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**THE CONSEQUENCES OF ISRAEL'S INVASION OF LEBANON, 1982:  
FAILURE OF A SUCCESS**

**by**

**Camille Habib**

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

at

**Dalhousie University**  
Halifax, Nova Scotia

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## DEDICATION

To my parents and my wife, to whom I owe  
this and more ...

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## ABSTRACT

A state's decision to go to war should be made after its decision-makers have carefully considered the purpose for introducing military forces and the risks involved. In particular, decision-makers are expected to calculate whether the state's foreign policy environments are favourable to secure the desired objectives through military means. But a state's military capability is not alone a sufficient instrument in the planning of foreign policy. The failure to consider the psychological, internal, and external constraints which, in the final analysis, tend to explain and predict a state's behaviour is a clear formula for political disaster.

Historically, Israelis have demonstrated an understanding of the essential linkage between military might and political purposes. Between the late 1940's and the early 1980's, Israel had survived four wars with its Arab neighbours, and this in itself is a testimony of the importance of conducting a limited military action under favourable foreign policy conditions. However, when Israel invaded Lebanon in 1982, something went wrong. In that war, the IDF had won, at best, an elusive victory. Although the PLO was forced to evacuate West Beirut, Palestinian nationalism in the West Bank and Gaza Strip remained well and alive. Besides, Israel was unable to impose a peace treaty on Lebanon because its "friends" there were not willing to abandon their Arab affiliation for fear of Syrian reprisals.

Broadly speaking, this study focuses on analyzing those factors which led to the demise of Israel's policy in Lebanon. Of course, there are many explanations to why Israel found itself in such a quagmire. At least part of the answer is to be found in the apparent disregard by Defense Minister Ariel Sharon to the shortcomings of military means to achieve political goals at acceptable costs. In addition, Israel's failure in Lebanon also bears witness to the relevancy of the Clausewitzian literature in determining the outcome of a contemporary military conflict. It will be concluded, however, that a comprehensive understanding of Israel's fruitless campaign in Lebanon is to be found at the Lebanese level. In other words, Israel's misperception of the nature of Lebanon's polity, its communal realities, and its political actors had a profound impact on the failure of its military campaign in achieving nothing but unexpected and undesired results.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1: The Invasion: Towards an Analytical Framework

On 5 June 1982 the Israeli government ordered a full-scale advance into Lebanon. The invasion, dubbed "Operation: Peace for Galilee", had the expressed goals of uprooting the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) from Lebanon, installing a pro-Israeli regime in Beirut, and removing the Syrian forces which had been occupying a large area of the country since 1976.<sup>1</sup> Beyond these immediate aims, many observers felt that Israel had planned to crush Palestinian nationalism, annex the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and force the establishment of a Palestinian state in Jordan at the expense of the Hashemite King Hussein.<sup>2</sup>

Within days of the invasion, the Israeli Defense Forces (the IDF) had encircled West Beirut (the Muslim sector of the Lebanese capital) and so trapped the remaining PLO fighters and their allies inside the city. The siege of West Beirut lasted for seventy-two days, during which the Israelis managed to secure the election of their Lebanese ally, Bashir Gemayel, as President of Lebanon and force the PLO and Syrian combatants to leave the city for prearranged destinations in other Arab countries.<sup>3</sup> Above all, the invasion had offered Tel Aviv the opportunity to capture Beirut-the first Arab capital occupied by the IDF during the course of the protracted Arab-Israeli conflict.



Despite this stunning military victory, Israel's objectives then had to be replaced by much more limited aims. Israel's momentum for realizing its political objectives from the war was disrupted by several factors: the assassination of Bashir Gemayel on 14 September 1982; the election of his brother, Amin Gemayel, who maintained open channels of dialogue with the Muslims, the PLO and other Arab countries; the Israeli failure to remove Syrian forces from North and East Lebanon; the emergence of the Lebanese National Resistance, which had the aim of driving the IDF out of the southern part of the country; the resurgence of Palestinian nationalism - projected recently in terms of the famous "uprising" (also known as the Intifada) in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which has exacerbated the strife between the Israeli and the Palestinian nations; and, finally, the erosion of domestic support in Israel for the Likud policy in Lebanon. As a result, Israel's northward policy toward Beirut experienced a complete turnabout. It had now to concentrate on the creation of a "security belt" on the borders between Israel and Lebanon, and on developing good relations with the various Lebanese communities.<sup>4</sup>

Thus Israel failed to reap the fruit of its military success in 1982. In their discussion of Tel Aviv's Lebanon war, Schiff and Ya'ari conclude that the invasion "drew Israel into a wasteful adventure that drained much of its inner strength, and cost the IDF the lives of over 500 of its finest

men in a vain effort to fulfil a role it was never meant to play."<sup>5</sup> They argue that the invasion was bound to end in calamity because it was "a war for whose meagre gains Israel has paid an enormous price that has yet to be altogether reckoned; a war whose defensive rationale belied far-reaching political aims and its unconscionably myopic policy."<sup>6</sup> This suggests that an assessment of the success and failure of Tel Aviv's military operation has to be measured in relation to the political goals that Israel had tried to achieve. This, then, is a case study of the problems of making foreign policy, when it is compelled to achieve, by military means, political gains in areas as nebulous and ambiguous as the Middle East.

