the Hashimites had any influence that could

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<sup>1</sup> al-Nahar, February 10, 1955.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

be compared with what they had in Jordan. Syria lacked the stabilizing cult of a monarch and its republican form of government was riddled with factionalism. The civilian government had only recently (1954) succeeded in maintaining a certain amount of independence from the direct control of the army, but officer cliques were still politically active behind the scenes.

On February 7, the People's Party cabinet which had exercised a certain degree of prudence at Cairo fell under Nasserite pressure.<sup>1</sup> It was succeeded on February 13 by a coalition cabinet of a Nasserite color. The change of cabinets was a matter of concern to pro-West circles in Lebanon. The new Prime Minister, Sabri al-'Assali and the new minister of Foreign Affairs and Defense, Khalid al-'Azm, were not only Nasserites but also well known for their unfriendly record towards Lebanon.<sup>2</sup>

In Lebanon the Nasserites were also active. During the time span of the Cairo Conference (January 22 to February 6), some students of the American University of Beirut triggered student demonstrations against alliances in general and the prospective Turco-Iraqi alliance in particular.<sup>3</sup> Prominent Sunni politicians--ex-Premiers Saeb Salam, 'Abdulla al-Yafi and Hussein al-'Uwayni--left for Egypt where they

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<sup>1</sup>al-Nahar, February 8, 1955.

<sup>2</sup>al-Nahar, February 15, 1955.

<sup>3</sup>al-Nahar, January 26, 1955.

conducted private talks with Nasser and Crown Prince Feisal of Saudi Arabia.<sup>1</sup> While Premier Sulh was trying to reconcile Egyptian and Iraqi views, the above mentioned leaders were delivering statements in support of Egypt.<sup>2</sup> This behavior was hardly helpful to the mission of Premier Sulh in Cairo and did not pass without criticism from the supporters of the Premier in Beirut.<sup>3</sup>

Lacking in power within the Lebanese Parliament, the Nasserites organized with some other groups the "National Congress of Parties".<sup>4</sup> Groups and individuals participating in the "National Congress" had different ideologies, purposes and orientations. There were Communists, socialists, capitalists, Arab Nationalists, sectarian Moslems, and public figures who had personal feuds with the President, but despite their different motives and ideologies, the members of the "Congress" had one thing in common: the objective of discrediting the "regime". "The National Congress" realizing that the question of alliances was the most salient issue, capitalized on an anti-West policy and promoted the cause of Nasserism, but it could do little beyond creating an atmosphere of

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<sup>1</sup>al-Nahar, January 26, 1955.

<sup>2</sup>al-Nahar, January 26, 1955.

<sup>3</sup>al-Nahar, January 29, 1955.

<sup>4</sup>al-Nahar, March 11, 1955.



agitation in the country because its parliamentary representation was weak.<sup>1</sup>

B. Diplomatic Support to Iraq and Turkey.

Realizing that Nasser was the major obstacle to an Arab-Western alliance, President Chamoun wrote Nasser a memorandum on February 8, hoping to convince him that it was in the best interest of the Arab States to co-operate with the West. His views turned out to be similar to those of the Iraqi Government. The President criticized the negative attitude of the Arab World to which he attributed weakness and isolation. Facing the threat of Israeli aggression and communism, the President thought that the Arabs could not afford to remain isolated and weak. He suggested that a regional organization between the Arabs and their neighbours, Turkey, Iran and Pakistan, would go a long way in solving Arab problems. In such an organization, he expected, the Arabs would have the last word due to their strategic position and superior resources.<sup>2</sup>

He wondered how Nasser could object to an alliance with the West when Egypt was under an obligation to allow British troops back into the Suez Base in case of aggression on Turkey and/or the Arab States, and

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<sup>1</sup>There were only two deputies who were permanent members of the "National Congress": 'Abdulla al-Haj and Kamal Jumlat. Hamid Franjeh and 'Abdullah al-Yafi were sympathizers; Sabri Hemadeh and Ahmed al-Ass'ad were in and out according to circumstances and the dictates of their interests. The membership of the "National Congress of Parties" was heavily Sunni.

<sup>2</sup>Camille Chamoun, Crise Au Moyen-Orient (Paris: Gallimard, 1963), pp. 266-68.

ended up suggesting that Egypt take the initiative towards the formation of a regional defense organization by calling for a regional conference in Cairo.<sup>1</sup>

The memorandum of the President went unanswered, but on February 23, with the arrival of Salah Salem in Beirut, the hopes of the President for a change in Egyptian outlook were dissipated.<sup>2</sup> Salem was carrying proposals for a purely Arab defense alliance which excluded the possibility of admitting non-Arab States, and which specifically stipulated that Iraq would not qualify for membership.<sup>3</sup> The Egyptian project was not well received by the President and the Prime Minister who counseled Salem to keep the door open for Iraq.<sup>4</sup> When Salem refused to give in, the Lebanese Government instead of standing up to Egypt, resorted to the tradition of ducking under Arab conflicts. Salem was told Lebanon would determine its position in the light of the reaction of other Arab States to the Egyptian Proposals.<sup>5</sup> In the meanwhile the President secretly

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>al-Ahram, February 27, 1955, p. 5. See also RIIA, Documents on International Affairs, 1955, ed. Noble Frankland (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 324.

<sup>4</sup>Chamoun, op.cit., p. 268.

<sup>5</sup>Sami al-Sulh, Memoirs of Sami al-Sulh (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr Press, 1960), p. 252.

advised Iraq to preserve close ties with Jordan at all costs.<sup>1</sup>

Salem made a tour of Arab capitals and returned to Beirut with Khalid al-'Azam on March 6.<sup>2</sup> As expected the Egyptian proposals were accepted by the 'Assali Cabinet in Syria and by King Sa'ud,<sup>3</sup> but they were rejected by Jordan.<sup>4</sup> Pressed again for a decision on the Egyptian Project, the Lebanese authorities declined on the basis that such a decision would only aggravate the raging Arab conflict. The Lebanese Government proposed that the Arab States meet in Beirut for the purpose of discussing the Project. Only in the light of such discussions were the Lebanese authorities prepared to consider the Egyptian proposals.<sup>5</sup>

The idea of holding an all-Arab conference at Beirut was justified by the Lebanese Government as a means for the facilitation of reconciliation among the Arab States. In reality, however, the conference would have meant more than simple reconciliation. To the Egyptian Government whose primary objective was the isolation of Iraq, the conference would have defeated its purposes. Iraq had already signed the Turco-Iraqi Alliance on February 24, and was likewise prepared to keep

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<sup>1</sup>Report by Burhan Uddine Bash -A'yan, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, to Nuri al-Sa'id: Iraq, The Iraqi Trials, 1958, IV, (Baghdad Government Press, 1959), p. 1133.

<sup>2</sup>al-Nahar, March 8, 1955.

<sup>3</sup>Refer to the Joint Communiques issued on the occasion of Salem's visits to Damascus and Riyad. RIIA, Documents on International Affairs, 1955, pp. 326-27.

<sup>4</sup>Sulh, op.cit., p. 252.

<sup>5</sup>al-Nahar, March 8, 1955.

its defensive commitments to the Arab States. If Egypt agreed to meet Iraq, its position would have been untenable, for Iraq would have asked the Egyptian Government to delete the Article excluding Iraq and to accede to the proposed Egyptian treaty thus linking Egypt and its allies to Western alliances. The Egyptian Government, therefore, refused the idea of an all-Arab conference in Beirut. Its policy was diametrically opposed to the very understanding which Lebanon was trying to achieve among the Arab States.

The negative attitude of Egypt did not discourage the President. Between the 8th and 25th of March, Lebanese diplomacy concentrated on selling the idea of a rapprochement between the Arab States--a rapprochement which the proposed conference in Beirut was expected to promote. Egypt did not look favorably upon Lebanese diplomatic activities in this respect. The success of Lebanese diplomacy would have weakened and isolated Egypt, for if Syria and Saudi Arabia accepted the Lebanese approach and agreed to attend the conference, Egypt would have had to face unpleasant alternatives: either desist from attending the conference and in that case appear as the state which was breaking the solidarity of Arab ranks; or attend the conference and thus be prepared to abandon its policy of isolating Iraq.

When Salem departed for Egypt, his colleague the Syrian Minister of Defense and Foreign Affairs, Khalid al-'Azm stayed behind in Beirut where he was counseled by the Lebanese Government to reserve his position towards the Egyptian-sponsored Defense Project (Tripartite Alliance). He was asked specifically to delete from the Egyptian Project

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provisions dictating the exclusion of Iraq.<sup>1</sup> Surrounded by Turkey to the North, Iraq to the East, Jordan to the South and Lebanon to the West, the Syrian Government was hardly in a position to disregard the policy of its neighbors.

On March 11, 'Azm apparently heeded the advice of the Lebanese Government. In a statement before the Syrian Parliament, he mentioned that the Syrian Government understood fully the circumstances which led Iraq to seek foreign alliances.<sup>2</sup> Syria, he said, would continue to support the prospective Tripartite Pact (Egyptian-sponsored Project) but would not accept the exclusion of Iraq from the Arab community.<sup>3</sup> In the meanwhile pro-Iraq Syrian politicians were frequently meeting Iraqi officials in Beirut arranging for a Syrian-Iraqi rapprochement with the blessing and the occasional advice of the Lebanese authorities. On March 13, President Chamoun met with Fadhil al-Jamali and Michael Lyan<sup>4</sup> in Beirut. His counsel was that the Iraqi Government should extend an invitation to 'Azm, treat him with patience and understanding, and as a token of good will express to 'Azm that Iraq was prepared to join the prospective Tripartite Pact.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Refer to statement by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Alfred Naqqash. Lebanon, The Official Gazette, 1st Ordinary Session, 9th Meeting, May 14, 1955, p. 751.

<sup>2</sup>al-Nahar, March 11, 1955.

<sup>3</sup>al-Nahar, March 11, 1955.

<sup>4</sup>Michael Lyan was a pro-West Christian deputy from Aleppo who belonged to the right wing of the Nationalist Party in Syria.

<sup>5</sup>Refer to cable by the Iraqi Military Attache in Beirut to the Central Military Intelligence in Baghdad, March 13, 1955. Iraq, The Iraqi Trials, 1958, III, p. 1121.

On the 14th of April with the arrival of a Syrian delegation under Khalid al-'Azm at Baghdad, the talks which President Chamoun had been preparing for started, but to the dismay of the President they ended in a deadlock a few days later.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, the contacts which President Chamoun had started on March 9 with the object of reconciling the traditional feud between the House of Sa'ud and the Hashimites of Iraq did not succeed.<sup>2</sup> Realizing that neither Syria nor Saudi Arabia were prepared to come to terms with Iraq, the President abandoned the idea of holding a conference in Beirut.

The deadlock between Syria and Iraq precipitated a series of incidents on the Syrian-Turkish borders during the last week of March and the first week of April.<sup>3</sup> At the same time tension was mounting on the Israeli-Syrian borders. The Syrian Government panicked, declared a state of emergency, mobilized and distributed arms to civilians for militia resistance. Although Iraq offered its good offices for conciliation between Turkey and Syria, the Syrian Government believed that Iraq, Turkey, and the West were conniving to subdue Syria.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> al-Nahar, March 16, 1955. Also RIIA. Documents on International Affairs, 1958, pp. 327-28.

<sup>2</sup> al-Nahar, March 10, 1955.

<sup>3</sup> al-Nahar, March 23, 1955.

<sup>4</sup> al-Hayat, March 24 and 27, 1955. The Arab World, March 25, 1955, p. 2. Communique by Syrian Government on Syrian-Turkish relations, March 22, 1955. U.S. Information Service, Foreign Broadcast, No. 57, March 23, 1955.

While the Syrian authorities were still pre-occupied, taking measures against what seemed to them as an eminent Turkish attack, President Chamoun paid an official state visit to Turkey. On this occasion the President exchanged with the Turkish authorities amicable speeches denoting the prominent role that Turkey was supposed to play in defending the Middle East. The President and the Turkish authorities raised diplomatic representation to the ambassadorial level and ratified agreements pertaining to the promotion of cultural and commercial relations between the two countries. On the termination of the state visit, April 5, a Joint Communique was issued which noted that the Lebanese Government sympathized with the Turco-Iraqi alliance, approved of Arab-Western cooperation in matters of defense, and pledged to promote cooperation and friendly relations between Turkey and the Arab States.<sup>1</sup> This demonstration of Lebanese - Turkish solidarity exposed the Lebanese Government to severe criticism from official quarters in Damascus, Riyadh, and Cairo.<sup>2</sup>

Criticism from these quarters stirred a wave of discontent among the Nasserites in Lebanon. The Progressive Socialist Party, the "National Congress of Parties" and other Nasser sympathizers accused the

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<sup>1</sup>al-Nahar, April 2, 3 and 6, 1955. al-Diyar, April 6, 1955. The Arab World, April 4, 1955, p. 4; April 6, 1955, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup>Refer to statements by Hamid Franjieh the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Parliamentary Committee, and by 'Abdullah al-Yafi, deputy from Beirut: Lebanon, The Official Gazette, 1st Ordinary Session, 7th Meeting, May 12, 1955, pp. 718-21, and 8th Meeting, May 13, 1955, pp. 728-31. See also, al-Nahar, April 10, 19, 1955. The Arab World, April 8, 1955, p. 5.

Government of secretly plotting with Turkey against the security of Syria. Some quarters suspected that a defense treaty had already been signed and that the Government was waiting for an opportunity to declare it.<sup>1</sup>

For a while, the Nasserites planned to meet the President on his return with riots, but after due consideration of the risks involved they changed their plans.<sup>2</sup> Lack of support among Christian quarters was discouraging. The Kataib, the only Christian mass organization which was against the entry of Lebanon to the Turco-Iraqi alliance, declined to co-operate with them.<sup>3</sup> Unlike the Nasserites, the Kataib were not against alignment with the West, nor were they against the Turco-Iraqi Alliance in principle. They were against the entry of Lebanon to that alliance out of concern for the independence of Lebanon from the ambitions of the Hashimites.<sup>4</sup> As Arab Nationalists and essentially against collaboration with the West, the Nasserites were likewise an object of suspicion to the Kata'ib. Thus although both were against the entry of Lebanon to the Turco-Iraqi alliance, the Kataib and the Nasserites had nothing else in common to justify close co-operation.

On the return of the President and his party (April 13) the Nasserites were further discouraged by stern security measures and by

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<sup>1</sup> al-Anba, April 8, 15, 1955. al-Nahar, April 10, 1955.

<sup>2</sup> al-Nahar, April 10, 1955. The Arab World, April 5, 1955, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup> al-'Amal, April 13, 1955.

<sup>4</sup> al-'Amal, April 7, 8, 1955.



the concentration of a large number of the followers of the President at the harbour of Beirut.<sup>1</sup> Shortly after the arrival of the President and his party, Premier Sulh in an effort to purge the country of the tense atmosphere hastened to assure the public in a press conference that no secret agreement had been signed at Ankara and that the Joint Communique was no more than a confirmation of cordial relations between the two states.<sup>2</sup> The Joint Communique was actually much more than a confirmation of cordial relations, but cordial relations were all that Premier Sulh wanted to admit to the public. In his Memoirs, Premier Sulh reported that in Ankara he was not asked to participate in the making of the Communique. It was the President who made it and he (the Premier) acquiesced in the text in order to save the President from embarrassment before the Turks.<sup>3</sup> What Sulh probably failed to report was that a blunt opposition to the President in Ankara could have cost him his office. However, whether Sulh acquiesced or not, the interpretation which he gave to the Communique was undoubtedly a pacification to the Nasserites in the country. Sulh as a Sunni leader was more susceptible to the pressure of the Nasserites than the President.

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<sup>1</sup>al-Nahar, April 13, 1955. About 10,000, mostly Christians, from Mount Lebanon descended to the water-front to meet the President. Such tactics are often used by the authorities in order to give the Government an air of popularity and to checkmate any attempts at violence by the opposition.

<sup>2</sup>al-Jareeda, April 14, 1955.

<sup>3</sup>Sulh, op.cit., p. 254.

On the 13th of April, Alfred Naqqash, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, gave to the Foreign Affairs Parliamentary Committee almost the same assurances that Sulh had already given to the public. Naqqash assured the interested members of the Committee that the Government would not sign any pact without the prior approval of the House Deputies. The Government, he said, in compliance with the recommendations of the Committee, was still trying to reconcile the conflicting views among the Arab States.<sup>1</sup>

Although the Nasserites were assured that no secret pact was signed in Ankara, they were still discontented with what they considered as a policy of moral support to Iraq and Turkey. The sore point to the Nasserites was that the Lebanese Government had been trying to keep Syria out of the Egyptian orbit.<sup>2</sup> Such a policy to a Lebanese nationalist could be justified on the basis of denying Nasser the use of Syria as a spring-board to Lebanon, but to an Arab nationalist who saw in Nasser a champion of the "Arab Nation", such a policy was tantamount to treason.

Turkish pressure, which was intended to drive home to the Syrians the risks involved in an Egyptian-sponsored alliance, gave exactly the opposite results. In terms of the internal struggle in Syria, the border tension strengthened the anti-West elements and disarmed those who were pro-West. Anti-West forces were now able to convince the scared Syrians that the West, Turkey, Iraq, Israel and pro-West forces at home were all

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<sup>1</sup> al-Nahar, April 15, 1955. al-'Amal, April 15, 1955. The Arab World, April 15, 1955, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Statement by 'Abdullah al-Yaffi, deputy from Beirut, Lebanon, The Official Gazette, 1st Ordinary Session, 8th Meeting, May 13, 1955, pp. 728-31.

collaborating in a major conspiracy against the security of the State. Slogans which were used against pro-West elements such as "traitors" and "agents of the imperialists" had more appeal to the nationalistic Syrians in the light of Turkish threats.

In comparison pro-West forces had to condemn the actions of Turkey, an ally of the West and Iraq, from which they were receiving support. They could only retaliate by accusing anti-West forces of being communists; but that accusation could hardly stick, for neither the communists nor the Nasserites were speaking in terms of alliance with the Soviet Union. Soviet Russia was relying on the forces of nationalism rather than communism. It was demanding of the Arab States neutralism rather than alignment.<sup>1</sup>

It was not, therefore, surprising that the months of April and May in Syria were marked by a systematic persecution of pro-West forces. Officer ranks were purged of pro-West personnel. The PPS and the followers of ex-President Shishakli, the only militant pro-West organisations which were capable of competing with the Nasserites for the control of the streets, were driven underground and forced to flee in large numbers to neighbouring countries, especially to Lebanon. The People's Party which still held the Presidency was spared persecution temporarily, but its deputies in Parliament were intimidated.<sup>2</sup> Isolated and weakened

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<sup>1</sup>Statement by the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs, April 16, 1955. RIIA, Documents On International Affairs, 1955, pp. 300-04.

<sup>2</sup>The President of Syria was Hashim al-Attassi who was a member of the People's Party.

by the purge of the armed forces and the persecution of the PPS and the followers of Shishakli, the People's Party could no longer play more than a role or rearguard action.

The runaways from Syria, as usual, were given asylum in Lebanon where the Government placed no restrictions on their political activities which were, to say the least, not in the interest of the Nasserite regime in Syria. In retaliation against this friendly attitude towards the Syrian exiles, the Nasserites in Lebanon stepped up their activities demanding of the Lebanese Government similar persecutions of the PPS on Lebanese territory. Syria, Saudi Arabia and Egypt took economic measures harmful to the Lebanese economy. The Syrian Government obstructed transit trade by requesting that all goods passing through Syrian territory ought to be transferred into Syrian trucks.<sup>1</sup> Saudi Arabia discouraged investment of Saudi capital in Lebanon and encouraged already invested capital to withdraw.<sup>2</sup> Egypt reduced imports of Lebanese apples during the month of May and was hinting that Egyptian tourists could possibly spend their summer holidays elsewhere.<sup>3</sup>

C. Retreat.

Against this mounting internal and external pressure the Lebanese Government chose to retreat slightly by introducing changes in the cabinet

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<sup>1</sup> al-Anba, May 13, 1955.

<sup>2</sup> al-Anba, May 13, 1955, The Arab World, May 2, 1955, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup> al-Anba, May 13, 1955, The Arab World, May 4, 1955, p. 3.

aimed at assuring the sponsors of the Tripartite Pact that Lebanese support for the Turco-Iraqi alliance (hereafter the Baghdad Pact) was out of the question.

The cabinet changes which were introduced on July 9 were done by Sulh and not by the President. It was Sulh who started the cabinet crisis in the first place by creating an issue with Foreign Minister Naqqash over the appointment of Musa Mubarak as ambassador in Paris. Similarly the two ministers who were brought into the cabinet, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Hamid Franjeh and the Minister of Finance Pierre Eddeh, were the choice of Sulh, because they were known not to be on good terms with the President.<sup>1</sup>

The question that arises now is: why did the President allow Sulh to get away with these changes? There were two considerations which induced the President to give way. The first was that among those eligible for the Premiership, Premier Sulh was the least inclined to support Egypt. Rashid Karami, Hussein al-'Uweini, 'Abdulla al-Yaffi and Saeb Salam, the recognized leaders of the Sunni community, were all critical of the policy of the Government and supporters of the Tripartite Pact. The second consideration was one of tactics. The President, during this period of inter-Arab tension, did not desire to create an open issue with his Prime Minister on questions of foreign policy, because the discontented Sunni Community would then have had a chance to boycott him.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> al-Nahar, July 8, 1955. John Malha, A Collection of Cabinet Programs (Beirut: Khayat, 1955), p. 171.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with Adel 'Usayran, the Speaker of the House of Deputies, at his office, 'Usaili Building, Tripoli Street, Beirut, 27/1/1966.

Such was the case in 1952, when a Sunni boycott contributed to the abdication of President Khoury. Sulh actually had a record in this respect. In 1952, he was the last Sunni leader who co-operated with the President and the one who suddenly turned the tables on Khoury when he recognized that his political career as a Sunni leader was at stake.<sup>1</sup>

The symptoms in 1955 were similar to those of 1952 in the sense that the Sunni community was discontented with the policy of the President. Sulh, although pro-West, was discontented with the defiant attitude of the President towards the Sponsors of the Tripartite Pact. This discontentment was not unrelated to the pressures of the Sunni community.<sup>2</sup>

The introduction of Pierre Eddeh and Hamid Franjieh signified a challenge to the President and a gesture of goodwill towards the Sponsors of the Tripartite Pact. The elder brother of Pierre, Raymond Eddeh, and Hamid Franjieh were both aspiring for the Presidency. President Chamoun who did not like to see either one succeed him was at odds with them. Both Eddeh and Franjieh had good political assets in both Saudi Arabia and Egypt. The Eddehs were traditionally the enemies of the Hashimites and Britain. In 1943 it was the combined pressure of Britain and the Hashimites which offset the French backing extended to their father-- ex-president Emile Eddeh. It was, therefore, not surprising that the Eddehs developed intimate relations with the House of Sa'ud.

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<sup>1</sup>Bishara al-Khoury, Lebanese Facts (Dar'oum: Basil Brothers Press, 1960), pp. 457-67.

<sup>2</sup>Sulh, op.cit., p. 296. al-Nahar, May 14, 1955.

<sup>3</sup>Iraq, The Iraqi Trials, 1958, IV, p. 1406.

Hamid Franjieh had no traditional feud with either the Hasimites or Britain, but the necessity of standing up to President Chamoun dictated the development of friendly relations with the anti-Hashimite camp in the Arab World.<sup>1</sup> President Chamoun had had friendly relations with Britain and the Hashimites since 1943.<sup>2</sup> But while both Eddeh and Franjieh were on good terms with the sponsors of the Tripartite Pact--Egypt and Saudi Arabia--they could not as Maronite leaders go as far as their Sunni colleagues in advocating Arab nationalism and in attacking the West without losing their political base. It was, therefore, not surprising that their political record since the beginning of 1955 revealed that they were against the entry of Lebanon to the Baghdad Pact, but unopposed to Arab-Western collaboration through other means. This policy was definitely offensive to Britain, Turkey and Iraq who were already committed to the Baghdad Pact, but it was not necessarily offensive to the rest of the major Western Powers. In fact France was advocating the same policy--Arab-Western co-operation through other than the Baghdad Pact.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, the United States was not against a policy of straight co-operation with the West without the British-dominated Baghdad Pact which by the

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<sup>1</sup>Iraq, The Iraqi Trials, 1958, IV, p. 1406.

<sup>2</sup>Kamal Jumblat, The Truth About The Lebanese Revolution (Beirut: Arab Publication House, 1959), pp. 21-22. Also Eugenie Abou Chdid, Thirty Years of Lebanon and Syria 1917-1947 (Beirut: Sadir Press, 1948), pp. 147-48.

<sup>3</sup>Statement by Louis Roche, French Ambassador in Beirut: The Arab World, April 6, 1955, p. 2. al-Nahar, April 8, 1955.

Summer of 1955 was clearly suffering from unpopularity in the Arab World.<sup>1</sup> Needless to say, Saudi Arabia and Egypt were contented with the policy of these Maronite personalities.

The question of Lebanese-Arab relations in this period was more of a question of confidence in individuals than a question of declared policy. The policy program which was submitted to the House of Deputies on July 15 contained nothing new in terms of foreign policy. The new Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hamid Franjieh simply emphasized what had been already stated before, that he was bent on improving Lebanese relations with the Sponsors of the Tripartite Pact. When he was asked how he intended to do that, Franjieh turned the question into one of confidence in his person by stating that the methods were not clear to him but that he was confident of his capability to attain this objective. Apparently the members of the House understood what he meant when they gave him a vote of confidence without requesting further clarification.<sup>2</sup> Later in July, the Egyptian Ambassador Abdul Hamid Ghalib behaved in a manner that tends to support this observation. When Sulh approached Ghalib for permission to visit Egypt, the Ambassador did not show any interest. He, however, volunteered to facilitate a trip by Franjieh.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Statement by Hamid Franjieh on his discussions with the American Ambassador in Beirut: The Arab World, August 15, 1955, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup>Lebanon, The Official Gazette, 1st Ordinary Session, 4th Meeting, June 14, 1955, pp. 1163-64.

<sup>3</sup>Sulh, op.cit., p. 282.



As soon as the new cabinet was in power, Premier Sulh and Franjieh concentrated on the improvement of Lebanese relations with the Sponsors of the Tripartite Pact. They were ready to give guarantees that Lebanon was no longer inclined either to join or support the Baghdad Pact and expected in return that the anti-Baghdad camp would agree to resume normal relations with Lebanon. The Government, however, did not exclude the possibility of collaboration with the West outside the Baghdad Pact and expected that Syria, Egypt and Saudi Arabia would not object to such a policy. Such expectations were still possible, for Egypt had not then acquired arms from the Soviet Union.

The task of pacifying the sponsors of the Tripartite Pact was not easy, for they were not as eager as the Lebanese Government to settle pending problems. Premier Sulh soon found out that despite his friendly gestures he was still considered persona non grata in Cairo, Damascus and Riyadh. On the 24th of July he visited Saudi Arabia under the pretext of a pilgrimage to Mecca.<sup>1</sup> King Sa'ud in July had sent a message to President Chamoun, which was leaked to the press, accusing the President of conspiracy against the sponsors of the Tripartite Pact.<sup>2</sup> Sulh's major objective in his pilgrimage was to reduce the suspicions of the King, but he made hardly any impression on the Saudi Monarch and his Prince Regent, Feisal.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Sulh, op.cit., p. 282.

<sup>2</sup> al-Jareeda, June 11, 1955.

<sup>3</sup> Sulh, op.cit., p. 286.

Sulh having failed to pacify Saudi Arabia, the task of improving Lebanese relations with the other prospective members of the Tripartite Pact, Syria and Egypt, was left mainly to Franjieh, the new Minister of Foreign Affairs. Franjieh started out by arranging for a meeting between the Syrian Foreign Affairs Parliamentary Committee and its Lebanese counterpart, in the hope that the heavy membership of the moderate People's Party in that Committee would make it predisposed to reach an understanding with Lebanon. Such expectations were not misplaced, for on July 23 it was reported that the two Committees met on the 22nd in Sofar, Lebanon, and reached an understanding on the basis of which pending economic and political questions between Syria and Lebanon could be resolved.<sup>1</sup> This understanding did not, however, materialize because the parliament in Syria was largely under the influence of the army which was controlled by the Ba'th Party and other splinter officer groups of Nasserite leanings. It was the army which had thwarted an understanding between Syria and Iraq a few month before; here again it was attempting to thwart an understanding with Lebanon. The setback came up on August 1, when Franjieh met his Syrian counterpart at Dummar, Syria. In that meeting 'Azm stated that pending economic and political questions between Syria and Lebanon could not be resolved outside the framework of the prospective Tripartite Alliance, a proposition which Franjieh could not possibly accept without clearly violating Lebanese neutrality. Franjieh could go as far as to assure 'Azm that Lebanon would not join the Baghdad

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<sup>1</sup>al-Nahar, July 23, 1955.

Pact, but that was insufficient to satisfy the Syrian Minister.<sup>1</sup>

After failure in Syria, Franjieh turned to Cairo where it was hoped that a settlement with Egypt would encourage Syria and Saudi Arabia to follow suit. On August 28, Franjieh paid a visit to the Egyptian capital which culminated on September 2 in a joint Communique to the effect that Lebanon and Egypt were in accord and that arrangements had been made for the promotion of economic, financial and cultural relations between the two States. Egypt accepted what had already been rejected by Syria, Franjieh's guarantees that the entry of Lebanon to the Baghdad Pact was out of question, but its blessings were bought at a price. The Foreign Minister committed Lebanon to exchange information with Egypt on all matters pertaining to international policy.<sup>2</sup>

The President was willing to approve an Egyptian-Lebanese rapprochement, but not through the efforts of Franjieh, his arch-rival, whose success in Cairo implied a significant improvement in his chances as a potential presidential candidate, a prospect which President Chamoun detested. While Franjieh was still in Cairo, he was blackmailed by another aspirant to the Presidency, Emile Bustani, who flew to Cairo with the Minutes of a secret session in Parliament where apparently Franjieh criticized Egypt. Franjieh suspected that the President had a hand in

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<sup>1</sup>al-Nahar, August 2, 1955; The Arab World, August 2, 1955, p. 2. Sulh, op.cit., p. 289.

<sup>2</sup>See the report of the French Press Agency on the Franjieh-Nasser talks in Cairo: al-Hayat, August 30, 1955; and the text of the Joint Egyptian-Lebanese Communique: The Arab World, September 2, 1955.

in this plot, for Bustani was well known as a politician who worked strictly under the aegis of the President. He represented the home constituency of the President, Deir al-Qamar-Shheim, where the President's support was crucial to his political career. What confirmed the suspicions of Franjieh that the President had a hand in the plot was that on his return to Beirut he was kept, contrary to custom, four days before he was allowed to present himself to the President.<sup>1</sup>

In an interview with the author, the President denied that he had kept Franjieh waiting for four days, but he, nevertheless, gave an account which revealed that he was suspicious of an Egyptian conspiracy to help Franjieh's bid for the Presidency. He said:

Franjieh was aspiring for the presidency. When he went to Egypt as the Minister of Foreign Affairs, he was given a royal treatment which is not given but to Kings and heads of states, and surrounded with a halo of greatness. They convinced him that it would be possible to get rid of the President and place him in that post instead.

On return from Cairo, he protested that during his visit a speech which he had delivered in a secret session of the House was sneaked to Cairo in an effort to thwart his mission. I could see that he was disturbed, so I tried to cool him off but without success. Thereafter, I convened the Cabinet and asked him to say who he thought handed over the speech to Cairo. He wouldn't say, but continued on every turn to threaten with his resignation. I then laid my hand flat on the table and said: come on give it. He gave his resignation and left.<sup>2</sup>

This was the beginning of the end of the Cabinet. The resignation of Hamid Franjieh on September 7 was immediately followed by the

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<sup>1</sup>Sulh, op.cit., p. 288.

<sup>2</sup>President Chamoun in an interview with the author at the headquarters building of al-Nahar, August 26, 1967.

resignation of the Minister of Finance, Pierre Eddeh, who was also experiencing difficulties in carrying out his duties.<sup>1</sup> Premier Sulh, realizing the implications created by the resignation of two prominent Maronite personalities from the Cabinet, submitted his resignation on September 14, thus leaving what the Cabinet had set out to do (pacification of the sponsors of the Tripartite Pact) only half-done.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>al-Hayat, September 8, 9, 1955.

<sup>2</sup>al-Nahar, September 14, 1955.

## Chapter VI

### BALANCE AND CONFLICT

#### A. The Karami Cabinet: September 19, 1955 to March 16, 1956.

The new Cabinet which succeeded the Sulh Cabinet was under the premiership of Rashid Karami. The appointment of Karami as Premier was a definite indication that the President did not intend to reverse the trend of appeasing the sponsors of the pending Tripartite Pact which had been introduced by the former cabinet. This was suggested by the record of Karami and the nature of his constituency.

Karami had already gone on record as being sympathetic to the sponsors of the Tripartite Pact, an opponent of alliances with foreign powers in general and to the Baghdad Pact in particular. This record was largely dictated by the nature of his constituency, Tripoli, whose inhabitants were predominantly Sunni, traditionally known for their unionist sentiments and recently noted for their violent, ardent, and unconditional support of Nasser. His appointment as Premier was, therefore, expected to erase any suspicions as to the sincerity of the President towards the sponsors of the Tripartite Pact. Conversely, it was also an assurance that the Lebanese government was not preparing to join the Baghdad Pact and that it was not actually biased in favor of Iraq.

But while the President was bent on appeasing the Arab States sponsoring the Tripartite Pact and their supporters in Lebanon, the indications were that he did not intend to extend unconditional support to Egypt, its allies and followers. This intention was hinted at from

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the very beginning by the appointment of Salim Lahhoud as Foreign Minister.

Lahhoud had neither the qualifications nor the experience for this portfolio. He was an engineer by profession, the director of the Litani River Project by occupation, and a deputy with an obscure record in foreign affairs. Under the circumstances, however, his obscurity in foreign affairs turned out to be more of an asset than a handicap, for it rendered his appointment inoffensive to Egypt and its supporters. Lahhoud on the other hand was a bonafide person to President Chamoun who could be relied upon to checkmate Karami, in case the latter's pro-Egyptian inclinations tempted him to steer Lebanon off the neutral course.

In contrast with Premier Karami, Lahhoud was a Maronite representing Northern Matn, a purely Christian constituency in Mount Lebanon, where in contrast to Tripoli there was neither the pan-Arabist tradition of the Tripolitarians nor the more recent transformation of that tradition into an unconditional support for Nasser. The aggressive policy of Egypt under Nasser, which was constantly pounding the Arab World through the "Voice of the Arabs" from Cairo, the glorification of the Arab past which was indistinguishable from that of Islam, and the call for the revival of that past by means of Arab unity, struck a hostile cord among the Christians of Mount Lebanon who traditionally feared the predominantly Islamic interior and desired friendly relations with the Western Powers.

There were three major sources of votes in Northern Matn: the Kataib, the PPS and President Chamoun, all of which, sometimes for

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different reasons, were pro-West and unimpressed with Nasser. The personal influence of Chamoun in Matn originated in the 1940's when he had to campaign all over Mount Lebanon which was one constituency. With the ascendancy of Chamoun to the Presidency in 1952, this influence improved and Lahhoud made use of it in the 1953 elections. Taking into consideration these electoral factors, Lahhoud had no choice but to work closely with the President. He could not afford to advocate a pro-Egypt policy without damaging his political career.

The different dispositions of the President and Lahhoud on the one hand and Karami on the other were felt even before the Cabinet initiated its work officially. In the course of preparing the policy program of the Cabinet, Karami clashed with the President and other members of the Cabinet, notably Lahhoud, on the text pertaining to the policy of Lebanon towards alliances. Karami wanted it stated in the program that the government did not intend to join the Baghdad Pact or any other alliance with foreign powers.<sup>1</sup> The members of the Cabinet, who were loyal to the President, opposed such a step holding that it could be interpreted in some quarters as a deviation from the neutral course which had been maintained between Iraq and Egypt. It was feared that a statement in the policy program to the effect that Lebanon did not intend to join the Baghdad Pact or any other alliance with foreign powers would deprive the state of the ability to continue with its conciliatory role among the

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<sup>1</sup>Interview with Rashid Karami at his house in Zqaq al-Bilat, Beirut, 27/6/1966. See also al-Nahar, October 5, 1955.



Arab States.<sup>1</sup> This controversy delayed the presentation of the policy program to the House for two weeks, but it was finally resolved by a vague text which apparently satisfied neither party. The paragraph pertaining to alliances read thus:

Concerning our relations with the Arab states, we shall work energetically to promote these relations and to support the Arab League. Moreover, we shall work for the creation of an Arab Pact which would include all Arab states; a pact that could be more effective in preserving Arab rights . . . on condition that an Arab state with commitments to foreign powers would not transfer these commitments to other members.<sup>2</sup>

This much was said in the program, but in the discussions which followed its presentation to the House of Deputies on October 4, Karami under a cross-examination from the floor spelled out what he had in mind more clearly. He said that the All-Arab Pact presented in the policy program could be an extension of the prospective Arab Tripartite Pact, on condition that Iraq would not transfer its foreign commitments to other Arab States. He continued:

I declare it frankly from this platform that Lebanon does not find it useful to join any alliance (with foreign powers), especially the Turco-Iraqi alliance.<sup>3</sup>

Evident in such a statement was moral support for the Egyptian standpoint and a criticism of Iraqi policy. Apparently Karami, who had

<sup>1</sup>Interview with Kazim al-Khalil in his office, Sa'idi Building, Bishara al-Khoury Street, Beirut, 15/1/1966.

<sup>2</sup>John Malha, A Collection of Cabinet Programs (Beirut: Khayyat, 1965), p. 181.

<sup>3</sup>Lebanon, Official Gazette, 1st Ordinary Session, 9th Meeting, April 14, 1955, pp. 1438-39.

restrained himself earlier, spelled out what was on his mind more clearly in the discussions perhaps because it was too late for the President to hold him back without creating a cabinet crisis. This conflict persisted throughout the period of the Cabinet rendering the Government incapable of taking positive action towards the resolution of the raging inter-Arab dispute.

The Lebanese compromise formula as presented in the policy program had at least the theoretical foundations for the resolution of the Iraqi-Egyptian dispute, provided that the parties to the dispute had the slightest inclination to do so. The All-Arab Pact proposed by Lebanon implied that Egypt and its supporters would have had to relinquish the drive to isolate Iraq, and that Iraq in return would have had to undertake not to transfer its commitments to the other Arab States. The objective of such a formula as the Lebanese envisaged, would be the preservation of Arab solidarity as against Israel and the termination of inter-Arab tension, for it would have relieved it of the internal tensions which were echoes of the tension on the Arab front, and opened the way for the solution of economic and political problems with other Arab States, in particular Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Syria. But as it turned out later, Egypt and its allies did not accept such a proposal. They were neither willing to relinquish the drive to isolate Iraq nor were they willing to resolve pending economic and political problems with Lebanon without attracting it to their pole. The President and his supporters were not willing to pay such a price.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Infra., pp. 212-15.

The uncompromising attitude of Egypt and its allies was not unrelated to new developments in the Arab world which commenced in the Fall of 1955. The Egyptian-Czech Arms Deal, which was announced by Nasser on September 23, had begun to produce a revolutionary impact on the Arab world.<sup>1</sup> It signified a successful challenge to the unpopular Western Powers which were held responsible by most Arabs for the loss of Palestine to the Zionists and for the state of perpetual Arab weakness arising, as they believed, from insufficient arms. It was hoped that with the Arms Deal and with similar actions by other Arab States, the Arabs would be capable at some future point of retrieving their lost rights from the Zionists. Nasser became to most Arabs a symbol of power and liberation, a leader who was capable of saving them from past and present humiliations which were attributed to the Western Powers.

With access to Soviet arms arsenals, steps towards the realization of the pending Tripartite Pact followed one another in rapid succession. Egypt concluded a mutual treaty of defense and economic co-operation with Syria on October 20 which was followed seven days later by the conclusion of a similar treaty with Saudi Arabia. The final step towards the realization of the Tripartite Pact came on December 26 with the declaration that the three states had set up a joint command for their

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<sup>1</sup> al-Nahar, September 24, 1955. See also speech by Nasser on the opening of the arms exhibition, September 27, 1955: RIIA, Documents On International Affairs, 1955, ed. Noble Frankland (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), pp. 370-72.

armed forces under Major-General Abdul-Hakim Amer, the Egyptian Minister of War.<sup>1</sup>

The Arms Deal as well as the realization of the Tripartite Pact left a pronounced impact on Israel which reacted in characteristic style by increasing the tempo of its border raids only to be met with counter raids by the more confident Arabs. The successful bid for Soviet armaments reduced the prospects of the Baghdad Pact significantly as Iraq was deprived of a major point in its dialogue with Egypt i.e. that alliances were the only means through which the Arab States could arm themselves adequately. The Nasserites were now claiming that Egypt had successfully purchased arms on commercial terms without any "mortgage" to any foreign power. Such claims were on the whole accepted by the average Arab, but in the more sophisticated circles, it was realized that the implications of the Arms Deal had far reaching political consequences beyond the commercial terms of the transaction.

An attempt to reinforce Iraq by encouraging Jordan to join the Baghdad Pact did not succeed. The visit of the British Chief-of-Staff, General Templer, to Amman on December 5, 1955, with the object of making arrangements for Jordan to join the Baghdad Pact, triggered a crisis which forced the King to retreat before the mounting tide of Nasserism in Jordan.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>American Council on Foreign Relations, The United States in World Affairs, 1955. ed. Hollis W. Barber, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), pp. 183-84. For the text of the treaties see the following: RIIA, Documents On International Affairs, 1955, pp. 328-331; Khalil, op.cit., p. 242; Middle East Journal, X (Winter, 1956), pp. 77-79.

<sup>2</sup>King Hussein of Jordan, Uneasy Lies The Head: Memoirs, (New York, Random House, 1962), pp. 108-13.

King Hussein had to meet the riots and the state of confusion which befell the country on Templer's visit by appointing on January 9 a new Cabinet headed by Samir al-Rifa'i who pledged not to join the Baghdad Pact.<sup>1</sup> Having successfully barred the entry of Jordan to the Baghdad Pact, Egypt, Syria and Saudi Arabia moved in to attract Jordan to their side. Realizing that the Anglo-Jordanian Treaty gave Britain leverage in Jordan, Nasser, Sa'ud and Qu'atly proposed to Jordan on March 12 the abrogation of that Treaty and offered to undertake jointly the financial as well as the defense commitments which Britain was assuming under that Treaty.<sup>2</sup> The King, however, did not desire to surrender the fate of his kingdom to the neighbouring suitors who were only too recently plotting against the Monarchy. With the encouragement of Iraq, he refused the offer.<sup>3</sup>

Lebanon like Jordan was not immune to the developing tension in the Arab World. The crisis in Jordan triggered demonstrations in Beirut against the Western Powers and the Baghdad Pact.<sup>4</sup> The opposition was becoming more aggressive as it resorted to strikes and public rallies

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<sup>1</sup> Benjamin Shwadran, "The Kingdom of Jordan: to be or not to be," Middle Eastern Affairs, VIII (June-July, 1957), p. 222. Refer also to policy statement by Samir al-Rifa'i in the Jordanian Parliament: al-Nahar, January 27, 1956.

<sup>2</sup> Refer to message by Sa'ud, Qu'atly and Nasser to Hussein, March 12, 1956: RIIA, Documents On International Affairs, 1956, ed. Noble Frankland (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), pp. 35-36.

<sup>3</sup> Reply by King Hussein to Nasser, Qu'atly and Sa'ud, 17 March, 1956: Ibid. Refer also to cable No. 172, dated 28/12/1955, by the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Iraqi Ambassador in Beirut: Iraq, Iraqi Trials, 1958, IV, pp. 1386-87.

<sup>4</sup> al-Jareeda, January 15, 1956.

during which the President was attacked openly and personally while Nasser and his supporters were hailed. The Nasserites in Lebanon were no longer contented with assurances that Lebanon did not desire to join the Baghdad Pact; they wanted alignment with Egypt and towards that end they resorted to agitation which was often disregarded by Prime Minister Karami.<sup>1</sup> The lukewarm attitude of Karami created tension on the Cabinet level between the Prime Minister and the supporters of the President.

This tension was pronounced during the months of November and December with regard to Syrian-Lebanese relations. The Syrian Government having joined the Tripartite Pact and having successfully subdued the anti-Nasserite elements, began to exert heavy pressure on Lebanon with the object of forcing alignment on the Lebanese authorities. On being approached by Lebanon for the resolution of suspended economic and political questions, the Syrian Government took the position that the solution of such questions was dependent in large measure on matters related to defense arrangements between the two states and requested negotiations towards that objective. Initially the Lebanese Government had no objection to the Syrian request, but it was soon apparent that the Syrian Government was not simply interested in defense arrangements in as much as she was interested in the entry of Lebanon to the

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<sup>1</sup>For example refer to the circumstances and the speeches delivered at the Ghbeiri rally which was held under the auspices of Ahmed al-Ass'ad and other leaders of the opposition: al-Nahar, November 8, 1955. Refer also to memorandum addressed by the Najjadah Party to Prime Minister Karami: al-Nahar, November 25, 1955.

Tripartite Pact. The Syrian Government proposed that both states should place a portion of their armed forces under a joint command. All appropriations in the national budgets of the two states allocated to the maintenance of these troops had to be transferred to the budget of the joint command which would have had the authority to spend the money on the troops as it deemed fit and to transfer such troops across the borders at will in times of peace or war.<sup>1</sup>

Lebanon was not thinking in terms of such heavy and definite commitments, but rather in terms of co-ordinating its defenses with Syria against Israel. The Lebanese Government countered with the following proposal. All arrangements pertaining to defense matters would have to be done on the level of the Chiefs of Staff; a joint command was not acceptable; the troops of either country could not be authorized to move into the territory of the other in times of peace; in case of war the troops of either country would move into the territory of the other only at the request of the receiving country; and finally each government would reserve the right to command all troops operating on its territory.<sup>2</sup>

After a short period of intermittent negotiations it was apparent that the negotiating parties were not able to accommodate one another. Syria was not prone to accept defense arrangements short of treaty

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<sup>1</sup> al-Anba, October 7, 1955, The Arab World, January 18, 1956, p. 1 and January 23, 1956, p. 6. President Chamoun affirmed the Syrian proposals as stated above with the exception of an independent budget for the Joint Command which he stated could have been touched upon in the discussions but was nevertheless unofficial. Interview with President Chamoun at the headquarters of al-Nahar, Central Bank Street, Beirut, August 27, 1967.

<sup>2</sup> al-Jareeda, January 14, 1956. Also The Arab World, January 18, 1956, p. 1, and January 23, 1956, p. 6. Interview with President Chamoun at the headquarters of al-Nahar, Central Bank Street, Beirut, August 26, 1967.

commitments and Lebanon, in conformity with its traditional neutral policy, did not desire to offend Iraq and/or the Western Powers.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, Iraq had requested the Lebanese Government to work towards the conclusion of a trilateral defense treaty rather than a bilateral treaty with Syria on the assumption that a treaty which included Iraq would provide for better defense against Israel.<sup>2</sup> The Lebanese authorities welcomed the prospect of having Iraq as a third party in a defense treaty with Syria. The entry of Iraq was envisaged as a step towards the re-establishment of Arab solidarity which was within the framework of Lebanese Policy. But on feeling the Syrians out about this possibility all hopes for the entry of Iraq were dissipated. The ruling factions in Syria were concerned that a defense treaty with Iraq would render Syria vulnerable to Iraqi pressures.<sup>3</sup>

As the Syrians were concerned about the vulnerability of Syria towards Iraq, President Chamoun was likewise concerned about the vulnerability of Lebanon towards Syria. He was not ready, as he put it, "to permit the entry of foreign troops into Lebanon without the prior approval of the Government and the Lebanese Command."<sup>4</sup> In a trilateral treaty, Syria could be counterbalance by Iraq, but in a bilateral treaty the

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<sup>1</sup> al-Jareeda, January 29, 1956.

<sup>2</sup> Refer to report dispatched by Kazim al-Sulh, The Lebanese Ambassador in Iraq to President Chamoun: al-Nahar, November 6, 1955.

<sup>3</sup> al-Nahar, November 22, 1955.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with President Chamoun at the Headquarters of al-Nahar, Central Bank Street, August 26, 1967.



Lebanese Government alone would have had to face, Syria reinforced by Saudi Arabia and Egypt. This disposition was especially risky when it is realized that Syria and its allies had considerable support within the country.

Prime Minister Karami did not see eye-to-eye with the President in this respect:

In reality I was inclined towards the conclusion of a bilateral defense treaty with Syria based on a joint command and on the entry of Lebanese and Syrian armies to the territories of one another. It is true that Foreign Minister Lahhoud did not approve of that. Some Lebanese are still suspicious of the entry of neighboring armies to Lebanon out of fear that if they do, they won't leave easily. I approved of a bilateral treaty with Syria due to the existence of a common enemy on our borders (Israel) against which all our resources should be mobilized.<sup>1</sup>

The Prime Minister's attitude brought him into conflict with other ministers notably Lahhoud, Bizri, and Mekkawi all of whom moved to resign probably on the suggestion of the President. Karami realizing that the resignations were an attempt to terminate his office, retreated from his former position reluctantly.<sup>2</sup> He survived, but the conflict continued through other means until March 1956, when another episode rendered his continued presence in the Cabinet intolerable to the President and his supporters.

The episode was started on the return of Foreign Minister Lahhoud

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<sup>1</sup>Interview with Rashid Karami at his house in Zqaq al-Bilat, Beirut, 27/6/1966.

<sup>2</sup>al-Jareeda, January 8, 1956. The Arab World, January 5, 6, 1956, p. 1. See also Sulh, op.cit., p. 330.

from a visit to Saudi Arabia on February 29, 1956. Lahhoud started out on his trip to Saudi Arabia on February 26, with the intention of resolving the tension between the two states which had developed out of Saudi suspicions that Lebanon was clandestinely supporting the Baghdad Pact.<sup>1</sup> King Sa'ud had already communicated his displeasure to the Lebanese authorities through a verbal message given to Yusif Salem, a prominent businessman and a deputy in the Lebanese Parliament. Furthermore, King Sa'ud had taken measures for curtailment of Lebanese-Saudi economic and commercial relations. Sa'ud's attitude worried the Lebanese authorities who realized that Lebanon was deriving a substantial amount of income from its business relations with the oil-rich Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Lahhoud was expected to restore amicable Saudi-Lebanese relations and, moreover, convince the Saudi Monarch to use his good offices in Syria for the resolution of pending economic problems with that state. Syria had been obstructing transit trade, the life-line of the Lebanese economy, requesting planes using Lebanese airports and overflying Syria to land in Syrian airports, and pressing the oil companies, whose pipelines passed through Syrian territories but whose refineries were in Lebanon, to transfer the refineries to Syria.<sup>2</sup> Lahhoud's mission was also aimed at recruiting the assistance of King Sa'ud in holding an all-Arab conference at Cairo instead of the forthcoming conference for the signatories of the Tripartite Alliance in that capital.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Amin al-Mumayyiz, The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia As I Knew It: Memoirs (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub, 1963), pp. 593-94.

<sup>2</sup>al-Nahar, February 17, 1956.

<sup>3</sup>al-Nahar, March 1, 1956.

Towards the realization of these objectives Lahhoud was requested to assure the King that Lebanon was not promoting the Baghdad Pact and that its sole purpose was the preservation of Arab solidarity. With such instructions, Lahhoud departed to Riyadh, the capital of Saudi Arabia, where apparently his mission was successful. The King agreed to relax all measures harmful to the Lebanese economy and promised to intervene with Syria on Lebanon's behalf. He, moreover, promised to look into the possibility of arranging for an all-embracing Arab conference.<sup>1</sup> On the termination of the visit, a Joint Lebanese-Saudi communique was issued to the effect that the two parties agreed to raise the diplomatic relations between them to the ambassadorial level and to promote cultural and economic relations.<sup>2</sup> There was, however, a paragraph in the communique which indicated that King Sa'ud had won a concession for his tolerance and good offices. The text of the paragraph ran as follows:

Concerning the subject of alliances both parties declared their adherence to the principle: not to join the Baghdad Pact or any other alliance with foreign powers in preservation of the unity of [Arab] ranks and in compliance with the objectives of the Arab League and the Arab Collective Security Pact.<sup>3</sup>

Evidently there was more to this paragraph than an assurance that the parties did not desire to join the Baghdad Pact and that they intended to preserve the unity of Arab ranks. On closer examination one finds that the text had made a causal connection between "The principle:

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<sup>1</sup> al-Jareeda, March 1, 1956.

<sup>2</sup> al-Diyar, February 29, 1956.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

not to join the Baghdad Pact" and the "preservation of the unity of Arab ranks". The text implied that Iraq by joining the Baghdad Pact, which was considered an alliance with foreign powers, was actually breaking Arab solidarity and violating the objectives of the Arab League and the Arab Collective Security Pact. Lebanon was definitely taking sides here by subscribing to the point of view which the opponents of Iraq upheld. But perhaps Foreign Minister Lahhoud, while negotiating with his Saudi counterpart, found that the concession was essential as a price for the resumption of normal economic relations with Saudi Arabia.

The broadcast of the Communique from Riyadh created a Cabinet crisis in Lebanon. President Chamoun summoned Lahhoud and rebuked him for having exceeded his briefs.<sup>1</sup> He got in touch with Saudi Arabia suggesting changes in the text which would delete the causal connection between non-participation in the Baghdad Pact and the solidarity of Arab ranks, but the Saudis would not accept the suggestion.<sup>2</sup> Instead, they asked their embassy in Beirut to distribute the original text to the Beirut press. In the meantime Egypt and Syria exerted pressure on the Lebanese Government to broadcast the Communique from radio Beirut unchanged, while Iraq and other members of the Baghdad Pact protested.<sup>3</sup>

The issue over the Communique created a storm in the Cabinet when Prime Minister Karami took the Saudi point of view on that matter and

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<sup>1</sup>al-Jareeda, March 6, 1956.

<sup>2</sup>al-Nahar, March 3, 1956.

<sup>3</sup>al-Nahar, March 2, 1956. al-Diyar, March 3, 1956. al-Jareeda, March 6, 1956. See also al-Mumayyiz, op.cit., p. 594.

insisted that either the Communique would be accepted as it was or he would resign.<sup>1</sup> Some other ministers were insisting, however, they would resign if no changes were introduced.<sup>2</sup> All evidence suggested that Lahhoud was regretting what he had done. Although he was rebuked by the President, Lahhoud unlike Karami kept silent on the issue. Taking into consideration his inexperience in foreign affairs, his electoral interests and his close association with the President, the probability that he committed a mistake when he agreed to the text of the Communique cannot be ruled out.

Finally on March 6 the President agreed to broadcast the Communique from Beirut unchanged, after having given assurances to Iraq that it would have no lasting effect on Lebanese policy.<sup>3</sup> By broadcasting the Communique the President had avoided a cabinet crisis on a touchy issue which would have had detrimental effects on the already strained Lebanese relations with Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Syria. But he was, nevertheless, determined to get rid of Karami on another issue as soon as possible. On March 15, a good excuse was found in a strike of secondary school teachers. Four ministers well known for their close association with the President, (Faud Ghusn, Salim Lahhoud, George Akl and Kazim al-Khalil) suddenly resigned. Karami under the circumstances had no choice but to tender his resignation.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>al-Jareeda, March 3, 1956.

<sup>2</sup>al-Diyar, March 2, 1956.

<sup>3</sup>al-Jareeda, March 7, 1956.

<sup>4</sup>al-Nahar, March 16, 1956.

The episode over the Communique reflected the impact of inter-Arab tension on Lebanese affairs which penetrated down to the cabinet level. The raging Arab conflict had rendered the neutral position of Lebanon almost untenable in view of the aggressive policy of Saudi Arabia, Syria and Egypt which could perhaps be summarised with the attitude: if you are not with us then you are against us. President Chamoun did not, however, give up hope of achieving some sort of an understanding with these powers. In view of the large following which they commanded in his own country, it was perhaps the only tenable course to pursue without creating a national crisis.

B. The Yaffi Cabinet: March 19 to November 19, 1956.

1. Relations with Syria and Egypt.

As soon as Premier Karami resigned, President Chamoun requested 'Abdullah al-Yaffi to head the new government. Yaffi, like his predecessor Karami, had already gone on record as an admirer of Nasser and an advocate of a pro-Egypt policy. He was, however, expected not to be as much of an extremist in view of his older age, longer experience and his representation of the city of Beirut which had more Christians than Tripoli and consequently had less pro-Egyptian extremists. Yaffi, moreover, had been frequently visiting the residence of President Chamoun hinting that he could resolve the misunderstandings with Egypt and its allies, a task which his predecessor Karami could not match. President Chamoun under the circumstances saw no reason why he should not give Yaffi a chance.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Interview with 'Adel 'Usayran, the Speaker of the House of Deputies, in his office, 'Usayli Building, Tripoli Street, 27/1/1966.

The appointment of a minister to the foreign affairs portfolio posed a dilemma for the President. On the one hand it was necessary to guard against Yaffi's pro-Egyptian inclinations by giving that portfolio to a person who was not inclined to sacrifice basic Lebanese interests in the hope of appeasing Egypt. But persons with such an orientation were expected to meet difficulties in Damascus and Cairo. Two qualified persons for the portfolio of foreign affairs, Dr. Charles Malik, the Lebanese Ambassador in the United States, and Ghassan Tweini, the deputy from Beirut, were duly considered, but they were finally ruled out on the grounds that Malik had a strict pro-West record associated closely with the United States, and Tweini beside being pro-West was associated with the PPS which was persecuted in Damascus. Having realized that the appointment of Malik or Tweini was impractical, President Chamoun considered the re-appointment of Salim Lahhoud, but here again Lahhoud's record under Premier Karami had rendered him undesirable in the Egyptian camp. Finally, the dilemma was resolved by appointing Lahhoud as Minister of Foreign Affairs and creating a portfolio for a Minister of State which was given to Sa'eb Salam. Salam, as a prominent Sunni politician and ex-Premier, was expected to assist Lahhoud on matters related to Arab affairs particularly in Damascus, Riyad and Cairo. Like his colleague Yaffi, Salam was already on record as pro-Nasser.<sup>1</sup>

Yaffi and Salam apparently succeeded where Karami had failed. On March 19 the policy program of the new cabinet which was submitted

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid. Also interview with Ghassan Tweini at the headquarters of al-Nahar, Central Bank Street, Beirut, August, 1967. See also The Arab World, March 20, 1956, p. 2.

to the House of Deputies for a vote of confidence contained for the first time a clear-cut statement that the Government did not desire to join the Baghdad Pact or any other alliance with foreign powers. It was stated, moreover, that among the major objectives of the Government was the improvement of Syrian-Lebanese relations and the conclusion of a bilateral defense treaty between the two states.<sup>1</sup>

Yaffi's policy program did not pass without criticism in the House of Deputies. He was challenged, for example, by the deputy from Beirut, Ghassan Tweini, who pointed out that the section dealing with foreign affairs was brief, vague and negative. Lebanon, he said, had violated its neutrality among the Arab States by stating that it did not desire to join alliances with foreign powers. A clear-cut stand ought to be taken with regard to the cold war between "East" and "West" because on such matters depended "our destiny as human beings, the destiny of man and the survival or the destruction of the world."<sup>2</sup> Tweini was supported by several deputies, among them ex-Premier Sami al-Sulh and the deputy from Ba'albek, Salim Haidar, who pointed out that the Government was clearly biased against Iraq.<sup>3</sup> Such arguments were countered by Ahmed al-Ass'ad, the deputy from Bent-Gbeil, and his son-in-law, the deputy from Ba'albek, Sabri Hemadeh, who contended that the Baghdad Pact was "imperialistic" and that the Tripartite Pact was a purely Arab Pact

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<sup>1</sup>Lebanon, Official Gazette, 1st Ordinary Session, 2nd Meeting, March 29, 1956, pp. 1194-95.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 1208-09.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 1200, 1228.



to which the Government should adhere.<sup>1</sup> Premier Yaffi in answer to criticisms from the floor sounded apologetic with regard to Iraq.

"But when we say: we do not desire to join the Baghdad Pact, we differ in interpreting the objective. By stating that we do not intend to join the Baghdad, we are certainly not expressing hatred to Iraq, but that we want the defense of the Arab countries to be by the Arab countries and not by joining foreign alliances. Therefore we hope that it is understood that refraining from joining the Baghdad Pact is closely connected with refraining from joining foreign alliances, because we want the Arabs to be self-reliant.

I am one of those who say that Iraq has got its special circumstances which dictated its subscription to that Pact. But the special circumstances of Iraq do not apply to other Arab States."<sup>2</sup>

Yaffi's rationalization of Iraq's entry to the Baghdad Pact was certainly inadequate from a neutral's point of view, for it was coupled with a stand which was to say the least uncomplementary to Iraq. The unique phenomenon about the debates on the Government's policy was that the criticisms, contrary to custom, came from those deputies who were noted for their loyalty to the President, while the outspoken supporters of the Government were those whose relations with President Chamoun were unfriendly. However, since Parliament voted confidence in the Cabinet, it could be safely assumed that President Chamoun did not object to the policy as declared in the program hoping that it might help lift the pressure off Lebanon.

Throughout April, May and June Premier Yaffi and his colleagues concentrated on improving Syrian-Labeneese relations as was promised

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 1205-06.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 1244-45.

in the policy program of the Government, and, moreover, attempted to recruit Syria's assistance in reducing Iraqi-Egyptian tension. Their attempts were, however, unsuccessful mainly because Yaffi had nothing new to propose to the Syrian authorities. The Syrian authorities proposed to Yaffi, as they had proposed to his predecessor Karami, three major proposals: a re-orientation in Lebanese Policy with the object of reducing the friendly relations between Lebanon and the Western Powers; the persecution of the PPS party in Lebanon and the expulsion of Syrian refugees who were charged with plotting against Syria; and finally the conclusion of a bilateral defense treaty similar to those which were concluded by Egypt, Syria and Saudi Arabia. On the fulfillment of these proposals, the Syrians maintained, all outstanding questions between Syria and Lebanon would be resolved.<sup>1</sup>

The Lebanese Premier could not fulfill any of the Syrian demands. He could not, for example, sever diplomatic relations with France in protest against French policy in Algeria, as the Syrians requested on April 13, without alienating a substantial portion of the Christian public opinion which was not prepared to sacrifice diverse Lebanese interests with France for the sake of the Algerian people. Foreign Minister Lahhoud had refused earlier in that month a proposal to that effect presented at the Arab League conference in Cairo.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, Premier Yaffi could not do much in the way of persecuting the PPS, (despite his

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<sup>1</sup>al-Nahar, April 13, 15, and July 22, 1956.

<sup>2</sup>al-Nahar, April 13, 1956.

promise to take stringent measures against that party), because it fulfilled a role in counter-balancing the Nasserites on the internal front. President Chamoun did not desire to tip the balance in favor of the Nasserites who were acting on Syria's behalf in Lebanon.

The conclusion of a bilateral defense treaty as the Syrians had requested was likewise unacceptable to Lebanon, for it implied alignment with the Tripartite Alliance against Iraq, a step which President Chamoun backed up by pro-West Christian public opinion would not allow because it violated Lebanese neutrality. All Yaffi could do, or rather all that he was allowed to do by the President, was to propose the signature of a bilateral defense treaty with Syria at the level of the Chiefs of Staff. Such proposals were presented by Premier Karami before and rejected by the Syrians. They were, in the Spring of 1956 presented and rejected again.<sup>1</sup>

In pursuit of its objectives, Syria took stringent economic measures against Lebanon: cars travelling in and out of Syria were requested to pay a fee; Syrians travelling to Lebanon were required to have official permits and requested to pay poll tax; aircraft taking off from Beirut and over-flying Syria were again forced to land in Damascus; and Lebanese business in Syria was curtailed.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>al-Nahar, July 5, 1956.

<sup>2</sup>al-Nahar, June 10, 1956.

In an attempt to retrieve the situation, Yaffi resorted to personal diplomacy. He asked King Hussein of Jordan to intervene with the Syrian authorities in preparation for a summit meeting between President Qu'atly and President Chamoun, but the Syrian authorities refused the summit.<sup>1</sup> On the 5th of June Yaffi appealed to Nasser requesting his intervention for the conclusion of a bilateral defense treaty with Syria on the level of the Chiefs of Staff, but Nasser declined to intervene upholding the Syrian point of view that such treaties ought to be concluded on higher levels.<sup>2</sup> Yaffi's hopes for the assistance of Syria in reducing Iraqi-Egyptian tension were finally dissipated with the appointment of a Ba'th Foreign Minister in Syria, Salahuddine al-Bitar, on July 14, 1956.<sup>3</sup> The following day Bitar delivered a major policy statement to the effect that all Syria's actions were to be geared towards the realization of unity with Egypt.<sup>4</sup> Such intentions stirred discontent in Iraq.

The fundamental deficiency in Yaffi's policy was that he relied on personal diplomacy for the achievement of objectives which required basic changes in the dispositions of either Syria or Lebanon and ultimately in the disposition of other Arab states. It was indeed futile to expect assistance from the Syrians in mediating between Iraq and Egypt while they were a party to the dispute. Similarly,

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<sup>1</sup> al-Nahar, April 15, 1956.

<sup>2</sup> al-Nahar, July 6, 1956.

<sup>3</sup> al-Nahar, July 15, 1956.

<sup>4</sup> al-Nahar, July 16, 1956.

little could be expected in the way of solving suspended questions between Syria and Lebanon while there were no indications that either country had changed its disposition to accommodate the other. Syria was asking no less than alignment as a price for the settlement of outstanding questions with Lebanon, and the Lebanese authorities were not willing to pay the price.<sup>1</sup> Yaffi established contacts with Syria having nothing to offer other than what had already been offered by his predecessor Karami, i.e., the conclusion of a bilateral defense treaty on the level of the Chiefs of Staff. It was not, therefore, surprising that his efforts, like those of his predecessor, were wasted.

In a further effort to promote the chances for a settlement with Syria, Yaffi went about requesting the intervention of Arab heads of states, but such requests were either imprudent or meaningless. Had the summit conference between Qu'atly and Chamoun materialized through the assistance of Hussein, it would have done more harm than good, for contacts on lower levels had not yielded any positive results. Moreover, Yaffi's request to Nasser to intervene on behalf of Lebanon was unrealistic. It was indeed strange to expect Nasser to intervene on Lebanon's behalf in order to relieve it of Syrian pressure while Syria was subservient to Cairo's policy line. In short, Yaffi's reliance on personal diplomacy to surmount problems posed by substantial differences between Syria and Lebanon had no utility other than the internal political gain acquired by posing as if he was, after all, trying to resolve suspended questions with neighbouring Syria and assisting in the reduction of

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, pp. 209-212.

inter-Arab tension.

With the approach of the summer the nationalization of the Suez Canal Company and its aftermath dwarfed Syrian-Lebanese relations temporarily. The nationalization of the Suez Canal Company by the Egyptian Government on July 26 was well received in Lebanon and other Arab States. Even pro-Western press in Beirut between the 26th and the 30th of July applauded the nationalization as an act of national sovereignty. al-'Amal, the press organ of the Christian-oriented Kataib Party regarded the confrontation with the Western Powers over the nationalization of the Suez Canal Company as an outcome of past errors committed by the Egyptian Government. But it continued:

Even though Egypt had committed many mistakes in days past, as we think it did, it should not under any circumstances be left alone in the battlefield with international powers. We should reconcile our differences and co-operate as soon as possible.<sup>1</sup>

Ghassan Tweini writing, in the independent but pro-West al-Nahar, said that Nasser by nationalizing the Suez Canal Company did not only challenge the Western Powers but also himself, for he alone of the leaders in the Arab World did not regard the withdrawal of foreign armies as an end in itself, but as a beginning towards real independence. By nationalizing the Suez Canal Company, Nasser was terminating the exploitation of his people.<sup>2</sup> Nasri al-Ma'louf, another pro-West editorialist,

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<sup>1</sup>Fuad Haddad, "It Isn't Sufficient to Clap for Nasser," al-'Amal, July 29, 1956.

<sup>2</sup>Ghassan Tweini, "He Challenged Himself," al-Nahar, July 29, 1956.

wrote in al-Jareeda:

As the Western Powers are free to use their loans and money, so it is with Egypt who is likewise free to utilize its waters and sands.<sup>1</sup>

The views of pro-Western writers were almost identical with those of the radicals who traditionally supported Nasser. Basim al-Jisr, a pro-Nasser, anti-Western editorialist, regarded the nationalization as an act of national sovereignty. Having reviewed the measures which the major Western Powers could possibly use against Egypt, he concluded that they had little leverage left to discourage Nasser.

All what the Western Powers could do now is to change their policy towards Egypt and the Arabs. This policy, which started with the creation of Israel passed by the Baghdad Pact and ended with the withdrawal of the Aswan Dam loan<sup>2</sup>, [could not be any worse].

Hanna Ghusn, another radical pro-Nasser editorialist, described the nationalization of the Suez Canal Company as a "master's stroke". Egypt as a sovereign state had the right in his opinion, to nationalize the Suez Canal Company with a law. He distinguished between the administration of the Canal and the right to free navigation which was guaranteed by international treaties, stating that Nasser had already guaranteed free navigation to all users without exception.<sup>3</sup> "Nevertheless," he

<sup>1</sup>Nasri al-Ma'louf, "And We Are Free to Use Our Waters and Sands," al-Jareeda, July 29, 1956.

<sup>2</sup>Basim al-Jisr, "What After the Nationalization?" al-Jareeda, July 28, 1956.

<sup>3</sup>Ghusn's account was not accurate. Israel was the only exception.

concluded sarcastically,

we shall hear the screams of Britain and its allies, Israel's agents. But it is preferable for the Arabs to have the West protest and threaten rather than to have them occupy our positions and put us in tears. We have wept for centuries while they laughed, let us laugh now while others weep.<sup>1</sup>

The homogeneity of the press in Lebanon was reflected on the official level. Premier Yaffi, who derived his support from pro-Nasser elements in the country, stated on July 27:

The Lebanese Government supports unconditionally the Egyptian decision to nationalize the Suez Canal Company. It is high time for the world to realize that the Arab states have attained a level of awakening and power which does not permit any power to dominate them and exploit their resources. The Egyptian decision was a heroic step with which Egypt proved that it is a sovereign state which knows how to make the aggressors suffer for their doings.<sup>2</sup>

'Adel 'Usayran, the Speaker of the House, who was a Moslem like Yaffi but a close associate of the President, likewise applauded the nationalization.

President Nasser's decision to nationalize the Suez Canal Company was but a further step in the quest to liberate Egypt from exploitation and slavery. I, as an Arab citizen, welcome this step and other similar steps whether they are done by Egypt or any other state.<sup>3</sup>

On July 30, 1956, the House of Deputies passed by unanimity the following cable to Egypt:

The House of Deputies, in appreciation of the giant strides done by sister Egypt in consolidation of its

<sup>1</sup>Hanna Ghusn, "A Master's Stroke," al-Diyar, July 28, 1956.

<sup>2</sup>al-Jareeda, July 28, 1956.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.



political and economic independence, sends its warm congratulations to President Nasser for the nationalization of the Suez Canal Company, and extends to him full support wishing Egypt success.<sup>1</sup>

There was apparently no difference between Christian and Moslem public figures on the principle that the nationalization of the Suez Canal Company was within Egypt's sovereign rights. The Ambassador of Lebanon to the United States, Dr. Charles Malik, a well-known Christian and pro-Western public figure, concurred with Yaffi and 'Usayran that Egypt had every right to nationalize the Suez Canal Company. He stated on the 3rd of August to the Middle East News Agency:

I believe Egypt is free to use its land and utilities as it deems fit with due consideration to its international obligations. The Suez Canal Company is an undertaking which is solely within Egyptian sovereignty.<sup>2</sup>

Two days later President Chamoun in one of these rare occasions<sup>3</sup> delivered a speech at Deir al-Qamar in full support of Egypt. He stated:

There is no doubt that the nationalization of the Suez Canal Company by Egypt is an act of national sovereignty which could not possibly become subject to legal protests, especially since Egypt offered the shareholders just compensation.

If Egypt is exposed, due to the nationalization of the Suez Canal Company, to hostile measures by the Western Powers, I am afraid that the West would lose now as well as in the future and perhaps finally all the confidence it

<sup>1</sup>Lebanon, Official Gazette, 1st Extraordinary Session, 14th Meeting, July 30, 1956., p. 2078.

<sup>2</sup>al-Jareeda, August 4, 1956.

<sup>3</sup>The President of Lebanon by the Constitution is not to be held responsible for the policy of the government. Accordingly, he rarely makes public statements about the policy of the government on controversial issues.

has got left in this region, and all hope in co-operating with its peoples, even with<sup>1</sup> those who are tied to the West by treaties and traditions.

But despite the homogeneity which was initially expressed by the public as well as by the Lebanese authorities in support of the nationalization of the Suez Canal Company, Lebanon was bound to experience a state of acute tension due to the irreconcilable conflict between Egypt and the Western Powers. As war talks began to circulate in London and Paris, pro-Western elements in Lebanon began to dissociate themselves from Egypt's battle. This change in their behavior was primarily affected by their disposition towards the West and the Arab World. The pro-Western elements in Lebanon were Lebanese nationalists and predominantly Christian. As Lebanese nationalists, they were ready to support Egypt provided that Lebanese interests were not substantially harmed, and as Christians they were not ready to burn their bridges with the Western Powers as the Nasserites were demanding.

The Nasserites, contrary to the pro-West elements, were primarily Arab nationalists and predominantly Moslem. They regarded Egypt's battle as their own and extended to Nasser unconditional support. The firm attitude of Britain and France had created among them a violent hostility towards the West which was not devoid of religious prejudice. There were frequent demonstrations against the Western Powers often ignited by speeches in the Mosques calling for a holy war against the "infidels." These demonstrations were, likewise, not devoid of challenges to the Lebanese nationalists who noted that the banners, the placards, the pictures

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<sup>1</sup>al-Jareeda, August 7, 1956.

and the slogans used by the demonstrators were exclusively for Egypt, Arab unity, and Nasser.<sup>1</sup>

The Lebanese nationalists, realizing that such actions constituted a threat to the independence of Lebanon, reacted by warning that although they supported the nationalization of the Canal Company, they were not ready to sacrifice the vital interests of Lebanon. al-'Amal, for example, described the demonstrators as "saboteurs." Having noted its support for the nationalization of the Suez Canal Company, it followed up by warning that the "Lebanese" would not permit the violation of the National Pact,<sup>2</sup> a reference to the fact that the demonstrators were agitating for Arab unity. Addressing the demonstrators, Premier Yaffi probably had some sectors of Christian public opinion in mind when he said that "some elements who tried to pose Lebanon as a non-concerned state have failed." This did not pass unnoticed as al-'Amal, for example, retaliated by accusing the Premier and his supporters of being "Egyptian mercenaries."<sup>3</sup> In another editorial in the same issue al-'Amal stated:

Nobody is ready to die for the sake of the canal.  
There are other Arab interests which ought not to be sacrificed  
on the altar of Egyptian adventures.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Refer for example to the events of August 3 and those of August 16, 1956. al-'Amal, August 4, 1956. al-Jareeda, August 17, 1956.

<sup>2</sup>The National Pact is a fundamental unwritten agreement among some Christian and Islamic leaders which was reached in 1943 to the effect that the Christians would relinquish the French Mandate and the Moslems in return would relinquish demands for Arab unity. The agitation for Arab Unity by the demonstrators during the Suez Crisis was interpreted by some Christian sectors as a betrayal of the National Pact.

<sup>3</sup>"Saboteurs," al-'Amal, August 5, 1956.

<sup>4</sup>Fuad Haddad, "No Adventures for the Sake of the Canal," al-'Amal, August 5, 1956.

On August 11, the same paper answered the agitation for a general mobilization by elaborating at length on the vulnerability of Lebanon in case of war and its limited military potential, concluding:

We shall do everything for Egypt's cause short of suicide.  
We shall not commit suicide.<sup>1</sup>

On August 19 al-'Amal noting the pressure on the government to boycott the Western Powers, stated that such measures would inflict serious damage on the vital interests of the state. In some sections of the editorial, "We Could Do Without It", the attachment of some Christian elements to the Western Powers was expressed clearly.

It is our right, or rather our duty, to rebel against the West when it deviates towards imperialism. This does not, however, mean that we ought to refuse the friendship of that West just because it is West, or because the intriguers refuse but to isolate us from a world which belongs to us in as much as we belong to it - a world in which we have many a deed, a horizon, and a hope.<sup>2</sup>

Such an attitude was reminiscent of such Christian Lebanese thinkers as Charles Malik, Yusif al-Sawda, Edward Hunein, Michel Chiha and others who regarded Lebanon in history as being an integral part of the Western world, and more recently as an extension or an outpost of Western culture.

The Suez Crisis presented the Government with a series of dilemmas. On the internal level, a policy of disengagement towards the Crisis was bound to push the Nasserites to the limits of brinkmanship with the state. On the other hand a policy of challenge to the Western

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<sup>1</sup>"What Can Be Said and What Cannot be Said," al-'Amal, August 11, 1956.

<sup>2</sup>"We Could Do Without It," al-'Amal, August 19, 1956.

Powers which was demanded by the Nasserites would have severed Lebanese-Western relations and alienated Christian public opinion. Some Christian circles were already complaining that Lebanon had become virtually an Egyptian satellite.<sup>1</sup>

The solution of the Lebanese authorities was to pursue a policy of solidarity with Egypt on the Canal question with the least possible offense to the Western Powers, especially Britain and France. Lebanese diplomacy throughout the Summer of 1956 seemed to have had two objectives. The first was to avoid, if possible, an open conflict between Britain and France on the one hand and Egypt on the other. The second and perhaps the ultimate, objective was to resolve the Canal dispute in a manner which would not negate the sovereign right of Egypt to nationalize the Suez Canal Company, but which at the same time would give adequate guarantees to the Suez Canal users.

Lebanon, it was expected, as a country with a friendly record towards the Western Powers and their allies, was in a position to find listening ears in official Western circles. President Chamoun actually did all that he could to resolve the Suez conflict. With the knowledge of the Egyptian Government, the President counseled the friendly Governments of Turkey and Iran to use their influence in Western circles in defense of the nationalization of the Suez Canal Company and in support of the Arab point of view on that question. He suggested that such a policy would go a long way in improving their relations with the Arab states and

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<sup>1</sup>Refer for example to the statement of Pierre Gmayyil, al-'Amal, September 9, 1956.

, in particular, with Nasser.<sup>1</sup> The President, moreover, advised Iraq to use its influence with Britain in Egypt's favor noting that such a policy might terminate the chronic Iraqi-Egyptian dispute over the Baghdad Pact.<sup>2</sup> He also requested the United States to restrain its NATO partners, Britain and France, pointing out that an attack on Egypt was likely to damage Western influence in the Arab World.<sup>3</sup>

At the same time President Chamoun was counseling Egyptian moderation. On August 12 it was reported that he sent a letter to Nasser with the Minister of State, Saeb Salam, suggesting the solution of the conflict by direct negotiations with Britain and if that was not possible then directly through the United Nations, provided that the discussions would not touch on the act of nationalization, but on adequate guarantees for free navigation in the Canal. Moreover, it was suggested that Egypt desist from delivering statements which could be interpreted as provocative in Western circles.<sup>4</sup>

On reflection, one could not escape the conclusion that Lebanon had more at stake in the Suez crisis than the safety of Egypt. Lebanon as a country whose economy was primarily based on the services sector, was bound to lose substantially from any conflict or tension between the Arab states and the Western Powers. It was reported by al-Dunia that in the

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<sup>1</sup> al-Jareeda, August 11, 1956.

<sup>2</sup> al-Jareeda, August 5, 12, 1956.

<sup>3</sup> al-Jareeda, September 6, 1956.

<sup>4</sup> al-Jareeda, August 12, 1956. Chamoun, Crise Au Moyen-Orient, p. 386. The Arab World, August 13, 1956, p. 7.

month of August alone 170 million pounds (about \$55 million) were transferred abroad.<sup>1</sup> Caspard Minak, a leading financier, reported that prices in the Beirut stock-market had reached a lower level than that reached during the Korean War and attributed this phenomenon to political instability.<sup>2</sup> It was perhaps with the impact of the Suez Crisis on the Lebanese economy in mind that Saeb Salam, the Minister of State, hastened to assure foreign capitalists that the Lebanese Government had no intention of nationalizing foreign firms.<sup>3</sup>

A policy of moderate support to Egypt was also dictated by factors related to external security. In the shadow of an impending war in the area, the Government could not resort to a provocative policy against Britain and France without risking hazards beyond its capacity. A military alliance with Syria would have created more problems than it would have solved. The French armies which began to concentrate in Cyprus in early September caused concern in Lebanese circles, lest they branch out into Syria and Lebanon in case of war.<sup>4</sup> Lebanon under the circumstances

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<sup>1</sup>The Arab World, August 27, 1956, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup>The Arab World, September 17, 1956, p. 6.

<sup>3</sup>Press conference by Saeb Salam on October 5, 1956. al-Nahar, October 6, 1956.

<sup>4</sup>The Lebanese Government protested the concentration of French troops in Cyprus, and submitted a memorandum to the Secretary General of the United Nations to that effect. al-Jareeda, September 2 and September 18, 1956. See also statement by Saeb Salam on the concentration of French troops in Cyprus: al-Nahar, September 2, 1956.

found that the best source of security lay in desisting from provoking Britain and France, and in close co-operation with the United States. All of this dictated moderate Lebanese Support to Egypt. The United States of America was instrumental in giving assurances to Lebanon that the French forces in Cyprus did not pose a threat to its security.<sup>1</sup> The visit of some ships of the U.S. Sixth Fleet to Beirut on the first of September was interpreted by some papers as an American reassurance to Lebanon and other interested parties that the American Government had a vested interest in Lebanon's security.<sup>2</sup>

On the internal front the returns of a moderate policy in support of Egypt were useful but of a negative quality in the sense that the Government avoided a serious breach between the pro-West and the Nasserite wings in the country, even though it did not achieve a consensus. With the development of the Suez Crisis, tension was steadily rising which apparently affected members of the cabinet. Saeb Salam on September 16 accused the pro-Western wing of trying to isolate Lebanon from the Arab community.<sup>3</sup> On October 23, one of his colleagues, Alfred Naqqash, the Minister of Justice (a pro-Western Christian) countered by complaining that Egyptian policy had dominated the foreign policy of Lebanon.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The Press in Lebanon carried news to the effect that the United States on request from the Lebanese authorities assured Lebanon that the concentrations of French troops in Cyprus did not constitute a threat to Lebanon's independence. al-Nahar, September 4, 1956.

<sup>2</sup>al-Nahar, September 2, 1956.

<sup>3</sup>al-Nahar, September 16, 1956.

<sup>4</sup>al-Nahar, October 3, 1956.



This uneasy truce continued until the outbreak of the Suez War when the military campaign against Egypt left no room for compromise.

2. The Suez War and the Fall of the Cabinet.

On the outbreak of the Suez War the Lebanese authorities were in agreement in principle about the extension of support to Egypt, but they soon found themselves in disagreement about the extent of that support. The Lebanese Government extended full diplomatic support to Egypt and boycotted ships and aircraft flying either British or French flags, but it could not decide whether to sever diplomatic relations with the Major European Powers who were now at war with Egypt.<sup>1</sup> The Moslems were now maintaining that the least Lebanon could do was to sever economic and diplomatic relations with Britain and France,<sup>2</sup> while the Christians and some splinter groups of Western leanings were maintaining that the rupture of economic relations would be harmful to Lebanese interests and not useful to Egypt. Christian leaders were, on the whole, holding that Lebanon under the circumstances could serve Egypt better if it acted as a "hyphen" between the Egyptian Government and the Western Powers.<sup>3</sup> This conflict among the sects in Lebanon had its repercussions on the

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<sup>1</sup>Chamoun, Crise Au Moyen-Orient, pp. 297-99. Refer to The Arab World, November 1, 1956, p. 7; November 5, 1956, p. 8; November 6, 1956, p. 8.

<sup>2</sup>Refer to the Statement of November 10 by the Najjadah Party. The Arab World, November 12, 1956, p. 5. See also statement by the National Congress of Parties: al-Nahar, November 6, 1956.

<sup>3</sup>Fuad Ammoun, The Foreign Policy of Lebanon (Beirut: Arab Publication Press, 1959), p. 57.

Cabinet level where some loyalist ministers, notably Salim Lahhoud and Fuad Ghusn clashed with Saeb Salam and Abdullah al-Yaffi on the question of severing diplomatic relations.<sup>1</sup> Similarly there were disagreements on the question of severing diplomatic relations in the Consultative Council which President Chamoun convened on November 2 for the purpose of advising on a national policy above factional differences.<sup>2</sup>

The conflict on the public level was contained by declaring a state of emergency, applying martial law, banning public meetings and subjecting the press to censorship.<sup>3</sup> An outlet of the conflict on the official level was found by postponing a final decision on the rupture of economic and diplomatic relations with Britain and France until the forthcoming Arab summit meeting in Beirut.<sup>4</sup> President Chamoun had invited the heads of the Arab states on October 30 for a summit meeting in

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<sup>1</sup>The Arab World, November 12, 1956, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup>al-Nahar, November 3, 1956. The Arab World, November 3, 1956. The Consultative Council was similar to that which President Khoury convened in 1951. It was composed of members of the Cabinet, members of the Foreign Affairs Parliamentary Committee, ex-ministers of Defense and Foreign Affairs, the speaker and ex-speakers of the House of Deputies. Members who held such posts were the most influential political leaders in the country. Among them were loyalists as well as ardent supporters of Nasser such as Kamal Jumblat, Sabri Hamadeh, Rashid Karami and Ahmed al-Ass'ad. In the absence of organized political party life in the country, a consensus among those leaders constituted more or less a national consensus.

<sup>3</sup>The Arab World, November 6, 1956, p. 7.

<sup>4</sup>al-Nahar, November 1, 1956.

Beirut, but they did not convene until the 13th of November, seven days after the military hostilities had ceased at Suez.<sup>1</sup>

When the heads of the Arab states convened in Beirut, the question of severing diplomatic relations with Britain and France had outlived its usefulness. The main task ahead of the Arab states was no longer how to repulse the invasion, but how to facilitate an early withdrawal of the invading forces. It could be and was argued that the Arab states which had not severed diplomatic relations with Britain and France were now in a better position to facilitate an early withdrawal of the invading forces.<sup>2</sup> Along these lines President Chamoun stated his position in principle at the Arab Summit Meeting in Beirut.<sup>3</sup> But in order to avoid a head-on clash with Egypt, Syria and Saudi Arabia, he pointed out that Lebanon would agree to whatever measures the Arab states would pass by unanimity,<sup>4</sup> thus leaving the controversy to the Hashimites and their opponents in the Arab World. As expected Iraq and its opponents reached a deadlock on

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<sup>1</sup>Chamoun, Crise Au Moyen-Orient, p. 303.

<sup>2</sup>Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Syria severed diplomatic relations with both Britain and France. Iraq and Jordan severed relations with France. Only Lebanon declined to sever relations with either one.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 308.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid. See also statement by Salim Lahhoud: Lebanon, Official Gazette, 1st Ordinary Session, 7th Meeting, November 27, 1956, p. 1380.

the issue of severing diplomatic relations with Britain. In the absence of a unanimous decision, the President found an excuse for the preservation of diplomatic relations with both Britain and France. Yaffi and Salam, realizing that the President had managed to escape the issue, resigned in protest on November 16.<sup>1</sup> Their resignation stirred a wave of unrest in the country. What was a policy conflict between the majority of the Moslems and the majority of the Christians developed into a serious breach between the two factions.

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<sup>1</sup>al-Nahar, November 17, 1956. A detailed account of President Chamoun's attitude towards the issue of severing diplomatic relations with Britain and France at the Summit Conference in Beirut was told later by Emile Bustani, a close associate of the President. It was published by al-Nahar, April 27, 1957.

## Chapter VII

### THE MAJOR POWERS AND THE REGIONAL COLD WAR

#### A. A Disconcerted Start.

The three major Western powers, Britain, the United States and France did not commence the second round for alignment in 1955 as united as they were in 1951 when they submitted the Middle East Command Proposals. Although the Baghdad Pact was envisaged as an implementation of the "Northern Tier" concept which was first introduced by Dulles in 1953, the United States did not become a member of it despite the repeated appeals of the member states including Britain.<sup>1</sup>

There were several reasons which inhibited the United States from attaining full membership in the Baghdad Pact. One of them was the desire of the Republican Administration not to associate the United States directly with Britain and France out of fear that the colonial record of its allies would blemish the image of America in the area.<sup>2</sup> There was, moreover, the security of Israel to worry about. The American Government realized that full membership in the Baghdad Pact would subject it to tremendous Zionist pressure at home for the conclusion of a security treaty with Israel, a step which it could not take without alienating

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<sup>1</sup>Anthony Eden, Full Circle: Memoirs (London: Cassell & Co. Ltd., 1960), p. 336.

<sup>2</sup>American Council on Foreign Relations, The U.S. in World Affairs, 1955, ed. Hollis W. Barber (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957), p. 155.

the Arab States.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, the conflict which broke out among the Arab States on the commencement of the Baghdad Pact, was not encouraging. It was felt that the entry of the United States would involve it in conflicts which were not in its interest. For all these reasons, the United States concluded that entry to the Baghdad Pact was premature and preferred to await further developments especially since the Arab opponents to the Pact were not in early 1955 a Soviet sphere of influence.<sup>2</sup>

The United States, however, did almost everything possible to encourage the Baghdad Pact short of acquiring membership.<sup>3</sup> American observers attended the Pact meetings, permanent representatives sat on the economic and military committees, and provisions were made for the extension of free economic and military aid to the member states.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Mohammed Fadhil al-Jamali, Memories and Lessons of the Zionist Aggression and Its Impact on Arab Reality (Beirut: the New Book House, 1964), p. 65.

<sup>2</sup>M. Perlmann, "Facts Versus Pacts," Middle Eastern Affairs, VI (December, 1955), p. 381. See also Waldemar Gallman, Iraq Under General Nuri (Baltimore: John Hophins Press, 1964), p. 73.

<sup>3</sup>See for example the Statement delivered by the U.S. Department of State on the entry of Iran to the Baghdad Pact, October 12, 1955: RIIA, Documents On International Affairs, 1955, ed. Noble Frankland (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 304.

<sup>4</sup>Refer to the address delivered by the Chief American Observer to the Baghdad Pact Council meeting, Waldemar Gallman, on November 21, 1955; and to the Communique of the Baghdad Pact Council on November 22, 1955; RIIA, Documents on International Affairs, 1955, pp. 306-08.

France was absent from the Baghdad Pact because it was not consulted nor wanted. The developments in North Africa, where the Arab peoples were in open revolt against the French authorities, rendered the membership of France more of a debit than a credit to the prospects of the Baghdad Pact in the Arab World. The French were, however, piqued at being left out and, moreover, could not disregard the implications of having Britain and the Hashimites, their traditional rivals, the main promoters of the Pact in the area. Although the Pact was primarily set up against the Soviet Union, the French feared that British-Iraqi leadership would reduce French influence in Syria and Lebanon.<sup>1</sup> Consequently, they used whatever influence they had left in their ex-mandates to prevent their adhesion to the Baghdad Pact.<sup>2</sup> The French Ambassador in Beirut, George Ballay, was expressing French fears and fermenting local suspicions of British-Hashimite intentions when he said on April 5, 1955:

France lays a condition on its adhesion to the Baghdad Pact, the maintainance of the political and geographic status quo in the Near East, and in particular the preservation of the independence of Syria and Lebanon.<sup>3</sup>

This lack of solidarity among the three major Western powers towards the Baghdad Pact was only a symptom of a deep-rooted weakness in

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<sup>1</sup>American Council on Foreign Council Relations, The United States in World Affairs, 1955, p. 155.

<sup>2</sup>Author's interview with Raymond Edde, the Dean of the National Bloc, at his house, Sanai', Beirut, August 3, 1967.

<sup>3</sup>Beirut, April 6, 1955. The French were not officially asked to join the Pact. Ballay's statement was made in answer to a question by a reporter about the attitude of France towards the Baghdad Pact.