There have been many studies of Israel's military adventure in Lebanon in 1982 and its consequences. These studies, however, tend to be historical and journalistic in approach. Bulloch's Final Conflict and Jansen's The Battle of Beirut, for example, although rich in chronological data, lack a comprehensive explanation of why things happened the way they did.<sup>7</sup> Even more recent studies, like Mackey's Lebanon: Death of A Nation and Fisk's Pity the Nation: Lebanon At War, do not escape such criticisms. At best, Israel's invasion of Lebanon has been treated briefly in studies, depending on the perspectives of various authors. This is exemplified by Cockburn's Dangerous Liaison: The Inside Story of the US-Israeli Covert Relationship, Seale's Asad: The Struggle for

the Middle East, Chomsky's The Fateful Triangle, and Harkabi's Israel's Fateful Hour.<sup>8</sup>

In addition, there are personal accounts. They include Surviving the Siege of Beirut, by Mikdadi, who stayed in West Beirut, the main focus of the Israeli attacks, and recorded the events around her from the viewpoint of the ordinary people; The Covenant, by Newman, who wrote a compelling love story describing her intimate relationship with Bashir Gemayel; and Timerman's The Longest War: Israel In Lebanon, in which the author unveiled his opposition to that war. All indicate the need for a broader perspective in analyzing Israel's military intervention in Lebanon. Also, some accounts on the war are nothing less than illustrations of the parochial interests of the writers. An example is The Greatest Bet, by Amin Gemayel, who served as President of Lebanon between 1982 and 1988.<sup>9</sup>

With respect to papers in academic journals, most of these publications have been interested primarily in dealing with the aftermath of the Israeli invasion, without making the required connection between their analyses of contemporary realities and past events. Examples of such studies are Miller's "Palestinians and the Intifada: One Year Later", Tueni's "Lebanon: A New Republic", and Dickey's "Assad and His Allies: Irreconcilable Differences."<sup>10</sup> However, in cases when the connection is made, the reader finds that some of the articles deal only with one aspect of the invasion, like

Green's "Reflection On the Kahan Commission Report", and Yishai's "Dissent In Israel."<sup>11</sup> On the other hand, most writers are not so much interested in explaining events, as in making predictions on the possibility of peace in the Middle East, or in evaluating Washington's policy and its relations with regional players. Rubbin's "Middle East: Search for Peace" and Coban's "The US-Israeli relationship in the Reagan Era" are cases in point.<sup>12</sup>

The present study draws on a variety of sources (noted later in this chapter) to analyze the significance of the 1982 invasion. These are utilized in the context of a theoretical framework (elaborated in Chapter Two) which focuses on the psychological, domestic, and external environments of foreign policy, with particular reference to use of the military instrument.

### 1.2: Aims and Importance of the Study

The broader purpose of this study, therefore, is to assess the relevance of the use of force as a tool for realizing foreign policy goals. Throughout history nations have tended to employ all means available to them in order to serve their national interests of security and economic well-being. The classical question arises, however, of whether resort to war is indeed a politically profitable option. In its specific context, the Israeli invasion of Lebanon offers policy-makers and students of foreign policy and military

strategy a useful background against which to examine the general relationship between political planning and military venture.

The complexity of Middle Eastern affairs requires students of Arab-Israeli politics to take a highly structured approach that entails an examination of the regional and international environment in which the Israeli invasion occurred. However, the existing literature on the Middle East suffers from a number of limitations. In part this stems from the theoretical weakness of the field, which has often been dominated by description and policy prescription at the expense of theoretical innovation or rigour. Even the formal division of the Arab world into a twenty-two states has not inhibited analysts from largely ignoring the domestic development of each individual state. Instead, it has often been assumed that the force of pan-Arab and pan-Islamic ideology has spilled across state borders. As a result, the importance of the state as an autonomous actor, or as an instrument of class rule, has been obscured. Thus, in their search for a framework for analyzing the foreign policies of Arab states, Korany and Dessuki place more emphasis on domestic sources of foreign policy and on how the processes of modernization and social change affect the external behaviour of Arab states.<sup>13</sup>

From a theoretical perspective, the examination of what Dowdy calls "the international relations of regions"

underlines the relevance of the Middle East for the study of international relations. He traces such a study to the emergence in the 1940s and 1950s of the "area studies" approach, which was inspired more by a particular interest in the affairs of a given locality than by a general interest in global affairs.<sup>14</sup> Over the years, however, references to regions have become common in the language of international politics. Dowdy sees a basic theoretical affinity among those interested in regional study because they all take geographical areas as a basic unit of analysis.<sup>15</sup> Thus he considers the Middle East along with Latin America, Southeast Asia and Western Europe as subsystems, in the hope that such a classification can be drawn upon for insights to strengthen and enrich the systems approach to regional political study.<sup>16</sup>

To this end, Dowdy distinguishes among four levels of analysis: (1) the system level, which is composed of all international political actors and their interactions; (2) the subsystem, which is defined as a term of structural hierarchy denoting a subdivision or component or segment of a system; (3) the sub-subsystem level (or core), which consists of a group of states that forms a central focus of world politics within a given region; and (4), there is the sub-sub-system (or nation-state) which includes all individual states of the global system.<sup>17</sup> Dowdy's approach to the study of the Persian Gulf from a "subsystemic perspective" is also relevant for

this present endeavour. Accepting the Maximalist view<sup>18</sup> of the Middle East (see map #1) this region is taken to be a dominant subsystem, with the Maghreb, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the Persian Gulf as its cores or subsystems. In a more particular view, this study will focus on the states of Israel and Lebanon as individual entities in the "Arab-Israeli conflict" core.

The Middle East, in addition to the theoretical perspective, acquires a special importance in world affairs because of historical, religious, geographic and economic factors. The region's strategic location, immense oil resources, and its historical role as the "Cradle of Civilizations" (i.e., Egyptian, Sumerian, Babylonian, and Assyrian) and as the Birthplace of the Jewish, Christian and Muslim faiths, have made it a major focus of international attention. To begin with, the religious factor is of great importance because it still provides a working context for twentieth century politics in the Middle East. Carter contends that it is useful to examine the holy scriptures in order to understand the roots of the Arab-Israeli conflict. He finds that the "Will of God" is the basis for both the esoteric debates and the vicious struggle among Jews and Muslims over the "promised land."<sup>19</sup> For instance, while Jews consider the Covenant made by God with Abraham as applying exclusively to them, the Muslims derive from the same Covenant the justification for their assured place in the eyes of

God.<sup>20</sup> This implies that contemporary politics in the Middle East cannot be separated from specific historic and religious events, such as the Jewish exodus from Egypt and the subsequent establishment of the state of Israel in 1948. It follows that "Judaism and Islam have a profound effect on the governments and public policy in Israel and the Arab countries."<sup>21</sup> For instance, Jews are admitted automatically to citizenship when they arrive in Israel, while for Arab nations the Koran remains a binding force in that it provides them with a common state religion from which basic laws are derived.<sup>22</sup> In short, religion plays a functional role -- one that makes it an essential consideration in studying Middle Eastern politics.

By virtue of its geographical location, the Middle East has long been a focal point of world politics. Throughout history the region has acted as a crossroads and as a bridge that separates and yet connects, Europe, Asia, and Africa. In fact, the Strait of Gibraltar (which connects Europe with North and East Africa), the Turkish Straits (which link Europe with Asia), and the Suez Canal (which links the Atlantic and Indian Oceans via the Mediterranean and the Red Seas) have given the Middle East a great geopolitical significance.<sup>23</sup> Needless to say, these waterways are important for the movement of people and goods, for commercial shipping, and for communication networks joining Europe with Africa, the Indian subcontinent, Southeast Asia, the Far East and Australia.<sup>24</sup>



In retrospect, this implies that the Middle East's military significance is a direct result of its location. This has long fascinated the maritime powers interested in saving time, in narrowing distances, and in controlling or exerting influence over this part of the world.

Apart from its geographical position, oil also has guaranteed the Middle East a privileged and powerful position on the world stage. Middle Eastern oil is abundant, has an unusual high quality, and is an essential energy source for the world. First, owing largely to the geographical characteristics of the land and the presence of large volumes of natural gas which serve to force the oil to the surface, Middle Eastern oil resources represent about 60 percent of the world's proven reserves, and among the most easily exploited.<sup>25</sup> Moreover, oil constitutes the principal basis of the national economies of the producing states. The export and sale of Middle Eastern oil at high prices has guaranteed a surplus of "petrodollars" in many of the oil-producing states, contributes to their economic growth and provides them with increased influence in the international community.<sup>26</sup> On the other hand, all producing countries lack the necessary technologies to exploit their own oil resources. It has been asserted that nearly half of all American income from direct investment in foreign petroleum comes from the Middle East. The thousands of Americans working for the oil companies and shipping firms in the region, as well as in banks and other

enterprises, have a direct impact in making oil an essential ingredient in the thinking of those making American foreign policy.<sup>27</sup>

But even without oil the Middle East has always been an important arena of world events. Long before biblical times, outside forces had struggled almost continuously along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. They struggled for commercial gain, political benefits, and to deny the area's advantages to an adversary.<sup>28</sup> Consequently, the region was successively a part of the Persian, Greek, Roman, Arab, Mongol, Tatar and Ottoman empires. More recently, at the end of the First World War, the Middle East came under the control of France and Britain. But in the aftermath of the Second World War, European influence in this area faded steadily and was practically ousted as a result of US-Soviet rivalries. Indeed, since the early 1950s, each superpower has capitalized on every opportunity to extend its own influence in the Middle East, usually at the expense of the other. This competition between Moscow and Washington reached its zenith during the so-called Cold War, which was characterized by a hostile relationship between the West and the Soviet Union. As each of the poles moved quickly to organize and dominate world-wide alliances, the polarization of the Middle East became inevitable. The premise of East-West tension is easy to identify by the fact that Moscow and Washington have striven to achieve similar objectives. For instance, despite other

differences, each superpower wants a stable presence and listening post in the heart of the Middle East, an access to friendly air and naval facilities, a lever on the peace process, and the curtailment of the other's economic influence and political prestige.<sup>29</sup>

Even so, the bipolar struggle is only one facet in understanding the wider context of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. It must not be forgotten that a diversity of religions, cultures, and economies exists in the Middle East and define its wider structure. For instance, while Islam is the dominant religion, it is divided between the Sunni and Shiite branches, and each branch, in turn, is split into a large number of groups. For example, whereas the Sunni branch is divided among the Hanafi, the Maliki, the Shafii and the Hambali schools, the Shiites are divided among the Imami, the Ismaili and Zaydi communities. The same can be said about the Christians, who are represented by small and scattered pockets which include the Nestorian, Maronite, Greek Orthodox, Jacobite, Coptic and various Protestant groups.<sup>30</sup> This communal division is of great significance because it provides a framework for understanding the Middle East in terms of the struggle among various minorities.

The communal factor means that the possibilities of structural development in each country depend on particular melanges of traditional norms and modern demands. It also means that each state can be said to have its own distinctive

environment, which, in turn, can explain the diversity of politics and political institutions which exist in the region.<sup>31</sup> In short, the Middle East lacks an established political culture, whereas the patterns of decisionmaking, political parties, and the military vary from one state to another.<sup>32</sup> This comparative political variation in the Middle East is well illustrated in the individual experiences of Lebanon and Israel. These two countries have been struggling to establish their legitimacy since their independence in 1943 and 1948 respectively.