Western diplomacy - the absence of a common, concerted and long-range policy towards the Afro-Asian World. They were in agreement on a negative policy--the prevention of Soviet penetration into the Afro-Asian World and the use of that World's resources and bases against the Soviet Union and its allies. But that policy was insufficient to harness their efforts without a clarification of fundamental positive tenets in their diplomacy towards the Afro-Asian World. Although this lack of solidarity among the major Western powers could be interpreted and understood in terms of the colonial heritage of Britain and France and the anti-colonial heritage of the United States, one cannot avoid the conclusion that had the Americans taken a more positive view towards the Baghdad Pact, its prospects in the Arab World would have been better. The United States could proceed as it did by distributing recommendations for the Baghdad Pact, but its recommendations could have carried much more weight primarily in such pro-American Arab States as Lebanon and Saudi Arabia had it been a member of the Pact. Similarly, French opposition to the Pact discouraged Syria and Lebanon and aroused latent fears of a prospective Greater Syria project. Whether Britain and the Hashimites were actually planning to use the Baghdad Pact as a vehicle for the promotion of a Greater Syria Project or not is beside the point. Political questions cannot be interpreted only in terms of the actual, but likewise in terms of the possible. The extension of the Baghdad Pact in the absence of the United States and France implied the extension of British and Hashimite influence in the area. This prospect raised the possibility of realizing at some future point Hashimite ambitions in Saudi Arabia and other countries in the Arab East, which in turn aroused suspicions and hence contributed to the reservations

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expressed in Lebanon, Syria and Saudi Arabia towards the Baghdad Pact. In Lebanon, for example, such fears caused Maronite groups and political personalities such as the Kata'ib, the Edde Brothers and Hamid Franjeh to take the position that if alignment was necessary, then let it be directly with the Western Powers rather than through Baghdad.<sup>1</sup> In Syria anti-Hashimite elements ruled out the Baghdad Pact, and in Saudi Arabia, the traditional Saudi-Hashimite feud placed the ruling house of Saud unequivocally against it.<sup>2</sup>

It was perhaps in the belief that the Soviet Union was still an outsider in the area that the Western Powers did not harness fully their disposition towards the Baghdad Pact. This was still essentially true in early 1955, but the Soviet Union had by that time acquired the necessary credentials to join the arena of Middle Eastern politics as a fourth party among the major powers. During the period which separated the Middle East Command Proposals from the Baghdad Pact, (1951-55), the Soviet Union had introduced changes in its strategy which allowed it to capitalize on the motives of the nationalists in the area. The primary target for the communist in the Afro-Asian World became imperialism rather than the "national bourgeoisie", and towards that end a phase of close collaboration with the national leaders was envisaged.<sup>3</sup> There was no

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<sup>1</sup> Author's interview with Raymond Edde, the Dean of the National Bloc, at his house, Sanai', Beirut, August 3, 1967. Refer also to Declaration by Pierre Gmayyil, the leader of the Kata'ib Party; Beirut, March 17, 1955.

<sup>2</sup> Patrick Seale, The Struggle for Syria (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), pp. 218-26.

<sup>3</sup> Walter Laquer, The Soviet Union & the Middle East (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1959), pp. 189-94.

lack of opportunity to capitalize on national sentiments, for those years were full of incidents between the Arab peoples and one or the other of the European Powers concerning one colonial issue or another. The Soviet Union utilized such conflicts by simply extending verbal support to the Arabs at no extra cost, for it was still an outsider to the area. Moreover, as a measure of improving its disposition in the Arab World, the Soviet Union after 1952, supported the Arabs at the United Nations on questions involving Arab-Israeli conflicts, thereby winning the appreciation of all Arabs, be they pro-West or anti-West.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, the Soviet Union benefited from a realistic appraisal of the political circumstances in the Arab World. Realizing that Communism was still weak in the Arab World and that the moving force was primarily a nationalism which was sensitive to the conclusion of pacts or treaties with the Great Powers, the Soviet Union met the Western offensive for alignment by requesting non-alignment rather than a counter-alignment.<sup>2</sup> Thus it appealed to a substantial segment of Arab public opinion as the innocent power which had no ambitions in the area but the expulsion of Western influence.

The formulation and the implementation of American policy in the region was a more delicate matter which involved more complexities than those which the Soviet Union as an outsider had to consider. The

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<sup>1</sup>American Council on Foreign Relations, The United States in World Affairs, 1955, p. 166.

<sup>2</sup>Refer to statement by the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs, April 16, 1955. RIIA, Documents on International Affairs, 1955, p. 300.

U.S. had to reconcile the colonial disputes between its European Allies and the Arab States without alienating irretrievably either party, a thankless task which often invited criticisms from Arab as well as British and French quarters. Reconciliation is a slow and a delicate process which can be applied only as the conflict arises. The U.S. reconciliatory policy could hardly cope with the rapid succession of colonial conflicts between the Arab States and the great European Powers. For example, in the Autumn of 1955 as the Tunisian question was well on its way towards a solution, not without American assistance, the Moroccan question had reached its peak and the Algerian question was just starting. Consequently Arab-Western relations were continuously under strain.

B. An Attempt to Resolve the Palestinian Question.

But if Arab disputes with Britain and France were running ahead of the United States' reconciliatory policy, the Arab-Israeli dispute was of a more enduring nature. A successful reconciliation of that dispute, in view of its profound impact on Arab attitudes towards the West and the dilemmas it posed to the Western Powers on every turn, would have contributed immeasurably to the improvement of Arab-Western relations and perhaps opened the way towards an Arab-Western alignment or at least provided the U.S. with an opportunity to join the Baghdad Pact. On August 26, 1955, Secretary Dulles attempted to do just that by laying down before the American Council on Foreign Relations proposals to be used as a basis for negotiating a settlement between the Arabs and the Israelis. He said:

The existing lines separating Israel and the Arab States were fixed by the Armistice Agreements of 1949. They were not designed to be permanent frontiers in every respect and

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in part at least, they reflected the status of the fighting at the moment.<sup>1</sup>

It was necessary, he continued, to reconsider the Armistice Lines in order to create acceptable boundaries, and pointed out that "the United States would be willing to help in the search for a solution if the parties to the dispute should so desire."<sup>2</sup> Realizing that a resolution of the refugee problem was essential for a final settlement, he suggested:

"To end the plight of the 900,000 refugees requires that these uprooted people should, through resettlement and, to such an extent as may be feasible, repatriation, be enabled to resume a life of dignity and self respect.

All of this requires money . . . compensation is due from Israel to the refugees."<sup>3</sup>

He went on to point out that Israel could not unaided provide adequate compensation, but he suggested that the problem could be largely solved by the advancement of an international loan to which the U.S. could contribute to the development of irrigation projects which would facilitate the resettlement of the refugees.<sup>4</sup> He was perhaps referring among other things to the Johnston Plan for the River Jordan to which the U.S. promised \$200 million in contribution.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Dulles's statement before the American Council on Foreign Relations, August 26, 1955. Middle Eastern Affairs, VI (August-September, 1955), pp. 270-73. See also RIIA, Documents On International Affairs, 1955, pp. 364-65.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>American Council on Foreign Relations, U.S. in World Affairs, 1955, pp. 171-73.

The Dulles Proposals were immediately endorsed by the British and the French who pointed out that they were willing to assist and contribute to the endeavor of the United States in seeking a settlement;<sup>1</sup> but they were met with reservations, and sometimes clear cut rejection, by the parties concerned in the region - the Arabs and the Israelis. Israel welcomed the prospect of a multilateral treaty with the United States which would guarantee the Arab-Israeli borders, but it was not prepared to give territorial concessions to the Arabs as the Dulles Proposals implied.<sup>2</sup> The Arabs on the other hand were hardly prepared for a negotiated settlement. Some of them ruled out the possibility of recognizing Israel regardless of the terms. Said King Sa'ud to the American Ambassador in Riyadh:

"The Arab World is not big enough for the Arabs and the Israelis. The hopes of the United States for the achievement of peace among them either now or in the future are unrealistic."<sup>3</sup>

Other Arab Officials were not as blunt as King Sa'ud, but they, nevertheless, rejected the Proposals. Fadhil al-Jamali, for example, informed an American official who was dispatched to feel him out on the

<sup>1</sup>Refer to Statement by the British Foreign Office: Middle Eastern Affairs, VI (August - September, 1955), p. 273.

<sup>2</sup>Statement by Moshe Sharett, Prime Minister of Israel, in the Knesset, October 18, 1955: J. C. Hurewitz Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East (Princeton: Van Nostrand & Co. Inc. 1956), pp. 405-12. See also al-Jareeda, October 20, 1955.

<sup>3</sup>Amin al-Mumayyez, The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia As I Knew It (Beirut: the Book House, 1963), p. 399.

Proposals that they were unacceptable to the Arabs because they even fell short of implementing the United Nations resolutions, which were to start with unjust to the Arabs.<sup>1</sup> 'Adel 'Usayran, the Speaker of the House of Deputies in Lebanon, in a statement to the press, held that the Proposals should be rejected. He maintained that the American plan implied that the refugees would have to relinquish their rights in Palestine for a token compensation and that the Arabs would have to recognize Israel for minor adjustments of the Armistice Lines. If the United States desired a fair settlement, he concluded, the least it could do was to implement the United Nations resolutions.<sup>2</sup>

Other Arab officials did not give their opinion about the Proposals in public. Premier Sami al-Sulh of Lebanon and Premier Sa'id al-Mufti of Jordan declined to comment, allegedly because they were awaiting consultations among the Arab States.<sup>3</sup> Dr. Charles Malik, who returned to Lebanon from Washington for consultations, cautioned against an early rejection of the Proposals. He said:

The Arabs should neither accept nor reject the Dulles Proposals for an Arab-Israeli Settlement before they consult one another and take a united stand on that question.<sup>4</sup>

The Arab Foreign Ministers met in Cairo during the third week of

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<sup>1</sup>Fadhil al-Jamali, Memoirs and Lessons of the Zionist Aggression and Its Impact on Arab Reality, p. 63.

<sup>2</sup>al-Nahar, September 1, 1955.

<sup>3</sup>The Arab World, August 29, 1955, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>The Arab World, September 6, 1955, p. 2.

October to discuss a variety of topics among which were the Dulles Proposals, but they failed to agree on a united stand on that matter and, therefore, did not touch on it in the communique. Foreign Minister Lahhoud on his return from the Arab Foreign Ministers Conference on October 20, refused to comment about the decisions of the Conference on the Proposals holding that they were not official and that, therefore, the foreign ministers did not discuss them officially.<sup>1</sup>

But while Foreign Minister Lahhoud declined to reveal the substance of the discussions which touched on the Dulles Proposals, some newspapers were reporting that Lebanon, Iraq and Jordan were inclined to pursue the question further with the American Secretary of State. Other Arab States were not inclined to do so.<sup>2</sup> Under the circumstances the Proposals were temporarily shelved.

That the Dulles Proposals did not even reach the negotiating table was not surprising. There were fundamental differences in the disposition of the three parties concerned--the three major Western powers, the Arabs and the Israelis--which prevented them from negotiating. The three major Western powers assumed that Israel was founded to stay. Therefore, any negotiated settlement from their point of view should be limited to slight territorial concessions coupled with measures designed to

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<sup>1</sup>Statement by Foreign Minister Lahhoud on October 20, 1955: al-Nahar, October 21, 1955.

<sup>2</sup>al-Nahar, September 2 and 17, 1955.

resolve the plight of the refugees by compensation and largely resettlement in the Arab World. Some Arabs questioned that assumption, and those who were disposed to accept, wanted the implementation of the United Nations Partition Resolution as a prerequisite for negotiations which, to start with, would have sliced off about a third of the territories under Israeli sovereignty. Israel on the other hand ruled out the possibility of any territorial concessions whatsoever. The only concession that it was apparently willing to consider, if it could be called a concession at all, was some compensation for the refugees, provided that the U.S. and its European allies were prepared to shoulder most of the cost.<sup>1</sup>

The attitude of the Arabs was perhaps justified in terms of human rights, but if one considers politics as the art of the possible, some criticism could be levelled at the way the Arabs conducted themselves towards the Dulles Proposals. The Arabs should have realized that the American Government was actually withstanding substantial Zionist pressure in the United States when it proposed a solution for the Palestinian problem on lines which were not acceptable to Israel. Consequently, a positive attitude towards the gesture made by Secretary Dulles might have been to their advantage. This does not mean, of course, that the Arabs should have settled for what Dulles had proposed; but that their officials should have appreciated publicly the trend initiated by Dulles and suggested alignment as another way of promoting American interest in the area provided that the United States would go further by suggesting

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<sup>1</sup>The Jerusalem Post, August 29, 1955, p. 1.



the implementation or the possibility of implementing the United Nations resolutions. As it was, not a single statement made by an Arab official appreciated the efforts of Secretary Dulles, and to that extent Arab diplomacy failed to take full advantage of this opportunity. It was true that some Arab leaders requested the implementation of the Partition Resolution, but that request was made in a negative context devoid of any incentives for the government of the United States. That this criticism is one of tact rather than substance is not totally true. The incentives which could have been given to the United States such as hints about the possibility of alignment were actually points of substance as well as tact. Besides, tact in diplomacy as well as in other human relations often makes the difference between success and failure. This is not to say that the diplomacy of the United States in the region was perfect. American diplomacy was to a large extent susceptible to Zionist pressure on the question of Palestine, sometimes to the detriment of American interest. But by the same logic, Arab diplomacy allowed itself to become the captive of an uncompromising anti-Israel public opinion, sometimes to the detriment of Arab interest as well.

The press all over the Arab World was almost unanimously critical of Dulles. al-Gumhuria a semi-official Egyptian daily headlined: "The Arab States as well as the Arab press denounce the Dulles plan."<sup>1</sup> The Demacene daily al-Rai' al-'Am, the press organ of Khalid al-'Azm, the Syrian Minister of Foreign Affairs, considered the plan as a "conspiracy" against the Arabs and picked this opportunity to criticize those who were

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<sup>1</sup>The Arab World, August 29, 1955, p. 7.

advocating alignment with the West.<sup>1</sup> Even Beirut press which was supposed to be on the whole more sophisticated than other Arab press reflected on the whole a negative mood. The right wing daily, al-Bayraq, described Dulles plan as one that "consecrates an inequitous fait accompli."<sup>2</sup> The PPS daily Sada Lubnan dismissed the plan as a maneuver by the Republican Administration to win Zionist votes in the forthcoming congressional elections.<sup>3</sup> The left wing daily, al-Telegraph, described the plan as a "conspiracy concocted in the kitchens of international imperialism."<sup>4</sup> al-Hayat, maintained that the circumstances did not permit any discussion of the plan. Two papers were not totally negative.<sup>5</sup> al-Nahar described the plan as "iniquitous", but followed up by suggesting in a conditional manner, that if the Arabs believed in co-existence with Israel, the Dulles Plan was worth further discussion.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, L'Orient thought the Dulles Plan was inequitable, but it advocated that under the circumstances the Arabs should not miss the Dulles "bandwagon" provided that they could approach him with closed ranks.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>al-Bayraq, August 29, 1955.

<sup>3</sup>Sada Lubnan, August 29, 1955.

<sup>4</sup>The Arab World, August 29, 1955, p. 6.

<sup>5</sup>al-Hayat, August 29, 1955.

<sup>6</sup>al-Nahar, August 29, 1955.

<sup>7</sup>The Arab World, August 29, 1955, p. 5.

The Arab States were, however, far from being able to solidify their ranks towards such a crucial and sensitive matter. Taking into consideration their constant bickering, jealousies and conflicts, any positive gesture by one or another state would have been most probably described by its adversaries as an attempt to liquidate the Palestinian question and as a betrayal of the most sacred "Arab cause." With the existence of a zealous, uncompromising public opinion, the accusation would have appealed to the people and ruined the governments involved.

On November 9, Sir Anthony Eden, in another attempt to resolve the question, went further than Dulles by suggesting in a speech at the Guildhall of London, before the Lord Mayor, that the Arab-Israeli borders should be demarcated somewhere between the Armistice Lines and the lines set up by the United Nations Partition Resolution.<sup>1</sup> Eden's suggestion was described by some Arabs as a step in the right direction, but the Israelis were adamantly against it.<sup>2</sup> The day following Eden's Guildhall Speech the ambassador of Israel in London stated:

Israel does not admit any claim on part of the Arabs whether alone or supported by other powers, to any of the territory Israel now holds.<sup>3</sup>

This attitude was further reaffirmed by Prime Minister Ben-Gurion

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<sup>1</sup>The New York Times, November 10, 1955, p. 8.

<sup>2</sup>American Council on Foreign Relations, The United States in World Affairs, 1959, p. 179.

<sup>3</sup>The Times (London), November 11, 1955, p. 7.

in the Knesset on November 15. He said:

Proposals to truncate the territory of Israel for the benefit of its neighbours have no legal, moral, or logical basis and cannot be considered.<sup>1</sup>

C. The Impact of Soviet Influence.

Ben-Gurion's position found listening ears in influential circles of the Major Western Powers not so much for the legality or the morality which the Prime Minister evoked, as for the Soviet influence which had been recently introduced to the area by the Egyptian Arms Deal with the Soviet Bloc. The Egyptian-Czech Arms Deal which was announced by Nasser on September 27, threatened the balance of power which the three Major Western powers had been trying to maintain between the Arab States and Israel, and put the Middle East in the shadow of an impending crisis. It was perhaps with the Arms Deal in mind that Anthony Eden made his suggestion for a settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict on November 9 and received for that measure the official support of the United States. But the Arms Deal on the other hand moved substantial parliamentary forces in Britain and the United States to exert pressure on their governments for what they described as "a firm policy", but which was actually a hostile policy towards the Arabs. On March 7, 1956, the parliamentary opposition in Britain accused the government of having neglected the security of Israel and criticised the Prime Minister for having gone too far in placating the Arabs. Said Hugh Gaitskell, the leader of the opposition:

We take the view that the Prime Minister's Guildhall Speech

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<sup>1</sup>The Times (London), November 16, 1955, p. 10.

with its implications of substantial concessions by Israel and its encouragement, accordingly, of Arab hopes, was a grave error.<sup>1</sup>

The leader of the opposition with the assistance of his colleagues proceeded to request additional arms shipments to Israel, and to demand a British guarantee of the existing Israeli "borders". Similarly, a group of more than 40 members of the House of Representatives in the United States addressed a letter to Secretary Dulles urging the Government to extend armaments to Israel, to give an American guarantee to the existing Arab-Israeli frontier, and to withhold all types of assistance from the Arab States.<sup>2</sup>

While such pressures were being exerted on the Western Powers, most of the Arabs were in a jubilant mood in celebration of the Egyptian-Czech Arms Deal, and Nasser as if to dramatize the impact of the Deal criticised at length on various occasions the Western Powers and exposed their biased policy towards Israel, especially in the field of armaments.<sup>3</sup>

The Arms Deal, which was followed by Soviet offers of economic aid to all Arab countries regardless of their political orientation,<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Great Britain, Parliamentary Debates (Commons), DXLIX (1965) p. 21127.

<sup>2</sup>U.S. Department of State, Bulletin, XXXIV (February 20, 1956), pp. 286-88.

<sup>3</sup>Refer for example to Nasser's address to the graduating cadets on October 19, 1955: al-Ahram, October 20, 1955.

<sup>4</sup>Refer to Statement by Daniel Solod, the Soviet Ambassador in Egypt, October 10, 1955: al-Nahar, October 11, 1955. See also: Hazzah al-Majali, My Memoirs (N. pl. N. P., 1960), p. 164.

realized several Soviet objectives simultaneously. Western efforts to shift the focus of Arab politics from Israel towards the wider East-West conflict by resolving the Palestinian question became more difficult if not impossible. Western monopoly on the supply of armaments to the Middle East was destroyed and with that the Western Powers lost a useful political lever. With the receipt of Soviet armaments in Egypt, which was shortly followed by other shipments to Syria, the Arabs envisaged better military prospects as against Israel and, therefore, became more confident than ever in declining all attempts for the resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict. On the other hand the trends in Israel were pointing towards war: the national elections brought in an extremist Knessett, and as a result, the militant Israeli leader, David Ben-Gurion became Prime Minister on November 3, 1955.<sup>1</sup> Large-scale border raids were launched against Egypt, Jordan and Syria only to be met by counter-raids on behalf of the more confident Arabs.<sup>2</sup> It became obvious that under the circumstances an Arab-Israeli settlement could not be realized. More important to the three major Western powers was the fact that the Soviet political offensive rendered the Soviet Union for the first time since the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 an influential fourth party to be reckoned with in every action concerning the Middle East. This emerging

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<sup>1</sup>American Council on Foreign Relations, The United States in World Affairs, 1955, p. 175. See also the Jerusalem Post, November 3, 1955, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>It was reported that Israel would have resorted to war had it not been given assurances as to its security by the United States: George Lichtheim "U.S. Gives Israel Unilateral Pledge," The Jerusalem Post, October 17, 1955, p. 1.

reality caused the three major Western powers to close their ranks,<sup>1</sup> but their efforts to contain the extension of Soviet influence in the area were ineffective. Western protests to Moscow were as expected rebuffed by the Soviet Union,<sup>2</sup> and thus stripped of any political utility save some propaganda that the three major Western powers were after all interested in peace in the Middle East, but, one could add, with a slight military superiority on the Israeli side.<sup>3</sup> Statements delivered by the three major Western powers separately or jointly as to their commitments under the Tripartite Declaration and their intent to intervene in the event of an Arab-Israeli war<sup>4</sup>, worked to the detriment of Western influence in the Arab World. They served as further evidence to the Arabs that the Western powers were the real protectors of Israel,<sup>5</sup> and gave the Soviet Union the

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<sup>1</sup>Press release 50, February 1, 1956: U.S. Department of State, Bulletin, XXXIV (February 13, 1956), p. 233.

<sup>2</sup>al-Jareeda, November 2, 1955.

<sup>3</sup>That the Western Powers recognized that Israel was militarily superior to its Arab neighbors was borne out by Anthony Eden's statement in the House of Commons, December 12, 1955: "Perhaps it is unwise, but I think I should say it. Israel is not, in my belief, at a military disadvantage today in relation to any Arab State or any combination of Arab States who are on her frontier. I think that is about a true estimate of the situation." RIIA, Documents On International Affairs, 1955, p. 395.

<sup>4</sup>Refer for example to the Eden-Eisenhower joint statement concerning the Middle East, February 1, 1956. Middle Eastern Affairs, VII (March 1956), p. 102. See also, U.S. Department of State, Bulletin, XXXIV (February 13, 1956), pp. 232-34.

<sup>5</sup>Lebanon, Official Gazette, 1st Extra-Ordinary Session, 1st Meeting, October 4, 1955, pp. 1423-24.

opportunity to protest against such statements and warn that it could not be indifferent to any encroachment on the sovereignty of the regional states.<sup>1</sup> The point here was not whether the Soviet warnings were a bluff, but that such warnings appealed to the Arabs who resented the intention of the Western Powers to intervene if the status quo between Israel and the Arab States was challenged by military action.

Measures taken by the Western Powers to retrieve what was lost by the Soviet initiative in the region did not yield satisfactory results. The American Under-Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, George Allen, was immediately sent to the Middle East, following the announcement of the Egyptian-Czech Arms Deal, with a shopping list of American arms, but could not make any sales in Egypt or in Syria where Soviet influence counted most.<sup>2</sup> The visit of the British Chief of Staff, General Templer, to Amman on December 5 was a complete fiasco. The General whose mission was to work out a membership for Jordan in the Baghdad Pact and offer in return British equipment for the Arab Legion, was met with a sweeping uprising which imperilled the security of the state and led four ministers to resign in protest over Templer's mission.<sup>3</sup> The General, under the circumstances, had to leave Jordan prematurely. The uprising against General Templer's visit was only the beginning of a sequence of events

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<sup>1</sup>Refer for example to the statement of the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs, February 14, 1956: RIIA, Documents On International Affairs, 1956, ed. Noble Frankland (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), pp. 53-56. See also: al-Nahar, February 14, 1956; and Middle Eastern Affairs, VII (March 1956), pp. 103-04.

<sup>2</sup>al-Jareeda, October 6, 1955.

<sup>3</sup>Eden, op.cit., pp. 343-44. See also Majali, op.cit., pp. 168-71.



which led on March 1, 1956 to the sacking of British officers in the Arab Legion, among them the Commander-in-Chief, General John Bagot Glubb Pasha,<sup>1</sup> and culminated in a national crisis which nearly destroyed the Monarchy and the viability of Jordan.<sup>2</sup>

D. Anxiety in Lebanon.

These incidents were only isolated phenomena of the wider popularity which Nasser had acquired throughout the Arab World by purchasing arms from the Soviet Bloc. The press in the Arab world, including Lebanon, almost unanimously supported the Arms Deal as a step in the right direction towards a military balance with Israel.<sup>3</sup> There were, however, some warnings in the rightist press as to the possibility of importing Soviet influence and ideology in the wake of the Arms Deal, but such comments passed almost unnoticed, for they were made in a context approving of the Deal in principle.<sup>4</sup> Unanimity in Lebanon on the Arms Deal was largely a reflection of anti-Israeli homogeneity. This homogeneity was not only expressed by the press, but likewise by the House of Deputies which to the last deputy passed a cable to the Egyptian government in support of the Arms Deal.<sup>5</sup> Similarly, official pronouncements by Lebanese officials

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<sup>1</sup>Eden, op.cit., pp. 349-50. Also Majali, op.cit., pp. 183-87.

<sup>2</sup>Majali, op.cit., pp. 217-21.

<sup>3</sup>The Arab World, September 28 and 30, pp. 2 and 3.

<sup>4</sup>See for example the following editorials: Sa'id Takieuddine, "Embracing the Bear," Sada Lubnan, September 29, 1955; [Fuad Haddad], "What We Fear," al-'Amal, September 29, 1955.

<sup>5</sup>Lebanon, The Official Gazette, 1st Extra-Ordinary Session, 1st Meeting, October 4, 1955, p. 1441.

in support of Nasser's move were not lacking.<sup>1</sup>

But while gestures of solidarity with Egypt were being made, pro-Western official circles in Lebanon under the aegis of the President were worried about the consequences of the Arms Deal.<sup>2</sup> This worry did not arise out of the prospect of an Arab military superiority against Israel which was actually welcomed in Lebanon, but out of the prospect of Soviet penetration in the Arab World.<sup>3</sup> President Chamoun in a letter to President Eisenhower after the declaration of the Arms Deal, attributed the mounting anti-Western wave in the area to the bias of American policy towards Israel. The President pointed out three major faults in American policy: Political support to Israel, the disproportion in American aid between Israel and the Arab States, and the lack of determination by the American government to overcome the internal circumstances which created an American pro-Israeli policy and, consequently, convinced the Arabs that fundamental changes in American policy on this score could not be expected.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Refer for example to the reports about the demonstrations launched on August 16 in support of Egypt and to addresses by Minister of State, Sa'eb Salam; Prime Minister, 'Abdullah al-Yaffi; and the Speaker of the House of Deputies, 'Adel 'Usayran, to the demonstrators. al-Nahar, August 17, 1956.

<sup>2</sup>Author's interview with President Chamoun at the main office building of al-Nahar, Bank of Lebanon Street, August 27, 1967.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid. See also Ghassan Tweini, "This Leftist Trend," al-Nahar, October 16, 1955. Also al-Nahar, October 15, 1955.

<sup>4</sup>al-Jareeda, October 15, 1955.

Premier Yaffi, likewise, expressed similar criticisms of Western policy in a debate for a vote of confidence on April 29, 1956; the Premier stated:

Alliances between the Major Powers and the Arab States, while the Arab States are still weak, the way they are now, constitute nothing more than clandestine protection or the revival of a mandatory system.

Some people say that alliances with foreign powers would give us strength and the necessary armaments to fight our common enemy. I remind you that President Nasser concluded an Arms Deal with the Soviet Bloc. What happened after the Deal? The mask behind which the advocators of alliances with the West hid themselves disappeared. There were statements and declarations to the effect that the Deal created an imbalance in the Middle East, i.e. between 40 million Arabs and Israel. This is why I am and will continue to be against alliances as long as they are based on maintaining a military balance between the Arabs and Israel.<sup>1</sup>

President Chamoun was not of the same opinion about alliances, as the idea did appeal to him in principle.<sup>2</sup> However, he was willing to keep Lebanon non-aligned as a measure of pacification to those Arab States who opposed alignment. In fact he appointed Yaffi as Prime Minister to re-assure the opponents of alignment in the Arab World that Lebanon was not about to be aligned.<sup>3</sup> But if the President was willing to tolerate non-alignment, he and his supporters were not willing to accept a gradual drift towards the Soviet pole. Consequently, Lebanon

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<sup>1</sup>Lebanon, The Official Gazette, 1st Ordinary Session, 1st Meeting, March 29, 1956, p. 1245.

<sup>2</sup>Supra., pp. 181-82.

<sup>3</sup>Supra., pp. 218-20.

side-stepped Soviet approaches by declining offers for economic aid and supplies of armaments. Lebanese reservations towards the Soviet Union were clearly manifested on the visit of Soviet Foreign Minister, Demitri Shepilov, to Beirut, June 25, 1956. Shortly before the arrival of Shepilov, whose mission included offers of Soviet economic aid to Lebanon, the Government declared that it had received \$3,670,000 from the U.S. for building highways and improving Beirut International Airport.<sup>1</sup> On June 25, Shepilov's speech at Beirut International Airport passed unanswered by Foreign Minister Lahhoud, contrary to protocol, because the Soviet Minister chose to praise in public the struggle of the "Lebanese people" against the "imperialistic" Baghdad Pact.<sup>2</sup> During his visit, Shepilov received an uncomplimentary publicized memorandum from the Foreign Affairs Parliamentary Committee. The Memorandum acknowledged the recent pro-Arab voting record of the Soviet Union at the United Nations, but recalled that the Soviet Union had in the past approved of the partition of Palestine and "raced with London, Paris, and Washington in recognizing the state of Israel". The members of the Committee interpreted the pro-Israeli record of the Western Powers in terms of Zionist pressure at home, but they wondered: why was it that the Soviet Union approved of the establishment of Israel? That the Soviet Union continued to support the existence of that state, they continued, was borne out recently by the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs which declared on April 17, 1956 that it did not

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<sup>1</sup>al-Nahar, June 23, 1956.

<sup>2</sup>al-Nahar, June 26, 1956.

envisage a solution to the Palestinian question except in the light "of the national interest of all parties concerned".<sup>1</sup> The over-all impression about the memorandum was that it exaggerated the short-comings of the Soviet Union on the Palestinian question in an attempt to reduce the pro-Arab image of the Soviet Union. Similarly, Foreign Minister Lahhoud chose to discredit the Soviet Union on that same record. After the departure of Shepilov, the Foreign Minister declared that he saw no visible improvement in the disposition of the Soviet Union towards the Palestinian Question.<sup>2</sup> Speaking about the prospects of Soviet economic aid, he said: "The Soviet Union does not give grants,"<sup>3</sup> a comment calculated to draw comparison with the United States which was giving grants-in-aid to Lebanon.

While the President was holding a steady pro-West course within the context of non-alignment, he was watching with concern the developments in Syria and Egypt, which were pointing towards Moscow.<sup>4</sup> These developments were coupled with a persistent offensive attitude towards the non-aligned but pro-West Arab States, specifically Jordan and Lebanon. During the Winter and Spring of 1956, Lebanon was subjected to relentless pressure from Egypt and Syria to divert it from the pro-Western course. Syria used almost every conceivable means to bring

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<sup>1</sup>The text of the Memorandum was published in: al-Nahar, June 28, 1956.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Chamoun, op.cit., p. 322. See also Muhieddine al-Nusuli, "The Warning of the President," Beirut, October 16, 1955. See also Seale, op.cit. pp. 232-34, 255-56.

Lebanon to heel; obstruction of transit trade, economic pressure, political pressure, and illegitimate methods of intervention in Lebanon's internal affairs. Syrian officers were caught after having been dispatched to kidnap or assassinate Syrians in asylum in Lebanon.<sup>1</sup> Some of the followers of Ahmed al-Ass'ad, one of the leaders in opposition, were indicted by the courts for having received training and arms in Syria to strike terror in the country.<sup>2</sup> The opposition began to resort to violent mass rallies hailing Nasser and assailing the President (an act which was not constitutional).<sup>3</sup> These events were taking place against a background of rising Islamic sectarian demands which were usually made not so much to maintain the balance between Christians and Moslems as much as they were for jeopardizing the position of the President.<sup>4</sup>

On being reproached for a settlement of outstanding economic questions, the Syrian government demanded of Lebanon a reorientation in its foreign policy, the expulsion of Syrian exiles and the curtailment of Lebanese elements whose activities were considered as dangerous to

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<sup>1</sup> al-'Amal, October 15 & 16, 1955.

<sup>2</sup> al-'Amal, November 30, 1955.

<sup>3</sup> Refer to the rally held by Ahmed al-Ass'ad and his associates on November 7, 1955, and the incidents which took place on that occasion. al-Nahar, November 8, 1955.

<sup>5</sup> Refer to the speeches exchanged by the Grand Mufti of Lebanon, Mohammad 'Alaya and President Chamoun on the occasion of the prophet's Birthday. al-Nahar, October 29, 1955. See also the demands of the Higher Islamic Council as presented to the Government, September 12, 1955. al-Nahar, September 13, 1955.

the stability of Syria's regime.<sup>1</sup> An attempt by the Lebanese government to set up a summit meeting between President Chamoun and President Qu'atly of Syria for the resolution of outstanding problems between the two countries was rebuffed.<sup>2</sup>

The President, however, did not accede to Syria's demands. He maintained a pro-Western course, kept Lebanon accessible to Syrian exiles and applied no restrictions on the press or other elements who were critical of the Syrian government. President Chamoun maintained that Lebanon's pro-West policy was in conformity with its traditional policy which did not in any way endanger Syria. Similarly, he justified granting asylum to Syrian exiles in terms of Lebanese traditions, and pointed out that the curtailment of press criticisms of Syria was unthinkable for it would have violated freedom which was one of the basic tenets of the Lebanese system. "After all", he said, "some quarters of the Lebanese press were attacking the Government and sometimes my person, in violation of the law, and were left free to do that".<sup>3</sup> He stated that some Syrian exiles were asked to leave the country in response to Syria's requests and recalled of them ex-President Shishakli and Michael Lyan.<sup>4</sup>

Undoubtedly traditional factors in the Lebanese polity, such as the

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<sup>1</sup>Refer to reports about the meeting between the Syrian Foreign Minister, Salahuddin al-Bitar and the Lebanese Foreign Minister, Salim Lahhoud, at Zahleh, Lebanon, July 21, 1956. al-Nahar, July 22, 1956.

<sup>2</sup>al-Nahar, April 15, 1955 and August 24, 1956.

<sup>3</sup>Author's interview with President Chamoun at the main office building of al-Nahar, Bank of Lebanon Street, Beirut, August 26, 1967.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

free economic system, the Christian heritage and the belief in some sectors of the population of a cultural affiliation with the West, contributed to the maintenance of friendly relations with the Western Powers. But there were, likewise, contemporary factors which rendered the attachment of Lebanon to the Western Powers the more necessary. The President and his associates noted with concern the gradual drift in Syria towards the left. Communism was on the increase as was Arab nationalism.<sup>1</sup> The alliance between the local communists in Syria with the Ba'th Party and the Nasserites who were primarily Arab nationalists but, nevertheless, leftist and pro-Soviet, was a combination which threatened pro-West circles in Lebanon in two respects. The first was that the rise of Soviet influence exerted additional pressure on Lebanon to relinquish friendly relations with the Western Powers. The second was that the extension of revolutionary Arab nationalism posed a threat to the liberal democratic system of the state and ultimately to the independence of Lebanon. It is in the light of that interpretation that the non-aligned but, nevertheless, pro-West course in Lebanon could be interpreted and understood.

President Chamoun, contrary to President Khoury, did not report in his memoirs verbatim excerpts of his discussions with American emissaries. Though Chamoun was not explicit whether there was an understanding between him and the United States on the preservation of the independence of Lebanon as there was between Khoury and the United States in 1951, the indications were certainly pointing in that direction. The

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<sup>1</sup>Seale, op.cit., pp. 232-34.



American Ambassador Donald Heath on submitting his credentials, March 9, 1955, expressed the interest of the United States in preserving the independence of Lebanon and in its continued prosperity.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, on May 9, 1955, al-Nahar reported that President Chamoun on consultation with some of his close associates requested Ambassador Malik to ask of the United States a guarantee for the independence of Lebanon.<sup>2</sup> That this report had some authenticity was borne out by a memorandum raised by the Iraqi Foreign Minister, Burhanuddine Bash A'yan, to Prime Minister Nuri al-Sa'id of Iraq on August 10, 1955. A'yan mentioned that the American Under-Secretary of State, George Allen, felt him out on giving a guarantee to the independence of Lebanon and that he (A'yan) advised against excessive guarantees, pointing out, that he thought American commitments under the Tripartite Declaration were sufficient.. "But Allen", he said, "did not consider that sufficient."<sup>3</sup> Similarly, Eden reports in his memoirs that President Chamoun had expressed to the British government his concern over the developments in the surrounding Arab World and asked for British economic aid and military equipment in order to safeguard

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<sup>1</sup> al-Nahar, March 10, 1955.

<sup>2</sup> al-Nahar, May 9, 1955.

<sup>3</sup> Memorandum by, the Iraqi Minister of Foreign Affairs to Prime Minister Nuri al-Sa'id, August 6, 1955; Iraq, The Iraqi Trials, 1958, IV (Baghdad: The Government Press, 1959) p. 1407. Note how the Iraqis were not enthusiastic about firm guarantees to the independence of Lebanon, although they felt strongly against the mounting Syrian-Egyptian pressure. Such reservations were most probably a manifestation of Iraqi ambitions in the Fertile Crescent. President Chamoun was apparently not unaware of such ambitions. In 1958 when the Iraqis offered to send him troops for assistance against the Rebels, he declined the offer. See Infra, pp. 362-63.

his country. Britain obliged by delivering some military equipment and requested the United States to do likewise so that Lebanon could resist the pressure brought to bear on it to join the Syrian-Egyptian alliance.<sup>1</sup>

The tension in Lebanese-Syrian-Egyptian relations as well as the mounting internal tension were in large measure a reflection of the tension in Western-Egyptian-Syrian relations which were precipitated by the introduction of Soviet influence. The abrupt withdrawal of the promised Western loans to the Egyptian High Dam Project on the 26th of June, 1956, raised tension between the Three Major Western Powers on the one hand and Egypt and Syria on the other hand to a higher level. Many interpretations were advanced in explanation of the withdrawal of the promised loan, among them: Nasser's diplomacy of playing the Soviet Bloc against the Western Powers,<sup>2</sup> the anticipation of the United States that the Soviet Union would not undertake to finance the Dam,<sup>3</sup> and the Egyptian incapacity to pay back the loan while its cotton crop was already "mortgaged" to the Soviet Bloc in payments of armaments.<sup>4</sup> But whatever the reasons behind the decision to withdraw the offer, there was no doubt that such a step was calculated as a blow to Nasser's prestige. Nasser who was

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<sup>1</sup>Eden, op.cit., p. 342.

<sup>2</sup>Dwight D. Eisenhower, Waging Peace, 1956-61 (London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1956), pp. 30-33. See also Alfred Lilienthal, There Goes The Middle East (New York: The Devin-Adair Company, 1957), pp. 177-78.

<sup>3</sup>"Aswan: A Bluff Is Called," The Christian Science Monitor, July 26, 1956, p. 18.

<sup>4</sup>Eisenhower, op.cit., pp. 30-33.

at the height of his popularity countered in kind by abruptly nationalizing the Suez Canal Company on July 26, 1956, which was promptly countered in turn by the freezing of Egyptian hard currency deposits in London, Paris and Washington. Thereafter, throughout the Summer of 1956, Egyptian-Western relations moved steadily from bad to worse culminating in the Suez War.

The offensive attitude of the Western Powers towards Egypt, aroused the national feelings of the Arabs who almost universally applauded the nationalization of the Suez Canal Company and extended their support to Egypt.<sup>1</sup> This confrontation provided the Soviet Union with the opportunity to capitalize on Arab national feelings by siding with Egypt and delivering a series of protests and threats to the Western Powers. Here again it is irrelevant to question the genuinity of the Soviet Union. The point in question was that the Soviet Union appealed to most Arabs as their natural ally, and thus further promoted its popularity in the Arab World at the expense of the Western Powers.

The Lebanese government in solidarity with the Arab States supported the nationalization of the Suez Canal Company,<sup>2</sup> and thereafter,

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<sup>1</sup>The Lebanese House of Deputies passed a cable to the Egyptian government in support of the nationalization of the Suez Canal Company. Several deputies spoke on that topic all of which were in the affirmative. Lebanon, The Official Gazette, 1st Ordinary Session, 14th Meeting, June 30, 1956, pp. 2073-78.

<sup>2</sup>Premier Yaffi: "The Lebanese Government supports fully the Egyptian resolution to nationalize the Suez Canal Company"; The Minister of State, Sa'eb Salam: "America and Britain, no doubt, made a mistake in their recent action against Egypt. It is about time these two big powers realized that it is their duty to change their attitude towards the Arabs"; 'Adel 'Usayran, the speaker of the House of Deputies: "President Nasser's move is but a means to an end. This end is the liberation of Egypt from imperialism, exploitation and servitude. As an Arab citizen . . . I welcome this step." The Arab World, July 30, 1956, p. 5. See also, al-Nahar, August 17, 1956.

used its influence and good offices with both Egypt and the Western Powers to prevent a major confrontation.<sup>1</sup> But despite the dissatisfaction in Lebanese official circles of the war talks in London and Paris and the high handed methods of the Western Powers, the President and his associates were of the belief that Nasser had brought all this on himself.<sup>2</sup>

While the Western Powers were busy taking steps to discourage Nasser, Iraq throughout the Summer of 1956 was plotting for an uprising in Syria with the active assistance of the United States and Britain. Contacts between Syrian exiles, the PPS, Iraqi Officials and other personnel involved in the plot were made in Beirut.<sup>3</sup> President Chamoun denied any knowledge of that plot and indeed there is no evidence whatsoever which suggests that any Lebanese official was involved. But it is difficult to believe that Lebanese intelligence had no wind at all of some unusual activity against Syria, especially that air shipments of arms were being delivered by Iraq to the PPS through Beirut International Airport.<sup>4</sup> All this seems to suggest that the asylum given to Syrian

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<sup>1</sup> al-Diyar, August 8 and 18, 1956. al-Nahar, August 10, 1956.

<sup>2</sup> Author's interview with President Chamoun, at the main office building of al-Nahar, Bank of Lebanon Street, Beirut, August 26, 1967.

<sup>3</sup> Iraq, The Iraqi Trials, 1958, I (Baghdad: The Government Press, 1959). See also Seale, op.cit., p. 264.

<sup>4</sup> Refer to the testimony of first lieutenant pilots, Taha Ahmad and Adnan Amin Khaki, Iraq, The Iraqi Trials, 1958, I, pp. 254-64. See also Seale, op.cit., pp. 269-75.

exiles and the freedom given to the PPS were not as innocent as they seemed, but that as 'Adel 'Usayran, the Speaker of the House of Deputies, suggested evasively but nevertheless truly: "Both [Syria and Lebanon] were undermining one another."<sup>1</sup>

The crowded events of 1955-56 suggest that the introduction of the Soviet Union into the area, created a polarization among the Arab States. Non-alignment in the Arab World lost a lot of its meaning as Egypt and Syria drifted towards the Soviet Bloc in almost every conceivable way short of treaty commitments while Lebanon and Jordan in self defense held on to their close relations with the Western Powers perhaps more tenaciously than ever before. The polarization in the Arab World as well as the confrontations between the Western Powers on the one hand and Egypt and Syria on the other, made it increasingly difficult for Lebanon to play its traditional role as a conciliator between Arab States in conflict and a moderating influence in Arab-Western relations.

This confrontation presented Lebanon with a dilemma. If it was to support the Western Powers, it would have been charged with breaking Arab solidarity which it could not afford. On the other hand, if it was to stand unreservedly by Egypt and Syria, it would have drifted along with them towards the Soviet Pole, a policy which it could not afford either. The solution, as it seemed, was in pursuing a double role: extending support to Egypt on major confrontations with the Western Powers and at the same time trying to resist the extension of Egyptian as well

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<sup>1</sup> Author's interview with 'Adel 'Usayran, the Speaker of the House of Deputies, in his Office, 'Usayli Building, Tripoli Street, Beirut, 27/1/1966.

as Soviet influence in Syria, Jordan and Lebanon. The question was for how long could Lebanon play such a role under the changing circumstances in the Arab World while it was also suffering from a critical schism on its internal fragile front. Apparently President Chamoun, after the Suez War, considered that it was time to relinquish the traditional role of Lebanon and step into the arena of Arab cold war politics, as the ally of the United States. An account of this new trend is given in the forthcoming chapter.

## Chapter VIII

### LEBANON ALIGNED, MARCH 1957 - MAY 1958

#### A. The United States Takes the Lead.

After Suez, the American Government assessed the situation in the area and came to the conclusion that the Middle East was in grave danger of communist subversion.<sup>1</sup> This conclusion was based on the assumption that the Suez crisis created a power vacuum in the area.<sup>2</sup> The consequences of the Suez Crisis were detrimental to the power position of Britain and France. They were now considered by most Arabs not only as imperialistic powers, but also as aggressors who connived with their deadliest enemy, Israel, against their sovereignty, independence and security. Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Syria had already severed diplomatic and economic relations with them. Iraq, Jordan, and Lebanon managed to remain on speaking terms with both or either one of them, but did so at a great cost to their security, stability and image in the Arab World. The Lebanese Government had to keep the country under martial law in order to avoid internal repercussions; King Hussein was no longer capable of standing up to Nasserite pressure on his own. In March 1957, the Nabulsi Cabinet abrogated the Anglo-Jordanian Treaty and accepted financial assistance and military guarantees from Egypt, Syria and Saudi

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<sup>1</sup>Message to Congress by President Eisenhower, January 5, 1957; U.S. Department of State, U.S. Policy in the Middle East (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1957), pp. 15- 23.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

Arabia.<sup>1</sup>

The Suez Campaign ruined the prospects of the Baghdad Pact in the Arab World. The Iraqi government was now mainly concerned with internal security problems which were posed by the Suez Campaign, and with the integrity of its image which was blemished by its connection with Britain. As a face saving measure, it boycotted Britain at the Baghdad Council Meetings and passed strenuous security measures for internal stability.<sup>2</sup>

The economic consequences of the Suez War, especially from a European point of view, were most serious; the blowing up of the I.P.C. Pipelines in Syria, the blocking of the Suez Canal, and other economic measures which ruptured European-Arab trade jeopardized the European economy and reduced the dollar reserves of many a European state.<sup>3</sup> The economic consequences of the Suez Crisis were, of course, not only restricted to Europe. The Arab States were most severely affected. The Egyptian economy in addition to the burden of the war was denied access to Egyptian sterling accounts in London and dollar accounts in the U.S. The oil producing countries experienced a sudden slump in their oil

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<sup>1</sup>Refer to the text of the note from Suleiman al-Nabulsi to the British Ambassador in Amman terminating the Anglo-Jordanian Treaty of 1948: RIIA, Documents On International Affairs, 1957, pp. 271-74.

<sup>2</sup>George Lenczowski, The Middle East in World Affairs (3rd ed., Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1962), pp. 295-96.

<sup>3</sup>RIIA, British Interest in the Mediterranean and the Middle East (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), pp. 27-28.



royalties which constituted a major part of their national income.<sup>1</sup> 277

Lebanon, whose income was largely based on trade and services, began to recognize symptoms of recession in the economy.

Under the circumstances, the notion of the U.S. administration, that Britain and France were no longer capable economically, politically, militarily, and psychologically of playing a dominant role in the Middle East, was confirmed.<sup>2</sup> It had to step in to fill the power vacuum by increasing its involvement in the area.

While the U.S. witnessed the decline of Britain and France, Soviet influence in the area was steadily improving. The Soviet Union during the Suez Crisis campaign and aftermath championed the Arab cause in its diplomacy. Verbally, it went to the extent of promising volunteers and threatening London and Paris with a nuclear war.<sup>3</sup> This attitude crowned a consistent pro-Arab policy on questions related to colonialism, Arab-Israeli disputes and armaments. It was, therefore, not surprising that the Soviet Union in the wake of the Suez Crisis emerged more influential than before, especially among radical groups and radical countries such as Syria and Egypt.<sup>4</sup> The American administration was of the opinion that

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Statement by Secretary of State Dulles, before a Joint Session of the Foreign Relations and Armed Services Committees of the Senate, January 14, 1957: U.S. Department of State: U.S. Policy in the Middle East, pp. 30-38.

<sup>3</sup>M. Perlmann, "New Doctrine, Old Realities," Middle Eastern Affairs, VIII (February, 1958), p. 101.

<sup>4</sup>Tom Little, "Nasser and Cold War Strategy," Middle East Forum, XXXIV (April, 1959), p. 23.

the international stature of the Soviet Union improved the chances of communist subversion in the area.<sup>1</sup> It also believed that the Soviet Union in case of a world war would be in a position to strike at the Middle East if there were no adequate deterrents.<sup>2</sup> In his conclusion of a Middle East survey delivered before a joint session of the Foreign Relations and Armed Services Committee of the Senate, on January 14, 1957, Dulles made the following statement:

"Thus the Middle East area is at once endangered by potential military threats, against which there is no adequate deterrent; by a rapidly mounting financial and economic crisis and by subversive efforts which seek advantage from exceptional opportunities arising out of recent events. This adds up to a new grave danger."<sup>3</sup>

In order to fill in the power vacuum in the area, the U.S. Government devised what was later known as the Eisenhower Doctrine. The United States declared unequivocally that it was prepared to deploy its armed might against any Soviet aggression in the area.<sup>4</sup> Arab States which were prepared to resist communist subversion and overt aggression by international communism were eligible under the Doctrine for a generous dose of

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<sup>1</sup>Statement by Secretary of State, Dulles before a Joint Session of the Foreign Relations and the Armed Services Committee: U.S. Department of State, United States Policy in the Middle East, p. 32.

<sup>2</sup>Eisenhower's Message to Congress, January 5, 1957: U.S. Department of State, United States Policy in the Middle East, pp. 16-18.

<sup>3</sup>U.S. Department of State, United States Policy in the Middle East, p. 32.

<sup>4</sup>Statement of Secretary Dulles before the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, January 7, 1957: U.S. Department of State, The United States Policy in the Middle East, pp. 24-29.

of American military, economic, and technical assistance.<sup>1</sup> It was hoped that U.S. military commitments would deter Soviet aggression and that economic and technical assistance would contribute to a general improvement of the social and economic conditions, thus creating an infertile milieu for communism.<sup>2</sup> Economically, the Eisenhower Doctrine was more or less a miniature of the Marshall Plan in Europe. Militarily and politically it was a design to guarantee the Middle East against Soviet influence by promoting the presence of the United States.

Naturally the Soviet Union was perturbed. It did not lose any time in condemning the Eisenhower Doctrine as a new device for the perpetuation of Western imperialism in the area.<sup>3</sup> Britain and France did not receive the Doctrine without misgivings. They were observing that the United States was attempting to take the lead in an area where they had previously led the West. This resentment had some justifications. American sympathy to anti-colonialist movements was detrimental to the vested colonial interests of Britain and France. The United States, for example, recognized in principle the right of the Algerian people to self-determination while the French Government maintained that Algeria was an

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Message to Congress by President Eisenhower, January 5, 1957: U.S. Department of State, United States Policy in the Middle East, pp. 20-21.

<sup>3</sup>Tass Statement, 12 January, 1957: RIIA, Documents On International Affairs, 1957, ed. by Noble Frankland (London: Oxford University Press, 1960), pp. 242-47.

integral part of Metropolitan France. The experience of Iran, where British political misfortunes led to a larger American share in Iranian Oil, was not lost on the British government. American support of Saudi Arabia over the Bureimi dispute served as a vivid reminder to Britain that American and British interests were not always compatible. These are only a few instances of Inter-Western frictions in the area.<sup>1</sup>

However, neither Soviet condemnation nor Franco-British resentments were sufficient to make the U.S. pause. Soviet opposition was expected and so Britain and France, with all their complaints, had no alternative but to go along with the U.S.

B. The Doctrine and the Arab States.

Egypt and Syria soon concluded that the Doctrine was incompatible with their policy. In the first place, they were committed to a policy of positive neutralism. Subscription to the Eisenhower Doctrine-- condemnation of international communism--meant to them alignment and consequently the disruption of their relations with the Soviet Union. They were receiving financial aid, equipment, technicians and armaments from the Soviet Union and other Communist states. Some sectors of their economies were now geared to Soviet commerce. Therefore, disruption of their relations with the Soviet Union was not a matter that could be taken lightly.

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<sup>1</sup>Ernest Bevin, "Britain & America at Loggerheads," Foreign Affairs, XXXVI (October, 1957), pp. 60-67.

Underlying Egyptian - American relations were elements of mutual suspicion which could not easily be dismissed by either Nasser or the American government. Washington was under the impression that Nasser was responsible for the growth of Soviet influence in the area and for the setback of its European Allies which culminated in the Suez debacle.<sup>1</sup> Nasser on the other hand was aware that the United States denied him armaments, resisted his neutral policy, recommended the Baghdad Pact, withdrew its offers to finance the Aswan Dam, and to a limited extent co-operated diplomatically with Britain and France during the Suez Crisis until its allies ventured to wage an open war against Egypt.<sup>2</sup> The policy of the United States during the Suez War, its pressure on Britain, France and Israel to cease hostilities and subsequently to withdraw their troops unconditionally from Egyptian territory gained the gratitude of the Arab States including Egypt.<sup>3</sup> However, American support seemed to Nasser to be no reason to slap the Soviet Union whose pro-Egyptian record during the Suez war was no less than that of the United States.

Alignment with the West would have eroded the very foundations of the regimes of Syria and Egypt which had built their popularity on an anti-Western stand and directed their revolutionary sentiments against

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<sup>1</sup>Leila Meo, Lebanon: Improbable Nation (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1965), pp. 121-22.

<sup>2</sup>Refer to the press interview which was given by President Nasser to Mr. Constantine Koriya, al-Ahram, January 18, 1957, pp. 1, 5.

<sup>3</sup>Nasser's Speech at al-Azhar Mosque, Cairo, November 9, 1956; Egyptian Gazette, November 10, 1956.

free entrepreneurship and liberal democracy. On the other hand, they sympathized with the Soviet Union and advocated Marxist-Socialism to be installed by a one-party system. They were bent upon the reduction of Western influence in the area and the annihilation of the state of Israel.<sup>1</sup> The U.S. could not give them satisfaction on either ground.

These revolutionary forces beside being anti-Western were more importantly Arab nationalist and striving to unify the Arab World under the leadership of Nasser with any possible means including the use of subversion and force.<sup>2</sup> Here again American policy in general and the Eisenhower Doctrine in particular did not suit their purposes. The Eisenhower Doctrine specified that American aid and military assistance were available to any country in the area for the maintenance of its independence and to every regime desirous of combating subversion.<sup>3</sup> At the same time, the United States was still prepared to abide by its commitments under the Tripartite Declaration of 1950, which meant that the American Government

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<sup>1</sup>George Kirk, "Arab Nationalism and Nasser," Foreign Policy Bulletin, XXXVIII (November 15, 1958), pp. 33-34. For reference to authentic literature on the objectives of the Regimes in Syria and Egypt, see the following: U.A.R., President Gamal Abdel Nasser's Speeches and Press Interviews, 1958, (Cairo: Department of Information, N.D.), U.A.R., President Abdul Nasser on Socialism (Cairo: Department of Information, N.S.), The Arab Resurrection Socialist Party (Ba'th), The Struggle of Resurrection (Beirut: Dar al-Taliha, 1964), IV.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Refer to the Message of President Eisenhower to the Congress, 5 January, 1957: RIIA, Documents on International Affairs, 1957, p. 238.

opposed any aggression by either the Arabs or the Israelis.<sup>1</sup> It was then a policy favouring the status quo--the very thing that the revolutionary forces of Arab nationalism were trying to alter. Under the circumstances, the regimes of Egypt and Syria were prudent in opposing the Eisenhower Doctrine.

The Monarchs of the Arab East derived their political power from the traditional conservative and moderate elements in their respective kingdoms. The revolutionary forces of Arab nationalism under Nasser posed a threat to their political base. Iraq and Saudi Arabia had vested interests in co-operating with the West, the most outstanding reason being the oil from which both kingdoms derived the major part of their income.

Jordan traditionally owed its very existence to British military support and financial subsidy. The Suez War had had adverse effects on British-Jordanian relations. Faced with an imminent war against Israel, and unable to draw on British support due to the anti-British sentiments generated by the Suez Crisis, King Hussein in the Fall of 1956 placed his troops under the Egyptian-controlled Joint Command of the Tripartite Pact and admitted Syrian and Sa'udi troops into Jordan as a deterrent against Israel.<sup>2</sup> The rapprochement with Egypt dictated co-operation between the King and the Nasserite elements in Jordan which came about

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<sup>1</sup>Statement by Secretary of State Dulles, February 5, 1957: U.S. Department of State, U.S. Policy in the Middle East (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1957), p. 40.

<sup>2</sup>Statement by Brigadier Ali Abu Nawar, Jordanian Chief of Staff, on the Joint Command between Jordan, Egypt, Syria and Saudi Arabia: al-Nahar, October 25, 1956. See also al-Nahar, November 4, 1956, on the entry of Syrian troops to Jordan.

in the appointment of a new cabinet under the Premiership of Suleiman Nabulsi, one of the leading pro-Egyptian figures.<sup>1</sup>

As soon as Premier Nabulsi was in power, he hastened to substitute Egyptian for British influence in Jordan. On January 19, 1957, the Jordanian government signed an accord with Egypt, Syria and Saudi Arabia which stated that the three powers would undertake to grant Jordan the sum of 12.5 million pounds annually.<sup>2</sup> Having thus secured funds for the annual deficit in the Jordanian budget which had been covered by Britain, the Nabulsi Cabinet abrogated the Anglo-Jordanian Treaty in March rendering Jordan susceptible in large measure to the influence of Egypt and its allies.

King Hussein was unhappy about the new arrangements; the substitution of British for Syrian-Egyptian influence constituted a threat to the Jordanian throne. Looking for a source of subsidy which would spare him the necessity of becoming dependent upon Egypt, the King saw his chance in the Eisenhower Doctrine. Soon after the American Congress approved the Doctrine, the King challenged the Nabulsi Cabinet. On February 2, 1957, in an open letter to Prime Minister Nabulsi, who derived his political power from leftist elements, the King attacked communism, the Soviet Union and "countries rotating in its orbit", and warned that subversive elements in his Kingdom would not be

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<sup>1</sup>Hazza' al-Majali, My Memoirs (Amman, N.P., 1960), pp. 200-213. Majali, who was often a Prime Minister in Jordan and one of the King's close associates, gave a full account of the circumstances which led to the rise and fall of the Nabulsi Cabinet.

<sup>2</sup>The full text of the Accord is in: RIIA, Documents on International Affairs, 1957, ed. Noble Frankland (London: Oxford University Press, 1960), pp. 255-57.



tolerated.<sup>1</sup> Thus the new policy of the United States induced Hussein to resist the leftist policy of the Nabulsi Cabinet.

King Sa'ud, who realized that the forces marshalled in Syria and Egypt constituted a threat both to his Regime and to vested oil interests, was easily won to the Eisenhower Doctrine of the United States of America, already his closest ally. After his visit to the United States in February, 1957, King Sa'ud condemned communism, warned against interference in Middle Eastern affairs, renewed the lease of the Dahrn Air Base to the Americans and recommended the Eisenhower Doctrine to the Arab States.<sup>2</sup> On return to the Arab World, he found that Qu'atly and Nasser were in serious disagreement with him on the question of the growth of Soviet influence into the area and the necessity of close collaboration with the West.<sup>3</sup> Thereafter, Saudi relations with Syria and Egypt began to take a definite turn for the worse.

The rift between Saudi Arabia and Egypt was met with a rapprochement between Sa'ud and the Hashimite Monarchy of Iraq. Now that the

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<sup>1</sup>The text of the letter is in: al-Nahar, February 3, 1957. King Hussein followed up his letter to Nabulsi by another letter to Qu'atly, Nasser and Sa'ud in which he stated that the Arab States while they were "struggling against Western imperialism", were also duty bound to fight communism. The fact that the King released the letter to the press served notice that Hussein was bracing to fight Soviet infiltration and find his way back to the folds of the West, in particular the U.S. The Arab World, April 10, 1957.

<sup>2</sup>Refer to the interview by the reporter of the New York Herald Tribune with King Sa'ud. See also the Joint American-Saudi Communique: The Arab World, February 5, 11, 1957; al-Nahar, February 5, 9, 1957.

<sup>3</sup>See the message of King Sa'ud to President Chamoun: Chamoun, Crise Au Moyen-Orient (Paris: Gallimard, 1963), pp. 356-67.

United States was taking the lead in Middle Eastern affairs, King Sa'ud felt safe enough to extend a hand of friendship to his traditional rivals the Hashimites. There were good reasons for the two Monarchs to forget their feud and join forces against the subversive danger emanating from Egypt and Syria which were supported by the Soviet Union.<sup>1</sup> Sa'udi-Iraqi co-operation reached its zenith on May 19, 1957 when the two Monarchs issued a joint communique condemning the interference of the Arab States in the affairs of one another.<sup>2</sup> They were actually referring to Egypt and its ally Syria which were encouraging revolutionary forces in the various Arab States to rise up against any regime which was co-operating with the Western Powers. The communiqué, moreover, stated that the two governments had unified their petroleum policies and intended to co-operate closely on the international level.<sup>3</sup>

King Hussein made his final move against the revolutionary forces in April. The dismissal of the Nabulsi Cabinet on April 10 triggered a crisis which lasted over a month. On April 14, Egyptian sympathizers in the army staged a putsch under the Chief of Staff, Ali Abu Nawar, which came close to destroying the Monarchy.<sup>4</sup> The April Crisis which was in large measure the result of Syrian-Egyptian instigations against the

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<sup>1</sup>Lenczowski, op.cit., p. 296.

<sup>2</sup>The text of the Communique is in: RIIA, Documents on International Affairs, 1957, pp. 294-95.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Arab World, April 15 and 16, pp. 1 and 2.

Monarchy was quite severe.<sup>1</sup> Had it not been for the support of the U.S. and its allies in the Arab World, the chances were that the King would have succumbed under Syrian-Egyptian pressures. The fact was that the crisis had external as well as internal dimensions. There were Syrian troops in Northern Jordan and Sa'udi troops in Southern Jordan-Aqaba. Syria, Sa'udi Arabia and Iraq were all keenly interested in the outcome of the Crisis and ready to intervene if an opportunity was made available.<sup>2</sup> Loyal troops were hardly sufficient to control the armed riots which were organized in collaboration with Egypt and Syria. It was doubtful that under the circumstances they could have withstood intervention by Syrian troops based in Jordan and/or an onslaught from Syrian territory.

It was by denying Syria the opportunity to intervene that the U.S. and its allies in the Arab World contributed significantly to the success of King Hussein. Soon after the Crisis started, King Sa'ud put his troops at the disposal of King Hussein and moved them from the Aqaba region in the South to Northern Jordan in order to neutralize Syrian troops.<sup>3</sup> In a further attempt to check intervention from outside,

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<sup>1</sup>Refer to the interview with King Hussein by the reporter of the Sunday Express; Arab World, May 6, 1957, p. 2. Refer also to Hazza' al-Majali, op.cit. pp. 200-213.

<sup>2</sup>Dwight Eisenhower, Waging Peace (London: Heinmann, 1966), p. 194. See also, King Hussein of Jordan, Uneasy Lies the Head (New York: Random House, 1962), pp. 180-183.

<sup>3</sup>al-Nahar, April 17, 1957. See also Arab World, April 17, 1957, p. 1. For the friendly attitude of Sa'ud towards Hussein during the Crisis refer to the letter of congratulations which was sent by the Monarch of Saudi Arabia to King Hussein when the latter succeeded in restoring order in Jordan and in purging pro-Egyptian elements. al-Nahar, April 27, 1958.

Iraq concentrated troops on the Syrian borders, and the United States moved units of the Sixth Fleet with a Marine detachment aboard to the Eastern Mediterranean where they were well received in Beirut ostensibly on a good will visit.<sup>1</sup> Israel, who was always poised to annex the western bank of the Jordan River, was kept at bay by the United States.<sup>2</sup>

These movements by the United States and its allies isolated the Crisis and hence improved the chances of the King to crush it with the use of his loyal troops.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, without the availability of financial assistance by the United States, it was doubtful whether the King would have ventured to challenge Syria and Egypt which were expected to shoulder 7.5 million Sterling pounds out of a total of 12.5 million to which Jordan was entitled under the Accord of January 19, 1957. Jordan was in need of that sum annually to cover its budget deficits. The King could not resort to the old arrangement with Britain just after Suez. Such an arrangement would have been tantamount to political suicide. The United States was his best choice under the circumstances, and in fact when Egypt and Syria refused to pay their share of the annual subsidy to which they were committed under the Accord of January 19, the United

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<sup>1</sup>Benjamin Shwadran, Jordan State of Tension (New York: Middle Eastern Affairs Press, 1959), p. 351. See also Meo, op.cit., pp. 189-90.

<sup>2</sup>Eisenhower, op.cit., pp. 194-95.

<sup>3</sup>Leila Meo was of the impression that the Crisis in Jordan was internal against which a show of force by the U.S. was not effective. Meo, op.cit., p. 190.

States and King Sa'ud extended financial aid to cover the deficit.<sup>1</sup> It was, therefore, in large measure due to the assistance of the United States and its allies in the Arab World that King Hussein succeeded in wresting Jordan out of Egyptian-Syrian control.<sup>2</sup> Without them the chances were that Jordan would have stayed in Egyptian orbit and therefore susceptible to Soviet influence.<sup>3</sup>

Having wrested Jordan from the Egyptian orbit, the U.S. and its sympathizers moved to overthrow the Syrian regime. Syria was far from being the innocent victim. The Syrian government had been active throughout the winter, spring and summer of 1957 in rendering assistance and encouragement to revolutionary elements in the surrounding pro-Western Arab states. In August 1957, the Syrian government uncovered a plot in which the American Central Intelligence Agency, the Iraqi and the Jordanian governments were implicated.<sup>4</sup> The right wing in Syria which was supposed

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<sup>1</sup>King Sa'ud paid his share of the 12.5 million Sterling pounds allotted to Jordan under the Accord of January 19, 1957. The United States gave Jordan in 1957 thirty million dollars in grants. Refer to the announcements of the Department of State, June 29 and July 1, 1959: Council on Foreign Relations, Documents on Foreign Relations, 1957, ed. Paul Zimmerman (New York: Harper Brothers, 1958), p. 232.

<sup>2</sup>Larry Larson, U.S. Policy in Jordan 1956-60 (Unpublished M.A. thesis, American University of Beirut, 1961), pp. 15-26.

<sup>3</sup>A comprehensive review of the Crisis was made by the King of Jordan. King Hussein, Uneasy Lies the Head, pp. 164-183.

<sup>4</sup>Refer to the Press Conference which was held by Salahuddin al-Bitar, the Syrian Minister of Foreign Affairs, on September 2, al-Nahar, September 3, 1957. Refer also to Eisenhower, op.cit., pp. 196-97. Jordan, Iraq, Turkey and Lebanon were all concerned about Communist infiltration in Syria and were anxious to purge the government. The situation in Syria was alarming as the Communists began to work and establish direct contacts with officials behind the back of the Head of State, Shukri al-Qu'atly.

to execute the plot turned out to be too weak for a forceful return to power. An attempt to give it support through the concentration of Turkish and Iraqi troops on the Syrian borders produced exactly the opposite results.<sup>1</sup> The emergent peoples of Syria were touchy about such high-handed methods. They rallied to the support of their government in what they believed to be a battle for national survival. The inevitable result was that the Left appeared as the guardian of national sovereignty, while the idea that the Right was "a coalition of traitors", which the Left was trying to promote, gained ground.

The Syrian government realizing that it was surrounded by unfriendly powers, taking note of the danger of Communist infiltration, and inspired by Arab nationalist ideology, hastened to arrange for unity with Egypt.<sup>2</sup> This object was achieved on February 1, 1958. The declaration of unity aroused the excitement of the revolutionary Arab nationalists everywhere. To them, the unity of Egypt and Syria (UAR) constituted

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<sup>1</sup>Patrick Seale, The Struggle for Syria (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), pp. 296-302. One of the serious consequences of the Crisis was that General Nizamuddin, the Syrian Chief of Staff who was considered a moderate by pro-Western circles and by the Western Powers themselves, was dismissed, and his office was given to General Afif al-Bizri who was considered a communist. The fact that Khaled al-'Azm was the Premier in Syria at that time increased American suspicions. Khaled al-'Azm was not a communist, but he was well known for advocating close co-operation with the Soviet Union as well as for instigations against the Regime in Lebanon. The pro-Western regime in Lebanon had already felt the impact of the Syrian Deuzieme Bureau's interventions and infiltrations in Lebanon and had asked the U.S. to be prepared to assist it if the need arose. Eisenhower, Waging Peace, p. 197.

<sup>2</sup>Walid Khalidi, "Nasser and the Arab World," The Middle East Forum, XXXIV (April, 1959), pp. 30-34.

the first step towards the realization of their ultimate goal: unity of the Arab World in one nation.<sup>1</sup> Not to be outdone in this respect, Iraq and Jordan hastened to declare a federation which came about on February 15, two weeks after Syria and Egypt had declared their agreement to unite.<sup>2</sup>

In conclusion, it could be safely assumed that Jordan, Sa'udi Arabia and Iraq during the period extending from March 1957 to February 1958 were successfully quarantined against Soviet influence. These governments condemned international communism, combatted subversion, and willingly received American aid. Their commercial, economic, cultural and political activities remained exclusively in the sphere of the West. Such were the goals of the Eisenhower Doctrine. To all intents and purposes these governments virtually accepted the Doctrine, but none of them subscribed to it officially. Nasser and his supporters, through intensive propaganda, had created a wide-spread impression among the Arab masses that alignment was bad. It was equated in the eyes of the many with "treason", "imperialism" and other cliches which Egyptian official and unofficial media were spreading. In order to avoid the stigma of alignment, the governments of Saudi Arabia and Jordan avoided an official subscription to the Doctrine, while in reality they were with it. In the case of Iraq the reasons were slightly different but, nevertheless, of the same nature. The United States did not want to create the impres-

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<sup>1</sup>Refer for example to speech by Salahuddin al-Bitar, one of the leaders of the Ba'th Party and a member of the U.A.R. government, in the celebrations which were held on the occasion of unity between Syria and Egypt. al-Jareeda, March 1, 1958.

<sup>2</sup>al-Nahar, February 16, 1957.

sion among the Arab masses that the Eisenhower Doctrine and the Baghdad Pact were interrelated.<sup>1</sup> In reality, however, the Eisenhower Doctrine and the Baghdad Pact ultimately shared the same purpose --containment of Soviet infiltration into the Middle East.

C. Lebanon and the Eisenhower Doctrine.

1. Lebanon Subscribes.

The fall of the Yaffi Cabinet terminated a period of hesitation and indecision on questions related to cold war tension in the area. Unlike its predecessors, the new Cabinet under Premier Sulh suffered of no conflicts in this respect. Sami al-Sulh was the only Sunni leader who did not applaud the policy of Nasser and, as such, he had no influence in the ruling circles of Egypt and Syria. The new Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Charles Malik, was well known as an advocate of close Lebanese-Western relations. He was a diplomat who spent many of his career years in the U.S., where it has been said, he developed good connections with some influential circles in that country.<sup>2</sup>

One of the outstanding features of the new government was its determination to exercise an independent course on matters related to cold war issues.<sup>3</sup> Dr. Charles Malik was the first Arab statesman who

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<sup>1</sup>John Campbell, Defense of the Middle East (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958), p. 127.

<sup>2</sup>al-Nahar, November 20, 1957. See also the Arab World, January 9, 1957, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Refer to the Cabinet program delivered on April 4, 1957 in Parliament. Lebanon, Official Gazette: Parliamentary Debates, First Ordinary Session, the Sixth Meeting, April 4, 1957, pp. 882-91.



recommended the Eisenhower Doctrine. On January 5, the same day that President Eisenhower delivered his message to Congress, Dr. Malik welcomed the new policy of the U.S. in the area.<sup>1</sup> On January 8, in Cairo, Malik gave the following statement to the press:

"I have already stated that Lebanon desires to co-operate with the United States of America within the framework of complete independence and sovereignty. From what we have read and understood in the plan of President Eisenhower we consider that it precisely confirms the United States' full respect for the independence of all the countries of the Middle East, including Lebanon."<sup>2</sup>

About a month later, on February 7, Malik having met President Eisenhower, stated to the press in Washington that Lebanon had decided to co-operate with the U.S. on the basis of the Eisenhower Doctrine. Malik also stated that he intended to seek support for the Doctrine in the Arab World.<sup>3</sup> On March 16, Ambassador Richards, the Special Envoy of President Eisenhower, concluded his talks in Beirut with a Joint Lebanese-American Communique which committed Lebanon officially to the Eisenhower Doctrine.<sup>4</sup> Here again Lebanon accepted the Eisenhower Doctrine without

<sup>1</sup>Press conference by Dr. Charles Malik on January 5, 1957. al-Nahar, January 6, 1957.

<sup>2</sup>Malik's Statement was quoted in full in al-Nahar, January 8, 1957. See also Arab World, January 9, 1957.

<sup>3</sup>Arab World, February 7, 1957. For the details of the press conference see al-Nahar, February 7, 1957.

<sup>4</sup>The text of the Joint American-Lebanese Communique of March 16 is in: RIIA, Documents On International Affairs, 1957, pp. 272-76. The following paragraph in the Communique is especially important with regard to Lebanon's commitment under the Eisenhower Doctrine: The two Governments "consider that international communism is incompatible with national independence and constitutes a cause of permanent trouble for world peace and security". Review also the speeches which were delivered by Malik and Richards on this occasion. al-Nahar, March 16, 1957.

waiting for other Arab States to take an official decision.

The early recommendation and acceptance of the Eisenhower Doctrine denoted a basic change in the style of Lebanese diplomacy on the question of alignment. Lebanon had abandoned the traditional requirement of Arab unanimity on questions subject to dispute in the Arab World and neglected the method of avoiding inter-Arab conflicts by using Arab disagreements as a pretext for its indecision of neutral stand on controversial questions related to alignment.<sup>1</sup>

This abrupt change in Lebanese diplomacy was not unrelated to the disillusionment of President Chamoun with Egypt and Syria. Throughout 1955 and 1956, President Chamoun, notwithstanding his pro-Western inclinations, had kept Lebanon non-aligned in order to placate the neutralist camp in the Arab World, but to no avail. Despite repeated efforts to settle outstanding questions with Syria and Egypt, and despite the full support which Lebanon had extended to Egypt during the Suez Crisis, the ruling circles in Cairo and Damascus refused to come to terms with the Lebanese Government.<sup>2</sup> Underlying this misunderstanding were real differences in the political orientations between the Lebanese Regime and those of Syria and Egypt. President Chamoun, Premier Sulh and Dr. Charles Malik were Lebanese nationalists and, as such, they feared the trends of revolutionary Arab nationalism which were manifested by the regimes in

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<sup>1</sup>Speech by Dr. Malik before Mr. Richards on March 15, 1957, al-Nahar, March 16, 1957. See also, the Cabinet Program of April 4, 1957. Lebanon, Official Gazette: Parliamentary Debates, 1st Ordinary Session, the 6th Meeting, April 4, 1957, pp. 882-91.

<sup>2</sup>Author's interview with Premier Sami al-Sulh at the Ghalayyini Cafe, Beirut, October 20, 1966, at 10 a.m.

Syria and Egypt. For the present, Nasser, the recognized leader of the revolutionary Arab nationalists, was only seeking the political leadership of the Arab States, but ultimately actual political union was the intended outcome of the Arab nationalist ideology which he embraced.

The Lebanese government considered that unequivocal submission to pan-Arabism compromised Lebanese sovereignty.<sup>1</sup> Similarly it was considered that forceful attempts to change the status quo in the Arab World on the basis of an Arab nationalist ideology constituted a threat to the independence and security of Lebanon.<sup>2</sup> Lebanon as a small prosperous Arab state had a vested interest in the status quo or in a balance of power between the Arab States.

Thinking in terms of Lebanese interest, the Lebanese government feared the extent of Soviet infiltration in the area and suspected that revolutionary Arab nationalism was one of the means used for the extension of Soviet influence. Some quarters believed, as Dr. Malik and President Chamoun did, that the trends which were manifested by revolutionary Arab nationalism would ultimately lead to communism.<sup>3</sup> The presence of the

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<sup>1</sup>Refer to the Report of Dr. Malik to Parliament: Lebanon, Official Gazette, Parliamentary Debates, 1st Ordinary Session, 7th Meeting, April 5, 1957, p. 967.

<sup>2</sup>Refer to the Report of Premier Sulh to Parliament: Lebanon, Official Gazette: Parliamentary Debates, 1st Ordinary Session, 6th Meeting, April 4, 1957, pp. 885-86.

<sup>3</sup>Refer to the interview given by Dr. Malik to the correspondent of the United States News and World Report: Arab World, March 26, 1957, p. 9. Refer also to Malik's statement on foreign policy, Lebanon: Official Gazette: Parliamentary Debates, 1st Ordinary Session, 7th Meeting, April 5, 1957, p. 966.

Soviet Union in the Middle East and especially in neighbouring Syria was viewed by the Lebanese nationalist government as a threat to the vital interests of Lebanon.<sup>1</sup> Lebanon historically, culturally, politically and economically had strong ties with the West. A rupture of Western-Arab relations was expected to inflict severe damage on its free enterprise economy, its liberal political system and its cultural life. The Lebanese government was not prepared to accept such consequences.<sup>2</sup>

Motivated by such fears, the Lebanese government found that the policy of the United States suited the interests of Lebanon on two levels: the regional and the national.

On the regional level, the United States was unequivocally committed to resist Soviet infiltration and to oppose Soviet "aggression" at all costs.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, the policy of the United States under the Doctrine accentuated the status quo.<sup>4</sup> By pledging to support the governments of the various Arab countries against external subversion in the interest of peace and stability, the United States was actually undertaking to resist the attempts of the revolutionary Arab nationalists to change the status quo by force. These were the conditions which the Lebanese

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<sup>1</sup>Chamoun, Crise Au Moyen-Orient, pp. 352-53.

<sup>2</sup>Refer to Press Conference by Malik on March 15, 1957. al-Nahar, March 16, 1957. Also Chamoun, Crise Au Moyen-Orient, p. 353.

<sup>3</sup>Council on Foreign Relations, Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1957, p. 202.

<sup>4</sup>H.A.R. Philby, "Nasser and the West," Middle East Forum, (April 1957), p. 39. See also letter by President Eisenhower to Premier Nehru: Eisenhower, Waging Peace, p. 181.

Government wanted to achieve on the regional level.

On the level of national policy, the United States under the Eisenhower Doctrine was committed to defend Lebanon against aggression by international communism or a country controlled by international communism.<sup>1</sup> In addition to this commitment, the government of the United States assured the Lebanese Government that it was prepared to defend the independence of Lebanon against overt aggressions by other than communist sources, and that it was prepared to give such assurances in written form on demand.<sup>2</sup> Thus the policy of the United States was promoting the regional objectives of the Lebanese nationalists and, at the same time, guaranteeing the independence of Lebanon.

From an economic point of view, the Eisenhower Doctrine contained promising prospects for the country. In the course of 1957 Lebanon received under the Eisenhower Doctrine \$20,000,000 in addition to \$10,000,000 which were received under President Truman's Point IV Program. This aid was approximately equal to one fourth of the total national budget. In view of the small size of the country the aid for which

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<sup>1</sup>Refer to the Speech of Malik in Parliament on August 29, 1957: Lebanon, Official Gazette: Parliamentary Debates, 1st Ordinary Session, 3rd Meeting, August 29, 1957, pp. 111-12. Refer also to Malik-Richards Communique: text in: RIIA, Documents on International Affairs, 1957, pp. 275-76.

<sup>2</sup>Address by Dr. Malik to Eisenhower's special emissary to the Middle East on March 15, 1957: "We understand that your new policy which you represent aspires to isolate communism in addition to assisting us in strengthening our independence. We subscribe to this policy. We would like to draw your attention to the fact that we may become the object of other aggressions and we know, likewise, that a part of your policy is to stand by us against any aggression regardless of the source." al-Nahar, March 16, 1957.

Lebanon qualified was virtually unlimited. The American government started out by pledging to pay 50% of the costs involved in public projects.<sup>1</sup> As a result, the government developed ambitious development plans which involved extension of electricity and drinking water to outlying districts, irrigation projects, and a four lane highway network.<sup>2</sup> On recognition that the national budget could not pay for half the expenditures involved, the U.S. agreed to shoulder more than 50% on demand.<sup>3</sup> American aid was also made available to the private sector as well, especially in the fields of industry and education. According to the Minister of Finance, Nasri al-Ma'louf, American aid was limited only by the capacity of the Lebanese economy to absorb money without suffering inflation.<sup>4</sup> American assistance was not, however, restricted to economic aid only; with Lebanon aligned, the United States promised to facilitate

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to the statement on foreign policy made by Dr. Charles Malik on November 26, 1957 in Parliament: the Lebanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Documents on the Foreign Policy of Lebanon, (Beirut: Government Printing Office, 1958), p. 11

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Refer to statement by Dr. Malik: Lebanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, op.cit., pp. 11-12. The United States carried out its promises at the outset as, for example, was the case in building the Beirut-Dhbayyih Highway, but after few months the U.S. became more cautious about further expenditures as it was realized that serious disturbances in the country put a question mark on the future of the Doctrine in Lebanon and the capacity of the Government to carry out public projects. U.S. caution precipitated further criticisms about the significance of U.S. aid under the Doctrine.

<sup>4</sup> Refer to the statement of Nasri al-Ma'louf, the Lebanese Minister of Finance in: al-Jareeda, March 18, 1957.

the marketing in Europe of Lebanese surplus products: citrus fruits, olives and olive oil.<sup>1</sup>

Against these advantages Lebanon had little to lose in economic terms. Commercial, financial, cultural and other types of relations with the Soviet Union were insignificant. Most of the income derived from the Arab World was from the oil rich Arab States who were also pro-West. The volume of trade with Syria and Egypt was substantial, but the general balance was in their favor.<sup>2</sup> At best these countries could create some dislocations in the trade sector from which Lebanon could easily recover with the assistance of the Western powers.

## 2. Lebanon and the Arab States.

The Eisenhower Doctrine increased the exposure of Lebanon to cold war tension in the Arab World. As soon as the government accepted the Eisenhower Doctrine, the regime was subjected to a vehement radio and press campaign from Moscow, Syria and Egypt. The Soviet Union had little direct influence on the country; Lebanese armaments were exclusively from the West, commercial transactions with the Soviet Bloc constituted less than 5% of the volume of trade;<sup>3</sup> and the Communist Party was un influential.

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<sup>1</sup>The Lebanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, op.cit., p. 12.

<sup>2</sup>See table on the Lebanese volume of Trade for 1956 and 1957; Middle Eastern Affairs, IX (August-September, 1958), p. 283.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

The Soviet Union, however, benefited indirectly from the pressures exerted by Syria and Egypt which had ample means to use as leverage against Lebanon.

Egyptian and Syrian hostility towards Lebanon assumed differing forms. Sometimes it was manifested by reducing imports from Lebanon or by obstructing transit trade through Syria. At other times, this hostility was most obvious in radio and press campaigns directed to instigate an uprising against the government or by creating border incidents and giving asylum to both ordinary and political criminals. In order to counteract Syrian-Egyptian hostility, the Lebanese government developed close relationships with friendly Arab States, namely: Iraq, Jordan and Saudi Arabia. King Sa'ud who had been the year before an enemy of President Chamoun, became in 1957 one of his close associates.<sup>1</sup> Iraq after 1955 had been consistently friendly to Lebanon and King Hussein was in no position to refuse a friendly hand to his threatened throne.

The common denominator between the government of Lebanon and the monarchs of the Arab East was that they all feared and tried to resist the tide of Nasserism. On different occasions they denounced the intervention of the Arab States in each other's affairs and declared their respect for the Charter of the Arab League. They, moreover, picked almost every opportunity to abhor "destructive creeds" and to declare ardent opposition to Communism.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Chamoun, Crise Au Moyen-Orient, p. 357.

<sup>2</sup>Refer to the Lebanese-Sau'di Communique, the Feisal-Hussein Communique and the Feisal-Sa'ud Communique in the following sources respectively: Agwani, The Lebanese Crisis, 1958 (London: Asian Publishing House, 1965), pp. 18-19; Arab World, June 20, 1957, p. 5; Arab World, April 30, 1957, p. 2.



Lebanese diplomacy contributed to the solidarity of the Arab Monarchs by assisting in the termination of the traditional feud between the Hashimites and the House of Sa'ud.<sup>1</sup> It also contributed to the preservation of King Hussein's throne against the plots of Nasser's followers in Jordan. Lebanon during the Jordanian Crisis encouraged Iraq, Saudi Arabia and the United States to assist Hussein.<sup>2</sup> The Government extended sea port facilities to the Sixth Fleet which was under orders to stand by for developments, and conducted intelligence activities for the purpose of giving the King advanced warnings about the conspiracies on the security of the Throne.<sup>3</sup>

Similarly in the summer and autumn of 1957, Lebanon and Egypt found themselves on opposite sides in the Syrian Crisis. While the Egyptian government was sending troops to assist the Syrian Regime

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<sup>1</sup>Chamoun, Crise Au Moyen-Orient, pp. 368-69.

<sup>2</sup>See the Report of Burhanuddin Bash-A'yan, Deputy Foreign Minister of Iraq to the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs on April 14, 1957: Iraq, The Iraqi Trials, 1958, IV, p. 1402.

<sup>3</sup>Chamoun, Crise Au Moyen-Orient, pp. 378-89. On April 24, 1957 President Chamoun sent a letter to President Eisenhower urging him to do everything possible to save Jordan at almost any cost. Eisenhower, Waging Peace, p. 194. On August 5, 1957, in answer to Nasser's speech which was delivered at the Liberation Square in Alexandria and in which Nasser for the first time made a direct public attack against the Eisenhower Doctrine and its supporters in the Arab World, President Chamoun publicly rebuked Egypt and Syria for conspiracy against the security of Jordan in violation of the principles of the U.N. Charter and the Covenant of the Arab League. He, moreover, criticised them for failing to pay their share of the subsidy to which they were committed under the Accord of January 19, 1957. For the full text of President Chamoun's speech see: al-Nahar, August 6, 1957.

against a possible onslaught from Turkey, the Lebanese authorities were expressing concern over the situation in Syria.<sup>1</sup>

The cooperation of Lebanon with the Monarchs of the Arab East and the United States was perhaps useful in terms of external security, but of little use in terms of internal security. The discontented in Lebanon were Nasserites before anything else. King Sa'ud, without Nasser's support, hardly exercised any influence on the Sunni community, and the Iraqi government with the exception of a few Shi'a sympathisers had little following in the country.<sup>2</sup>

The Government was aware of its weakness vis-à-vis Syria and Egypt, but it had no means of avoiding Egyptian pressure, especially because it was aligned with the U.S. Again and again the Lebanese government extended a friendly hand to Syria and Egypt but it was always refused. After the crisis in Jordan, President Chamoun on August 5, at Deir al-Qamar, proposed a comprehensive Arab summit conference to settle differences. He said:

"In order to put a limit to all the causes of the conflicts which disperse the Arab States and open a new era of constructive co-operation, I propose an all Arab summit meeting to be held after due diplomatic preparations, not in Beirut but in Cairo itself, or in Riyadh or any other Arab capital, so that we may all, with the blessing of God and with all what we have got of wisdom, reason and brotherly love, participate in making the conference a success."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>al-Nahar, October 9, 1957. See also Eisenhower, op.cit., pp. 201-02.

<sup>2</sup>Author's interview with 'Adel 'Usayran, Speaker of Parliament, in his office at Esaili Building, Tripoli Street, Beirut; 4:30 p.m. 27/1/66.

<sup>3</sup>A quotation translated by the author from the Speech of President Chamoun on August 5, 1957. al-Nahar, August 6, 1957.

The President's plea for a summit conference was not well received in Cairo and Damascus. Two days later, August 7, the state controlled radio in Syria ridiculed the idea of an Arab summit meeting and described the President as a person "contaminated with imperialism."<sup>1</sup>

Underlying the differences between Lebanon on the one hand and Syria and Egypt on the other were different conceptions of the Arab World. The Lebanese government believed that there were separate peoples in the Arab World living in separate states whose sovereignty and independence ought to be respected. Starting out with this assumption, the Lebanese government opposed Egyptian intervention in the affairs of other Arab States, and advocated a settlement of inter-Arab disputes notwithstanding some differences in foreign policy.<sup>2</sup> This was not, however, the case with Egypt and Syria who believed that there was an "Arab nation" which had been partitioned by the "imperialists" and that the borders between the Arab States were, therefore, artificial borders. Having styled themselves as the spokesmen for the interest of that Nation, these regimes could not tolerate any deviation from the course which they set for themselves.<sup>3</sup> Consequently, they did not respond to

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<sup>1</sup> al-Nahar, August 8, 1957.

<sup>2</sup> President Chamoun's Speech at Deir al-Qamar, August 5, 1957; al-Nahar, August 6, 1957.

<sup>3</sup> See the press interview which was given by Salahuddin al-Bitar, the Ba'thist Minister of Foreign Affairs in Syria, to Nuhad al-Ghadiri, the correspondent of the Lebanese daily newspaper, al-Siassa, July 6, 1957.

Lebanon's repeated calls for an Arab summit conference and for a settlement of the existing disputes.

### 3. Internal Repercussions.

Lebanese nationalism and Arab nationalism determined to a large extent the attitude of the Lebanese citizens towards the Eisenhower Doctrine. The Lebanese nationalists feared the unionist tendencies of the Syrian and Egyptian Regimes and disapproved of Soviet influence in these countries. Alignment with the United States meant to them an additional security against the dangers emanating from these sources and a means for the preservation of close ties with the West.<sup>1</sup> Thinking in terms of the interest of Lebanon, the Lebanese nationalists welcomed economic and technical assistance from the United States and saw no major problems between Lebanon and the West which dictated refusal or postponement of the Eisenhower Doctrine.<sup>2</sup>

The Arab nationalists evaluated the Doctrine primarily on the Arab level. Thinking of the "Arab Nation" as a homeland, the Arab nationalists could point to many problems with the West which dictated against Western-Arab collaboration. But of more direct importance was the position of Egypt and Syria, from whose hands the Arab nationalists expected the realization of Arab unity.<sup>3</sup> The anti-Western policy of

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<sup>1</sup>Le Jour, January 7, 1957. Beirut, January 8, 1957.

<sup>2</sup>al-'Amal, March 15, 1957.

<sup>3</sup>Review the speech of 'Abdullah al-Yafi in Parliament, April 5, 1957: al-Siassa, April 6, 1957.

Syria and Egypt played a major role in instigating the Arab nationalists against the Eisenhower Doctrine. The Arab nationalists, realizing that the Eisenhower Doctrine was directed against a change of the status quo by force, and that it was designed to drive a wedge between the Arabs and the Soviet Union, sought to discredit the United States of America.<sup>1</sup> Their attacks on this country often would use the same descriptions that were usually used by the communist countries.<sup>2</sup> Underlying the different political orientations of the two groups, as has been shown above, were diverse cultural and political factors. Looking for allies, the Arab nationalists collaborated with the communists and the Lebanese nationalists welcomed the support of the PPS. Due to the overwhelming sectarian allegiance of each group the breach between the Arab nationalists and the Lebanese nationalists gradually acquired a confessional color.

Initially, during the months of April and March, the Eisenhower Doctrine was met with a weak opposition on the official level. When the Government on April 4, 1957 asked for a vote of confidence on the basis of the Eisenhower Doctrine, only 8 deputies out of a total of 44 withheld their confidence,<sup>3</sup> a fact which demonstrated that the Arab

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<sup>1</sup>Philby, op.cit., p. 39.

<sup>2</sup>Beirut al-Massa, January 7, 1957. Refer to the Manifesto of the "National Congress": an aggregation of groups and individuals with Arab nationalist leanings and fellow travellers, al-Siassa, March 22, 1957. See for example the broadcasts from Syria; U.S. Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Foreign Radio Broadcasts, 1957, December 12, c.2. 1530 GMT and 1715 GMT.

<sup>3</sup>The eight deputies who opposed were: Ahmad al-Ass'ad, Sabri Hamadeh, Hamid Franjeh, Abdallah al-Hajj, Rashid Karami, 'Abdallah al-Yaffi, Kamel al'Ass'ad, and Hashim al-Husseini. Of the eight, seven resigned from Parliament in protest: al-Nahar, April 5, 1957. See also Lebanon, Official Gazette: Parliamentary Debates, 1st Ordinary Session, 8th Meeting, April 9, 1957, p. 977.

nationalist representation in Parliament was weak. Although a majority of the Sunni Community was against the Eisenhower Doctrine, the majority of the Sunni deputies in Parliament failed to reflect that attitude. Many factors contributed to the discrepancy between the attitudes of the Sunni leadership and the Sunni community. In the first place, some Sunni deputies under-estimated the zeal of Sunni support to Nasser after Suez. Secondly, the Sunni deputies had to consider that in their constituencies there were Christian voters. Thirdly, the Sunni deputies, like other members of Parliament, had to consider the risks involved in opposing the Regime.<sup>1</sup> The support given by the Regime<sup>1</sup> to a deputy often made the difference between success or failure in elections: and the general elections were coming up in June.