Lebanon's precarious historical experience is attributed to a conjunction of paradoxes and contradictions. As a country, Lebanon was created by accident rather than by design -- at least, not by the design of its people -- by virtue of its becoming a French zone of influence in the era that followed the First World War. As a polity, Lebanon was, and is, archaic, inefficient and divided: Western and Arab, Christian and Muslim, modern and traditional.<sup>33</sup> In short, within its internal structures, Lebanon is a dichotomy, not knowing whether it has a Western identity with an "Arab face" or an Arab identity with a "Western face". This dilemma exploded in 1958, and again in 1975. Whereas the 1958 civil war promoted United States military intervention, the post-1975 ongoing impasse has linked Lebanon to the overall Arab-Israeli conflict. Indeed, since the mid-1970s the strife in Lebanon has been a conjunction of several conflicts, through

which the country has become "everyone's land", and its crisis has turned out to be "everyone's war", and "everyone's revolution" as well. For the purpose of this study, this has involved three interconnected foci: the Palestinians and Lebanon's sovereignty, Syria and Lebanon's independence, and Israel's and Lebanon's security.

Until very recently, Israel was considered to be "in" the Middle East, but not "of" the Middle East. Demographically, for instance, Israel differs from its neighbouring states because a large percentage of its citizens were born beyond its borders. Perhaps because of the European backgrounds of the majority of new Jewish settlers, and possibly because of the strong Western support accorded the new state, Israel has come to be seen as a Western surrogate in the Middle East. Piscatori and Ramazani observe that "official Judaism, European cultural affinities, the political strength of the Ashkenazis [European Jews], and the intimate connection with the United States make Israel unique in, and thus different from the region."<sup>34</sup>

After forty-five years of Israel's existence, however, about fifty percent of the present Israeli population is native-born. In addition, the massive immigration of Jews from the Arab states, as well as from other parts of Asia and Africa, has resulted in an influx of large numbers of people whose societal and cultural traditions are akin to the Oriental populations, and different from those of their

Western co-religionists.<sup>35</sup> Finally, there are those Arabs, or their offspring, who have lived in Israel since its independence. They number about 700,000 and, forming Israel's Arab community, participate in the making of the Israeli society.<sup>36</sup> Hence, as new generations of Israelis have been born and lived in Israel since 1948, the presence of this growing Arab minority, and the normalization of relations between Tel Aviv and Cairo in 1978, portend the "Middle Easternization" of Israel. In short, Israel now is a reality; its existence is considered by many to be a fait accompli, and it is at once, finally, both in and of the Middle East. An analysis of this state's foreign policy can be telling evidence of its endurance in a hostile region.

It is this study's contention that Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982 not only gave a broader regional context to the Lebanese civil war, but also provided a linkage between the military instrument of Tel Aviv's foreign policy and Lebanon's internal politics. The Arab-versus-Israeli aspect of the invasion has made the Lebanese crisis a definite threat to any Middle East peace initiative. It has raised, finally, the question of the extent to which Israel's vigorous democracy allows it to continue to be the most mobilized and armed nation in the region.

### 1.3: Research Outline, Methodology and Sources

This study argues that Israel's misunderstanding of

intra-Lebanese politics has translated its military success of 1982 into a political disaster. In other words, the study examines Israel's foreign policy environments, its military success in its 1982 invasion of Lebanon, and its failure to achieve its political objectives. In short, the study attempts to explain the downfall of Tel Aviv's policy in Lebanon. We also aim to specify the lessons which can be drawn from the use of armed forces in the implementation of foreign policy in a critical environment such as that of Lebanon.

The second chapter discusses the psychological, domestic and external environments of foreign policy. Also incorporated in this chapter is the notion that foreign policy involves economic, diplomatic and military instruments. Because the last resort of policy in an anarchical international system is the use of force, the chapter proceeds by discussing war as the most consequential instrument of foreign policy. This entails an examination of the importance of war for the study of international relations, approaches to its study at individual, state, and international levels, its Clausewitzian principles, and its paradoxical yet strategic logic.

The third chapter provides an understanding of Israel's foreign policy within the context of the three aforementioned environments. The psychological environment includes the impact of Judaism, the Diaspora, Zionism, and the impact of

Israel's precarious existence in a hostile region on the minds of Israeli decisionmakers. The domestic environment involves an examination of the nature of the population, leaderships, internal political arrangements, and the state's economic capability, its civil-military relations, and the roles of interest groups, the mass media, and public opinion. Finally, the external environment considers Israel's regional and international relations. Throughout, examples are drawn from historical, political, and military areas in order to show the instruments which have been available to the Jewish State in the making of its foreign policy.

The fourth chapter concentrates on the making of modern Lebanon. This includes a discussion of that country's communities, its political parties, and the emergence of the Lebanese state. In particular, this chapter argues that Lebanon's communities, which share similar characteristics, are separated from each other by fear and suspicions; that each of them has the desire to dominate the country's polity, even at the expense of others; and that all compete for establishing links with external powers to protect their interests and the interests of their patrons. Such a pattern of politics has resulted in Lebanon's becoming engaged in a brutal and protracted conflict since 1975. In retrospect, while the internal phase of the Lebanese crisis requires a recognition of the fact that the civil war there is a conflict among opposing rights, the external phase indicates that



foreign powers used the Lebanese crisis to protect and promote their own interests as well. This proved the case during the Israeli invasion in June 1982. In this sense, then, Israel's invasion of Lebanon must be seen within the wider context of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The fifth chapter examines Israel's motivations for invading Lebanon in 1982. It is against the background of Tel Aviv's objectives that its decision to invade can be assessed on the basis of success and failure. To this end, this chapter is divided into two parts. The first part discusses the psychological, domestic, and external environments which surrounded the Israeli decision to invade. The second part explores Israel's objectives in its military involvement in Lebanon. This includes an understanding of Tel Aviv's relations with Lebanon, Syria, the PLO and Palestinian nationalism.

The sixth chapter analyses the reasons for Israel's military success, and, by balancing the objectives of its military operation against the results, explores the failure of Tel Aviv's policy in Lebanon. This chapter also examines the conventional reasoning which had led the Jewish State into the quagmire of Beirut. It will be concluded in Chapter Seven that Israel's misperception of intra-Lebanese politics transformed its military success into a political demise. The fact that Israel cannot afford to lose, politically and otherwise, in its relations with the Arab world, prompts one

to ask: Why did Tel Aviv not understand Lebanon? Why did it lose control over the course of events there? This suggests that the extent to which the environments of foreign policy provide an explanation of a state's interventionist behaviour can be of little significance unless the state has elaborated a realistic conceptual understanding of the target state's politics. For this reason, the study is entitled: "The Consequences of Israel's Invasion of Lebanon, 1982: Failure of a Success".

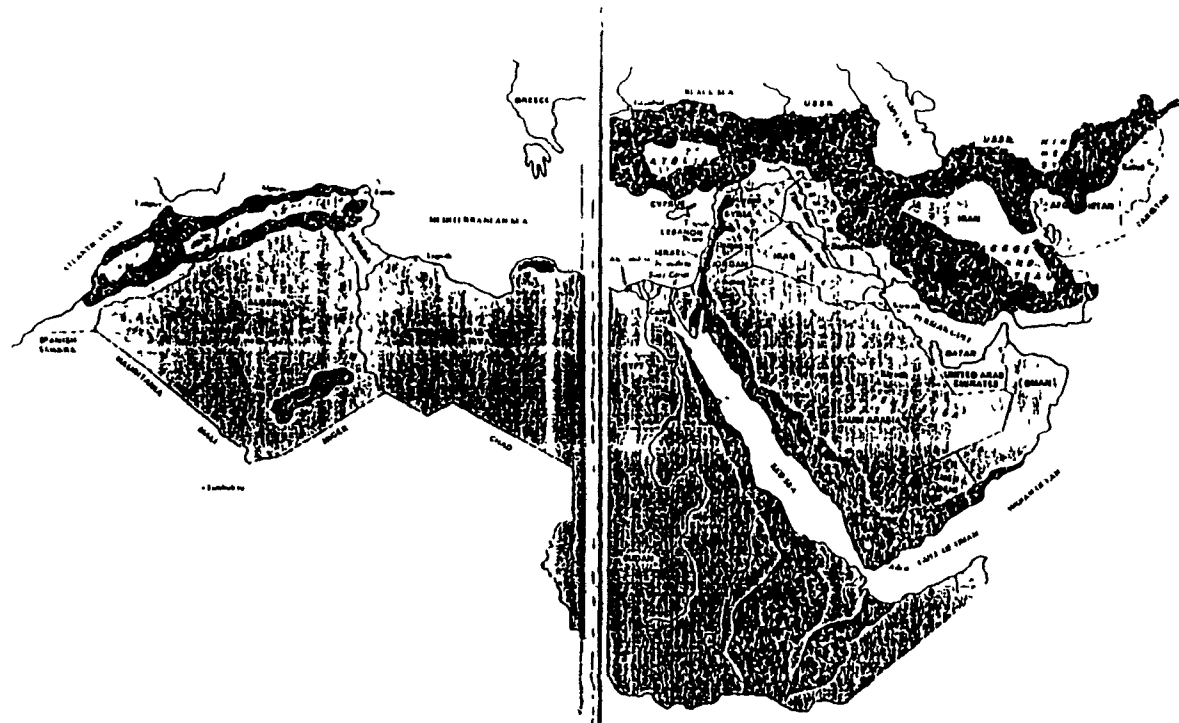
The methodology employed is essentially analytical in approach. The study is not a work of history. Rather, it is meant to be a contribution to our knowledge of a recent period in Israel's military affairs in Lebanon in the hopes that the elusive peace, which the Middle East so badly needs, will prove elusive no longer. To this end, the research design utilizes a combination of historical, political, military and other interpretative evidence to assess the limits of the use of force - no matter how tempting and effective it may appear to be in the implementation of foreign policy.

Two complementary research strategies were adopted in this study. The first borrows from the existing literature the concepts needed to explain the environments of foreign policy. The same method is employed to examine Israel's foreign policy system, and to provide an understanding of intra-Lebanese politics. The sources comprise a wide selection of books and journals, and are supplemented by

newspaper articles in English and Arabic.