The conflict between the Sunni Community and the Regime over foreign policy constituted a dilemma to some Sunni deputies. Some tried to avoid the dilemma by criticizing the Eisenhower Doctrine and giving the Government a vote of confidence at the same time.<sup>2</sup> They were hoping

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<sup>1</sup>The Term "Regime" ("al-'Ahd") in Lebanon is used in reference to the President and his closest or trusted associates. It is often used to distinguish between those who have the backing of the President and those who do not. "Regime" has more of a functional than a structural significance. It denotes where the actual power is rather than where it should be. Thus at a certain point in time a member of the Government who does not have the backing of the President is not considered of the "Regime." Such members do not often last long in office, but while they do, they are more often than not ignored by the bureaucracy and other people with public interest.

<sup>2</sup>Refer to statement by Nazih al-Bizri, Deputy from Sidon; Lebanon, Official Gazette, Parliamentary Debates, 1st Ordinary Session, 6th Meeting, April 4, 1957, p. 904. Refer also to statement by Anwar al-Khatib: Official Gazette, Parliamentary Debates, 1st Extra-Ordinary Session, 3rd Meeting, 29 August, 1957, pp. 92-93.

that their criticism of the Doctrine would placate the Sunni voters and that a vote of confidence would satisfy the Regime. Others made a clear choice opting either for loyalty to the Regime or to the Sunni Community. Those Sunni deputies who opted for a straight ticket of loyalty to the Regime were representing constituencies with a heavy Christian vote.<sup>1</sup> Significantly, leading Sunni figures, ex-premiers, 'Abdullah al-Yaffi, Rashid Karami and Saeb Salam, chose to turn their backs on the Regime. They stood by a straight pro-Egypt line, thereby winning the support of the Sunni Community. This attitude induced the incumbent Premier, Sami al-Sulh, to rely heavily on the support of the Regime.

Another group of political leaders outside the Sunni Community attacked the Eisenhower Doctrine primarily because they were interested in discrediting the Regime. In this respect they were different from their Sunni colleagues Karami, Yaffi and Salam who were mainly motivated to oppose the Regime because it adopted the Doctrine. Four leaders fall into this category; Hamid Franjieh, Kamal Jumblat, Ahmad al-Ass'ad and Sabri Hemadeh.

Hamid Franjieh was a Maronite representing a Maronite constituency, Zagharta. This constituency was relatively underdeveloped in comparison to other Christian constituencies. A chronic blood feud between the large families of this constituency rendered family allegiance the most important factor in determining the behaviour of the voters.<sup>2</sup> Accordingly,

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<sup>1</sup>Jamil Mekkawi, Hassan al-Huss, Abdul Karim al-Kaddour etc.

<sup>2</sup>On June 18, a few days before the elections were held in the North, the Franjieh and the Mo'awad families clashed with the Duweihi family, in Mizyarah at church. Twenty-two people were killed and several others were wounded. The press conference which was held by Hamid Franjieh

Hamid Franjeh, who derived his political power from family allegiance, was at liberty in opposing policy issues which were not on the whole popular in Christian districts. Franjeh's political behavior was determined in large measure by his aspirations for the Presidency in the forthcoming term. Realizing that President Chamoud stood in his way, he resorted to the opposition as a measure to weaken the President and improve his chances. His opposition to the Eisenhower Doctrine was derived in large measure from a desire to win the ranks of the opposition.

Kamal Jumblat was primarily a Druze leader whose community, unlike Christian and Sunni communities, did not concern itself with the Eisenhower Doctrine as such. The Druze like the Maronites of Zagharta were still in large measure feudal in the sense that factional allegiance determined for the most part their political behavior. Two traditional feudal factions of the Druze has always dominated the Druze community: the Yazbakis and the Jumblatis. The President was biased in favor of the former. As a result Kamal Jumblat, the traditional leader of the Jumblatis, failed in the June elections of 1957 for the first time in his political career. In revenge, Jumblat, who was like other feudal leaders at liberty in matters of policy, turned out frantically against the Eisenhower Doctrine and everything else which the Regime stood for, although before the elections he had spoken well of the Doctrine and its

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on the 19th of June revealed the extent to which blood feuds determined politics in this region: al-Siassa, June 19 and 20, 1957.



foremost advocate in Lebanon, Dr. Charles Malik.<sup>1</sup>

Sabri Hemadeh and Ahmad al-Ass'ad were Shi'a representing the most underdeveloped regions in the country, Hermel in the North-East and Marjeyoun in the South-East. Like Franjieh and Jumblat their following was fairly stable and derived from "feudal"<sup>2</sup> factors. While President Khoury was in office, Hemadeh and his father-in-law, Ahmed al-Ass'ad, dominated the power structure in their regions. They controlled the votes of the deputies representing their regions in Parliament; and alternated in the post of Speaker of Parliament, the highest office allocated to the Shi'a. Although they were still able to win seats for themselves in Parliament, many of the deputies representing their regions succeeded on opposite slates, and none of them could get the post of Speaker. Realizing that President Chamoun was responsible for their failing power, Hemadeh and Ass'ad became his deadly enemies. The fact that

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<sup>1</sup>The failure of Jumblat in the elections of June 1957 influenced his attitude to a large extent. Before the elections, Monday, April 15, Jumblat in a press conference approved of Lebanon's subscription to the Eisenhower Doctrine. He followed the conference with a supplementary release to the press paying tribute to Dr. Malik and denouncing what he termed as the "biased campaign against him": Arab World, April 16, 1957, p. 4. After having failed in the elections of June 1957, Jumblat became an ardent opponent of both Malik and the Eisenhower Doctrine. For the impact of Jumblat's failure on his attitude towards the Government, review: Jumblat, The Truth About the Lebanese Revolution, pp. 84-86.

<sup>2</sup>"Feudal" is used here to denote a political rather than an economic relationship. It refers to a traditional affective rather than an instrumental relationship between the followers and the leader which is more often than not unaffected by the policy of the leader on the national level.

President Chamoun adopted the Eisenhower Doctrine, was sufficient reason for them to oppose it,<sup>1</sup>

The association of the Eisenhower Doctrine with the fortunes of the Regime was not, however, totally on the debit side. There were some other Zu'ama<sup>2</sup> who were won to the cause of the Eisenhower Doctrine, largely because it was associated with the Regime. The most outstanding of these Zu'ama were Yusif al-Zein and Kazim al-Khalil in the South and Majeed Arslan in 'Aley. The significance of the alignment of the Zu'ama for or against the Eisenhower Doctrine was that they carried their personal following with them, and thus influenced the popularity of the Doctrine to some extent.<sup>3</sup> It is pertinent to note here that all the above-mentioned Zu'ama with the exception of Franjeh were either Druze or Shi'a. In view of the "feudal" allegiance in these communities,

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<sup>1</sup>For the line-up of the various public and religious personalities and their attitude refer to: Meo, op.cit., pp. 165-172.

<sup>2</sup>"Zu'ama" is an Arabic term which is often used in Lebanon in reference to outstanding political leaders with more or less stable following and who possess a marked influence on governmental affairs. It has been used above in reference to political leaders with more or less a feudal following or in reference to leaders who influenced their following more than their following influenced them. The term was used with a slightly different meaning by Arnold Hottinger, "Zu'ama and Parties in the Lebanese Crisis of 1958," The Middle East Journal, XV (Spring, 1961), pp. 127-140. See also Hess and Bodman, "Confessionalism and Feudality in Lebanese Politics," The Middle East Journal, VIII, (Winter, 1954), pp. 10-26.

<sup>3</sup>Meo, op.cit., pp. 165-173.

which often superseded other considerations, these Zu'ama influenced in large measure the attitude of their following.

This was not, however, the case in other communities. In the relatively more developed districts, i.e. Christian and Sunni districts where the communities took a more "universal" view about foreign affairs and where political orientation superseded other considerations in such critical times, political leaders tended to follow rather than lead public opinion. It was in these districts that the pro-Western policy of the Government which culminated in the Eisenhower Doctrine affected the power position of the President. Leading Sunni figures such as Rashid Karami, 'Abdullah al-Yaffi, Saeb Salam, Hashim al-Husseini and Hussein al-'Uweini were hardly in a position to make peace with the President in view of the pro-Egyptian and Arab Nationalist orientations of their communities. Sunni agitation, against the pro-Western policy in general and the Eisenhower Doctrine in particular, coupled with an unreserved allegiance to Nasser and a tendency to unite with neighbouring Syria, intensified Christian support to President Chamoun. Under the circumstances, prominent Christian leaders such as the Eddeh Brothers and Pierre Gmayyil, who were not previously on especially good terms with the President, rallied to his support.

The issues in contest between the members of the Opposition and the Government varied depending on the beliefs as well as the circumstances of each leader. However, for the purpose of analysis, the following could be regarded as the most important issues which were broadly accepted by the Opposition leaders:

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1. Lebanon, by subscribing to the Eisenhower Doctrine, had concluded a pact with the United States of America. Such a pact, the Opposition contended, was in violation of the National Pact of 1943, and a deviation from the traditional policy of Lebanon, based, as it was, on solidarity with the Arab States and on non-alignment. The Government, therefore, had isolated the country from the Arab States in breach of the National Pact of 1943.<sup>1</sup>

2. The Eisenhower Doctrine, the Opposition held, gave the United States a pretext for intervention in the internal affairs of Lebanon. It was unbelievable that a state would give foreign aid to another without requesting certain conditions from the receiver.<sup>2</sup>

3. The joint commitment by the two parties of the Richards-Malik Communique for the settlement of regional disputes by peaceful means, implied that Lebanon was prepared to recognize the State of Israel, and thus it betrayed the Arabs.<sup>3</sup>

4. Lebanon, by subscribing to the Eisenhower Doctrine, was actually taking a step which was detrimental to the interests of Syria. In view of the crucial importance of Syria's friendship to Lebanon, the Government should have done nothing which impaired friendly relations with that state.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Lebanon, Official Gazette: Parliamentary Debates, 1st Ordinary Session, 6th Meeting, April 4, 1957, pp. 897, 925. Ibid., 7th Meeting, April 5, 1957, p. 946.

<sup>2</sup>al-Nahar, March 19, 1957.

<sup>3</sup>Lebanon, Official Gazette: Parliamentary Debates, 1st Ordinary Session, 6th Meeting, April 4, 1957, p. 897.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 910, 917. Ibid., 7th Meeting, April 5, 1957, p. 937.

5. Lebanon should have consulted adequately with other Arab States on the Eisenhower Doctrine and should not have taken such a crucial step on its own. This was more in line with the traditional policy.<sup>1</sup>

6. There was no justification for such a major affront to the Soviet Union and/or the Communists, while they were assisting in the Arab struggle against "imperialism".<sup>2</sup>

7. The absence of any mention in the Richards-Malik Communique of possible sources of aggression other than "international communism" such as some European powers or Israel, implies to the opposition that Lebanon became a "Protege" of the United States.<sup>3</sup>

To these accusations the Government replied in what could be summarised as follows:

1. Subscription to the Eisenhower Doctrine did not constitute a pact. It was a unilateral commitment by one party, the United States, to assist Lebanon in case of aggression by "international communism" on the request of the Lebanese Government. Lebanon was under no commitment to aid the United States in case of aggression.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 6th Meeting, April 4, 1957, pp. 911, 917, 895. Ibid., 7th Meeting, April 5, 1957, pp. 937.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 6th Meeting, April 4, 1957, pp. 897, 925. Ibid., 7th Meeting, April 5, 1957, p. 940.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 6th Meeting, April 4, 1957, pp. 896, 917, 924.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 7th Meeting, April 5, 1957, p. 969.

2. The text of the Richards-Malik Communique stated clearly that the two parties were against the intervention of any state in the internal affairs of another state. There were no conditions attached to the financial aid extended by the United States to Lebanon,<sup>1</sup>

3. The statement related to the settlement of regional problems by peaceful means did not imply a recognition of Israel, inasmuch as for example, the repeated statements by President Nasser that Egypt did not intend to commit aggression on Israel, or Saudi Arabia's commitment not to use arms purchased from the United States against Israel, did not imply recognition of that state.<sup>2</sup>

4. The subscription of Lebanon to the Eisenhower Doctrine did not imply any affront to Syria. Lebanon did not isolate itself from the Arab States and would continue to co-operate with the Arab States. The records of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and those of the United Nations contain evidence of this truth. Lebanon consulted all Arab States before it subscribed to the Eisenhower Doctrine. This was especially true with respect to Egypt. When Dr. Malik visited President Nasser during the month of February, 1956, and informed him that Lebanon intended to subscribe to the Eisenhower Doctrine, the Egyptian President did not voice any objection. As far as Egypt was concerned, he promised to give the Doctrine serious consideration. The Lebanese government rejected any implication

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 1st Extra-Ordinary Session, 3rd Meeting, August 29, 1957, p. 115.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 1st Extra-Ordinary Session, 3rd Meeting, August 29, 1957, p. 113. See also al-Nahar, March 19, 1957.

that co-operation with the Arab States meant that Lebanon should take no decision other than what had already been decided upon by others. This rejection was based on the sovereignty of the state.<sup>1</sup>

5. In defense against the accusation that Lebanon had isolated itself from the Arab States, it was stated that if Egypt and Syria happened to disapprove of the Eisenhower Doctrine other Arab States were not of the same opinion. In fact all other Arab States, which were in the majority, sympathised with the subscription of Lebanon to the doctrine.<sup>2</sup>

6. Nothing in the joint Richards-Malik Communiqué impaired the possibility of maintaining friendly relations with the Soviet Union or any other state. The communiqué stated that the government intended to defend the country against "international communism" which recognized no borders and no national sovereignty. The government believed that it was defending the Lebanese way of life and the values of the majority when it took that disposition. Any assistance extended to Lebanon in this respect by the U.S. with which the Lebanese have a lot in common would be welcomed.<sup>3</sup>

7. The absence of any reference in the Joint Richards-Malik Communiqué to sources of aggression other than international communism did not imply that Lebanon became a satellite of the U.S. Sovereign states agree and disagree on particular issues in foreign affairs. The agreement

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 1st Ordinary Session, 7th Meeting, April 5, 1957, pp. 967, 949. Ibid., 6th Meeting, April 4, 1957, pp. 898-99, 920.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 1st Extra-Ordinary Session, 3rd Meeting, August 29, 1957, pp. 108-09. Ibid., 1st Ordinary Session, 7th Meeting, April 5, 1957, p. 966.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 1st Ordinary Session, 7th Meeting, April 5, 1957, pp. 951, 953, 968.

between the U.S. and Lebanon on combatting international communism did not imply that they might not disagree on other issues. Furthermore, Dr. Charles Malik, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, challenged the Opposition on their own grounds. He said:

When I mentioned to President Eisenhower and Secretary Dulles the Question of Palestine, their answer was: 'We have proven by our attitude towards Egypt in her plight how we would react towards such matters. We shall have the same attitude towards any other Arab State subject to aggression in the Middle East.' You might ask why don't we take a written commitment from the United States concerning that? And I ask you would you like us to enter into a treaty with the United States for our protection from any aggression whatsoever? I don't believe you want that. As I mentioned earlier, the United States is trying to improve its disposition towards the Arab States. His Majesty King Sa'ud understood this and made use of it. We have to put the good will of the United States' administration into good use in the coming three years.<sup>1</sup>

Such were in brief the answers of the government to the accusations of the Opposition matched point by point. The defense of the government, inspired as it was, by Charles Malik, was theoretically sound, but it lacked a sense of realism on some points. Such fine distinctions between the Soviet Union and international communism, between defense and offense, were more academic than realistic. The question was not whether the Soviet Union, Syria, and Egypt should take offense from the subscription of Lebanon to the Eisenhower Doctrine, but whether they would retaliate against such a step. If such a question was considered adequately, it would have led to another realistic question: whether Lebanon was in a position to sustain such a retaliation. The fact was that the country was divided within itself. The Sunni

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 1st Ordinary Session, 7th Meeting, April 5, 1957, pp. 970-71.



community supported by substantial portions of the Shi'a and the Druze community, which together constituted the overwhelming majority of the Moslem community, were influenced in large measure by the radical attitudes of Syria and Egypt. The dissension within the country in the course of 1955-56 had demonstrated that it was in the interest of stability and security in Lebanon to avoid any affront or any step which could be interpreted as an affront to Syria and Egypt whenever possible. Under the circumstances, it should have been expected that subscription to the Eisenhower Doctrine without the concurrence of Syria and Egypt would intensify internal dissension and further alienate important sections of Islamic public opinion.

The adherence of the government to the text of the Joint Richards-Malik Communique, and its interpretation that the subscription of Lebanon to the Eisenhower Doctrine did not constitute a pact were legally valid. However, there was no question that Lebanon by subscribing to the Eisenhower Doctrine was taking a clear moral position in the context of international cold war politics. It was self-evident that the Soviet Union and its allies in the communist camp embraced "international communism" and that an affront to international communism constituted an affront to the communist states. Furthermore, it was understood at that time that, if and when aggression by "international communism" took place, Syria would be the source, for communist as well as Soviet influence were on the increase in that state. Therefore, the subscription of Lebanon to the Eisenhower Doctrine was directed not only against the Soviet Union, but also against its allies in the Arab World, Syria and Egypt. Consequently, Egypt and Syria were justified in protesting against the Eisenhower Doctrine and

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in viewing the entry of Lebanon as an unfriendly act.

It has been argued that Secretary Dulles, Charles Malik and President Chamoun exaggerated the extent of Communist and Soviet influence in Syria; that the dominant force in that state was that of nationalism and not of communism; and that consequently the Eisenhower Doctrine with its offensive implications against Syria and Egypt was not justified.<sup>1</sup> Fears of communist influence in Syria might have been exaggerated, but was it only communism which constituted a threat to Lebanon? The movements which controlled Syria were of a radical Arab nationalist or a pan-Arabist color which believed in socialism admired the Soviet Union, resented liberal democratic values, and strove to unify the Arab States by all means at their disposal including subversion and force. Whether such movements would ultimately lead to Communism, as, for example, Dr. Charles Malik believed, is still today open to question. But regardless of their final form or content, these movements in 1957 represented a real threat to the interests of Lebanon and its sovereignty. The determination of the United States to reverse the radical trend in Syria and to a lesser extent in Egypt or perhaps isolate it, was therefore in the interest of the Lebanese system and its preservation. The Eisenhower Doctrine as such contained nothing to the detriment of Lebanese interests. Where the Government went wrong was in its entry or subscription to the Eisenhower Doctrine, a step which contributed to the intensification of dissension in the country and to the promotion of Syrian-Egyptian pressure.

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<sup>1</sup>Leila Meo, for example, subscribes to that point of view with regard to the U.S. Leila Meo, Lebanon Improbable Nation (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1965), pp. 107-117.

The inadequate appraisal, by the government of the internal conflict in the country, opened the way for the opposition leaders to capitalise on that conflict in their own interest. The contentions of the Opposition leaders that the Government had violated the National Pact and isolated Lebanon from the Arab World, appealed to the alienated sectors of public opinion which were largely Moslem and further intensified the Christian-Moslem conflict in the country. Such contentions were supplemented by reviving chronic internal sectarian issues and capitalizing on Islamic grievances, for example, that the Christian-Moslem ratio in the country had turned in favor of the latter and that, therefore, the Moslems were entitled to more public posts including the Presidency.<sup>1</sup>

The power struggle degenerated gradually to the use of illegitimate methods by both factions, the Loyalists and the Opposition, as it was realized that the Opposition leaders could not weaken the Regime and alter the course of foreign policy through legitimate methods. The Opposition leaders were in a small minority in the House. In anticipation of the forthcoming national elections in June, they attempted to increase the parliamentary seats from 44 to 88 in the hope that a wider representation would reduce the influence of the executive over the legislature and provide for more radical representation. But such attempts were thwarted by the Loyalists who maintained that 66 seats were adequate, and passed a law to that effect.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Fahim Qubain, Crisis in Lebanon (Washington, D.C.: Middle East Institute, 1961), pp. 30-33.

<sup>2</sup>Lebanon, Official Gazette: Parliamentary Debates, 1st Ordinary Session, 4th Meeting, April 2, 1957, pp. 794-817.

In the June elections, which were in large measure a plebiscite on the Eisenhower Doctrine, the Opposition suffered a staggering defeat. Only 13 deputies out of 66 succeeded on the Opposition slates.<sup>1</sup>

Confronted with failure, the Opposition resorted to illegitimate methods, violence and sabotage. Due to the fact that the following of the Opposition was largely Moslem, demonstrations usually started from the mosques and violence, therefore, took place in Islamic quarters and towns.<sup>2</sup> The attempts of the Government to quell such unlawful activities were interpreted by its adversaries as persecutions of the Islamic Community.<sup>3</sup> Such interpretations increased the animosity of the Moslem Confessions towards the President and led to more violence. The Christians in reaction to the Islamic campaign rallied to support the Government. They were observing that Nasser had become the recognized leader of the Islamic Community and that Syria and Egypt were not respecting the sovereignty of Lebanon.<sup>4</sup> Radio and press media from Cairo and Damascus instigated the Opposition against the Government and focused

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<sup>1</sup> al-Nahar, June 10, 17 and 24, 1957. For further discussion of the June elections of 1957, see Infra., pp. 343-44.

<sup>2</sup> Refer to the demonstrations of May 30 and 31st, 1957, al-Nahar, May 31st and June 1, 1957.

<sup>3</sup> Review the declaration of Kamal Jumblat, al-Nahar, March 22, 1958. See also the speeches delivered at the Ramadan feast, al-Nahar, April 11, 1958.

<sup>4</sup> al-'Amal, February 16 and February 18, 1958.

their attacks on President Chamoun. In addition to press and radio campaigns, Egypt and Syria were sending arms and sabotage experts to the Opposition.<sup>1</sup>

Realizing that the security forces were not sufficient to meet the mounting wave of violence and that the army was refusing to intervene,<sup>2</sup> the Government by the end of 1957 armed its civilian supporters. With the resort of the Government to illegitimate methods, the country plunged into a state of chaos.

#### 4. The Impact of the United Arab Republic.

The birth of the United Arab Republic on February 1, 1958 aggravated what was already a grave situation in the country. The State of Lebanon ceased to be a sufficient object of loyalty for the majority of the Arab nationalist masses.<sup>3</sup> They were now demanding unity with the United Arab Republic which was considered by them as "the nucleus of an all-embracing Arab unity". The Lebanese nationalists panicked and retorted by warning that unity with the United Arab Republic

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<sup>1</sup>Chamoun, Crise Au Moyen Orient, p. 389. For various incidents in Lebanon where agents of the Syrian Deuxieme Bureau were either caught redhanded or found closely associated with violence refer to the following issues of al-Nahar: September 3 and 7, December 12, 1957; and April 11, 1958. See also al-Jareeda, October 4, 1957; Arab World, October 1, 1957, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup>For reasons which influenced the decision of the army not to intervene see Infra., pp. 337-40.

<sup>3</sup>For example the Arab nationalists flocked to Damascus in thousands chanting for Arab unity. They also raised Nasser's portraits and the U.A.R. flags in the many rallies which were held in celebration of the Union. In one of those rallies in Tyre, they trampled the Lebanese flag and launched violent demonstrations against the Government when the authorities arrested a few men on the charge of insulting the flag. al-Nahar, March 29, 1958; al-Siassa, April 1, 1958.

would not be tolerated and that independence would be defended at all costs.<sup>1</sup>

The leaders of the Opposition, contrary to their Arab nationalist following, mentioned frequently that they respected the independence of Lebanon; some of them, however, in the same breath spoke in terms of the Arab nation and expressed hope for a future merger in a united Arab state.<sup>2</sup> President Nasser made no secret of his desire to unite the Arab nation, but on certain occasions he declared that the U.A.R. did not intend to annex Lebanon.<sup>3</sup> Such declarations, however, had no real value in terms of Lebanese security. Violence in the country continued with an increasing tempo. The leaders of the Opposition flocked to Damascus at the head of their followers where they praised Nasser, celebrated the birth of the U.A.R. and solicited support against the Government. Under the circumstances the authorities in Lebanon had good reasons to fear that if the Arab nationalists won the upper hand in the country, they would eventually seek merger with the U.A.R.

Laboring under fears of a U.A.R. "Anschluss", President Chamoun and Dr. Charles Malik started to place an unusual stress on the permanence

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<sup>1</sup>Refer to the editorial of al-Nahar, as reported by al-Jareeda, March 3, 1958. Refer also to the declaration by Pierre Gmayyil, "We Don't and We Shall Not Accept Arab Unity," al-'Amal, April 2, 1958.

<sup>2</sup>Outstanding in that respect were Saeb Salam and Rashid Karami. Review the speech of Karami to the citizens of Tripoli on March 21, 1958; al-Nahar, March 22, 1958. See also the statement of Saeb Salam, al-Nahar, February 11, 1958.

<sup>3</sup>Refer to the speech of Nasser to the Lebanese in Damascus on the 28th of February, 1958: al-Jareeda, March 1, 1958.

of Lebanon's independence. President Chamoun picked the opportunity of St. Maroun's Day, February 10, 1958, and addressed the congregation in the following terms:

"The independence of Lebanon is based on the will of its faithful sons of whatever creed they come from, and they are thank God numerous. This independence is not limited by time; it is a means and a goal, a beginning and an end; it is everlasting and eternal; it will exist as long as its high mountains stand as a symbol to this independence and as long as the hearts of its sons surround it and rally to its defense."<sup>1</sup>

A few days later Dr. Charles Malik in the conclusion of a speech before the Foreign Affairs Parliamentary Committee, expressed almost the same attitude:

"Lebanon who stays and who is determined to stay forever a sovereign and an independent nation with a message and a role to play in the world at large, does not permit itself but to contribute to every good that accrues to its colleagues in the Covenant of life and death."<sup>2</sup>

But despite this stress on the "eternal" Lebanon, the power of the Regime was beginning to disintegrate. Under the circumstances some of its Moslem supporters began to abandon the rocking boat and follow the foot steps of the Opposition leaders to Damascus where they sought the blessings of Nasser. 'Adel 'Usayran, for example, the speaker of Parliament, who had been among the ardent supporters of the Regime, said in Damascus before Nasser and Qu'atly: "Lebanon would join the Arab

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<sup>1</sup>The quotation was translated by the author as it appeared in al-Nahar, February 11, 1958.

<sup>2</sup>The quotation was translated by the author as it appeared in al-Nahar, February 12, 1958. Malik used the phrase: "Covenant of life and death" in reference to the Covenant or the Charter of the Arab League.

caravan sooner or later".<sup>1</sup> Jamil Mekkawi, the Minister of Finance, suddenly discovered that the acceptance of the Eisenhower Doctrine was not in the interest of Lebanon.<sup>2</sup> He resigned in protest on February 6, 1958, precipitating a cabinet crisis.

On March 14, the President appointed a new cabinet which won a vote of confidence in Parliament. Sulh was returned as Premier and the portfolio of Foreign Affairs was given again to Dr. Malik. The success of the Cabinet in acquiring a vote of confidence denoted that the Regime was still powerful enough to control Parliament. But, beyond this apparent success, there were symptoms of fatigue and failing power. The Cabinet made some allowances for the Opposition by omitting from the policy program any mention of the Eisenhower Doctrine and by stressing that Lebanon welcomed the birth of the United Arab Republic and extended to the new state a friendly hand.<sup>3</sup> Even at that a vote of confidence was hardly managed (38 votes out of a total of 66)<sup>4</sup>, although the Cabinet was enlarged from 8 to 14 ministers in an effort to increase its support in Parliament.

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<sup>1</sup> al-Nahar, March 1, 1958.

<sup>2</sup> al-Nahar, March 15, 1958.

<sup>3</sup> Refer to the Cabinet's policy program in: John Malha, A Collection of the Cabinet Programs: Documents (Beirut: Khayat, 1965), pp. 222-33.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 219.



Such allowances were, however, hardly sufficient to placate the U.A.R. and its followers in Lebanon. They were observing that Lebanon did not relinquish the Eisenhower Doctrine, and that the Government encouraged and welcomed the creation of the Arab Federal State (February 14) which was actually a Hashimite Federation designed to counter balance the U.A.R.<sup>1</sup> They, therefore, continued to exert their maximum pressure on the Government, while the Lebanese nationalists rallied to support it in the belief that they were preserving the sovereignty of the state.<sup>2</sup>

Thus what was a question of foreign policy became a question of survival to the Regime and, to a large extent, a question of existence to Lebanon imperilled as it was by a serious breach between the majority of the Moslems and the majority of the Christians.

In retrospect it is pertinent to conclude that the Eisenhower Doctrine, its inclination towards the preservation of the status quo in the Arab World, its promises of financial assistance, its determination to reduce Soviet influence and isolate or reverse the trends in Syria and Egypt, suited the interests of Lebanon in many respects. It was not only the increasing Soviet influence in Syria and Egypt which constituted a threat to Lebanon, but also radical pan-Arabist ideology

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<sup>1</sup>Lebanon, Official Gazette: Parliamentary Debates, 1st Ordinary Session, 3rd Meeting, 1958, pp. 372-73.

<sup>2</sup>"Sunday Talk," al-'Amal, February 16, 1958.

which motivated Syria and Egypt to alter the status quo as a step in the direction towards Arab unity.

However, the subscription of Lebanon to the Eisenhower Doctrine was a totally different matter. In such a step there was involvement in the regional cold war of which Lebanon had already suffered during 1955 and 1956 without being aligned. It had emerged from the 1956 Suez Crisis with a serious internal breach. Instead of taking leave of cold war issues and directing its efforts towards internal pacification, the Government went right ahead and subscribed to the Eisenhower Doctrine, thereby contributing to the intensification of internal conflicts which had already reached serious proportions.

But although declining acceptance of the Eisenhower Doctrine would have constituted a step in the right direction, there was no assurance that the Government would have succeeded in bridging the gap or containing internal dissension. The dissension in the country involved several dimensions which were not necessarily directly related to the Eisenhower Doctrine. It involved the general orientation of the policy of the state, Arab nationalism against Lebanese nationalism, sectarian issues, and particularistic ambitions of individual politicians who were trying to weaken the Regime in their own interest. Moreover, the level of internal tension in Lebanon depended in large measure on the attitudes of Syria and Egypt who commanded the Arab nationalists in the country and exercised substantial influence on the attitude of the Moslems in general and the Sunni community in particular. These states were aware that they controlled substantial sectors of public opinion in Lebanon, but, at the same time, they seemingly underestimated the

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importance of sectors of public opinion which were diametrically opposed to their policies. Cairo's disregard of Lebanese neutrality in 1955-56 suggests that the Egyptian government and its ally Syria did not appreciate the special circumstances of Lebanon. However, the failings of Egypt and its ally did not provide an adequate justification for the Government to disregard sectors of public opinion whose centers were in Cairo and Damascus.

A certain measure of appeasement of Syria and Egypt was necessary. Whether declining to accept the Eisenhower Doctrine would have appeased Egypt and Syria is still open to question. What was, however, established was that the acceptance of the Eisenhower Doctrine constituted a step in the wrong direction which promoted civil strife and provided more suitable pretexts for Syria and Egypt to intervene in Lebanon's internal affairs.

The civil disturbances in 1956 and 1957 suggested that the traditional policy which consisted of avoiding involvement in matters related to alignment whenever they were subject to inter-Arab disputes, was more suitable to the special circumstances of Lebanon. Although the success of the Eisenhower Doctrine in the Arab World was in the interest of Lebanon, the Lebanese Government, in view of the internal dissension in the country and the vulnerability of Lebanon towards Syria and Egypt, had no other alternative but to avoid involvement with the Eisenhower Doctrine.

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## Chapter IX

### THE CRISIS OF 1958: MAY 9 - SEPTEMBER 23, 1958

#### A. The Internal Dimensions of the Crisis.

##### 1. The Assassination of Naseeb al-Matni.

Lebanon had been living in an atmosphere of crisis since the Winter of 1957 which was further promoted with the declaration of the birth of the United Arab Republic on February 2, 1958. During the months of February, March and April, armed bands appeared in the Shouf districts and the Bika' region, particularly in the district of Rashayya which is contiguous with the Syrian borders. The bands attacked public utilities and Government Posts whenever they could. In the cities violence and sabotage disturbed the peace of the state. It was not until May, however, that the Opposition launched an organized insurrection against the Government.

May 9 is generally recognized as the starting point of the Crisis of 1958. The insurrection was ostensibly triggered by the assassination of Naseeb al-Matni, the owner of a leftist paper, The Telegraph, in the early hours of May 8. The next day, May 9, the followers of the Opposition in Tripoli declared a strike in protest against Matni's assassination; they gathered in the Mansuri Mosque and then broke out in town attacking and looting stores. Within a short time Tripoli became the scene of a gun duel between some shopkeepers, the Loyalists and the security forces on the one hand and the followers of the Opposition on the other. By the end of the day the city quarters of the Opposition

were barricaded and declared off bounds to the security forces.<sup>1</sup>

Sami al-Sulh, the Prime Minister, went on the air that evening declaring that the Government was investigating Matni's assassination and that the assassins would receive severe punishment. He added: "Some opportunists have chosen to exploit this painful incident to achieve private aims" which were "at variance with the feelings of sorrow and grief". The Government, he declared, was determined to deal firmly with the rioters and other subversive elements. He asked the people to proceed with their work promising them the protection of the Government.<sup>2</sup>

The next day, May 10, the United National Front issued a statement attributing Matni's assassination to the Government. It urged the people to take up arms against the authorities and follow the "heroic" example of others in Tripoli and Hermel, who had succeeded the day before in burning some vehicles of the security forces and in overwhelming some Government posts. The uprising, the Opposition declared, was to continue until the President resigned his office.

"Compatriots; you are now in the midst of the battle . . . keep all of you in a single rank against the mean pre-determined attempt by the Chief Responsible Person who had neither conscience nor restraint, nor patriotism nor religion.

We are at the cross roads and we have chosen the road

<sup>1</sup>George Kirk, Contemporary Arab Politics (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1961), p. 127. See also al-Nahar, May 9 and 13, 1958.

<sup>2</sup>Statement by Sami al-Sulh, on May 9, 1958, M. A. Agwani, The Lebanese Crisis, 1958 (London: Asian Publishing House, 1965), pp. 56-57.

to freedom. The unjust must fail; darkness must be dispelled; the day of victory is not far".<sup>1</sup>

In a few days, the Crisis spread into other parts of Lebanon. Who killed Matni? The question is still unanswered. The Opposition claimed that the Government killed him, but the claim was never substantiated. In 1961 after Syria had separated from Egypt, a book published in Damascus (1961) by an anonymous writer under the title of al-Sarraaj and the Nasserite Conspiracy, attributed the assassination of Matni to the authorities of the U.A.R. The book, however, was never allowed into Lebanon and shortly after was suppressed in Syria when the Ba'th Party made a successful coup on March 8, 1962. According to this book, the assassination of Matni was planned by the authorities of the United Arab Republic to trigger the Crisis in Lebanon. The claim was that the U.A.R. authorities for a while had entertained the idea of assassinating the Grand Mufti, but they dropped the idea having realized that the assassination of the Mufti would turn the Crisis into an open religious massacre. The choice then fell on Naseeb al-Matni. It was alleged that Matni was chosen because of the following characteristics: He was a leftist, a severe critic of the Government and of the Eisenhower Doctrine, a Maronite and a non-rank and file member of the U.A.R. "fifth column". It was maintained that U.A.R. intelligence held that Matni's murder would arouse the Communists, who treasured his leftist tendencies, and promote the feud between the Maronite Patriarch, Ma'ouchi, and President Chamoun. Above all, it was expected that the insurrection of the Moslems under the pretext of Matni's murder would give the Crisis a secular rather than

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<sup>1</sup>Statement by Saeb Salam on behalf of the United National Front, May 10, 1958, Ibid., pp. 57-58.

a confessional color.<sup>1</sup> The book goes on to describe how and who murdered

Matni:

After consultations by code between Damascus and Cairo, Abdu Hakim, Abdul Jawad 'Abbara and Akram al-Safadi were dispatched to Lebanon accompanied by a number of Palestinian Commandos. They met in Beirut Rashid Shehabuddin and Mahmoud Wahbi in the house of Khairi 'Awni al-Ka'ki, the owner of the newspaper al-Sharq. Thereafter they killed Matni and escaped to Tripoli where they stayed at the house of Hamzy and from there left to the Syrian borders.<sup>2</sup>

This account would be plausible, but in the absence of published documents it still lacks conclusive evidence.<sup>3</sup> The documentation of this account is the more necessary,<sup>4</sup> in view of the fact that Nasser himself had said that the U.A.R. had nothing to do with Matni's murder.

"Every wise man in the world, every wise man in the Arab World, knows the real cause of the tragedies which are now taking place in the Lebanon. The much lamented Naseeb al-Matni was murdered in the Lebanon. Naseeb al-Matni was a free journalist. We all know that he was a free journalist. Who murdered Naseeb al-Matni? Surely we did not murder Naseeb al-Matni. Who murdered him? Who shed his blood? Who assaulted him four months ago with intent to murder? Who murdered him only a few days ago?

Indeed, the conscience of the Lebanese people was shaken by this crime, for they know who are the assassins; they

<sup>1</sup>al-Sarraj and the Nasserite Conspiracy (Damascus: Dar al-Hayat Press, 1961), pp. 63-64. It is widely believed that this book was published under the auspices of the Syrian Government.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>The book maintains that this information was based on documents found in the Syrian Deuzieme Bureau Headquarters, but the documents were not published.

<sup>4</sup>Matni was hit by a razor blade about four months before the assassination. It was rumored that he was hit by a cut-throat hired by Majeed Arslan. Matni was known for his relentless attacks against Arslan who was a Loyalist deputy from 'Aley.

know who are the criminals."<sup>1</sup>

But whoever killed Matni, his assassination came in handy for the Opposition, who according to Chamoun had been piling up arms from Egypt and Syria since 1956.<sup>2</sup> It was declared that the Opposition would not lay down arms unless President Chamoun resigned his office. There had been a precedent in Lebanon in this respect. President Khoury was forced to resign his office in 1952 by a peaceful strike which lasted less than a week. But to the dismay of the Opposition, President Chamoun held out and the Crisis continued for several months.

## 2. The Parties to the Conflict.

The circumstances of 1958 were radically different from those of 1952. In 1952, the Crisis was totally internal, it involved no more than the person of Bishara al-Khoury. But in 1958 much more than the person of President Chamoun was involved. The Crisis of 1958 involved demands for a re-orientation in the foreign policy of Lebanon; the relinquishment of the Eisenhower Doctrine, and the pursuit of a policy which was more or less parallel to that of the United Arab Republic. A forced resignation of President Chamoun would have meant the collapse of pro-West public opinion, the Lebanese nationalists and the majority of the Christians, before the combined pressure of the Communists, the Arab nationalists

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<sup>1</sup>Speech by President Nasser, May 16, 1958; Agwani, op.cit., p. 101.

<sup>2</sup>Press Conference by President Chamoun, May 21st 1958; Na'im al'Zayle' Chamoun Speaks (Beirut, publisher unknown, 1966), p. 41. See also al-Nahar, May 22, 1958.



and the majority of the Moslems. It was feared that if the Opposition succeeded, Lebanon would pass the point of no return and eventually submerge into the United Arab Republic. On the eve of July 15 when the American Marines landed in Lebanon, the forces of the Loyalists and those of the Opposition had reached a stalemate. The Opposition held the regions of Akkar and Tripoli in the North, the Hermel-Ba'albeck region in the North East, the district of Rashayya in the South East, the towns of Tyre and Sidon in the South, the Shouf district in Mount Lebanon and the Basta quarters in Beirut. Mount Lebanon, with the exception of the Shouf district, the Christian quarters of Beirut, Jezzine, central Bika', Kura and the Cedars district in the North remained under the control of the Government. The South outside the towns of Tyre and Sidon was contested between the Loyalists and the Rebels.

From a demographic point of view, regions which were firmly under the control of the Opposition had a Moslem majority while those which remained under the control of the Government were Christian regions. The spearhead of the Loyalists were two political parties; the Kata'ib and the PPS. The Kata'ib, a Christian-oriented Lebanese nationalist party, viewed the Crisis as an encroachment by the United Arab Republic on the sovereignty of Lebanon.<sup>1</sup> The PPS did not believe in Lebanese nationalism, but nevertheless, had good reasons to support Chamoun.<sup>2</sup> From an ideological point of view the PPS was considered an

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<sup>1</sup>Pierre Gmayyil, "We Will Pursue Our Endeavor for the Preservation of Our Independence and Freedom," al-'Amal, July 9, 1958. See also the interview which was given by Pierre Gmayyil to the correspondent of La Revue Du Liban; al-'Amal, August 11, 1958.

<sup>2</sup>Press conference by Assad al-Ashkar, President of the PPS Party on May 29, 1958; al-Nahar, May 30, 1958.

enemy of Arab nationalism. Similarly, the Communists and the PPS were ideologically and politically irreconcilable. Persecuted in Syria by the followers of Nasser, the Party considered Lebanon as a last refuge. With a pronounced political orientation towards Iraq and the West, the PPS had no alternative but to support President Chamoun.<sup>1</sup> It was estimated that the PPS had about 3,000 armed men in the field. Its members were disciplined, well-trained and militarily efficient. Contrary to the Kata'ib the PPS, which had no communal color, was able to operate behind the lines of the Opposition forces. Its forces contributed to the failure of Jumblat's offensive at Shimlan on July 1, 1958, which was designed to capture the International airport at Khaldeh and establish contact between the rebel forces of the Shouf and those of Beirut.<sup>2</sup> The Loyalist civilian supporters worked in close co-operation with the gendarmerie and other branches of the security forces, who were under the command of Colonel Zwein.

The Opposition forces were mainly recruited from a Moslem milieu and were operating in Moslem regions or districts. Organized parties such as the Najjadah party, the Ba'th Party and the Arab nationalist Movement participated in the insurrection, but their leadership was secondary to the leadership of the traditional leaders.<sup>3</sup> The

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> al-Nahar, July 2, 1958. See also Kamal Jumblat, In The Course of Lebanese Policy (Beirut: Vanguard Publication House, 1960), pp. 9-10.

<sup>3</sup> Arnold Hottinger, "Zu'ama and Parties in the Lebanese Crisis of 1958", Middle East Journal, XV (Spring, 1961), pp. 135-39.

Sunni community was largely led by traditional leaders such as Saeb Salam in Beirut, Rashid Karami in Tripoli and Ma'rouf Sa'd in Sidon, but most of those who participated in the fighting were not actually motivated by their traditional leaders as much as they were influenced by Nasser and the ideological aspiration for Arab unity.<sup>1</sup> Thus while they operated under traditional leadership, they were motivated more by ideological factors than by allegiance to their traditional leaders.

Ideological factors did not influence the Druzes as much as they influenced the Sunnis. Still strongly feudal in social structure, the attitude of each faction of the Druzes was determined in large measure by the attitude of the feudal leader. The Jumblatis rallied after their leader Kamal Jumblat to the side of the Opposition, and the Yazbakys under the leadership of Majeed Arslan took sides with the Loyalists. The two factions actually fought one another at Batlun in the Shouf district on May 16.<sup>2</sup> But, thereafter, the conflict was resolved with the intervention of Druze religious leaders in the interest of Druze solidarity.<sup>3</sup>

Although ideological factors were relatively more pronounced among the Shi'a than they were among the Druze, the Shi'a were also influenced in large measure by feudal allegiance. Due to pronounced political conflicts among their feudal leaders such as Kazim al-Khalil and

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<sup>1</sup>Fahim Qubain, Crisis in Lebanon (Washington, D.C. Middle East Institute, 1961), p. 41, quoting a Lebanese intellectual favoring the Opposition.

<sup>2</sup>al-Nahar, May 17, 1958.

<sup>3</sup>al-Jareeda, May 19, 1958.

Ahmed al-Assa'd, the Shi'a community was partially confused and as a result the Government did not lose total control of some of their regions in Southern Lebanon. Feudal allegiance provides, however, only a partial explanation to the confusion among the Shi'a. Monarchist Iraq had some residual influence among them, and as a heterodox Moslem sect, the Shi'a did not subscribe fully to the idea of Arab unity.<sup>1</sup>

### 3. The Avoidance of a Religious Massacre.

Basically, the main issue was the alignment of Lebanon with the United States which was contested between the Arab nationalists and the Lebanese nationalists. Religion played an indirect role in so far as it directed the political orientation of its adherents towards either one of those nationalisms. Thus, although the overwhelming majority on each side were of a definite religious persuasion, the fighting was politically oriented, which was apparently recognized by both sides. It should also be recalled that a minority of the Moslems stood by the Government, and that similarly a minority of the Christians stood by the Opposition. Among the Loyalists, for example, there were Moslem personalities such as Sami al-Sulh, Kazim al-Khalil and Khalil al-Hibri. The PPS, who functioned as a spearhead for the Loyalist forces had among its rank and file, members of different religious affiliations. In the Opposition camp there were Christian Arab nationalists, leftists and other personalities such as Fu'ad 'Ammoun, Hamid Franjeh and strangely enough, the

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<sup>1</sup>Author's interview with 'Adel 'Usayran, Speaker of the House of Deputies, in his office, 'Ussayli Building, Tripoli Street, Beirut, January 27, 1966.

Maronite Patriarch, Ma'oushi. In an interview with the author, Patriarch Ma'oushi stated that he was thinking of the welfare of Christians in other parts of the Arab World when he determined his disposition in 1958. He said that he had no objection to the foreign policy of Lebanon at that time.<sup>1</sup> It is generally believed that a personal feud between President Chamoun and Ma'oushi contributed to the anti-regime policy of the Patriarch. On the death of Patriarch 'Arida, Ma'oushi's predecessor, President Chamoun supported Bishop 'Akl as a candidate for the Patriarchate. Bishop Ma'oushi, to the disappointment of President Chamoun, was appointed Patriarch by the Pope,<sup>2</sup> contrary to Maronite tradition. Patriarch Ma'oushi, however, denied that personal reasons were involved in his disposition during the Crisis.<sup>3</sup> But, whatever were the motives of the Patriarch, the nominal support of a Christian minority to the Opposition and the nominal support of a Moslem minority to the Loyalists, contributed to the restraint which was exercised by the leadership of both factions.