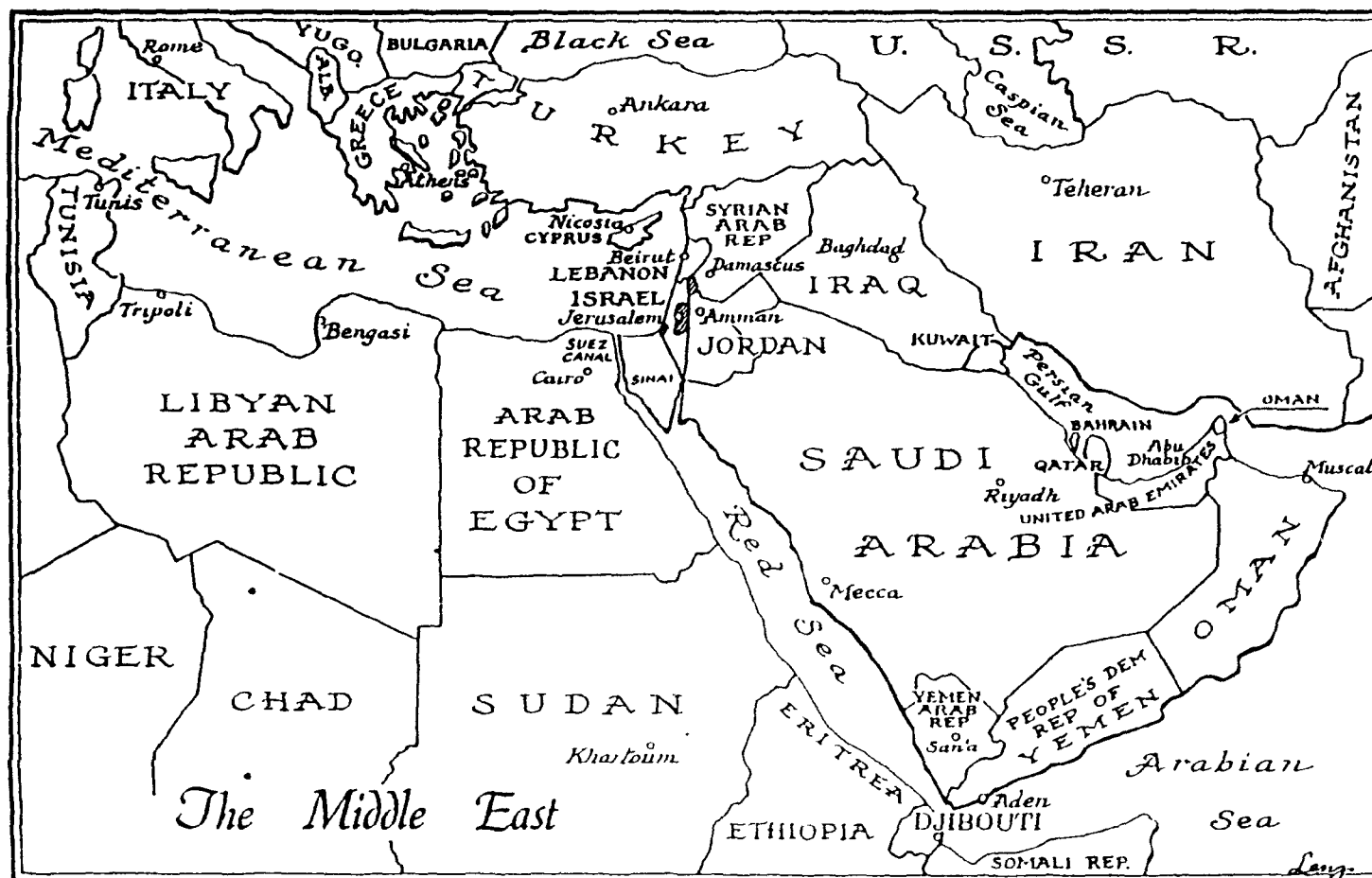
The second is field research conducted in Lebanon. In order to examine the success and failure of a policy carried out by one state towards another, one is compelled to investigate how such a policy is perceived by the affected state. In this context, it was judged very important to discuss the Israeli invasion with those Lebanese officials and other decisionmakers and communal representatives who were in a position to react to Tel Aviv's military initiative in their country. For their part, interviewees were asked to draw from their own experience and to say how they perceived the Israeli invasion. These interviews were designed to help in drawing general conclusions about Israel's failure to understand intra-Lebanese politics. However, since human behaviour reacts to changing circumstances, it was a major concern during the conduct of the field research in 1990 (when Syria seemed to have reaffirmed its control of the Lebanese theatre) that some, if not, all Lebanese leaders would formulate their answers in such a way as to give the impression that they opposed Operation Peace for Galilee. It is for this reason that a heavy reliance on Lebanese newspapers published in the summer of 1982 was necessary to obtain an accurate assessment of how Lebanese leaders in fact reacted to Israel's invasion of their country.

MAP #1: THE MAXIMALIST PERSPECTIVE OF THE MIDDLE EAST



SOURCE: M. Harari, *Government and Politics in the Middle East*,  
Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1962.

MAP #2: THE MINIMALIST PERSPECTIVE OF THE MIDDLE EAST



SOURCE: Current History, Vol: 85, No: 508, 1986

# ENDNOTES

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14. W. Dowdy, "International Politics of the Persian Gulf States From a Subsystemic Core Perspective", Tulane University, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, 1982, p. 9.

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18. The complexity of Middle Eastern affairs can also be attributed to the fact that there is no standard definition of the Middle East and the land it comprises. In general, however, most definitions of the Middle East fall under either a minimalist or maximalist view. Holders of the minimalist view restrict the Middle East to include the Arab countries of the Fertile Crescent, Israel, Egypt, the Arabian Peninsula, Iran, Turkey, and Afghanistan (see map #2). On the other hand, holders of the maximalist definition stretch the Middle East all the way from the Atlantic coast of Mauritania to Pakistan, thus including all the countries that are members of the Arab League, Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan (see map #1). For a minimalist view of the Middle East see, for example, G. Lenczowski, The Middle East In World Affairs, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980). For a minimalist view of the Middle East see, for instance, J. Gulick, The Middle East: An Anthropological Perspective, (California: Goodyear Publishing Company, Inc., 1976).

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**PART I**

**FOREIGN POLICY: THEORETICAL AND  
EMPIRICAL STUDY**

**CHAPTER TWO**  
**THE ENVIRONMENTS AND INSTRUMENTS**  
**OF FOREIGN POLICY**

**2.1: Introduction**

Over the years, the study of foreign policy has developed into a distinct field of specialization that separates it from the study of international relations. In a more practical vein, the terms are not synonymous. For instance, whereas the process of foreign policy is something which policymakers can control, international relations involve a confluence of forces and the net results of interactive processes to which policymakers may not even be sensitive or aware.<sup>1</sup> This distinction implies that international relations embraces more than the aggregate of national foreign policies; that it focuses primarily on the larger interactive process rather than on the way national decisionmakers view that process; and that it is not in any way the sum of the nation's foreign policies.<sup>2</sup>

According to Dougherty and Pfaltzgraff, foreign policy refers to "the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of external choices within one country, viewed from the perspective of that country."<sup>3</sup> It is understood that foreign policy cannot be wholly separated from domestic policy. Also incorporated in this is the notion that foreign policy involves economic, diplomatic and military instruments. This chapter begins by discussing the psychological, domestic, and

external environments of foreign policy. Because states are sometimes compelled to use force against the encroachments of other states, and because this thesis focuses on a study of armed intervention, the chapter proceeds by examining war as a foreign policy instrument of last resort. However, given the enormous literature associated with its study, the discussion of war will focus on three broad variations: war as gamelike activity, the principles which govern the relations between war and politics, and the various dimensions of military strategy. These propositions are useful for explaining the duration of Israel's military invasion of Lebanon (see Chapters Five and Six), and its failure to achieve the revealed objectives (see Chapter Seven).