The role of the army was also of some importance in this respect. The army under General Shebab dissociated itself from the Crisis. President Chamoun had requested the army to strike at the Opposition

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<sup>1</sup> Author's interview with the Maronite Patriarch Ma'oushi at his residence in Bkirki, January 23, 1966.

<sup>2</sup> Kamal Jumblat, The Truth About the Lebanese Revolution (Beirut. Arab Publication House, 1959), p. 120.

<sup>3</sup> Author's interview with Patriarch Ma'oushi, op.cit. It was also rumored that blood relations between ex-President Khoury and Ma'oushi contributed to the misunderstanding between the Patriarch and President Chamoun.

forces, but General Shehab managed to avoid carrying out the request. It is widely believed that three factors contributed to the behavior of the General. The first was one of principle. The General believed that much of the conflict involved a struggle among politicians for the spoils of political office, and that as such the army should not intervene, for its function was the protection of the country from an external invasion.<sup>1</sup> The other two factors were of a pragmatic nature. When the General was asked by the Government to strike at the Opposition forces, General Shehab maintained that his two-brigade size army was in no position to restore order in the country.<sup>2</sup> It is also believed that the General hesitated to commit his forces on the grounds that they were likely to split up between Moslem and Christian.<sup>3</sup>

Whether these reasons were genuine or merely excuses for the General whose motives lay elsewhere, is still open to question.<sup>4</sup> It was indeed difficult even for the Commander-in-Chief to predict how the army would behave under the strain of a civil war. There are, however, some considerations to be borne in mind in assessing the behavior of the

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<sup>1</sup>Qubain, op.cit., p. 81.

<sup>2</sup>Camille Chamoun, Crise Au Moyen-Orient (Paris, Gallimard, 1963), p. 406. Author's interview with Kazim al-Khalil, Minister of National Economy, in his office, Sa'idi Building, Bishara al-Khoury Street, Beirut, January 15, 1966.

<sup>3</sup>Robert Murphy, Diplomat Among Warriors (London: Collins, 1964), pp. 487-88.

<sup>4</sup>Many believe that Shehab was harboring ambitions for the Presidency and was therefore anxious to remain on good terms with the Opposition. Kamal Saliby "The Lebanese Crisis in Perspective," World Today, XIV (September, 1958), p. 379.

General. For example, Shehab committed his army in 1949, when the PPS attempted to launch a guerrilla war against the Government. It could be argued that the attempted guerrilla war by the PPS in 1949 did not reach the dimensions of the Crisis in 1958. Nevertheless, in principle, the army by suppressing the PPS bands was getting involved in politics, and, apparently, such considerations did not hinder the commitment of the General in 1949. With respect to the army's capability, President Chamoun, the cabinet and some of the officers did not share the General's pessimism. They pointed out that the Army had superior equipment to that of the Opposition forces and, therefore, the capability to subdue the insurrection with the assistance of the security forces and the Loyalists.<sup>1</sup> But, what of the danger of a mutiny? The question here is open to conjecture. The security forces fought with the Loyalists and experienced no mutinies. Yet to draw a parallel between the security forces and the army is rather risky. The participation of the army was likely to give the Crisis the dimensions of a full-fledged civil war, which could have introduced radical changes in the situation. Significantly, President Chamoun did not dismiss the General.<sup>2</sup>

The actual role of the army in the Crisis amounted to holding the balance between the disputing parties. In Moslem regions and quarters, the army allowed the forces of the Opposition to take over.

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<sup>1</sup>Chamoun, Crise Au Moyen-Orient, p. 408. Author's interview with Kazim al-Khalil, January 15, 1966.

<sup>2</sup>Murphy, op.cit., pp. 487-88.

In Christian areas, the Loyalists were allowed to brandish their arms openly. The army saw to it that water, food, electricity and other necessary supplies continued to reach the barricaded quarters in the cities.<sup>1</sup> Whenever the Opposition forces attempted an attack in mass on Loyalist territory, the army supported the Loyalists and vice versa.<sup>2</sup> The non-committed residual force of the army restricted the dimensions of the Crisis, and thus contributed to a further restraint on both factions.<sup>3</sup>

From an international and national point of view, both sides had vested interests in avoiding a religious massacre at all costs. A religious massacre was expected to invite international intervention, a situation which the Moslems wanted to avoid due to its adverse impact on the prospects of Arab unity. To the Christians, a massacre meant either the end of Lebanon or the partition of the country. Neither prospect conformed with their vested interest in the status quo.

#### 4. Tactics of the Opposition.

When the Crises started, the political controversy between the Opposition and the Government centered around the question: Whether the Crisis was exclusively of internal dimensions, or whether it had external

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<sup>1</sup>M. Perlmann "Mid-Summer Madness," Middle Eastern Affairs, IX (August-September, 1958), p. 247. See also, Kamal Saliby, "Lebanese Crisis in Perspective," World Today, XIV (September, 1958), pp. 378-79; Leila Meo, Lebanon Improbable Nation (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1965), pp. 176-77.

<sup>2</sup>Qubain, op.cit., p. 81.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 82. See also Iskandar Riyashi, The Presidents of Lebanon As I Knew Them (Beirut: Commerical Press, 1961), p. 195.



dimensions as well. On May 13, five days after the Crisis had started, Dr. Charles Malik, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, charged in a press conference that "the United Arab Republic's intervention in Lebanon's internal affairs was directly responsible for, as he put it, "the disturbances in the country".<sup>1</sup> The next day, Saeb Salam released a statement on behalf of the "National Front" which accused the President and Foreign Minister Malik of seeking political inspirations from outside. "The National Front", the statement went on, "wishes to reassert what it often asserted before, that its movement is purely national and Lebanese aiming at preserving the Lebanon's structure, independence and the unity of its peoples."<sup>2</sup> Thereafter, the controversy continued throughout the Crisis with each side advancing whatever evidence was available to prove its point.

The Opposition had good reasons to assert and reassert that the Crisis was solely internal. On the international level an indictment of the United Arab Republic with intervention in the internal affairs of Lebanon was expected to precipitate a counter intervention by the Western Powers, especially the United States. Official statements in Western capitals expressed their support for the Lebanese Government and Washington indicated that it did not preclude the possibility of intervention.<sup>3</sup> When President Eisenhower was asked whether under the Eisenhower Doctrine

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<sup>1</sup>Statement by Dr. Charles Malik, Minister of Foreign Affairs, May 13, 1958: Agwani, op.cit., pp. 58-59.

<sup>2</sup>Statement by Saeb Salam on behalf of the United National Front, May 14, 1958: Ibid., pp. 60-62.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 112-115.

he could take action in Lebanon even though aggression was not committed by a communist-controlled state, his answer was in the affirmative.

There were probably certain actions that we might be able to take that were beyond - or that were, yes, beyond just mere overt communist aggression, or I mean aggression from a communist controlled state.<sup>1</sup>

The next day the National Front answered President Eisenhower by condemning the Eisenhower Doctrine and contending that "the events taking place in Lebanon are internal ones, in which neither the United States nor any other state is concerned."<sup>2</sup>

On the national level, the Opposition by posing as a national movement with no strings attached to the United Arab Republic, appealed to the personal enemies of the President, who were not Arab nationalists, such as the Maronite Patriarch, Hamid Franjeh, Philip Takla and some other Christian personalities of the Constitutional Bloc. The contention of the National Front that the movement was national justified the co-operation of some Christian leaders with the Front to Christian public opinion.

Still the Opposition had to justify the unconstitutional nature of the movement--the insurrection. In this respect the Opposition challenged the legitimacy of the Government including the legislature. The House of Deputies, the Opposition contended, did not represent the

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<sup>1</sup>New York Times, 29 May, 1958, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup>Statement by Saeb Salam on behalf of the United National Front on May 29, 1958: Agwani, op.cit., pp. 87-88.

people, for it was an outcome of the "fraudulent" national elections of June 1957.<sup>1</sup> The Opposition, however, failed to substantiate its accusation on either procedural or substantive grounds. The elections were duly conducted according to the electoral law which was passed by the previous parliament whose legitimacy was not contested. It was widely believed that some gerrymandering took place, especially in the South, the Shouf and the districts of Beirut and that the Loyalists as well as the Opposition candidates bought some votes, especially in Beirut and the district of Zahleh.<sup>2</sup> Such matters were, however, by no means unusual in Lebanese elections and certainly fall short of supporting the charge of fraudulence.<sup>3</sup> There were no instances whereby it was proven that the Government violated the laws. The fact that Opposition candidates invariably succeeded in districts with a Sunni majority (Nasserite strongholds), such as Tripoli and Sidon, testifies that the elections were not forged. A good case could perhaps be made that Loyalist candidates, as always, were at an advantage. Gerrymandering is only one of the many ways through which the Government could assist its supporters without violating the law. This type of intervention was by no means a peculiar characteristic of the Government at that time. It is attributed to the

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<sup>1</sup>Qubain, op.cit., p. 58. See also al-Nahar, July 24, 1957. See also Jumblat, The Truth About the Lebanese Revolution, p. 83.

<sup>2</sup>al-Nahar, June 24, 1957. See also Ghassan Tweini, "The Peak of the Tragedy," al-Nahar, June 25, 1957. See also Ralph Crow, "Religious Sectarianism in the Lebanese Political System," Journal of Politics, XXIV (1962), pp. 489-520.

<sup>3</sup>In Lebanon candidates who lose the elections usually blame the Government for their failure and sometimes charge that the elections were rigged. In most cases such charges are simply made to safeguard the candidate's image before his following.

political system and ultimately to a strong particularistic attitude among the electorate which promotes the ability of the Government to manipulate a percentage of the vote by withholding or bestowing favors.

In a further effort to give internal justifications to the Crisis, the Opposition maintained that the President intended to renew his term in Office.<sup>1</sup> That the President had such intentions in mind before the Crisis had started is still open to conjecture. So far there is no evidence which establishes beyond doubt the intentions of the President in that respect. The Opposition, however, had good reasons to suspect that the President did not preclude the possibility of succeeding himself.<sup>2</sup> The silence of the President on that issue when it was subject to argument in the press and in almost all political circles in Lebanon could be interpreted as a tacit approval of what his loyal deputies were trying to do. When on December 17, a group of politicians asked President Chamoun to varify the widespread rumors that he intended to succeed himself, his answer was not assuring. He said that he had not changed his views regarding the inadvisability of amending the constitution, but that he would reconsider his attitude if a successor who could continue his policy was not assured.<sup>3</sup> Thereafter, it was generally believed that the President was inclined to succeed himself if an opportunity was made

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<sup>1</sup>See Statement by Saeb Salam, May 21, 1958; Desmond Stewart, Turmoil in Beirut (London: Allen Wingate, 1959), pp. 45-49.

<sup>2</sup>al-Nahar, May 1, 1968. See also al-Jareeda, May 5, 1958.

<sup>3</sup>al-Nahar, January 18, 1958.

available. President Chamoun in an interview with the author denied that he actually intended to succeed himself. When he was asked why he did not make an early statement to that effect, he answered that had he made an early statement, he would have played into the hands of the Opposition. The Opposition, he said, by insisting on an early statement to the effect that he did not desire to renew his term was actually aiming at reducing his influence (power of patronage) in the country.<sup>1</sup>

But, whatever were the real reasons behind the silence of the President, there is no doubt that by not clarifying his attitude towards that question he gave his opponents the opportunity to stir further discontent in the country and created suspicions of his motives in Lebanon and abroad.<sup>2</sup> Yet to say that the intention of the President to succeed himself set the stage for a crisis in Lebanon would be an exaggeration of reality. Acts of violence and sabotage, some of which were committed by Syrian agents, actually started in the autumn of 1956, long before the question of Presidential succession became a contested issue in the country.<sup>3</sup> Undoubtedly, the Opposition exaggerated the issue of presidential succession beyond reasonable proportions in order to cover up for the

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<sup>1</sup> Author's interview with President Chamoun at the headquarters of al-Nahar, Central Bank Street, August 27, 1968.

<sup>2</sup> President Eisenhower for example was suspicious of the motives of President Chamoun on the question of presidential succession. Dwight D. Eisenhower, The White House Years: Waging Peace, 1956-61, (London: Heinman, 1965), p. 265.

<sup>3</sup> See Premier Sulh's address to the nation on May 27, 1958. al-Jareeda, May 28, 1958.

external dimensions of the Crisis,<sup>1</sup> some of which are discussed in a succeeding section of this chapter.

One of the major points which was raised by the Opposition was that the Government violated the National Pact by subscribing to the Eisenhower Doctrine.<sup>2</sup> Opposition leaders maintained that Lebanon was being used by "imperialism" as an instrument for plots against the security of the Arab States.<sup>3</sup> Trying to prove that Lebanon's policy violated the Pact, they often referred in one form or another to the following quotation from the Cabinet Program of the First National Government on independence, October 13, 1943.

Our brothers in the Arab World do not want for Lebanon except what its proud patriotic sons want for themselves. We do not want it to be a base for imperialism, and they do not want it a path leading imperialism to them. We and they, therefore, want it a free, sovereign and independent nation.<sup>4</sup>

A proper interpretation of this quotation should be made in the light of the political context of 1943. The word "imperialism" then referred to French protection. It could not have meant otherwise, for the Arab States in 1943 were still all under British tutelage, and thus in no position to ask of Lebanon what they had not fulfilled themselves.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Statement by 'Abdulla al-Yafi; Lebanon, Official Gazette: Parliamentary Debates, 1st Ordinary Session, 7th Meeting, April 5, 1957, p. 939.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Lebanon, Official Gazette: Parliamentary Debates, 1st Ordinary Session, 3rd Meeting, October 7, 1943, p. 13. Author's translation.

<sup>5</sup>Statement by Ghassan Tweini, deputy from Beirut; Government of Lebanon, Official Gazette, 1st Ordinary Session, 7th Meeting, April 5, 1957, p. 947.

Even if the word imperialism referred to protection in general, the Opposition would still have been at a loss to prove that Lebanon, by subscribing to the Eisenhower Doctrine accepted a protectorate status. The United States under the Eisenhower Doctrine had no right to maintain military bases on Lebanese territory nor did it acquire any treaty privileges on Lebanese domain.<sup>1</sup>

The contention that the Government pursued a foreign policy which was in violation of the National Pact served the opposition in two ways: (1) it put foreign policy in a national context; (2) and accused the Government of violating matters of a constitutional nature, thus justifying the insurrection. The major objective was to discourage Western intervention, isolate the Government, and remove President Chamoun who was the pivot of pro-Western public opinion in the country. The removal of the President was also expected to dissipate official patronage hitherto a drawback to the Opposition leaders in governmental affairs. This was especially important to Kamal Jumblat, Ahmad al-Ass'ad, 'Abdallah al-Yafi and Saeb Salam who failed in the national elections of June, 1957.

##### 5. Internal Attempts for a Solution to the Crisis.

A few weeks before the insurrection started, the Government in an effort to calm the disturbances in the country tried to accommodate the leaders of the Opposition. Premier Sulh proposed to Kamal Jumblat that

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<sup>1</sup>Address by Sami al-Sulh to the people of Lebanon; July 12, 1958; Agwani, op.cit., p. 97.

he was willing to assist in passing a law for the enlargement of the legislature from 66 to 88.<sup>1</sup> The Premier was trying to adopt what the Opposition had advocated unsuccessfully before the national elections of June 1957. It was hoped that by creating 22 additional seats, some leaders of the Opposition would find their way into the house of Deputies and thus temper their criticisms of the Government. Jumblat, however, refused to accept the Premier's proposals. Instead he requested that the Premier resign his office.<sup>2</sup> Jumblat was hoping that President Chamoun would find difficulty in the appointment of a new Premier, for all Sunni leaders of a premiership calibre were in the ranks of the Opposition. A similar situation led to the resignation of President Khoury in 1952. Premier Sulh, realizing the implications of Jumblat's request, did not resign.<sup>3</sup>

During the Crisis some public figures who realized the gravity of the situation tried to find a solution to the ensuing dispute. What was termed as the "Third Force", an informal association of businessmen and public figures who dissociated themselves from the dispute, was quite active in this respect. Raymond Eddeh and 'Adel 'Ussayran, who had been in the Loyalist camp, were now also trying to mediate.<sup>4</sup> Pressure was brought to bear on the President to state in public that he was not seeking to renew his term in office. The President responded on May 21.

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<sup>1</sup>Sulh, Memoirs of Sami al-Sulh, pp. 504-05.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>al-Nahar, May 29, 1958. Author's interview with 'Adel 'Ussayran op.cit.



In a press conference held for the foreign press correspondents, President Chamoun stated:

"I did not mention at any time that I wanted to renew my term in office, nor did I say that I did not want it. Some of my friends have made some efforts in this respect and I did not encourage that at all. I shall not ask for the amendment of the constitution . . ."1

Six days later Premier Sulh precluded the possibility of renewing President Chamoun's term in office. On May 27, Premier Sulh in a speech to the nation, "swore" that President Chamoun did not discuss or mention the subject of renewal to him. He continued:

"The President did not ever request the amendment of the Constitution nor did the Government's Program contain anything of the sort. Moreover, the Government has not been nor will it be seeking such an amendment. It will not submit to parliament a bill to that effect and there hasn't been any sign that the Parliament intends to do so."2

In the meanwhile, Raymond Eddeh assisted by some prominent personalities of the "Third Force", had been searching for a compromise. It was proposed that President Chamoun should dismiss the Cabinet and appoint a new one under the premiership of General Shehab.<sup>3</sup> The new Government would then convene the House of Deputies and request the election of a president-elect, who would take office on the termination of President Chamoun's term, September 23, 1958.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Press conference by President Chamoun May 21, 1958; al-Nahar, May 22, 1958.

<sup>2</sup>Address by Sami al-Sulh to the people of Lebanon, May 27, 1958; al-Nahar, May 28, 1958.

<sup>3</sup>al-Nahar, May 29, 1958. Author's interview with 'Adel 'Ussayran, op.cit.

<sup>4</sup>Leila Meo, Lebanon: Improbable Nation, pp. 174-75. See also al-Nahar, 10, 11, 12 July, 1958.

President Chamoun was not opposed to this solution.<sup>1</sup> But his Prime Minister, Sami al-Sulh, opposed it on the grounds that Shehab was a Maronite and that the premiership was for the Sunni.<sup>2</sup> It was believed that Sulh was trying to avoid a situation whereby it would appear as if he were responsible for the Crisis. The leaders of the Opposition had no objection to the premiership of Shehab, but they demanded the immediate resignation of President Chamoun.<sup>3</sup> The Maronite Patriarch, in a last effort to resolve the issue, suggested that President Chamoun leave the country on the appointment of General Shehab as Premier.<sup>4</sup> His suggestion was not accepted by the President.

Towards the end of May it was becoming clear that, with the communities polarized, it was no longer possible for the President and the Opposition leaders to accommodate each other.

#### B. The External Dimensions of the Crisis.

##### 1. From May 9 to July 15.

The Lebanese Government convinced that the Crisis was a direct manifestation of intervention by the United Arab Republic in the domestic affairs of Lebanon, and realizing that its resources might not be sufficient to resolve the Crisis, discussed with the three Major Western

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<sup>1</sup>Chamoun's press conference May 21, 1958; al-Nahar, May 22, 1958.

<sup>2</sup>Statement by Patriarch Ma'oushi to foreign press correspondents, May 30, 1958; al-Nahar, June 1, 1958.

<sup>3</sup>al-Nahar, May 22, 1958.

<sup>4</sup>Statement by the Maronite Patriarch, Ma'oushi, to foreign press correspondents, May 30, 1958, al-Nahar, June 1, 1958.

Powers, France, Britain and the United States, the possibility of extending assistance to Lebanon in case of an imminent threat to the sovereignty and independence of the country. President Chamoun as early as May 13 summoned the ambassadors of the United States, France and Britain and inquired as to the possibility of rescue operations by the Three Powers. He reminded them of their commitments under the Tripartite Declaration of 1950 and pointed out to the U.S. Ambassador what he thought were the responsibilities of the United States under the Eisenhower Doctrine.<sup>1</sup> Two days later the ambassadors came back promising assistance to the Lebanese Government on official request,<sup>2</sup> provided that the course of events would establish that Lebanon was being subjected to aggression.<sup>3</sup> The Western Powers were not anxious to intervene, as direct intervention was viewed as a measure of last resort. John Foster Dulles, the American Secretary of State, expressed this attitude quite clearly in a news conference on July 1. He said:

"We do believe that the presence in Lebanon of foreign troops, however justifiable--and it is thoroughly justifiable from a legal and international law standpoint--is not as good a solution as for the Lebanese to find a solution themselves. It would be as you put it a measure of last resort."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Chamoun, Crise Au Moyen-Orient, p. 415.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>al-Nahar, May 14, 1958.

<sup>4</sup>Statement by Secretary of State, Dulles, at a press conference, July 1, 1958; U.S. Department of State, American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1958, (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1962), p. 952.

Underlying the reservations of Dulles were two considerations:

(1) the possible international repercussions which were expected to emanate from such intervention, (2) and a belief that the Lebanese Government had not yet committed its full resources into battle. Fadhil al-Jamali, Deputy Foreign Minister of Iraq, stated in reporting his discussions with Secretary Dulles to the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

"The opinion which acquired consensus over here is that President Chamoun is a coward. He must make better propaganda. The world should know that the situation is similar to infiltration in Korea. Moreover, he did not use all the powers and potentials at his disposal. Up till now martial law has not been declared and the Lebanese Army has not delivered powerful blows yet."<sup>1</sup>

But even though the three Major Western Powers were not anxious to intervene, they took the position that Lebanon was laboring under pressure from the U.A.R. and that the material and moral assistance forwarded by the U.A.R. to the Rebels in Lebanon should stop.<sup>2</sup> The United States and Britain preferred to act under the auspices of the United Nations if necessary, but at the same time they did not preclude the possibility of direct military action under Article 51 of the U.N. Charter.<sup>3</sup> This attitude coupled with reports that the United States was undertaking military preparations for

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<sup>1</sup>The full text of the cable is in: Iraq, The Iraqi Trials, 1958, III, pp. 1146-47.

<sup>2</sup>For the views of the three Major Western Powers on the accusation that the U.A.R. was intervening in Lebanese domestic affairs refer to the speeches of the French representative at the U.N. Mr. de Vaucelle, Mr. Lodge for the U.S. and Sir Pierson Dixon for Britain. Times (London), June 12, 1958, p. 10.

<sup>3</sup>Refer to statement by Secretary Dulles, at a press conference, July 1, 1958. U.S. Department of State, American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1958, p. 951. Refer also to excerpts of the British House of Commons Debates, June 25, 1958. Agwani, op.cit., pp. 112-115.

sudden military contingencies in the Middle East left no doubt that the Western Powers took a sombre view of the Crisis in Lebanon.<sup>1</sup> At stake in the Lebanese Crisis were vested Western interests in Lebanon as well as wider interests in the Arab World as a whole. If the Rebels supported as they were by the U.A.R. were to succeed, the prospects of the Arab Federal State would have been reduced as Nasser's prestige and influence in the Arab World would have been promoted. All this implied that the Western Powers would have had to reduce their power position and influence in the Middle East in order to accomodate Nasser. President Nasser was not a communist, and in fact unity between Syria and Egypt was regarded as a check to communist influence in Syria; but there was no question that his close collaboration with the Soviet Union implied that his success would amount to the promotion of Soviet prestige in the area.

It was, perhaps, with such thoughts in mind that Soviet officials, taking note of Western intentions, retaliated by accusing the Western Powers of intervention in matters which were of a domestic nature. The intervention of the Western Powers in Lebanese affairs, the Soviet Union warned, was likely to threaten the future of Lebanese independence as well as security and peace in the Middle East.<sup>2</sup>

The U.A.R. took a similar position to that of the U.S.S.R. The Crisis in Lebanon, the Government of the U.A.R. maintained, was solely internal. It complained that Lebanon was accusing it of intervention in

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<sup>1</sup>  
The New York Times, May 29, 1958, pp. 1, 4.

<sup>2</sup>Tass statement on the Crisis in Lebanon, May 19, 1958; Agwani, op.cit., pp. 103-04.

Lebanese affairs for the purpose of internationalizing a domestic crisis.<sup>1</sup> Following similar tactics to those which were used by the Opposition, President Nasser reduced the Crisis to the following factors: that the Government of Lebanon forged the national elections of June 1957, suppressed freedom, terrorized the people, encouraged corruption and violated the National Pact by supporting the Baghdad Pact, accepting the Eisenhower Doctrine and collaborating with the "imperialists."<sup>2</sup>

There was an element of truth in the U.A.R. point of view that the Crisis had deep domestic roots and that the rebels were largely Lebanese. The Lebanese Government did not contest these facts. The issue in contest was the intervention of the U.A.R. The Lebanese Government charged that the U.A.R. instigated the Lebanese against their constitutional government, fomented civil strife and supported the Rebels. Matched against evidence advanced by the Lebanese Government, the denials of the U.A.R. were not convincing.

Dr. Charles Malik, the Lebanese Minister of Foreign Affairs charged in the Security Council: (1) that the United Arab Republic supplied arms to the rebels, and provided them with training facilities on its territory; (2) that U.A.R. nationals residing in Lebanon participated in the Crisis; (3) that U.A.R. "Government elements" participated in subversion and terroristic activities on Lebanese territory; (4) and that

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<sup>1</sup>Statement by President Nasser to the correspondent of Egyptian Newspaper, al-Sha'b, June 29, 1958; Agwani, op.cit., pp. 115-17.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

the state controlled press and state owned broadcasting stations of the U.A.R. launched a violent campaign inciting the people of Lebanon to rebel against their constitutional government.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Malik fortified his charge by presenting court sentences indicting U.A.R. nationals; civilians, soldiers and officers, and by citing reports supplied to the Government by the Security forces. Arms bearing the marks of the Egyptian and Syrian armies, and paper clippings from the Syrian and Egyptian press were made available for the members of the Security Council. Hereunder are few samples of the evidence cited by Dr. Malik before the Security Council.

During the first week of the Crisis two sailboats were captured at sea off the Lebanese coast. Aboard the first boat were eleven Palestinians of the Egyptian region of Gaza with two machine guns, one revolver, 740 hand grenades and 4363 Egyptian Pounds. On May 28, a truck coming from Syria was seized near Tripoli. It was carrying the following arms: 88 "Bertha" mortars, 1 machine-gun, 1 anti-tank gun, 18 bomb shells "Energa", 12 jute bags containing ammunition, 60 cases containing hand grenades, 1 jute bag containing mortar shells, 60 rifles of which 22 were marked "Syrian Army", 28 boxes containing large size "Bertha" ammunition inscribed "The Egyptian Army".<sup>2</sup>

On May 13, a certain Mohammed Abdul Rahman Ja'bari of Aleppo, Syria, was arrested in Beirut. He confessed before a military tribunal that he was a Syrian Army Officer (serial No. 13748) attached to the First Battalion. He said that he was dispatched to Lebanon by his superior,

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<sup>1</sup>Speech by Dr. Charles Malik at the Security Council, June 6, 1958; Security Council Official Records, 823rd Meeting, pp. 1-22.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

Captain Najib Ma'rawi, head of the Deuxieme Bureau in Aleppo, to participate in subversion and terroristic activities. He also confessed that many others like him arrived in Lebanon clandestinely and separately, and then formed themselves into units of eleven.<sup>1</sup> On May 30, he was sentenced by the Lebanese military court to fifteen years hard labor.<sup>2</sup>

On May 15 a group of several hundred Syrians occupied the Lebanese village of Shab'a and destroyed roads and telephone lines connecting the village with other parts of Lebanon. Five days later, May 29, the assailants opened fire at Hasbayya where they were met by the state police and forced to retreat towards the Syrian borders.<sup>3</sup>

These are only a few of the numerous instances implicating the U.A.R. Umar Lutfi, the representative of the United Arab Republic at the Security Council, contested the validity of the evidence cited by Malik.<sup>4</sup> Gun running, he said, was a usual affair in Lebanon, and it happened that some arms were smuggled from U.A.R. territories. He denied the radio attacks by citing some instances when U.A.R. radio simply reported

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<sup>1</sup>A unit of eleven in military terms is a squad.

<sup>2</sup>The proceedings of the court and the sentences issued against Ja'bari and one other of his colleagues, Mohammad Yunis Asfari of Idlib, Syria, were published in: al-Nahar, June 1, 1958.

<sup>3</sup>Speech by Malik at the Security Council, June 6, 1958; Security Council Official Records, 823 Meeting, pp. 1-22.

<sup>4</sup>Speech by Mr. Umar Lutfi, U.A.R. Representative at the U.N. before the Security Council, June 10, 1958. Security Council Official Records, 824th Meeting, pp. 2-13.



what the opposition papers in Lebanon had published. His defense, however, was incomplete. Lutfi, for example, failed to refute some quotations presented by Dr. Malik which were taken from programs and commentaries prepared by the staff of the U.A.R. broadcasting stations, and failed to explain how it was that the U.A.R. radio quoted only editorials of the Lebanese Opposition papers. He dismissed court evidence against Syrian army privates and officers on the grounds that they were U.A.R. nationals who had carried their service cards on them while seeking work or residing in Lebanon. He failed to explain how it was that the black market in Lebanon made available mortars, anti-aircraft guns, anti-tank guns and other types of sophisticated military equipment; and how instructions were found on gun runners from U.A.R. territory indicating the place and time to use the smuggled explosives,<sup>1</sup> and why raids took

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<sup>1</sup>As an example of the written instructions, hereunder is the text of a note found on Mr. Louis De San, the Belgian Consul-General in Damascus, who was caught smuggling arms from Syria to Lebanon on May 12, 1958:

Hamid; Tackle Gendarmerie and Police Patrols with bullets--take away their arms even in an individual manner, continue shooting day and night. It is necessary to blow up the Tawili Market, Hamra Street, Sadat Street, and the Presidential Palace. Kill Badawi al-Jabal, Husni al-Barazi and any other persons you may desire. It is necessary to detonate hand grenades by throwing them from roof tops into the streets. Set fire to some cars at night. It is essential to block all roads and exits leading . . . It is all over in the regions except Beirut. Do whatever you like. Camille Chamoun proposed a truce on the authorities here. They refused and asked him to leave Lebanon immediately. Act in the most violent manner, may God be with you. Catch up with Tripoli and take it as an example. (signed) Saleh.

The note as translated by the author was quoted from the Memoirs of Premier Sulh; Sulh, Memoirs of Sami al-Sulh, pp. 554-55.

place from Syrian territory on Lebanese border villages.<sup>1</sup>

Robert Murphy, Eisenhower's Special Emissary to Lebanon, reported that the American forces in Lebanon on tapping telephone lines between Syria and the Rebel quarters in Beirut, were assured that the U.A.R. intervened in the Crisis.<sup>2</sup> President Chamoun in his memoirs quoted two letters from ex-President Peron of Argentine stating that the Argentinian advisors in the Egyptian government participated in official discussions on ways and means of fomenting civil strife and promoting the Crisis in Lebanon.<sup>3</sup> Nawaf Karami, one of Jumblat's assistants during the Crisis, reported in his book, The Reality of the Lebanese Revolution (1959) that on May 27, the Rebels in the Shouf district received a reinforcement from Syria, "Majmu'at al-Sultan", under the command of Syrian Army Lieutenants, Hassan Rislani and Ghalib Sayf.<sup>4</sup> It was also well known that Shawkat Shuqair, ex-Syrian Chief of Staff, was the Commander-in-Chief of the Rebel forces in this district.

Evidence available supports the thesis of the Lebanese Government that the United Arab Republic intervened in Lebanese domestic affairs and fomented civil strife against the constitutional government. That the

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<sup>1</sup>Refer to the text of Dr. Charles Malik's Speech at the Security Council on June 10, 1958. Security Council Official Records, 824th Meeting, pp. 13-21.

<sup>2</sup>Robert Murphy, Diplomat Among Warriors: Memoirs (London: Collins, 1964), p. 490.

<sup>3</sup>The texts of the letters are in: Chamoun, Crise Au Moyen-Orient, p. 413.

<sup>4</sup>Nawaf and Nadia Karami, The Reality of the Lebanese Revolution (Beirut: Karam Press, 1959), pp. 152-64.

United Arab Republic did not take any measures to stop gun running from its territories or stop hostile broadcasts, served as an additional factor in favor of the Government's thesis. The final word, however, will have to be reserved until the official files of the U.A.R. are opened.

While the U.A.R. was sending assistance to the Rebel forces, the Arab Federal State was in turn giving assistance to the Government and to the Loyalists with the knowledge or approval of the Government.<sup>1</sup> Shipments of light arms ostensibly for the use of the security forces were also rushed by air from the United States and Turkey.<sup>2</sup>

The attempt of the Nasserites in Lebanon to overthrow the Government was not an isolated case. The governments of Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Libya, and Tunisia had experienced at one time or another similar attempts of a milder nature.<sup>3</sup> The Government of Iraq was aware that Nasserism had support among the Iraqi people and that stern security measures were needed to control it. Consequently, it was feared that the success of the insurrection in Lebanon would precipitate a chain reaction in the rest of the Arab World, limit the prospects for the Arab Federal State and possibly spell the destruction of Iraq.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Review the following cables from the Central Military Intelligence in Baghdad to the Iraqi Military Attache in Beirut: No. 322, date 17/4/1958; No. 327, date 20/4/1958; No. 367, date 4/5/1958; No. 393, date 8/5/1958. The texts of these cables among others are quoted in: Iraq, Iraqi Trials, 1958, II pp. 490-93, 520-21.

<sup>2</sup>Qubain, op.cit., p. 136. See also al-Nahar, May 18, 1958.

<sup>3</sup>Press conference by President Chamoun to foreign press correspondents, May 21, 1958. al-Jareeda, May 22, 1958.

<sup>4</sup>Review the following cables by Fadhil al-Jamali: Cable dated 13/5/1958 to the Iraqi Embassy in Beirut; Cable dated 20/5/1958 to the Iraqi Embassy in Beirut; Cable dated 11/5/1958 to the Iraqi Embassy in

Working under the impact of an Arab Nationalist ideology, both the United Arab Republic and the Arab Federal State viewed the success of either one of them as a loss to the other. The Hashimites were already alarmed with the union between Syria and Egypt. A further success in Lebanon was expected to consolidate Egypt's foothold in the Arab East and shift the battle-ground into their own territory.<sup>1</sup> The problem of the Hashimites was not made easier by the temporary withdrawal of Saudi Arabia from active opposition to the United Arab Republic. The unmasked conspiracy of King Sa'ud against the U.A.R. in February and his plot to assassinate Nasser on the eve of the Union, damaged his image at home and abroad. This blunder coupled with gross inefficiency in the management of Saudi affairs, shook the power position of the King. Under pressure from the Royal Family, King Sa'ud reluctantly appointed Crown Prince Feisal as Prime Minister with extraordinary powers. In view of the jealousy which existed between Crown Prince Feisal and the King, Feisal's appointment as Prime Minister amounted to a palace coup in Saudi Arabia. As soon as Feisal was in power, he hastened to placate Nasser and veered Saudi Arabia away from the center of inter-Arab conflicts.<sup>2</sup>

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Beirut. The texts of the cables are in: Iraq, Iraqi Trials, 1958, III, pp. 1137, 1138-39, 1142.

<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>M. Perlmann, "Fusion and Confusion: Arab Mergers and Re-alignment," Middle Eastern Affairs, IX (April, 1958), p. 130. See also Benjamin Shwadran, "Union of Jordan with Iraq and Recoil," Middle Eastern Affairs, IX (December, 1958), p. 380. Documents implicating King Sa'ud in a conspiracy against the regime in Syria and in a plot to kill Nasser were released by the Syrian Deuxieme Bureau to the press on March 6. Abdul Hamid al-Sarraaj, the head of the Syrian Deuxieme Bureau and President Nasser accused King Sa'ud of the plot. See al-Nahar, March 6, 7, and 8, 1958.

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It was with such expectations in mind that Iraq extended aid to the Lebanese Government and counselled Beirut to commit the army and crush the insurrection. But inasmuch as the Government wanted to do that, it was aware of the risks involved in the Iraqi advice. An attempt to crush the insurrection involved the risk of a full civil war which could have possibly spelled the destruction of what the Lebanese Government was trying to preserve--the sovereignty and independence of Lebanon. There was a slight, but nevertheless, important difference between the objectives of Iraq and those of the Government of Lebanon. To Iraq, the destruction of Nasser was the major objective; the preservation of Lebanon's independence was only one of the means to that end. To the Lebanese nationalist government in Beirut, the reverse was true. The sovereignty and independence of Lebanon was the ultimate end; reducing Nasser to size was only one of the means.

By pushing the Crisis to the point of a civil war, the Lebanese Government would have risked the end, independence of Lebanon for the means, reducing Nasser to size. Iraq had made it clear that its armed forces were available for assistance, and in fact requested the Government to admit Iraqi troops into Lebanese territory. The President, however, dismissed the request.<sup>1</sup> He was not sure, as he put it to Iraq, that the Iraqi army would be prepared to fight other Arabs.<sup>2</sup> President

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<sup>1</sup>Document No. 15 dated 21/6/1958; Fadhil al-Jamali, "Comment on the cable of the Prime Minister of the Arab Federal State," Ibid., p. 1145.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

Chamoun stated to the author that he was sincere about these doubts and that the coup in Iraq on July 14 proved that he was right.<sup>1</sup> There were, however, other questions which could not be mentioned to the Iraqis, but which were quite important to Lebanon. The presence of Iraqi troops on Lebanese territory, raised the question: Who could guarantee that they would leave Lebanon when the time comes? The record of the Hashimites in this respect was not assuring. The fertile Crescent Plan, the Greater Syria plan, the grudging surrender of the Four Qadas to Lebanon in 1920 were well known. These considerations were perhaps partly responsible for the reservations of the Lebanese Government.

Apparently such reservations were not welcomed in Baghdad and Washington. Dr. Jamali on reporting his discussions with Dulles about the situation in Lebanon, cabled the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs on June 25, as follows:

We discussed thoroughly the converging danger on the Middle East by Nasserism; that the battle for Lebanon would decide either the success or fall of Nasserism. Nasserism should not be allowed to succeed under any circumstances. The elimination of freedom in Lebanon means the disappearance of all the remaining states in the Middle East. The opinion which acquired consensus over here is that President Chamoun is a coward. He must make better propaganda. The World should know that the situation is similar to infiltration in Korea. Moreover, he did not use all the powers and potentials at his disposal. Up till now martial law has not been declared and the Lebanese Army has not delivered powerful blows yet.<sup>2</sup>

Unwilling to push the Crisis to the limits of a civil war and to take up Iraq in its offer of sending troops to Lebanon, the Lebanese

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<sup>1</sup> Author's interview with President Chamoun at the headquarters of al-Nahar, Central Bank Street, Beirut, August 29, 1967.

<sup>2</sup> Cable by Jamali to the Iraqi Government, dated 25/6/1958; Iraq, Iraqi Trials, 1958, III, pp. 1146-47.

Government appealed to the Arab League and the United Nations. On May 21 a complaint was lodged at the Secretariat of the Arab League accusing the U.A.R. of massive intervention in Lebanese domestic affairs. The next day a similar complaint was raised in the Security Council.<sup>1</sup>

Little was expected of the Arab League. The position of the U.A.R. at the Council of the Arab League was similar to that of the U.S. or the U.S.S.R. at the Security Council. The Council of the Arab League was hardly in a position to condemn or pass sanctions against a member state and certainly in no position to apply sanctions against the U.A.R., the largest member.

It was with this opinion in mind that the Lebanese Government raised a complaint in the Security Council, before the Arab League had had a chance to discuss the Lebanese complaint. Lebanon, however, tactfully requested the Security Council on three separate occasions to postpone action on its complaint for short periods some of which were no more than twenty-four hours. This tactic of piecemeal postponement saved precious time by precluding attempts to stall discussions at the Council of the Arab League, and at the same time circumvented potential criticism that Lebanon by-passed the Arab League.

As expected, the Arab League faltered; its Draft Resolution of June 5 was more in favor of the U.A.R. than Lebanon. Without touching on the issue of intervention, the Draft Resolution of the Council

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<sup>1</sup>U.N. Document S/4007, May 23, 1957.



requested the withdrawal of the Lebanese complaint from the Security Council and appealed "to the various Lebanese groups to end the disturbances."<sup>1</sup> Thus the Draft Resolution implied that the Crisis was internal and indirectly blamed Lebanon for complaining to the United Nations. The Lebanese Government rejected the Draft and immediately requested the Security Council to act.

The Security Council was in no position to condemn the United Arab Republic either. Divided on a straight East-West basis, condemnations or sanctions against the U.A.R. were expected to be met by a Soviet veto. The way out of the deadlock was a Swedish Draft Resolution which gave no opinion on the substance of the case but which requested the Secretary General to dispatch a United Nations Observation Group to Lebanon (UNOGIL) "to ensure that there was no illegal infiltration of personnel or supply of arms or other material across the Lebanese borders."<sup>2</sup>

During the first week of July, the Government realized that the great expectations built on the presence of UNOGIL were misplaced. UNOGIL submitted its First Report to the Security Council on July 3. The Report stated at length the numerous difficulties which were met in the field: for example, that the observers were not allowed free access to Rebel-held areas; that the Rebels held 324 kilometers out of a 342 kilometer border with Syria, for the most part rugged and mountainous; that

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<sup>1</sup>The text of the Draft Resolution is in: U.S. Department of State, American Foreign Policy; Current Documents, 1958, pp. 940-41.

<sup>2</sup>Text of the Swedish Draft Resolution is in: Security Council Official Records, 13th year, Supplement for April, May and June, 1958, p. 47.

the observers were deficient in number (125) and poorly equipped; that air surveys were conducted during daylight hours only; and that distinction between people residing on both sides of the borders was not easy, they spoke the same language, maintained similar customs and had similar physical features.<sup>1</sup> Having stated these difficulties UNOGIL reported its observations of men at arms and the types of arms they carried. Then it concluded:

It has not been possible to establish from where these arms were acquired . . . nor was it possible to establish if any of the men observed had infiltrated from outside; there is little doubt, however, that the vast majority was in any case composed of Lebanese.<sup>2</sup>

Hampered as it was with numerous difficulties, UNOGIL was in no position to report otherwise.<sup>3</sup> The report, however, served the purposes of the Opposition, the U.A.R. and the U.S.S.R., who hastened to refute the charge of massive infiltration by pointing out that no such thing was observed by UNOGIL. The Government and the Western Powers, however,

<sup>1</sup>For a full appreciation of the difficulties which were met by UNOGIL refer to the press conference of Mr. Galo Plaza, the Chairman of UNOGIL, July 5, 1958. One of the major difficulties which was not mentioned in the Report but stated by Plaza was that the army did not secure for UNOGIL the patrols necessary for observing the whole border areas; al-Nahar, July 6, 1958.

<sup>2</sup>The text of the First Report of UNOGIL is in: Security Council Official Records, 13th year, supplement for July, August and September 1958, pp. 3-13. In the Second Report, July 30, UNOGIL, better equipped than before was able to detect some infiltration. The text is in: U.S. Department of State, American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1958, pp. 1006-09.

<sup>3</sup>For an evaluation of UNOGIL's report refer to the editorial of Michael Abu Jawdeh, "the Caricature Report," See also Ghassan Tweini, "That Report," al-Nahar, July 5 and 6, 1958. See also communique by Dr. Albert Mukhayber, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, which was the official evaluation of the report. al-Nahar, July 9, 1958.

insisted that infiltration continued unabated.<sup>1</sup> The report of UNOGIL coming on top of other information raised to President Chamoun by Dr. Charles Malik and Dr. Fadhil al-Jamali to the effect that Secretary General Hammarskjold was personally sympathetic towards Egypt and unenthusiastic about the Lebanese complaint, created a mood of disillusionment in Beirut with the effectiveness of the United Nations.<sup>2</sup>

Four days before UNOGIL's report was read before the Security Council, Fadhil al-Jamali sent a letter to President Chamoun pointing out that, since under the circumstances the United Nations was paralyzed, foreign assistance was necessary for the "redemption" of Lebanon from Nasserism and Communism. Jamali continued: "It is preferable that such assistance come from an Arab State," and concluded that "it is necessary to find a legal way for Arab intervention." Jamali then proposed three alternative plans to the Lebanese President: (1) the adherence of Lebanon to the Arab Federal State; (2) the conclusion of an alliance; (3) or the conclusion of a military agreement between Lebanon and the Arab Federal State. Jamali pointed out that in his opinion plan one was the most preferable, but if that was not possible plan two or three would suffice.<sup>3</sup> From the documents available it is not known what was President Chamoun's answer to this letter, but it would seem that he was disinterested in

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<sup>1</sup>For the official reactions to UNOGIL's report in London and Paris, see al-Nahar, July 5, 1958. See also The New York Times, July 7, 1958, pp. 1 and 4.

<sup>2</sup>Refer to cable by Dr. Malik to President Chamoun. Chamoun, Crise Au Moyen-Orient, p. 418.

<sup>3</sup>Letter from Jamali to President Chamoun, dated 29/6/1958. Iraqi Trials, 1958, III, pp. 1141.

such proposals.

Meanwhile Iraq was assessing its opportunities in Syria. On February 5, a few days after Syria and Egypt had declared their intention to unite, the Iraqi General Staff had laid down a detailed blueprint for the invasion of Syria--Operation Hawk. According to this plan pro-Iraqi Syrian elements were supposed to stage an uprising against the Syrian government; thus providing Iraq with the pretext for armed intervention. Troops were supposed to converge on Syria from two points: Singar district to the North East and Jordan to the South. Iraqi troops stationed at Mafrak in Jordan were assigned the task of spearheading the Jordanian attack from the South. A detachment of about 2500 armed men was scheduled to land secretly, but with the knowledge of the Lebanese government, in Northern Lebanon and head North to the Alawite Syrian region in the North West of Syria, apparently to block Egyptian reinforcements by sea.<sup>1</sup>

During the second week of July, it appeared that Syria was heading for trouble. The exchange of fire across the Syrian-Israeli borders was becoming more frequent.<sup>2</sup> On July 8, it was reported that the Islamic member states of the Baghdad Pact were preparing to act.<sup>3</sup> They scheduled a meeting on the 15th of July at Istanbul to discuss the situa-

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<sup>1</sup>For full details see the text of Operation Hawk; Iraq, Iraqi Trials, 1958, II, pp. 439-40.

<sup>2</sup>al-Nahar, July 4, 1958.