## 2.2: The Study of Foreign Policy

In his study of the Peloponnesian war, Thucydides examined the factors that led the leaders of city-states to decide the issues of war and peace, alliance and empire. And, most significantly, he focused not only on the conscious reasons for statesmen's choices, but also on their perceptions of the systemic environment, and the deeper psychological forces of fear, honour, and interest which in varying degrees motivated them as individuals and influenced their particular societies.<sup>4</sup> This suggests that the conduct of states does not always follow from enlightened motives. Rather, Jensen suggests that appropriate variables must be examined if one is

to be able to explain foreign policy more accurately.<sup>5</sup> Foreign policy, and hence war, is affected by three factors: the international environment, domestic politics, and the operation of the policy process. The relationship between these factors is more complex than the straightforward one of cause and effect. Policy, some scholars argue, is formed on the basis of the environment as it is perceived by decisionmakers. Frankel, for instance, adopts from the Sprouts a distinction between the psychological environment (with reference to which an individual defines choices and takes decisions) and the operational environment (which sets limits to what can happen when the decision is executed).<sup>6</sup> Decisionmaking analysis is more concerned with the psychological environment; that is, the environment as perceived. But in reality, the outcomes of decisions made for the achievement of goals depend to a large extent on the operational environment.

Jervis also recognizes the distinction between the psychological milieu and the operational milieu, but he adds a further distinction among four levels of analysis: the levels of decisionmaking, the bureaucracy, the state and domestic politics, and the international environment.<sup>7</sup> Throughout, Jervis emphasizes that decisionmakers perceive reality by organizing their views in a consistent fashion, by assessing information in terms of the credibility attached to the source, and by trying to justify behaviour to themselves

after the event. This means that the perceptions of decisionmakers may or may not be well founded. The point needing emphasis is that the psychological explanation brings the human dimension into the study of foreign policy. Indeed from the earlier perspective of Snyder, Bruck, and Sapin in the 1950s, the most important factors explaining foreign-policy choices are the motivations of decisionmakers, the flows of information among them, and the impact of varying foreign policies on their choices. To these writers, an analysis of the foreign policy process must direct attention not to states as metaphysical abstractions, but to the specific decisionmakers who actually shape governmental policy. "It is", they insist, "one of our basic methodological choices to define the state as its official decisionmakers - those whose authoritative acts are, to all intents and purposes, the acts of the state. State action is the action taken by those acting in the name of the state."<sup>8</sup> This is a complicated process, as perceptions are translated into policy, and policy is tested by circumstances in the real world. The process is further complicated by the fact that each state is obliged to determine its policy in accordance with certain constraints, namely, geographic, demographic, military, economic, ideological, and so on. Therefore, it is suggested that to find the basis for the foreign policy of a country, one is compelled to include the state's regional and international settings.

Brecher, Steinburg, and Stein have developed a "Framework for Research into Foreign Policy Behaviour."<sup>9</sup> Throughout, the authors attempt to examine the inputs and outputs surrounding a foreign policy decision. They theorize that:

[l]ike all other systems of action, the foreign policy system comprises an environment or setting, a group of actors, structures through which they initiate decisions and respond to challenges and processes which sustain or alter the flow of demands and products of the system as a whole.<sup>10</sup>

The initial component of this model is the operational environment, which defines the setting in which foreign policy decision is taken and thus it sets the parameters within which the decisionmakers must act. The nature of this environment is significant because the degree to which a decisionmaker's perception of the environment is founded upon reality influences the success of the decision.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, this environment is divided into two areas of study: the internal and the external aspects that surround a given issue. These last aspects, in turn, are further subdivided into a series of categories that comprise broad collections of variables at work in a given system. For instance, while the internal aspect of the operational environment underlines the state's economic capability and political arrangements, the external variable includes an examination of the state's behaviour in relation to the global system (i.e., the system level) and the subordinate system (i.e., the regional or sub-system level).

The observers must further qualify this analysis by examining the interaction between the state and other subordinate systems (i.e., sub-subsystem), namely, the state's bilateral relationships.

### 2.3: The Three Environments of Foreign Policy

The above examination of conceptual approaches to foreign policy focused on a number of recurring themes, in particular the significance of the psychological environment of decisionmakers. In this section we will look more carefully at the psychological, domestic and external environments of foreign policy.