<sup>3</sup>al-Nahar, July 8, 1958.

tion in the Middle East and in particular Lebanon.<sup>1</sup> An official spokesman of the Arab Federal State stated in Istanbul:

"The serious events taking place in Lebanon, the development of the situation in that country, prompted the Islamic members of the Baghdad Pact to concert their policy, to take urgent measures for the preservation of the status quo in the Middle East and to support the constitutional governments in that region."<sup>2</sup>

On the same day it was reported that Iraq declared the border area around Singar district off bounds to civilians to the depth of 100 kilometers.<sup>3</sup> On July 10 the press reported a stern warning by Dr. Jamali. He said:

"Any change in Lebanon to the effect of introducing a radical change in Lebanese policy which is based on non-alignment among the Arab States would disturb the peace in the surrounding countries. The safety of Lebanon is a part of the safety of Iraq and the Arab Federal State."<sup>4</sup>

In the meanwhile, Turkey had concentrated troops on its Southern borders. al-Nahar published a report by the Syrian paper al-Manar stating that there was a plan to converge on Syria from the region of Abu-Kamal.<sup>5</sup> Turkey and Israel, it was reported, were assigned the task

<sup>1</sup>al-Nahar, July 8, 1958.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>al-Nahar, July 10, 1958.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Abu Kamal is the Syrian border district contiguous to the district of Singar in Iraq which was according to the blueprints of Operation Hawk one of the points where Iraqi troops were supposed to converge on Syria.

of diverting the attention of the Syrian forces. The Western Powers were to stand by ready to block Soviet intervention.<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile, Iraq had requested again permission for the entry of Iraqi troops to Lebanon. President Chamoun, who had previously hedged on that question, was now prepared to give it serious consideration. Having lost hope of the effectiveness of the United Nations, the President realized that without a radical change in Syria, the Crisis in Lebanon could not be overcome.<sup>2</sup> On June 12 the cabinet met to discuss the question of admitting Iraqi troops to Lebanon, but it could not arrive at a decision reportedly due to the ardent opposition of Pierre Eddeh, the Minister of Finance. The discussion was adjourned to the next meeting on June 14.<sup>3</sup>

It was not surprising that the opinion of Pierre Eddeh, one of the leading Christian figures, carried weight with the President. The Government during the Crisis was relying almost solely on Christian support, and Christian suspicions could very well be roused about the entry of Iraqi troops to Lebanon. Although the Christians welcomed the support of Iraq in order to dispel the danger emanating from the U.A.R., they were reserved about admitting Iraqi troops to Lebanon, for the ambitions of Iraq in the Fertile Crescent were well known. It was probably with the Christian attitude in mind that President Chamoun took the opinion of

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<sup>1</sup>al-Nahar, July 10, 1958.

<sup>2</sup>Chamoun, op.cit., p. 418.

<sup>3</sup>Fuad Ammoun, The Foreign Policy of Lebanon (Beirut: The Arab Publishing Agency, 1959), p. 68.

Pierre Eddeh into consideration.<sup>1</sup>

On July 14, the government of Iraq, apparently, tried to execute another step of Operation Hawk. Two armored units of the 20th Brigade under the command of Brigadier General Abdul Karim Qassem, and Colonel Abd al-Salam'Arif, were ordered to move into position at Mafraq in Jordan; instead they moved on Baghdad. On that day, while the Lebanese Cabinet was presumably occupied with the question of admitting Iraqi troops to Lebanon, the news filtered out of Baghdad: Iraq was declared a Republic and thus the bulwark of the Western Powers in the Arab World was gone with the fall of the Monarchy.

2. From July 15 to September 23.

The morning of the 14th the Rebels were jubilant; the Government and the Loyalists were overwhelmed with fear. "Radio Free Lebanon", a clandestine radio station operated by the Rebels, broadcast that the Rebels would not settle short of complete victory.<sup>2</sup> President Chamoun immediately sent an official request for American troops.<sup>3</sup> At two p.m. on July 15, the first detachment of American marines landed on the sandy beaches just south of Beirut and occupied the International Airport at Khaldeh.

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<sup>1</sup>President Chamoun published in his memoirs the text of the Cabinet's Decision of June 16 which gave the President the right to call on military assistance from friendly powers. The understanding was, however, that the friendly powers were those of the Tripartite Declaration--France, Britain and the United States. Chamoun, op.cit., pp. 420-21.

<sup>2</sup>Qubain, op.cit., p. 115.

<sup>3</sup>Eisenhower, op.cit., p. 270.

The American government justified the landing under Art. 51 of the U.N. Charter and added that as soon as the United Nations could dispatch troops to Lebanon, the American forces would withdraw.<sup>1</sup> There was, however, much more to the American landing than just Lebanon. The U.S. and Britain were worried about the setbacks to Western interests in the whole area. There was the question of oil interests in Iraq, the ability of Jordan to withstand pressure, and American prestige to think about. President Eisenhower was under the impression that Nasser was of the opinion that the United States would not fulfill its commitments. American troops were there to show him otherwise,<sup>2</sup> and, of course, to participate in wider scale operations in the region if necessary. The United States could ill afford to leave Lebanon alone while it was known that subscription to the Eisenhower Doctrine was among the principal factors which brought about the Crisis.<sup>3</sup> If it did, then small states in the region and elsewhere were expected to lose faith in the U.S.

Nasser immediately charged aggression and called on the people of Lebanon to resist the "imperialistic" Americans. Similarly he called on the Jordanians, who had received a British detachment of paratroops, to strike at "imperialistic" Britain.<sup>4</sup> The Soviet Union, not unexpectedly

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<sup>1</sup>Statement by President Eisenhower, July 15, 1958; U.S. Department of State, American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1958, pp. 959-60.

<sup>2</sup>Eisenhower, op.cit., p. 290.

<sup>3</sup>Murphy, op.cit., p. 485.

<sup>4</sup>Statement by President Nasser 16 July 1958, Agwani, op.cit., p. 272.



cried aggression and warned of serious consequences.<sup>1</sup> None, however, doubted that the Western Powers were serious, and as such no counter military measures were taken by the Soviet Bloc or Nasser.

In Lebanon the Christians received the landing with jubilation, the Moslems with grief.<sup>2</sup> The Government was relieved, but General Shehab was apparently distressed. On the 16th of July while a company of American troops was moving from the International Airport at Khalde towards the harbor of Beirut, they suddenly discovered that they were at gun point with 13 Lebanese tanks. Taken by surprise, the American Ambassador McClintock with the assistance of President Chamoun hurriedly summoned the General, and in the course of an hour's time induced him not only to give orders for a cease fire, but also to send escorts with the American troops into the city.<sup>3</sup> Some commentators believed that it was a narrow aversion of a clash between the two forces;<sup>4</sup> nevertheless, the sudden change of mind by the General raises the question whether he was really determined to fight or whether he was conducting his army in

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<sup>1</sup>Statement by the Soviet Government, 16 July, 1968: Ibid., pp. 272-75.

<sup>2</sup>Murphy, op.cit., pp. 491-92. See also Pierre Gmayyil's address to the Lebanese, "The Battle for Our Destiny Enters a Critical Stage," and the address of President Chamoun, al-'Amal, July 16, 1958. See also the interview given by Pierre Gmayyil to the press correspondent of the Revue du Liban, "Lebanon Had Asked for Foreign Troops so That They May Assist It to Repel Foreign Intervention," al-'Amal, July 9, 1958.

<sup>3</sup>Charles Thayer, Diplomat (New York: Harper & Brother Publishers, 1959), pp. 33-35. See also Murphy, op.cit., p. 489.

<sup>4</sup>Qubain, op.cit., pp. 117-118.

such a way as to make of himself an indispensable choice in any compromise between the factions to the conflict including the U.S.

The United National Front, speaking for the Opposition, accused the President of being a traitor, charged the U.S. with aggression and requested the Rebels to resist the "invaders".<sup>1</sup> There were, however, no incidents between the Marines and Rebels; both sides avoided one another. In a few days it became clear that the American marines were not in Lebanon to crush the insurrection, but that the American government was determined to preserve the sovereignty of Lebanon and isolate the Crisis.<sup>2</sup> This position limited the expectations of the United Arab Republic and the Rebels. Thereafter, infiltrations from the U.A.R. decreased, violence subsided and the pan-Arab characteristics of the Crisis became less pronounced in so far as a settlement depended on internal negotiations between the contending factions. But while the landing of American troops had a sobering impact on the U.A.R. and the Rebels, the circumstances which led to the landing had, likewise, a sobering impact on the United States and the Loyalists. The United States in view of the developments in the area realised that it was not realistic to press on the Arab States for alignment with the Western Powers. Accordingly, it had to settle for a compromise which would fall short of alignment but which would

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<sup>1</sup>Address by Sa'eb Salam to the people, July 15, 1958; Agwani, op.cit., pp. 293-94.

<sup>2</sup>Statement by the U.S. representative, Henry Cabot Lodge in the U.N. Security Council, July 16, 1958; Murphy, op.cit., p. 493. Dulles had expressed the interest of the United States in the preservation of Lebanon's independence as early as July 1, 1958: al-'Amal, July 2, 1958. See also press conference by Dulles, U.S. Department of State, American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1958, pp. 938-39.

at the same time preserve the basic characteristics of the Lebanese system. In other words the subscription of Lebanon to the Eisenhower Doctrine was regarded as useless in so far as it could not be sustained by the country. The Loyalists were, moreover, brought to reckon with the fact that they could not have held out on their own had it not been for American intervention, and that, therefore, the Opposition should be accommodated.

With the stage set for a compromise, Robert Murphy, Eisenhower's Special Emissary to Lebanon, set out to find a solution. After several consultations with all the factions concerned, he suggested that the House of Deputies should convene to elect a President-elect who would take over from President Chamoun on the termination of his term in September.<sup>1</sup> This solution had been suggested earlier by Raymond Eddeh and rejected by the Opposition on the grounds that the immediate resignation of President Chamoun was necessary.<sup>2</sup> The Opposition took the same position in principle towards Murphy's proposals, but it was more of a face-saving device than an actual policy. The fact was that they agreed to elect a President-elect, although, they had no assurances that President Chamoun would leave office before the termination of his term in September. The presence of American troops might have contributed to the success of Murphy where Eddeh had previously failed.

Several candidates were surveyed for the Presidency but the choice was finally narrowed down to two: Raymond Eddeh and General Shehab.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Murphy, op.cit., pp. 490-96. See also Qubain, op.cit., p. 156.

<sup>2</sup>Supra., pp. 349-50.

<sup>3</sup>Other candidates who were initially considered for the

Neither one was a rank-and-file member of either faction, the Loyalists or the Opposition, but it was clear where the sympathies of each candidate lay. Raymond Eddeh did not arm his supporters, but his brother, Pierre, was a member of the Cabinet. As to the General, his attitude during the Crisis left no doubt that he did not sympathise with the Government.

The choice between Eddeh and Shehab was rather a difficult matter for there were extra-parliamentary factors to consider. President Chamoun, who was in favor of Eddeh, still commanded the majority of the House of Deputies despite the Crisis and the chaotic conditions in the country. If the Opposition were to settle for elections without conditions, the chances were that Eddeh would have carried the majority in the House. Chamoun, however, had one point of weakness, his majority in the House could not either maintain or restore order in the country without the active co-operation of the Opposition. It was on this point that the Opposition capitalized insisting that they would not attend the meeting of the House unless they were assured that Shehab would be elected.<sup>1</sup>

Finally, and not without American pressure, President Chamoun was induced to withdraw his support of Eddeh.<sup>2</sup> On July 31st the House of Deputies convened for the first time since the beginning of the Crisis. Shehab was elected President on the second ballot with a majority of

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Presidency were: Bishara al-Khoury, Salim Lahhoud, Farid Cosma, Iliyya Abu Jawdeh, Yusif Hitti, Jawad Bulus and Alfred Naqqash: al-Nahar, July 27, 1958.

<sup>1</sup>al-Nahar, July 28, 29 and 30, 1958.

<sup>2</sup>al-'Amal, July 31, 1958.

48 votes out of 66.<sup>1</sup> With the election of Shehab as President-elect the country began to return gradually to normal as the fighting came to a standstill and traffic resumed movement in and out of Rebel-held districts. The Rebels, however, continued to deny their territories to the security forces until Shehab was installed in office, September 24, 1958.

Meanwhile, the events of the Middle East still occupied the center of international attention. The Soviet Union was maneuvering for a major powers' summit conference outside the United Nations to restore order in the area and arrange for the withdrawal of American and British troops from Jordan and Lebanon.<sup>2</sup> The United States and Britain were not willing to give the Soviet Union the chance for gaining credit for a settlement, and so they insisted that all arrangements to restore order in the Middle East would have to be done within the framework of the United Nations.<sup>3</sup>

On August 8 the General Assembly met in a special session to discuss the situation in the Middle East. The American government held that American troops were in Lebanon in response to the request of a friendly government subjected to external intervention in its internal

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<sup>1</sup>al-Nahar, August 1, 1958. See also Qubain, op.cit., p. 156.

<sup>2</sup>Letter from Chairman Khrushchev to President Eisenhower, July 19, 1958; U.S. Department of State, Bulletin, (August 11, 1958), pp. 231-33.

<sup>3</sup>Letter from President Eisenhower to Chairman Khrushchev, July 22, 1958, Ibid., pp. 229-31.

affairs. Two conditions were laid down for the withdrawal of American troops: (1) the dispatch of a United Nations' force to insure against external intervention in Lebanese affairs, (2) or a formal request by the constitutional government in Lebanon that the presence of American troops was no longer necessary.<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile President Chamoun and his Foreign Minister, Malik, maintained that the presence of American troops in Lebanon was necessary.<sup>2</sup> The door was, however, left open for the replacement of American troops by U.N. forces. The Government was also considering prospects of internationalizing Lebanon, i.e. declaring the country neutral (similar to Switzerland) and acquiring in return a guarantee of its independence by the members of the United Nations.<sup>3</sup> This prospect embittered the Arab nationalists who felt that it would give Lebanon a special status and hence reduce the chances of Arab unity in the future.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Replies made by President Eisenhower to questions asked at a news conference, August 6, 1958; U.S. Department of State, American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1958, pp. 1023-025. Also address by President Eisenhower before the Third Emergency Special Session of the U.N. General Assembly, August 13, 1958, U.N. General Assembly Official Records, Third Emergency Special Session, 733 Plenary Meeting, pp. 7-10.

<sup>2</sup>Letter from President Chamoun to President Eisenhower, 21 July 1958; Agwani, op.cit., p. 238. Also press conference by President Chamoun August 18, 1958; Ibid., pp. 378-84.

<sup>3</sup>The Cabinet arrived at a decision for the internationalization of Lebanon on August 11, 1958; al-'Amal, August 12, 1958, al-Nahar, August 13, 1958. For the prospects of an international guarantee to Lebanon see, Michael, Abu Jawdeh, "Towards the Internationalization of Lebanon," al-Nahar, August 12, 1958.

<sup>4</sup>For the reaction of the Opposition to the prospects of internationalizing Lebanon see statements by Saeb Salam and 'Abdullah al-Yaffi, al-Nahar, August 14, 1958.

The Soviet Bloc and the United Arab Republic did not subscribe to the American view. Starting with the assumption that there had been no original intervention in Lebanese affairs, they demanded the immediate withdrawal of the American troops who, according to them, had no business to be there in the first place.<sup>1</sup> Polemics, however, did not change the immediate political facts. American and British troops were not withdrawing before the security of Lebanon and Jordan was insured.

The chances were that had the U.A.R. continued to be hostile towards Lebanon, most probably U.N. troops would have been dispatched to replace American and British troops. The presence of U.N. troops in Lebanon would have been more detrimental to the interest of the U.A.R. than the presence of American troops. The mobilization of international pressure against the presence of U.N. troops would have been more difficult once they were dispatched to Lebanon. This was especially true of the U.A.R. which served as host to U.N. troops in Gaza. Finally the presence of U.N. troops would have promoted the chances of realizing an international guarantee to the independence of Lebanon--a prospect which was not in the interest of all those who believed and worked for Arab Unity including the ruling circles of the U.A.R. These prospects coupled with a virtual stalemate among the contending factions in Lebanon induced the U.A.R. and the Rebels to compromise with the Lebanese Government. On the other hand, the fast approaching end of President Chamoun's term in office (September 23), the stalemate in Lebanon, the changing circumstances in the Arab world, the inability to restore order in the country

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<sup>1</sup>Speech by Mr. Gromyko, delegate of the USSR, at the General Assembly, August 13, 1958. United Nations, General Assembly, Official Records, Third Emergency Special Session, 733 Plenary Meeting, pp. 14-16.

without accommodating the Rebels, induced the Lebanese Government to meet Cairo halfway.

The compromise came finally in the form of a Joint Draft Resolution which was submitted by the Arab States to the General Assembly on August 21. The Joint Arab Draft Resolution assured the members of the General Assembly that the Arab States were willing to abide by the provisions of the U.N. Charter and the Covenant of the Arab League; and that, therefore, they were willing to respect the sovereignty, independence and integrity of each other. The Arab States requested the Secretary General to make arrangements forthwith for the "upholding of the principles of the Charter in relation to Lebanon and Jordan", thereby facilitating the early withdrawal of foreign troops from the two countries.<sup>1</sup> Realizing that the Arab States arrived at an agreement, the General Assembly approved the Joint Arab Draft Resolution. Beginning August 21st, tension in the Middle East began to subside. In Lebanon the installation of President Shehab in office on September 24, marked the starting point in the termination of tense relations with the United Arab Republic.

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<sup>1</sup>Resolution 1237 (ES-III); U.N. General Assembly, Official Records, Third Emergency Special Session, Supplement No. 1 (A/3905), p. 1. This resolution was sponsored by the representatives of Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Tunisia, the United Arab Republic and Yemen. It was adopted unanimously by the General Assembly on August 21, 1958.



## Chapter X

### LEBANON REVERTS TO NON-ALIGNMENT

#### A. The Counter Insurrection.

President Shehab inherited from his predecessor, Chamoun, a country torn with civil strife and on the verge of collapse. His main task was to terminate the Crisis, restore peace and order, and establish a basis on which the two factions to the dispute could work together again. This task, as Shehab soon found out, was most difficult.

General Shehab was elected President on the understanding that there were "no victor and no vanquished" factions to the dispute.<sup>1</sup> Other than that there were no guide lines to depict the course of policy which the general could follow. In his inauguration speech in the House of Deputies, on September 24, President Shehab took particular care not to offend either faction. He made no mention of the causes of the Crisis nor did he mention anywhere the Eisenhower Doctrine. He simply asked the people to patch up their differences and join hands to rebuild the damage which was inflicted on the country by the crisis. A special emphasis was made on the importance of the National Pact as a unifying factor among the Lebanese:

"In the hour that I undertake the oath of preserving the Lebanese Constitution, I pledge and ask you to pledge faith in the unwritten constitution: The National Pact which united us and continues to unite us in the belief that Lebanon is

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<sup>1</sup>Kamal Jumblat, In the Currents of Lebanese Politics (Beirut: Vanguard House for Publication, 1960), pp. 51-54. See also Kamal Saliby, The Modern History of Lebanon (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1965), p. 204.

a free and an independent nation; a nation that co-operates truly and sincerely with sister Arab States to the maximum possible limits for its own good as well as theirs; a nation that builds its relations with all the nations of the world on the basis of frindship, dignity and mutual respect."<sup>1</sup>

The President said that he intended to improve relations between Lebanon and some other Arab States, especially those of them whose borders were contiguous with Lebanon (U.A.R.), but he made no mention as to how he proposed to do that.<sup>2</sup> There was nothing that was new in Shehab's inauguration speech. President Chamoun and Dr. Malik before him had stressed their respect to the National Pact and vowed friendship to the Arab States, and still upheld subscription to the Eisenhower Doctrine.<sup>3</sup> The question in dispute between the former Loyalists and the former Rebels was whether subscription to the Eisenhower Doctrine constituted a betrayal of the friendly policy towards the Arab States and a deviation of the National Pact. Shehab did not answer this question and by doing so he avoided the risk of being branded as a supporter of one or the other party to the dispute.

Shehab, however, could not maintain that position indefinitely. The next day, September 25, he appointed an eight man cabinet under the premiership of Rashid Karami, the former Rebel leader from Tripoli.

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<sup>1</sup>The text of President Shehab's inauguration speech is in: al-Siassa, September 24, 1958.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Refer to President Chamoun's farewell address; al-Nahar, September 19, 1958.

None of the former Loyalist leaders was given a cabinet post.<sup>1</sup> The Loyalists were provoked and the problem was further aggravated by Rashid Karami's first message to the nation which asked of the citizens to lay down their arms and "reap the fruits of the revolution."<sup>2</sup> Retorted al-'Amal, the mouth piece of the Kata'ib Party: "If Rashid Karami's revolution is over, the revolution of the 'Lebanese' is just beginning."<sup>3</sup>

On September 26, while the former Rebels were removing their barricades and celebrating their victory, the former Loyalists, mostly Christians, under the leadership of the Kata'ib Party were erecting barricades and digging trenches in their own quarters. The former Loyalists complained that the appointments of the new cabinet were a deviation from the "no victor no vanquished" agreement. They declared that they would not lay down their arms unless a new cabinet was appointed under the premiership of a neutral person and with ministers representing both factions in the dispute.<sup>4</sup> The former Rebels on the other hand wanted no change in the cabinet.<sup>5</sup> While the leaders on both sides engaged in a brawl over the membership of the cabinet, the country passed

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<sup>1</sup>The members of the Cabinet were: Rashid Karami, Philip Taqla, Charles Helou, Mohammad Safiuddine, Yusif al-Sawda, Rafiq Naja, Farid Trad and Fuad Najjar. Malha, op.cit., p. 235.

<sup>2</sup>Refer to Karami's speech; al-Siassa, September 27, 1958.

<sup>3</sup>The Arab World, September 26, 1958.

<sup>4</sup>al-Nahar, October 3, 1958.

<sup>5</sup>al-Nahar, October 4, 1958. See also speeches delivered by Karami, Sa'eb Salam and Kamal Jumblat to the demonstrators in the Western Quarter of Beirut who were protesting against proposed changes in the cabinet. al-Nahar, October 11, 1958.

through the most dangerous period ever since May, 1958. Prior to September 24, the Crisis was viewed as a dispute between the Government and the Rebels, but after September 24, both Christians and Moslems became rebels and the Government fell in between with no foothold in either territory. The Christian - Moslem color of the Crisis became more striking as armed bands began to kidnap and kill unarmed citizens for no other reason than belonging to the opposite confession. Lebanon during the two weeks following September 24 was fast approaching a religious massacre, a situation which was feared by both sides to the dispute since May. It was perhaps fear of the shuddering consequences of a religious massacre which finally induced the leaders on both sides to accept a compromise.<sup>1</sup>

A compromise was reached on October 8 when the Christians accepted the appointment of Rashid Karami as Prime Minister and the Moslems assented to the appointment of former Loyalists in the cabinet. The cabinet which emerged out of this compromise was made up of four persons chosen to counter check one another. Rashid Karami, the former rebel leader on the moslem side, was matched by Pierre Gmayyil, the former militant loyalist leader on the Christian side. Hussein al-'Uweini a moderate member of the former Opposition was matched by Raymond Eddeh, a moderate member of the former Loyalists.<sup>2</sup> With the appointment of

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<sup>1</sup>Refer to statement by the American Ambassador in Lebanon, McClintock, about the deterioration of the situation in Lebanon, al-Nahar, October 2, 1958. See also editorial by Ghassan Tweini, "What Is Requested Is The Rescue Of Lebanon," al-Nahar, October 4, 1958. See also statement by the deputy from Jezzine, Jean Aziz, warning of the dangerous situation and of the impending religious massacre. 'Aziz advocated that in case the democratic system failed to redeem Lebanon from chaos, the army should take over. al-Nahar, October 11, 1958.

<sup>2</sup>Michael Abu Jawdeh, "The Country's Wings Are Its Shields," al-Nahar, October 16, 1958.

of the new cabinet both sides laid down their arms and the country began to recuperate from chaos.<sup>1</sup>

The significance of the two-week Crisis following September 24, was that it drove home to President Shehab and to the country as a whole that the Christians as well as the Moslems were capable of paralyzing the country and that without the active co-operation of both sides no legal authority could be sustained.

#### B. The Changing Arab World.

The contours of Middle Eastern Arab politics changed radically by the end of 1958. The jubilation of the United Arab Republic and the Nasserites over the successful Coup of July 14 in Iraq came to an abrupt end by the late Autumn. Brigadier Qassem who was expected to follow in Syria's footsteps and arrange for the annexation of Iraq to the United Arab Republic turned out to be more of a determined opponent to the United Arab Republic than Nuri al-Sa'id. He revived the Fertile Crescent project and tried to detach Syria from the United Arab Republic. "The Fertile Crescent Project," Qassem said to the correspondent of the Baghdad daily newspaper the Revolution, "was imperialistic, but now that Iraq is free, it has become a national project."<sup>2</sup> In his bid for the Fertile Crescent, Qassem could not rely on his mortal enemies, the

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<sup>1</sup>Ghassan Tweini, "The Government--A Lebanese Miracle," al-Nahar, October 16, 1958.

<sup>2</sup>The Arab World, November 17, 1959, p. 1. Refer also to speech delivered by Qassem on 22/2/1960 at the second congress of the teachers unions. al-Jareeda, February 24, 1960.

monarchists, nor could he rely solely on the revolutionary Arab nationalists who participated with him in the Coup of July 14 since many of them were Nasserites. The Communist Party was ready to lend him support, but here again an exclusive reliance on the Communists was dangerous because they had ambitions of their own in Iraq. Qassem finally resolved the dilemma by balancing the Communists against the Arab nationalists, using each party to check the other.<sup>1</sup>

The Communists saw their best chance in Qassem. Iraq was the only Arab State where the Communists were strong enough to make a bid for power on their own. In Egypt their power was insignificant; in Syria their power was substantial but Nasser after the Union curtailed their activities and drove them underground. After the destruction of the Monarchy in Iraq, the Communists turned out in favor of the detachment of Syria from Egypt hoping that the secession of Syria would improve their chances of capturing power in the Fertile Crescent through Iraq. At the Conference of the Socialist Labor Parties in Budapest on December 4, 1958, Khaled Bagdash, the leader of the Communist Party in Syria, and Artin Madonian, the Communist delegate from Lebanon, attacked what they termed the "arbitrary rule in Syria" and asked for a revision of the Syrian-Egyptian Unity.<sup>2</sup>

Nasser's reaction was to declare an open campaign against the Communists. Speaking at Port Sa'id on 23 December 1958, Nasser made an

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<sup>1</sup>J.S. Raleigh, "The Middle East In 1960: A Political Survey," Middle Eastern Affairs, XII (February, 1961), p. 50.

<sup>2</sup>Michael Abu Jawdeh, "From China To Hungary," al-Nahar, December 5, 1958.

attempt to associate the Communists in Syria with the hated Zionists by accusing them of obstructing the cause of Arab unity for exploitive purposes.<sup>1</sup> It was not long, before the feud developed into an open rift with Moscow.<sup>2</sup> Addressing the Communists Party Congress on January 27, 1959, Khrushchev complained of "a campaign against progressive forces in some countries (of the Middle East) under the spurious guise of anti-Communism".<sup>3</sup> Shortly after, Iraq received shipments of Soviet armaments which were, reportedly, in partial fulfillment of a Soviet-Iraqi technical and economical agreement in the amount of 70 million pounds sterling.<sup>4</sup>

Baghdad and Cairo fought each other with the same methods which were used during the days of the Monarchy: violent radio and press campaigns synchronized with a series of plots and counter plots; but apparently the competing capitals traded the very propoganda slogans which they used against one another in days past. Egypt used against revolutionary Iraq under Qassem, the same slogans which were used by the Iraqi Monarchy against it, such as: "Communists, atheists and enemies of Islam".

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<sup>1</sup>Jamal Abdul Nasser "We Won the Battle of Peace", The President Said, ed. Fathi Rudwan (Cairo: The Hilal Press House, 1959), p. 477.

<sup>2</sup>A rift between the U.A.R. and the Peoples Democratic Republic of China was also apparent. The U.A.R. took note of hostile speeches which were delivered in Peking by the Syrian communist leader, Khaled Bagdash. Unfriendly notes were exchanged between the two governments. al-Hayat, October 3 and 4, 1959.

<sup>3</sup>Khrushchev's address is in: al-Nahar, January 27, 1959.

<sup>4</sup>RIIA, Documents on International Affairs, 1959, ed. by Gillian King (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 339.

Similarly, Qassem used against the U.A.R. the same slogans which Cairo had used against the Iraqi Monarchy: "Reactionaries, agents of the imperialists and traitors to the cause of Palestine". The changing slogans represented the changing realities in inter-Arab politics. Baghdad was now trying to capitalize on Leftist groups in the Arab World, while Cairo was shifting to the Right in trying to counteract Baghdad by capitalizing on Islam. The result was that the Communists who co-operated in days past with Nasser against Monarchist Iraq, were now checkmating his followers in Iraq and plotting against the security of the U.A.R. in Syria. Conversely rightist Islamic groups such as the Moslem Brotherhood Organization which resisted Nasser before the Iraqi coup of July 14, 1958, were now finding their way back to his fold. The prize in contest between Egypt and Iraq was still the same - Syria - but the actors had changed roles.

The Egyptian-Iraqi dispute reached its zenith on March 8, 1959, when Colonel Shawwaf, the Commander of the Fifth Iraqi Brigade in Mosul, launched a shortlived military revolt in collaboration with the U.A.R. The Communist-controlled para-military "Popular Resistance Forces" who were restrained earlier in the year by Qassem were now given their head. The result was a blood-bath for the Nasserites and a setback to Nasser's chances of challenging Qassem in his home base--Iraq. When once again Nasser and Khrushchev tempestuously crossed words, many observers wondered whether Soviet-Egyptian relations were near the breaking point.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Refer to speech by Mr. Khrushchev regarding relations with Iraq and the U.A.R., Moscow, March 16, 1959 and to speech by Nasser in reply to Mr. Khrushchev, Damascus, March 20, 1959. RIIA, Documents on International Affairs, 1959, pp. 293-302. See also speeches by President



After the abortive revolt in Mosul, Nasser turned his attention towards the consolidation of his position in the U.A.R. His power position in Syria was less than satisfactory. The agricultural sector was hit by a year of drought, the commercial sector was crippled with restrictions on imports, and private capital was leaving the country. An attempt to merge the Syrian economy with that of Egypt by unifying the currency and passing land reforms similar to those which were made in Egypt was met with resistance from the relatively rich and enterprising Syrians.<sup>1</sup> At the same time the political situation in Syria did not show any promising signs. The communists were now working for secession and Nasser's traditional enemies were further reinforced by a large number of traditional upper class politicians who began to feel the economic depression and their unimportance in the new political setup. More important was that the Ba'th Party--the principal Syrian motivating force for the Union--put up passive resistance to merger in the "National Union", Nasser's only legal party.<sup>2</sup>

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Nasser: March 11, 1959, Damascus; March 12, 1959, Damascus; March 13, 1959, Damascus; March 15, 1959, Evacuation Square, Damascus; March 20, 1959 Damascus: U.A.R. Department of Information, President Jamal Abdul Nasser's Speeches and Press Interviews, 1959 (Cairo: Hilal House, N.D.) pp. 121-25. 126-29; 130-37; 143-54; 162-69.

<sup>1</sup>Oded Remba, "The Middle East In 1960: An Economic Survey," Middle Eastern Affairs, XII (March, 1961) p. 75. Shortly after the appointment of 'Abdul Hakim 'Amer as Nasser's personal envoy in Syria, 'Abdul Ghani Qanut, the Minister of Labor and Social Affairs, and Khalil Kallas who were both Ba'thists resigned their cabinet posts. Riyad al-Malki, another Ba'thist Minister had already resigned a few weeks before 'Amer's arrival. On December 31, 1959 it was reported that the resignations were accepted and that Akram al-Hourani and Salahuddine al-Bitar who were members of the central cabinet in Cairo resigned also. al-Hayat, 25th and 31st of December, 1959.

<sup>2</sup>Michael Abu Jawdeh, "The United Arab Republic; The First Year,"

Nasser chose to deal with his problems one at a time. In 1959 he turned his full attention to the solidification of his political power and shelved plans for economic integration. In October 1959 he appointed Egyptian Field Marshal, Abdul Hakim 'Amer, as his personal envoy in Syria. With 'Amer in Syria working closely with the Minister of Interior, 'Abdul Hamid al-Sarraj, who was in charge of the security forces, Nasser felt safe enough to ease the Ba'th leaders from key posts in the Government.<sup>1</sup> In March 1960, on return to Cairo after a long visit in Syria, Nasser seemed ready to resume his drive for economic integration. He announced ambitious industrial and agricultural plans with an eye on the faltering Syrian economy which had suffered from the third successive year of drought and followed up those measures with the appointment of 'Abdul-Hamid al-Sarraj, Syria's strong man and the arch-enemy of the Ba'th Party, as the head of the government in the Northern District of the U.A.R.<sup>2</sup>

The developments in Iraq were a growing concern to Western capitals. It was not so much Soviet assistance that bothered the Western Powers as it was the increasing strength of the Communist Party in Iraq. The Communists controlled the para-military "Peoples Resistance Forces", exercised influence on trade unions and student organizations, and maintained a foothold in the army and in the administration. There was no assurance that Qassam could continue to play off the Communists against

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al-Nahar, February 21, 1959.

<sup>1</sup>Raleigh, op.cit., pp. 49-50.

<sup>2</sup>RIIA, Survey of International Affairs, 1959-60, ed. G. Barraclough (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 343.

the Arab nationalists indefinitely. The possibility that the balance might at any time tilt in favor of the Communists could not be ruled out.<sup>1</sup>

U.S. concern over Iraq reached an alarming degree in the month of April, 1959, when in the wake of the abortive revolt in Mosul the Communists liquidated quite a number of their opponents and appeared more like partners to Qassem than tools in his hands. Allen Dulles, the Director of the CIA, was quoted as telling the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on April 28 that the situation in Iraq was "the most dangerous in the World today."<sup>2</sup> President Eisenhower, without necessarily going this far conceded that the situation in Iraq was among those requiring daily attention.<sup>3</sup>

The British government was also concerned about the developments in Iraq, but, apparently, it was not alarmed as much as Washington. It was widely believed that Britain restrained Washington from taking drastic measures against Qassem out of fear that his alienation would make him more dependent on the Soviet Union and, consequently, improve the chances of the Communists in Iraq. When on May 11, Britain announced that it was forwarding to Iraq substantial quantities of tanks, jet bombers and other military equipment, the United States did not object.<sup>4</sup> The British

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<sup>1</sup>M. Perlmann, "Iraqi Developments," Middle Eastern Affairs, X (June - July, 1959), pp. 228-233.

<sup>2</sup>U.S. Council on Foreign Relations, The United States in World Affairs, 1959, ed. Richard Stebbins, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1960), p. 226.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Statement by Profumo, Britain's Minister of Defense, in the House of Commons, regarding the supply of Arms to Iraq by the United

arms delivery reduced the dependence of Qassem on Soviet arms and served as a signal to the Iraqi leader that in case he decided to combat the Communists, Britain was willing to co-operate with him.

But while the door to the West was kept open to Qassem, a rapprochement was taking place between the Western Powers and the United Arab Republic. In December 1958, the World Bank, which was to a large extent under the influence of the Major Western Powers, made available to Egypt a loan in the amount of \$56 million for the purpose of introducing improvements to the Suez Canal.<sup>1</sup> When on February 28, 1959, the U.A.R. and Britain announced that they had reached an agreement on the settlement of economic questions which were still pending since the Suez War, and that they had also decided to resume diplomatic relations, it became clear that the tense post-Suez phase in Egyptian-British relations was coming to an end.<sup>2</sup> The rapprochement between Egypt and Britain was further promoted by the extension of loans from Western Germany and the resumption of surplus wheat shipments by the U.S. in the Spring of 1959. In 1960, the U.S. alone extended to Egypt more than \$20 million in economic and technical aid.<sup>3</sup>

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Kingdom, May 11, 1959, RIIA, Documents on International Affairs, 1959, pp. 304-05.

<sup>1</sup>Michael Abu Jawdeh, "Egypt From One Loan To Another: The East At Aswan And The West At Suez," al-Nahar, January 24, 1959.

<sup>2</sup>al-Nahar, February 28, 1959. The Communiques which were issued in London and Cairo on the resumption of diplomatic relations were published by al-Hayat, December 1, 1958.

<sup>3</sup>U.S. Department of State, Bulletin, XLI (July 20, 1959), p. 79. Also Council on Foreign Relations, Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1959, ed. Paul Zinner (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960). See also Council on Foreign Relations, The United States in World Affairs, 1959, p. 229.

Although Western-Egyptian relations showed a marked improvement in the Spring of 1959, the Western Powers and the U.A.R. continued not to commit themselves fully towards one another. There were still fundamental differences between the policies of the Western Powers and the U.A.R. in certain areas which dictated such reservations. Nasser, for example, continued to criticize Western "imperialism" while he was exchanging unkind words with Khrushchev. The Soviet Union was also cautious not to allow the rift with Egypt to become complete. There was no assurance that the honeymoon between Qassem and the Communists in Iraq would go on indefinitely. Soviet reservations were promoted further when Qassem started to curb the power of the Communist Party after the outbreak of fresh hostilities in Kirkuk by mid-July where the Communists attempted to liquidate their opponents and intimidate the local garrison.<sup>1</sup>

Jordan for the first few months following the Iraqi Coup of July 14, was bombarded with hostile radio campaigns from both Iraq and the U.A.R. When the last British paratroop detachment withdrew from Jordan in November 1958, few observers were optimistic about its future. Yet the renewed Egyptian-Iraqi dispute worked well in its favor. As Nasser resorted to a policy of eliminating misunderstanding with other Arab States in order to improve his capabilities in resisting Iraqi pressure, the hostility between Jordan and the U.A.R. decreased. When on August 16, 1959, Cairo resumed diplomatic relations with Amman,

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<sup>1</sup>Charles Arnot, "Iraq: Is The Mystery Lifting?" Foreign Policy Bulletin, XXXIX (September 15, 1959), pp. 1-2, 7-8. See also M. Perlmann "Slope And Sideline," Middle Eastern Affairs, X (October 1959), pp. 325-29.

Hussein was well on his way to recovery, thanks to massive American assistance - 40 million dollars annually.

Saudi Arabia and Sudan were not directly involved in the Iraqi-Egyptian dispute, but they, nevertheless, benefited from the reconciliatory mood of Cairo. On September 19, 1959, Saud was given the chance to fly to Cairo for a grand reunion. Only a year earlier he was accused by the U.A.R. of having paid over 2 million pounds sterling for the assassination of Nasser.<sup>1</sup> In October, the U.A.R. suddenly reached for an agreement with Sudan over the distribution of the Nile waters which had been in dispute between the two countries for a number of years.<sup>2</sup>

#### C. The Policy of Lebanon Under Shehab.

President Shehab's primary objective in foreign affairs was to devise a foreign policy which could accommodate both Christians and Moslems and simultaneously preserve the interests of the State.<sup>3</sup> The Christians emerged from the Crisis still determined to preserve close relations with the Western Powers, especially with the United States of America. When in March, 1959, the editor of the Middle East Forum asked Pierre Gmayyil, the leader of the Kata'ib Party, which country he

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<sup>1</sup>Documents related to the conspiracy of Sa'ud were released by 'Abdul Hamid al-Sarraaj, the head of the Deuxieme Bureau in Syria and published by al-Nahar, March 6, 1958.

<sup>2</sup>Harold MacMichael, "Egyptian-Sudanese Relations," Middle Eastern Affairs, X (March, 1959), pp. 102-08.

<sup>3</sup>Inauguration Speech by Shehab; al-Siassa, September 24, 1958. See also article written by Charles Helou, Minister of Information and National Economy: "For The Sake Of Brotherhood," al-Nahar, October 6, 1958. Refer also to speech delivered by General Shehab on his election, al-'Amal, August 5, 1958.

considered as Lebanon's closest ally, Gmayyil answered: "Undoubtedly the country that has helped us most since our independence, both morally and materially, is the United States of America".<sup>1</sup> But if the Christians were determined to keep close relations with the Western Powers, likewise the Moslems were still determined to keep the closest ties possible with the U.A.R., and the U.A.R. did not tolerate the alignment of Lebanon with any one of the Western Powers. Had the United States continued to insist on a policy of alignment, and had the U.A.R. insisted that Lebanon pursue its version of positive neutrality, Shehab most probably would have failed to accommodate both Christians and Moslems.

The developments in the area, however, ruled out this possibility. The eruption of new hostilities between Iraq under Qassem and the United Arab Republic removed from Lebanon some of the external pressure from the United Arab Republic and the Western Powers. Nasser in conformity with his new reconciliatory Arab policy, which was dictated by the new challenge from Baghdad, was no longer in a position to ask of Lebanon more than a friendly policy towards the U.A.R. Similarly the United States had relinquished the policy of isolating Nasser. After the Coup of July 14 in Baghdad, the United States realized that a policy of alignment in the Arab World did not succeed and that, therefore, some understanding with Arab neutrality was required.<sup>2</sup> The rapprochement which took place between

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<sup>1</sup>"Interview With Pierre Gmayyil," Middle East Forum, XXXIV (March 1959), p. 30.

<sup>2</sup>Richard Nolte, "The United States Policy And The Middle East," The United States and the Middle East, ed. Georgiana Stevens (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1963), pp. 170-74.

the Western Powers and Nasser after 1958 went a long way in giving Lebanon "elbow room" in foreign affairs. The Western Powers were no longer demanding of Lebanon alignment,<sup>1</sup> and Nasser ceased to regard Lebanese-Western friendly relations as dangerous.

The new events in the area left a marked impression on the attitudes of both Christians and Moslems in Lebanon. The Christians realized that the viability of Lebanon which was their uppermost objective could not be maintained by total reliance on Western protection.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, a mood of disillusionment descended on the Moslems in Lebanon as they realized that the eruption of new rivalries between Baghdad and Cairo reduced the prospects of Arab unity. They, therefore, reconciled themselves to the independence of Lebanon and waited for the next opportunity.<sup>3</sup> Rashid Karami, for example, was now speaking in terms of national unity and in terms of the sovereignty and the independence of Lebanon when only a few months back he seemed anxious to terminate that independence. Addressing himself to Nasser on February 27, 1958 Karami had said in Damascus:<sup>4</sup>

"The people of Lebanon, Mr. President, believe in your assistance and in your message. They follow in your footsteps and pursue your course. If external appearance does not coincide with this fact, it is

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<sup>1</sup>Statement by Prime Minister Karami on his return from the United States, September 30, 1959, al-Hayat, October 1, 1959.

<sup>2</sup>"Survey Of Editorial Opinion On The Lebanese Crisis," Middle East Forum, XXXIII (November - December 1968), p. 15.

<sup>3</sup>Edward Sa'b "Lebanon And The U.A.R. - Iraqi Conflict", Middle East Forum, XXXV (December, 1959), p. 16.

<sup>4</sup>The full text of Karami's speech is in" al-Siassah, February 27, 1958.



because appearance is deceiving; it often hides facts which eventually would emerge unscathed.

The fact is that the Lebanese are at pain but silent, because they are aware of their responsibilities and appreciate the circumstances through which the Arab nation is passing at present. But when the hour strikes we shall all rise up in unison behind the Arab flag which we shall either raise above our heads or else die to the last man in its cause."

That was in February 1958 when the prospect of the U.A.R. as the nucleus of a wider Arab unity seemed promising and when the extension of the U.A.R. seemed to many Nasserites as easy as installing a revolutionary Pan-Arabist Regime in one or other of the neighboring countries. But by the end of the Summer when it was realized that neither the Crisis in Lebanon nor the Coup in Iraq produced the expected unity with the U.A.R., Rashid Karami started to inch back from the position of a Pan-Arabist to that of a Lebanese patriot. This shift was quite apparent on consideration of three statements delivered by Rashid Karami between September 15, 1958 and October 4. In the first statement which was given to the Arab News Agency around mid-September, Karami said that he "prefers a federal union with the United Arab Republic," but that he "would leave the matter to the will of the majority of the Lebanese."<sup>1</sup> In the second statement which was given to an American television company, Karami reserved his personal preference in so far as the unity of Lebanon with the U.A.R. was concerned, but he was still willing to leave the question to the Lebanese. He said: "I leave the question of unity to a plebiscite."<sup>2</sup>

In a third statement which was given to the Lebanese Press on

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<sup>1</sup>Michael Abu Jawdeh, "A Unionist And A Patriot At The Same Time," al-Nahar, October 5, 1958.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

October 4, 1958, Karami who by that time became Prime Minister ruled out the prospects of unity with the U.A.R. altogether.

"Unity is out of question: All Lebanese are in agreement on the preservation of Lebanon's independence."<sup>1</sup>

The changes which took place in the region as well as the changes on the internal front in Lebanon provided the Lebanese Government with an opportunity to compromise the differences among the Lebanese, and hence dissociate itself from the tension of the cold war on the regional level. As soon as possible, the Lebanese Government arranged for the withdrawal of American troops from Lebanese territory and withdrew its subscription to the Eisenhower Doctrine,<sup>2</sup> which in fact reduced American-Lebanese relations to a lower level than that which existed prior to 1958. Lebanon was no longer interested in working closely with the United States on the regional level, and the United States in turn was no longer interested in forwarding grants in aid to Lebanon on a standing basis, or in sponsoring the marketing of its surplus products in European markets as it did in 1957. In the Autumn of 1958, Lebanon received a \$12.5 million (\$2.5 million in September and \$10 million in December) from the United States.<sup>3</sup> These funds were, however, intended to be for an early recovery from the economic depression which was caused by the Crisis. In 1960 the American government terminated all types of economic assistance to Lebanon on the assumption

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid. In an interview with the author on 27/6/1966, Rashid Karami maintained that the independence of Lebanon should be preserved.

<sup>2</sup>Statement by Hussein al-'Uweini, the Lebanese Minister of Foreign Affairs, November 2, 1958; The Arab World, November 3, 1958, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup>Fahim Qubain, Crisis in Lebanon (Washington, D.C.: Middle East Institute, 1961), p. 163.

that it was not an underdeveloped country and hence unqualified for economic aid.<sup>1</sup>

But despite the reduction of mutual commitments, Lebanese relations with the United States and other Western Powers remained friendly. Lebanon, for example, refrained from commenting unfavorably on Western policy, continued to purchase its armaments solely from Western arsenals and preserved close commercial, cultural and economic relations with the Western Powers. In comparison no visible improvement took place in Soviet-Lebanese relations except that the two countries ceased to exchange unfriendly memoranda as they did when Lebanon was a subscriber to the Eisenhower Doctrine. Lebanon, for example, continued to deny recognition to the Peoples Republic of China; kept cultural and commercial relations with the Soviet Union at a minimum level and did not make use of Soviet offers for economic and military aid which were still in good standing since 1955.<sup>2</sup> Such observations lead to the conclusion that Lebanon's non-alignment meant no more than the absence of official political commitments to the Western Powers in matters related to a positive role in the cold war.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Charles Issawi, "Economic Development And Liberalism In Lebanon," Middle East Journal, XVIII (Summer, 1964), p. 286.

<sup>2</sup>Daniel Solod, the Soviet Ambassador in Cairo, offered Soviet military and economic aid to Lebanon for the first time on September 29, 1955. The offer was made through Khalil Takieudinne, the Lebanese Ambassador in Cairo. A few months later, June 27, 1956, Soviet Foreign Minister Shepilov picked the opportunity of visiting Beirut to renew the offers. Lebanon consistently declined. al-Nahar, October 1, 1955 and June 58, 1956.

<sup>3</sup>"Lebanon Believes In A Policy Of Non-Alignment Towards Any International Bloc But It Desired To Cultivate Close Relations With The United States." Prime Minister Karami in a press conference in New York, September 29, 1959, al-Hayat, September 30, 1959.

On the regional level Lebanon dissociated itself from inter-Arab disputes. This policy, however, did not stand in the way of cultivating close relations with the U.A.R. On March 25, 1959 President Shehab and President Nasser met on the Lebanese-Syrian borders and worked out a grand reconciliation between the two countries. The joint Communique which was issued after the meeting stated that the two Governments were prepared to respect the sovereignty and the independence of one another and that they were willing to give serious consideration to the solution of pending economic questions between them.<sup>1</sup> On June 7, the two countries reached a final agreement on the suspended economic questions. The government of the U.A.R. agreed to reduce by half all taxes which were levied on Syrian cars and citizens travelling to Lebanon. Discriminatory laws which were in the past passed with the intention of curtailing Lebanese commercial activities in Syria, were suspended for five years, and Lebanese citizens were allowed to withdraw revenue from the returns on their property in the U.A.R.<sup>2</sup> Lebanon ideally would have preferred the lifting of all trade restrictions between the two countries; this was, however, impossible because the U.A.R. had a state controlled economy.

It should be borne in mind that these settlements came about in the spring of 1959 when the Soviet-Egyptian controversy over Communism in Iraq had reached its peak. Nasser by extending his hand to Lebanon

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<sup>1</sup>Find the text of the Joint Communique in: al-Nahar, March 26, 1959.

<sup>2</sup>Find the text of the Agreement in: L'Orient, June 8, 1959.

was doing no more than taking another step in conformity with his new reconciliatory policy in the Arab World. From a Christian-Lebanese point of view, the settlement with the U.A.R. was a result of Nasser's recognition that he could not "swallow" Lebanon.<sup>1</sup> Some independent political analysts observed that Nasser having failed to install revolutionary regimes in Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Lebanon, and having realized that the revolutionary regimes which he helped bring about in Sudan and Iraq were not willing to submit to his leadership, was now willing to trim down his ambitions in the Arab World.<sup>2</sup> Finally, there was the point of view of the Nasserites, who held that the termination of Chamoun's term in office and the relinquishment of the Eisenhower Doctrine prepared the ground for an understanding between Lebanon and the U.A.R. In all probability the U.A.R. took all these factors into consideration when it accepted the settlement with Lebanon. But whatever the reasons behind the decision of Nasser, there was no doubt that the rapprochement with Lebanon served his interests in Syria. Nasser's regime in Syria was beginning to experience instability and it is in such times that the ruling circles in Damascus watch, not without fear, their adversaries in exile who more often than not choose to reside in Beirut awaiting their turn to power. After the Shehab-Nasser meeting in March, the Government curbed the activities of such anti-U.A.R. parties as the PPS and the Communists, and kept the Syrian political refugees under surveillance. In the meanwhile, pro-U.A.R. elements were left to bolster

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<sup>1</sup>"Interview With Pierre Gmayyil," Middle East Forum, XXXIV (March, 1959), p. 30.

<sup>2</sup>Michael Abu Jawdeh, "The United Arab Republic: The First Year," al-Nahar, February 21, 1959.

the image of Nasser.

Lebanon throughout 1959 concentrated not only on re-establishing close economic relations with the U.A.R., but also on making arrangements for the facilitation of inter-Arab trade in general. It was largely due to Lebanese initiative that the U.A.R., Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Lebanon finally signed an agreement on November 30, 1959, for the facilitation of trade between them.<sup>1</sup> Iraq did not become a party to this agreement, for it was boycotting the Arab League at the time, and the agreement was negotiated and signed under the auspices of the League. Nevertheless, Lebanese diplomacy did not neglect the potentials of Iraqi markets. While Lebanese experts were attending to economic relations with the U.A.R., Jordan and Saudi Arabia, the Lebanese Embassy in Baghdad was negotiating with the Iraqi government tourist and transit agreements. These negotiations came to a successful conclusion in July 1960. Iraq allowed Iraqi tourists to spend the Summer in Lebanon, permitted Lebanese aircraft to operate between Beirut and Baghdad on the basis of reciprocity, and promised to study Lebanese proposals for the reduction of air fares during the Summer in order to encourage tourism to Lebanon.<sup>2</sup>

It is pertinent to note here that without a policy of dissociation from inter-Arab disputes, Lebanon would not have been able to maintain

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<sup>1</sup>The Arab World, December 1, 1959, p. 2. The full text of the agreement is in: al-Jareeda, March 5, 1960. See also the following issues of al-Hayat, December 1, 2 and 9, 1959. See also the ministerial statements which were delivered when the Arab League conference on trade and transit arrangement convened in Damascus. al-Hayat, November 4, 1959.

<sup>2</sup>Statement by Sa'id al-Ass'ad, Lebanese Ambassador in Baghdad, July 11, 1960; The Arab World, July 12, 1960. p. 6.

commercial and economic relations with Iraq and the U.A.R. at the same time. While Qassem and Nasser were trying to destroy each other, they both, at least overtly, had nothing but kind words for Lebanon.<sup>1</sup> Under the circumstances, Lebanon could not do better; but the tense situation in the Arab World was far from ideal to Lebanon. Lebanon as a commercial country was interested in peace and tranquility in the area. Border tensions and frequent eruption of hostilities between the Arab States often obstructed Lebanese transit trade.<sup>2</sup> Similarly the state-controlled economic systems which were imposed by the military regimes in the U.A.R. and in Iraq reduced the opportunities of Lebanese business in either country.<sup>3</sup> For example, under the June 7 Agreement, the U.A.R. agreed to reduce taxes which were levied on cars and passengers travelling to Lebanon; but it did not abolish them. The Syrian Decree 151 which forbade Lebanese

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to Qassem's speech on December 8, 1960. al-Jareeda, December 9, 1960. Refer also to the Press interview which was given by Nasser to the press correspondent of al-Sahafa; The Arab World, December 7, 1960.

<sup>2</sup> For example, in the wake of an attempt on Qassem's life by pro-U.A.R. elements in Iraq, border tension between Syria and Iraq reached a critical stage. A large number of trucks loaded with Lebanese apples were held five days on the Ritba border post in the burning desert sun and finally returned to Lebanon rotten. Iraq did not admit the trucks because they were Syrian and Syria did not allow the use of other than Syrian trucks on its territory. al-Hayat, October 31, 1959.

<sup>3</sup> See speech by deputy from Beirut, Fawzi al-Huss in the House of Deputies. al-Jareeda, February 24, 1960. George Skaf "The Delayed Implementation Of The Border of Agreement," al-Jareeda, March 6, 1960. Refer to the memorandum which the Minister of Lebanese National Economy, Philip Taqla, raised to the Economic Council of the Arab League complaining of the failure of the member states to comply with the terms of the trade and transit agreements. al-Jareeda, March 4, 1960.

business establishments to operate in Syria was not annulled but postponed for a period of five years. Imports from the free trade zone area in Lebanon were permitted but with a special license. Such arrangements were not ideal from a Lebanese point of view.<sup>1</sup> The ideal to Lebanon in this respect was the revival of the economic relations which existed between the two countries in the 1940's when capital, goods and persons were allowed to move across the borders with no restrictions save custom duties. Similarly, economic relations with Iraq under Qassem were weaker than those which existed under the Monarchy. Qassem forbade Iraqi capital to leave the country, curbed foreign business establishments and prohibited the citizens from leaving Iraq without special permits. The transit and tourist arrangements which were concluded with Lebanon in July 1960 were not without value, but they were far less satisfactory than those which existed under the Monarchy. For example, under the new arrangements tourists had to have special permits to leave Iraq and then they were allowed to carry with them 200 Iraqi Dinars only. Although such austerity measures were not taken against Lebanon in particular, the Lebanese economy suffered the consequences.

Yet Lebanon could do little to help the situation. It was not possible for Lebanon to change the systems in either Iraq or Egypt, nor was it possible to resolve their disputes. The safest course under the circumstances was non-involvement. The non-involvement rule in inter-Arab affairs ended whenever questions arose which affected or were bound to affect the sovereignty of the country. On such questions Lebanon did not hesitate to become partisan. The behavior of Lebanon at the Arab League meeting in February 1960 gave some examples of the type of questions which

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<sup>1</sup>L'Orient, June 8, 1959.



were considered by the government as dangerous to Lebanon's independence or stability.

There were three topics tabled on the agenda of the Arab League in February. The first was concerned with measures to be taken against Israel's project for the diversion of the Jordan river waters to the Negev. It was proposed at the meeting that the Arab States to the North of Israel should divert the tributaries to the Jordan river. Lebanon agreed to divert the Hasbani river.<sup>1</sup> But when the discussions touched on Jordan's plans to integrate the Palestinian refugees, Lebanon opposed.<sup>2</sup> It was feared that the Jordanian step would constitute a precedent which Lebanon could not follow. Most of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon (150,000) were Moslems. Their integration posed a serious imbalance to the delicate Christian-Moslem equilibrium in the country.

The second question involved French colonial policy in Algeria. The salient issue at the time was the French atomic test in the Algerian Sahara. Egypt proposed a resolution which requested the Arab States to sever diplomatic relations with France and boycott its products. Lebanon opposed such extreme measures, but agreed to condemn French policy in Algeria. Underlying the reservation of Lebanon were questions related to stability in the country. The Christians were not prepared to tolerate a rupture of diplomatic relations with France for several reasons, among them the traditional Christian heritage of friendship to the

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<sup>1</sup>Statement by Hussein al-'Uweini, Lebanese Minister of Foreign Affairs, February 8, 1960; The Arab World, February 9, 1960, p. 4. See also Statement by Fu'ad Ammoun, Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, al-Jareeda, February 2, 1960.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

Western Powers, and the belief that it was not in the interest of Lebanon, who derived a certain measure of security as well as economic and cultural benefits from friendly relations with the Western Powers, to jeopardize such relations by resorting to extreme measures against any one of the Major Western Powers in the interest of Arab solidarity.<sup>1</sup>

The third question involved an Egyptian proposal for the amendment of the Charter of the Arab League to the effect that decisions passed by simple majority were binding on all member states. Here again Lebanon opposed out of fear that such a step would put it in a very vulnerable position.<sup>2</sup>

Towards the end of March Abdul Khaliq Hassouna, the Secretary General of the Arab League, launched a project for a loose federal union among the Arab States which was in reality an extension of the Egyptian proposals.<sup>3</sup> Hassouna's project provoked a sharp exchange of criticisms in the press. Pierre Gmayyil and Philip Taqla, both Christians and members of the cabinet, deplored the project and stated that Lebanon would not agree to any amendment of the Arab League Charter. "Lebanon", said Philip Taqla, "wants the Arab League to remain as it is now."<sup>4</sup> On March 29, Hassouna's project was the subject of sharp controversy in the cabinet. Pierre Bmayyil and Taqla wanted the Government to condemn the project

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<sup>1</sup>al-Nahar, 5 and 7 April, 1960. Also statement by Pierre Gmayyil, al-Nahar, April 6, 1960.

<sup>2</sup>The Arab World, February 9, 1960, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup>The Arab World, March 23, 1960, pp. 2-3.

<sup>4</sup>The Arab World, March 24, 1960, p. 2.

officially. Prime Minister Karami (Moslem) refused to do that. He was not prepared, he said, to speak a word against Arab unity; besides, he maintained, Hassouna did not submit proposals, he simply expressed an opinion. Therefore, he concluded, an official condemnation by the Government was not necessary. Nevertheless, Taqla and Gmayyil insisted that the Government should express disapproval in one way or another. The issue was finally resolved by summoning Fuad 'Ammoun, the Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and requesting him to send a memorandum to Hassouna expressing disapproval of the project.<sup>1</sup>

The controversy over Hassouna's project took place against a rising background of sectarian tension fomented by the renewed conflict between Iraq and the United Arab Republic, and other purely internal issues such as the distribution of public posts among the Sects.<sup>2</sup> In July 1960, as the Christian-Moslem controversy was fast approaching serious dimensions, President Shehab suddenly submitted his resignation. In justification of his

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<sup>1</sup>The Arab World, March 29, 1960, p. 8. See also al-Jareeda, March 24, 1960.

<sup>2</sup>The Moslems in Lebanon after 1958 and particularly in the period extending from March till June 1960 stepped up their demands for a new count of the population and for additional posts in the administration and 50% of the seats in the House of Deputies. The Christians countered by requesting that a new count should include Lebanese emigrants abroad, a prospect which was not acceptable to the Moslems in view of the fact that the overwhelming majority of the emigrants were Christian Lebanese. The controversy reached serious dimensions in June as public figures of both communities began to speak of resort to violence. For the views of both factions refer to the following papers, al-Nahar, July 9, 10, 17 and 20, 1960. al-Siassa, December 11 and 29, 1960. See also Ralph Crow, "Religious Sectarianism In The Lebanese Political System," Journal of Politics, XXIV (October, 1959, pp. 508-09.

resignation which was submitted on July 20, President Shehab maintained that since the country had passed through the after-effects of the chaotic conditions of 1958, he was no longer interested to carry on with his duties.<sup>1</sup> Apparently, Shehab's optimism was not shared by the majority of the vocal groups in the country. New presidential elections were considered a risk in view of the fact that the country had not yet actually recovered from the after-effects of the Crisis. On July 21, the deputies almost to the last man moved to the Presidential Palace at Sarba where they virtually begged Shehab to withdraw his resignation; the President obliged.

A lot has been said about the motives which induced the President to resign. But whatever were his motives, there was no doubt that the resignation improved his power position in the country. Thereafter it was easier for Shehab to contain the Christian-Moslem controversy within manageable limits and to restrain some political leaders who since 1958 were in the habit of defying the legitimate authorities.

Thus Lebanon after 1958 continued to experience tension, but this tension was at a lower level than before and, as such, it was within the capacity of President Shehab to contain it. President Shehab's success where his predecessor, Chamoun, had failed was owed in large measure to the changes in the policies of the Western Powers and the U.A.R. towards Lebanon and towards one another. The stalemate of the Crisis in 1958 drove home to the U.A.R. and to the United States that neither party was capable of dislodging the influence of the other. As the United States

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<sup>1</sup>Find the text of the resignation in: al-Nahar, July 21, 1960.

achieved an understanding of Arab neutrality and as the U.A.R. resorted to a policy of reconciliation with its neighbors (excluding Iraq) in the interest of consolidating Syria, the tension between powerful public opinion sectors in Lebanon who were largely susceptible to the influence of these powers was reduced to a lower level. The rapprochement which took place between President Nasser and the Western Powers in response to the new Soviet Challenge in the area which was no longer contented to hide behind the facade of neutrality, permitted Lebanese diplomacy to steer a course which was not offensive to either the U.A.R. or the Western Powers.

## Chapter XI

### EVALUATION.

#### A. Lebanon and the Middle East Allied Command Proposals, 1951.

On the submission of the Middle East Allied Command Proposals in 1951, Lebanon was still an emergent country whose independence was no more than eight years old. It was, therefore quite natural for the Lebanese government to be primarily concerned about the preservation of its newly won independence.

During its eight years of independence Lebanon had evolved certain trends in foreign affairs. It pursued a policy of close co-operation with the other Arab States in every field, be it social, economic or political. Lebanon, for example, joined the Arab League in 1945, and three years later, in solidarity with the other Arab States, it participated in the Palestinian war of 1948. This trend in Lebanese foreign policy was in large measure a manifestation of the Arab identity of the Lebanese.

Lebanon, as a pluralistic society which was vulnerable in large measure to intervention by other Arab States and as a small country with no extra-territorial claims, had no interest in inter-Arab disputes. On the contrary a state of peace and inter-Arab co-operation served its commercial and political interests. The Lebanese government accordingly avoided involvement in inter-Arab disputes and often intervened as a reconciliator whenever circumstances permitted.

In the logic of a small state and in the interest of preserving its independence, the Lebanese government was interested in the preserva-

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tion of the status quo in the Arab World. Accordingly the policy of Lebanon stressed adherence to the Arab League Charter which stipulated that the Arab States should not commit aggression against one another nor intervene in one another's internal affairs.

The Arab League suited the purpose of Lebanon also in the sense that while it facilitated inter-Arab co-operation, it did not compromise the sovereignty of the state. The decisions of the Arab League Council were binding only on those members who approved of them. Thus a state could always decline a decision which was not in its interest. In 1951 Premier Nazim al-Qudsi of Syria submitted proposals for the transformation of the Arab League from a fraternal inter-Arab organization to an Arab Federation. Premier Riad al-Sulh of Lebanon on that occasion declined the proposals in the interest of Lebanese solidarity. The Christians were apprehensive about any inter-Arab arrangement which compromised the sovereignty of the state. This apprehension arose from the heritage of the Christian sects in Lebanon who feared hegemony by the Islamic Arab interior.

The challengers of the status quo in the Arab East in the 1940's and the early 1950's were the Hashimite Monarchies of Iraq and Jordan. Iraq was bent on the realization of the Fertile Crescent Project and Jordan on the realization of the Greater Syria Project, both of which involved Lebanon and Syria. Lebanon, accordingly, and in self defense, aligned itself with the opponents of the Hashimites--Saudi Arabia, Syria and Egypt--whenever matters related to either one of the Hashimite Projects were under discussion.

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The other trend which characterised Lebanese diplomacy was its close co-operation with the Three Major Western Powers, Britain, France and the United States in matters related to the cold war such as disarmament, the Korean question, and the Chinese question. Lebanon, however, as an emergent country often voted at the U.N. against Britain or France on matters related to colonialism whether in or outside the Arab World.

President Khoury envisaged in 1951 three major sources of threats to the independence of Lebanon: Israel to the South with which Lebanon was still in a state of war; the Hashimite ambitions in the Fertile Crescent and/or the Greater Syria Projects; and the return of a French mandatory system to the Levant. Prior to 1951 the President had relied on a policy of checks and balances to preserve the security of Lebanon. As against Israel, he relied on Arab solidarity and on a policy which was generally friendly to the Western Powers. As against the Hashimites the President relied on the support of the anti-Hashimite camp in the Arab World, Syria, Egypt and Saudi Arabia. In this respect the existence of Syria as a buffer state between Lebanon and the Hashimites was essential to the security of Lebanon.

President Khoury despite his unhappy memories about France during the struggle for independence in 1943, preserved French commercial and cultural interests in Lebanon. He was bent on keeping France and Britain on equal footing in Lebanon in order to guard against the hegemony of either power. France was negatively disposed towards the extension of British influence in its ex-mandates Syria and Lebanon whether directly or indirectly, i.e., through the Hashimites, Britain's closest allies in the Arab East. Britain on the other hand was negatively disposed towards

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the revival of French influence in the Levant. But, just in case, the two great European Powers agreed to divide the area into spheres of influence and substitute discord for accord, as had happened many a time in the history of colonial Powers; President Khoury saw to it that the U.S. standing in Lebanon was ahead of either Britain or France. The United States was trusted because it did not have the colonial heritage of its European allies. Of the three Major Western Powers the United States was the richest and the most powerful. It was also a country with which Lebanon had had traditional cultural and economic relations. Moreover, Lebanon had close to half a million emigrants in the U.S. All these factors contributed to the development of friendly Lebanese-American relations.

President Khoury was not particularly anxious for alignment. Lebanon in 1951 was not anywhere near a country with any significant Soviet influence, nor was it contiguous to the Soviet borders. But while there was no immediate danger on Lebanon from Soviet aggression, there were several factors which dictated to the President not to refuse the request of the Western powers for alignment once it was made. There were first moral or ideological considerations. The President felt that the nature of the Lebanese political system, the prevailing values in the Lebanese society and the social, economic and political ties with the Western Powers dictated some obligation to the Western Powers in the cold war context.

The President, moreover, could not disregard the consequences of a unilateral and immediate rejection of the Western Powers' proposals

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for alignment. Lebanon was in large measure vulnerable to pressure from the Western Powers. If he was to reject the Middle East Allied Command Proposals, Khoury would have incurred the risk of offending not only the Western Powers, but also those Arab States who were closely associated with them--such as Iraq and Jordan.

From the preliminary discussions about alignment with the emissaries of the Western Powers, Robertson of the U.K., Jones and McGhee of the U.S. (1951), it was apparent that the Lebanese government was first and foremost concerned about the preservation of Lebanon's independence. President Khoury wanted assurances against the ambitions of the Hashimites, against Israel and against the return of a French mandate to the Levant. These assurances were given to him by Britain and/or the United States. The United States stated to President Khoury that it was willing to give a written guarantee about the preservation of Lebanon's independence if the Lebanese government so desired. The security of Lebanon was further assured with the Joint Statement of November 10, 1951 which spelled out the general objectives of the Middle East Command. In this statement the proposing powers, the U.S., Britain, France and Turkey precluded the membership of Israel, guaranteed the Sovereignty of those states who would become members of the proposed defense organization, and implied in so many words the preservation of the status quo in the area. Thereafter, President Khoury and his government became well disposed towards alignment in principle.

But in as much as the Lebanese authorities desired to enter negotiations with the Western Powers towards alignment, they could not

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take such a step without the concurrence of the Arab States; and the Arab States were in disagreement. Egypt had rejected the Middle East Command Proposals in the belief that they were in the interest of perpetuating British colonialism in Egypt. Syria's position was equivocal. Iraq, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia were for alignment, but they would not enter into negotiations with the Western Powers without the concurrence of Egypt out of fear that they would be accused by Arab nationalist public opinion of betrayal of Egypt's national cause.

The conflicting views of the Arab States on alignment, as well as the conflict between the Western Powers and Egypt had their repercussions on the internal situation in Lebanon. Political parties, factions and political figures held conflicting views about the Middle East Allied Command. Beneath this fragmented picture a sectarian color to the conflict was emerging. The Sunni's were largely influenced by the attitude of Egypt and thus against alignment. The Christians generally sympathized with Egypt but they were not negatively disposed towards alignment. President Khoury in 1951 was hardly in a position to take sides on such a controversial issue. His over-extended period in office had already weakened his power position in the country. His power position was especially weak among the Sunni's who were alienated due to the severance of economic union with Syria and the sacking of Riad al-Sulh, the most outstanding Sunni leader at that time, from the Premiership.

In order to reduce the impact of the controversial views about alignment on the stability of the country, the government convinced the deputies not to discuss the Middle East Allied Command in an open session

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of the House of Deputies. Furthermore, the President consulted with the political leaders of the country, in order to formulate a policy above factional differences, and resorted to secret diplomacy. All these steps were dictated by fear of internal instability due to the conflicting views about the Middle East Allied Command.

Under the circumstances the interest of Lebanon and the personal interest of the President as well lay in reconciling the conflict between Egypt and the Western Powers. The President tried to do just that in an unofficial manner. He advised the Western Powers for a better understanding of the colonial problems in the Arab World and urged them to fulfil the national demands of Egypt by withdrawing British forces from Egypt and abrogating the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936. He also pointed out that the Palestinian question was one of the foremost problems which fermented Arab-Western misunderstanding. Towards the solution of that question, President Khoury suggested repatriation and/or compensation to the Palestinian refugees.

To Egypt the President counseled moderation. He wanted Egypt to postpone a final decision about the Western proposals for alignment until a solution to the Anglo-Egyptian dispute could be found. When he failed to make an impression on Egypt, he argued that Egyptian national demands and the MEAC proposals were different matters and that while the former was primarily an Egyptian affair the latter concerned the Arab League because it involved more than one Arab State. President Khoury, however, failed to make an impression on either Egypt or the Western Powers. The conflict therefore, continued and, as such, the Government could hardly

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afford to take a definite stand on the MEAC. The position of Lebanon was made more difficult in late November 1951 when Iraq and Egypt, at the meetings of the Arab League Political Committee in Paris, disputed a draft resolution submitted by Egypt to the effect that the MEAC proposals were rejected by the Arab League. Under the circumstances, the safest course for Lebanon was to sit on the sidelines offending neither party. A few months later, all discussions about alignment came to a standstill as Egypt experienced a coup d'etat on July 23, 1952.

B. President Chamoun Continues the Policy of President Khoury, 1952-56.

President Khoury was forced to resign on September 18, 1952. He was succeeded by President Chamoun on September 23. President Chamoun followed in the footsteps of President Khoury seeking to promote cultural, economic and political relations with the Arab States. The Government of Lebanon under President Chamoun signed several agreements with other Arab States to that effect. The limit imposed on Lebanese inter-Arab cooperation continued to be the rejection of any Arab project which compromised the sovereignty of the State. Lebanon in 1953 rejected the proposals submitted by Fadhil al-Jamali of Iraq for an Arab Federation. Two years earlier, President Khoury had taken a similar attitude towards an Arab Federation Project submitted by Premier Nazim al-Kudsi of Syria. The reservations of Lebanon towards Arab Federal projects were still motivated by Christian fears of an Islamic encirclement.

President Chamoun's policy towards alignment in 1953 and 1954 was conducted on similar lines to the policy of his predecessor Khoury. On the occasion of the visit of the U.S. Secretary of State, Dulles,

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to the Middle East in the Spring of 1953, the President tried to arrange for a positive dialogue between the United States and the Arab States. The Arab States were advised to sort out their differences, aggregate their demands upon the Western Powers and present them to the American Secretary of State. The diplomacy of Lebanon was still operating in the belief that it was possible to resolve pending problems with the Western Powers within the general framework of alignment.

On his visit to Lebanon the American Secretary of State was counseled to develop a better understanding of Arab colonial problems, requested to exert his influence for the fulfilment of Egypt's national demands and to resolve the Palestinian Question. By the Autumn of 1954, only one of these problems was resolved. Britain evacuated Egypt, but there were still several colonial problems in the Arab World. Moreover, the Arab-Israeli dispute remained unresolved. After the resolution of the Anglo-Egyptian dispute, Iraq began to take a steady step towards alignment. The outcome was the Baghdad Pact which initiated a new round of cold war tension in the Arab World.

The policy of Lebanon towards the Baghdad Pact was essentially the same policy which was formulated by President Khoury with regard to the MEAC Proposals. President Chamoun showed definite inclinations towards the Baghdad Pact but reserved commitment under the pressure of Islamic public opinion. Nevertheless, such reservation were no longer sufficient to spare Lebanon the damage which Arab rivalries created on its internal front.

The fact was that the circumstances in the Arab World had changed

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radically after 1955. Egypt was no longer the conservative monarchy it used to be in the early fifties. The cold war had polarized the Arab World. Iraq through the Baghdad Pact was linked up to the Western Camp and Egypt pursued a policy of positive neutralism which was marked with a heavy anti-Western tinge. Nasser pursued a policy of undeclared war on the interests of the Western Powers in the Middle East and focussed his attacks on Iraq because it ventured to join the Baghdad Pact. He countered the armaments which Iraq had arranged to purchase from the West under the Baghdad Pact by purchasing arms from the Soviet Bloc in the Autumn of 1955. In conjunction with this anti-Western trend, Egypt cultivated a revolutionary brand of Arab nationalism which was used by Egyptian diplomacy for the extension of Egyptian influence throughout the Arab World, the undermining of Arab Regimes which did not agree with Cairo, and ultimately for the establishment of Arab unity.

The Western Powers resented Nasser's drive for the weakening of Western influence in the Arab World, especially because the process helped introduce the Soviet Union into an area which was previously regarded as an exclusive sphere of Western influence. Britain and to a lesser degree the U.S. retaliated by reinforcing Iraq and, together with France, tried to isolate Nasser. The Soviet Union realizing the opportunity which was made available to it by Nasser, backed up Egypt. Thus the Arab States were caught up by the cross-currents of the Cold war.

The Lebanese Government during the Spring and the Summer of 1955 opposed Egypt's bid for Arab leadership by sympathising with the Baghdad Pact and by trying to exert pressure on Syria not to join the proposed

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Egyptian alliance (Tripartite Pact) which was designed to isolate Iraq from the Arab League. This role was in conformity with the policy of the status quo which Lebanon had followed under President Khoury with respect to the Fertile Crescent Project. After 1955, Egypt became the primary challenger to the status quo, for Nasser had captured the allegiance of the revolutionary Arab nationalists in other Arab States and thus extended his influence in scope and depth to a greater extent than the influence of the Hashimites in the Arab World.

Egyptian policy constituted a threat to the interests of Lebanon in three ways: (1) Egypt was seeking to dominate the Arab States and thus pursued a policy which was essentially against the status quo; (2) Egypt was trying to dominate Syria, and Syria was in many ways regarded as the key to Lebanon; (3) Egypt was trying to weaken the influence of the Western Powers in the Arab World and in the process introduced and promoted Soviet influence.

The isolation of Iraq was expected to establish the hegemony of Egypt over the Arab League. The rotation of Syria in the orbit of Egypt was expected to promote Egyptian influence in Lebanon which had already captured the loyalty of the Islamic community. The weakening of the Western Powers position in the area and the promotion of Soviet influence threatened the economic and political interests of Lebanon. Lebanon as a bridge between the Arab World and the West was interested in the preservation of friendly Arab-Western relations. Lebanon, therefore, had vested interests in opposing the ambitious Egyptian policy, and President Chamoun tried to implement such a policy during the first few months following

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the signature of the Turco-Iraqi Treaty in 1955. President Chamoun during that period took the position that an alliance between the Arab States and the Western Powers was commendable and that it would lead to a positive settlement of pending colonial problems in the Arab World. He, therefore, opposed the proposed Egyptian alliance which was meant to isolate Iraq from the rest of the Arab States. Towards that objective the President advised the Syrian government not to join the proposed Egyptian alliance and counseled Iraq to keep an eye on Jordan where the Nasserites were exerting pressure on King Hussein.

His attempts, however, did not succeed. Syria was won by Egypt and so was Saudi Arabia whose dynasty was still thinking in the traditional sense of the Hashimite-Saudi feud. Having failed to counter-balance Egypt, President Chamoun retreated from his former position by trying to dissociate Lebanon from the conflict. He assured Egypt that Lebanon would not join the Baghdad Pact and tried to appease the anti-Iraqi camp in the Arab World by introducing into his cabinets ministers and prime ministers who were noted either for their opposition to the Baghdad Pact or for their pro-Egyptian inclinations. Lebanese neutrality was, however, insufficient from the point of view of Egypt and its allies Syria and Saudi Arabia. They, therefore, continued to exert pressure on Lebanon with the object of forcing it to align itself with them. Syria obstructed transit trade, Saudi Arabia curtailed Lebanese business on its territories and ordered the withdrawal of Saudi capital from Lebanon, and Egypt reduced its imports of citrus fruits. More important than the economic sanctions was the agitation of some Islamic quarters against the neutral

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policy of the Lebanese government. Christian public opinion noting the internal and external pressure which was brought to bear against Lebanon, retaliated by extending support to the neutral policy of the government. The Christian-Moslem schism exposed the country to instability and often created conflicts at the cabinet level. But, although a neutral policy did not appease Egypt, its allies in the Arab World and its following in Lebanon, it was the only feasible course which the government could maintain as long as the country was divided among itself.

President Chamoun could not join the Arab Tripartite Alliance-- Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Syria--for the same reasons that he could not join the Baghdad Pact. If he had to placate the Sunni community by withholding entry to the Baghdad Pact, he likewise had to consider that the Christian community would be alienated if he chose to join the Tripartite Alliance. The fact was that the Christian community in Lebanon expressed pronounced reservations about the development of anti-Western trends in Egypt and Syria, and disapproved of their close collaboration with the Soviet Union. More important was Christian fear of Arab nationalism which was at that time upheld by Nasser and his following in the Arab World.

The Suez War left no room for compromise among Lebanese. The Moslems thinking in terms of an Arab nationalist ideology and expecting that the realization of that ideology would come under the guidance and leadership of Nasser, considered the battle of Egypt for the Canal as their own. The least Lebanon could do under these circumstances, they demanded, was to sever diplomatic and economic relations with Britain and France who were at war with Egypt.

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The Christians, however, did not go that far in supporting Egypt. The severance of diplomatic and economic relations with Britain and France contradicted traditional cultural and political relations between the Christians and the Western European Powers, in particular Britain and France. Moreover, as Lebanese nationalists, the Christians could not justify the sacrifice of vital Lebanese interests for the sake of Egypt whose policy was, from their point of view, undesirable. They, therefore, warned the government that the severance of economic and diplomatic relations with Britain and France would not be tolerated. Thus they came into open conflict with the Moslem Community which could have resulted in a civil strife had it not been for the martial law which was imposed on the country for several months.

The Lebanese Government did not hesitate to extend diplomatic and financial assistance to Egypt during the Suez campaign. There was no disagreement on such types of assistance whether on the official or the popular level. The disagreement was on the question of sanctions against Britain and France and on whether Lebanon was prepared to go to war if the armed conflict spread outside Egyptian territories. President Chamoun prudently postponed decisions on such controversial issues until the heads of the Arab States, who were invited to Beirut, would meet and discuss measures to be taken with regard to the Suez Campaign. Decisions of this nature involved great risks to Lebanon. Lebanon alone was no match for the superior Israeli military force to the South. It suspected that, in case of the extension of hostilities outside Egypt, Syria's assistance might not be forthcoming in view of the danger posed

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by the concentration of French troops in Cyprus.

The severance of diplomatic and economic relations with Britain and France would have done more harm to Lebanon than to the sanctioned powers. But the seeming gesture of severing diplomatic relations would have gone some way in exerting pressure on Britain and France and appeased Cairo. The issue was, however, a subject of hot dispute between the various factions in the country. A decision either way would have provoked major sectors of public opinion. The safest course was to demand an Arab consensus on a policy towards the Suez War, so that the risks involved in defying Britain and France and in participating in a war against Israel would be minimized. These were among the major reasons which induced the President to take the initiative and invite the heads of the Arab States for a Summit meeting in Beirut.

When the heads of the Arab States convened in Beirut (November 13, 1956), the fighting in the Canal Zone had ceased. The major task ahead of the Arab States became how to facilitate an early withdrawal of the invading forces from Egyptian territory. Lebanon having preserved diplomatic relations with Britain and France and having maintained throughout 1955 and 1956 friendly relations with the United States, was in a good position to intervene in Western circles on behalf of Egypt. This was in principle the position which President Chamoun took at the conference. But in order not to get entangled in inter-Arab disputes, he added, in the tradition of President Khoury: Lebanon would approve any unanimous Arab decisions. When the Arab delegates disagreed on the question of severing diplomatic relations, the President found a good excuse to dismiss the issue.

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The question of severing diplomatic relations with Britain and France had outlived its usefulness as a diplomatic leverage on the termination of hostilities at the Canal Zone. But it was, nevertheless, still a contested issue between the Lebanese communities as a decision either way represented a challenge to one or the other of the factions concerned. Yaffi and Salam, the spokesmen for the Sunni community in the cabinet, pressed on with the issue. When the President declined to sever diplomatic relations with Britain and France they resigned their cabinet posts in protest thus giving the President the inaccurate image of a person who betrayed Egypt in its darkest hour.

It was at this point that President Chamoun apparently took the decision not to placate Cairo in the future. He was noting that Nasser took unilateral decisions without consultations with other Arab governments and then asked the Arab States to bear the consequences of his policy. Although the President was against the British, French and Israeli aggression on Egypt, he was alarmed by the weakening of Western influence in the area and the corresponding improvement of Soviet influence. He laid the responsibility for that bleak picture on the shoulders of Egypt but in reality it was not totally Egypt's responsibility.

The Western Powers had over-played their hands in the Middle Eastern affairs in the same manner that Egypt over-extended itself towards the Soviet Union and towards the establishment of a leading role in Arab affairs which verged on hegemony. The struggle was in a way inevitable as long as the Western Powers were still thinking about the Arab World as an exclusive sphere of influence without sufficient regard to the

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emergent Arab radical nationalistic forces which supported Cairo. These forces opposed the colonialism of Britain and France, the policy of the Western Powers towards Israel and the air of superiority which often characterized the approach of the Western Powers towards the Arab World. The need was for accommodation, which implied a lower level of Western objectives in the area and a comparable restraint in Egyptian policy. But such accommodation was not forthcoming because the Western Powers had not yet appreciated fully the changing circumstances in the Arab World nor Egypt recognized its limitations.

The Suez War virtually terminated the prospects of military alliances with the Western Powers and reduced the power position of Britain and France substantially. But the United States emerged from the war unscathed due to its pro-Egyptian stand in the Suez War. The leading role which the United States assumed, thereafter, operated at a slightly lower level than that of MEAC in 1951 or the Baghdad Pact in 1955 in the sense that military alliances were no longer requested of the Arab States. But it continued to view the Arab World as an exclusive sphere of Western influence. This was the essence of the Eisenhower Doctrine which promised American economic and military assistance to all Arab States who would have nothing to do with the Soviet Union. Egypt and Syria, satisfied as they were with the role of the U.S. in the Suez War, and, thereafter, with the role of the United States in bringing about the unconditional withdrawal of Britain, France and Israel from Egyptian territories, realized that the success of the Eisenhower Doctrine implied their own isolation. They, therefore, opposed it and thus the struggle for alignment

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ensued again.

C. President Chamoun Resorts to Alignment: 1957-58.

After the Suez War President Chamoun suddenly abandoned the non-alignment policy which he had pursued for the most part of 1955-56. As soon as President Eisenhower delivered his message to the American Congress (January 5, 1957) which came to be known later as the Eisenhower Doctrine, the Lebanese government welcomed the message without reservations. With the signature of the Joint American-Lebanese Communique on March 16, 1957, Lebanon became the first, and as it turned out later, the only Arab State which subscribed officially to the Eisenhower Doctrine. The government then departed from the traditional policy of reserving commitments on questions of cold war tension in the area as long as they were subject to conflict among the Arab States. Moreover, the government undertook the role of a leader on such questions by subscribing to the Eisenhower Doctrine before any other Arab State.

Lebanon under the Eisenhower Doctrine secured substantial economic benefits: American aid was flowing at a higher rate than before, economic relations with the other Western Powers were improved, and vested economic interests in the Arab oil-producing countries were maintained. Lebanese-Saudi relations improved suddenly as King Sa'ud realized the gravity of Soviet influence in Egypt and Syria. Lebanese economic relations with Syria, Egypt and the Soviet Union suffered, but these disadvantages were outweighed by the advantages derived from the West and the oil rich countries in the Arab World.

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The Eisenhower Doctrine appealed to the Lebanese government in two ways: (1) It was an instrument which was designed to drive a wedge between the Soviet Union and the Arab World and/or isolate or purge communist influence in Syria and Egypt. (2) It was an instrument which hinged on the preservation of the status quo in the Arab World. Soviet infiltration into the Middle East posed a threat to the liberal political and economic system of the state. Syria and Egypt were trying to alter the status quo; they upheld an Arab nationalist ideology which posed a threat to the independence of Lebanon, and, moreover, were instrumental in introducing Soviet influence into the area. Therefore, the isolation or the purge of communist influence in these countries was not particularly harmful to Lebanese interest.

But although the success of the Eisenhower Doctrine would have suited the policy of Lebanon, the Lebanese government was not in a position to subscribe to it. Subscription to the Eisenhower Doctrine implied direct involvement in inter-Arab conflicts, a direct confrontation with Syria and Egypt and a leading role in Arab affairs. Lebanon had neither the resources nor the internal solidarity to undertake such a role.

The political consequences of the Eisenhower Doctrine were tragic in terms of internal stability. Large sectors of public opinion were inspired with the Arab nationalist ideology which inspired Cairo and therefore, extended their support to Egypt as against their own government. The country had experienced a serious breach between Christian and Islamic public opinion which reached serious proportions during the Suez War. It was obvious at that time that the most urgent

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task was to tend the internal wounds in the country. Instead of doing that, President Chamoun went right ahead and subscribed to the Eisenhower Doctrine, thereby exposing Lebanon to the cross-currents of cold war tension more than ever before. Consequently, the conflict between large sectors of public opinion which ran largely along Christian-Islamic lines increased in intensity. The disgruntled feudal political figures who lost their influence under President Chamoun quickly capitalized on the alienated Islamic communities by deploring the Eisenhower Doctrine. Their object was to force out of office the man who reduced their political power.

In fairness to President Chamoun it ought to be mentioned that for almost two years he had pursued a policy of non-alignment on the regional level particularly to appease Nasser but to no avail. But if a policy of non-alignment did not give the expected returns, it was still the best possible under the circumstances. The fact was that the Lebanese people were divided among themselves and hence a policy of non-alignment on the international level was preferable as a policy of the lesser evil. President Chamoun apparently did not grasp this reality when he opted for the Eisenhower Doctrine. The consequences were that the Moslem communities particularly the Sunnis, were alienated and, thereafter, shifted from agitation to subversion with the encouragement and assistance of Egypt and Syria. The birth of the United Arab Republic in February 1958 aggravated what had already been a grave situation by increasing the saliency of Arab Unity as an issue in the East-West cold war tension in the Arab World. The result was the Crisis of 1958 which nearly shattered the country.

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D. The Solution.

The Crisis drove home to the authorities that the country was divided among itself and that the Lebanese government was in no position to take sides in the regional cold war as long as U.A.R. and the Western Powers were in conflict. This reality was manifested by the stalemate between the warring factions in 1958. General Shehab, therefore, resorted to a policy of non-alignment which was apparently accepted by the U.A.R. and by the Western Powers, in particular the United States of America. The question that arises here is: why did President Nasser accept a policy of non-alignment for Lebanon after 1958 while he apparently had been dissatisfied with that same policy in 1955 and 1956?

President Nasser's objectives changed after 1958. The stalemate of the Crisis not only taught lessons to the Lebanese government, but also to all parties concerned including the U.S. and U.A.R. that Lebanon could not possibly be won by either side without incurring risks out of proportion to the prize. The landing of American troops in Lebanon served as a further discouragement to the U.A.R. The American landing localized the conflict and thus precluded the possibility of success to the Rebels and/or annexation to the U.A.R. Consequently, President Nasser was motivated to meet Lebanon halfway--settle for the installation of General Shehab as President and for a policy of non-alignment by Lebanon.

The developments in the area went further in preparing suitable circumstances for a general settlement in Lebanon along the lines of a non-alignment policy. The abrupt renewal of hostilities between Iraq

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under Qassem and the U.A.R. and the extension of communist as well as Soviet support to Qassem, created some misunderstanding between U.A.R. and the Soviet Union. The outcome was a steady rapprochement between the Western Powers and U.A.R. which went some way to reducing the intensity of their conflicts and hence reduced the strain on Lebanon. President Nasser was also further induced to meet Lebanon halfway when he realized that his position in Syria was insecure and that under an offensive from Iraq, he needed a breathing spell to solidify his position in the Northern Province.

The developments of 1958 in Lebanon, and thereafter, in the region also induced the Western Powers to tolerate a formal non-alignment policy by Lebanon. The Western Powers after 1958 discarded the policy of all-out Soviet exclusion from the Arab World. They had finally ceased to view the Arab World as an exclusive sphere of Western influence and began to regard it more or less as an open field. This change in concepts introduced flexibility to the policy of the Western Powers and provided them with the opportunity to accommodate the radical Arab nationalist forces and the U.A.R. Henceforth, a policy of non-alignment by Lebanon was no longer offensive to them, since in effective practice they expected that Lebanon would continue to be pro-West.

After 1958 the attitude of both the Christian and the Moslem Communities changed slightly. The Moslems reconciled themselves temporarily to the existence of Lebanon when they realized that coups or the substitution of one regime by another, as had happened in Iraq, were not sufficient to bring about an early union between the Arab States. Influenced as they were by the attitude of Nasser and the policy of the

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U.A.R., they had no longer any objective in opposing the policy of the state as long as Lebanon and the U.A.R. were on good terms. As for the Christians, they discovered the hard way that the viability of the state could not be maintained without a compromise with the Moslems. The relinquishment of alignment with the Western Powers seemed to them a small price in payment for the maintenance of the sovereignty of Lebanon. Thus it was largely due to the changing contours of international politics in the Arab World and the corresponding changes in the attitudes of the communal groups on the internal front that a policy of non-alignment was successfully introduced by President Shehab, and that the viability of the state was maintained. To be sure the Christian-Moslem controversy continued to exist and will continue to exist as long as the majority of the Christians are Lebanese nationalists and the majority of the Moslems are Arab nationalists. The government, therefore, in conducting its foreign policy should be primarily concerned about keeping Christian-Moslem controversy within manageable size.

E. A Paradox in Lebanon's Arab Policy.

Lebanon as a small Arab State has vested interests in the maintenance of the status quo in the Arab East, since the expansion of any one of the Arab States at the expense of another is likely to pose in the long run a threat to the sovereignty and the independence of the state. This danger becomes the more real as it is realized that all Arab governments in the Arab East with the exception of the government of Lebanon subscribe to the idea of Arab nationalism. It is therefore to be expected that any one state would not hesitate to annex another if an

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opportunity is made available to it. Since Lebanon does not have the power to deter the ambitions of other Arab states single-handed, it follows that a balance of power system in the Arab World is in its best interest.

Yet, great as the need may be from a Lebanese point of view for a balance of power system in the Arab World, Lebanon is not in a position to contribute to the maintenance of a balance of power system by carrying out the policy of a balancer. This is because Lebanon does not have the resources nor the internal solidarity which are necessary for such a role. When the Lebanese government in 1957 subscribed to the Eisenhower Doctrine and collaborated with other Arab States against the U.A.R. in the interest of preserving among other things the status quo in the Arab World, the result was that this policy backfired on its initiators.

Under the circumstances the only feasible course for the government is to disengage from inter-Arab conflicts and to try to reconcile such conflicts if an opportunity is made available. Disengagement reduces the internal tension created by inter-Arab conflicts. Reconciliation among the Arab States contributes to the promotion of tranquility in the Arab World, a situation which is useful to Lebanon in terms of internal and external security as well as in terms of commercial and economic returns.

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