#### **2.3.1: The Psychological Environment**

Many states today depend in their foreign-policy decisionmaking on the personal views or idiosyncrasies of their leaders. Greenstein devotes a chapter of his Personality and Politics to the "Psychological Analysis of Single Political Actors."<sup>12</sup> He stresses that "the processes of single-actor...personality diagnosis...can usefully be conceived of as involving three overlapping but analytically separable operations: the characterization of the phenomenology, the dynamics, and the genesis of personality."<sup>13</sup> In this process, according to Greenstein, an analyst is expected (1) to examine "the regular pattern of behaviour that the individual...exhibits under varying



environmental conditions", (2) to find out why the "individual...exhibits a particular syndrome," and (3) to search for the aspects of "inborn structure, maturation, and experience that culminated in the observed presenting features and the inferred underlying dynamics."<sup>14</sup> This implies that, while one can identify a number of structural and situational factors that influence foreign policy choices, the choices are made on the basis of the perceptions of those in positions of authority. The central theme is that any interpretation of world events is a reflection of leaders' personalities; that leaders take their decisions on the basis of images they hold about the world; and that the world as viewed by decisionmakers (subjective reality) is more important than its objective reality.<sup>15</sup>

Yet in formulating their decisions, national leaders are expected to protect their countries' interests, to defend the ideals embodied by their respective states, and to ensure their personal survival within their own political systems. Jervis lists three main sources of perception that contribute to the decisionmaker's concepts of the state's external behaviour. First, the actors' beliefs about their domestic political system, and their experience with that system, will determine what they are familiar with and what they are apt to perceive in others. Second, the concepts are influenced by actors' previous experiences and are reinforced by their degree of personal involvement in terms of time, ego, and

energy. Finally, the concepts of international relations as a whole, and views of other states in particular, will be affected by the actors' understanding of history. Jervis contends that "historical traumas can heavily influence further perceptions. They can either establish a state's image of the other state involved or can be used as analogies."<sup>16</sup>

The crux of Jervis' framework is that decisionmakers have a set of theories or perceptions - their attitudinal prism - according to which they formulate their decisions. In the case of Soviet decisionmakers, for instance, the attitudinal prism was shaped by Marxist-Leninist thought and the state's historical experience with other countries. One would expect that Third World decisionmakers would have their perceptions of world affairs clouded by their relative economic conditions and other internal problems.

A related factor is the political survival of leaders. Dummer argues that the US decision to intervene militarily in the Dominican Republic in April 1965, and the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968, occurred because President Johnson and General Secretary Brezhnev were concerned about their personal positions and their respective careers. Johnson had to consider the long-term effects of his action upon his legislative program, the approaching mid-term elections in 1966, and the presidential election in 1958. Brezhnev did not need to concern himself with elections or

public opinion, but he had to consider the possibility of being removed from office by a hostile coalition within the Politburo.<sup>17</sup> Similarly, Stoessinger seems to be less impressed by the role of "abstract forces" such as nationalism, militarism, and alliance systems.<sup>18</sup> Instead, he argues that a leader's image of himself, and his views of his adversary's character, intentions and power, play a major role in the outbreak of war. He contends that the personalities of the Kaiser (1914), Hitler (1939), General MacArthur (1950), Johnson (1964), Abd el-Nasser (1967), Yahya Khan (1971), and Saddam Hussein (1980) were the most crucial factors in precipitating or prolonging the respective wars in which these figures were involved.<sup>19</sup>

Another important psychological dimension of foreign policy is the cultural basis of a state's belief system. Examination of a state's national character, ideology, historical tradition and religious belief is essential if one is to explain that state's external behaviour. Booth defines ethnocentrism as a universal social phenomenon. He considers ethnocentrism to be an important aspect of international politics because societies tend to look at the world with their own group as the center; because they perceive and interpret other societies with their own frames of reference; and because they invariably judge these others inferior.<sup>20</sup>

Ethnocentrism is used in the following closely related senses. First, it is a term that describes feelings of group

centrality and superiority. It includes a strong identification with one's own group and its culture, the tendency to see one's own group as the center of the universe, and the tendency to perceive events in terms of one's own interests. Second, ethnocentrism is a technical term that describes a faulty methodology in the social science. This is "the tendency to assess aspects of other cultures in terms of one's own culture, and thus in social science research to apply in a biased and improper fashion the standards and values of one's own culture in the study and analysis of other cultures."<sup>21</sup> Finally, ethnocentrism can be used as a synonym for being "culture-bound." Being culture-bound means that an individual or group is unable to see the world from the perspectives of those belonging to a different group.<sup>22</sup> For Rosenblatt the most useful features of ethnocentrism can be seen in the area of military life. He suggests that ethnocentrism aids military efficiency by unifying a group, by intensifying its commitment to a cause, and by facilitating internal communication and cooperation.<sup>23</sup>

Writers on national character suggest that there is a model personality type that develops among people in a state, and which distinguishes them from people in other societies. They cite such factors as the educational system as being indicative of a particular national setting and as a factor in producing patriotic and civic-minded subjects. The extent to which a state's national character affects its foreign policy

remains uncertain. Nevertheless, one might assume that national character does make some differences - if not in the substance of foreign policy, then at least in style. One can speak, for example, of the consensus style of decisionmaking favoured by the Japanese, the pragmatic or short-term approach to problem-solving adopted by the Americans, or the Chinese emphasis on making decisions for the benefit of the collectivity rather than for that of the individual.<sup>24</sup>

National traits not only affect a state's foreign policy style, they may also shape its propensity to engage in international conflict. This was evident in the conflict between Athens and Sparta. The Athenians clearly believed in their cultural superiority. In Pericles' Funeral Oration, he stated that the Athenian system of government did not copy the institutions of its neighbours; rather it was more the case of "our being a model to others, than of our imitating anyone else."<sup>25</sup> By the same token, one may speak of American beliefs in the 1950s about Communism, or Soviet view of capitalism, as factors partially causing and sustaining the Cold War.

Foreign policy can thus be seen as a product of a state's past experience and historical tradition. The collective experience of a people forms part of the belief system of the state, and so influences the course of foreign policy. The existence of an external threat to a society is in itself a defining element of any nation vis-a-vis any other nation. A real or imagined threat often strengthens the ties among

subcultures at the mass level, between leaders at the elite level, and between these leaders and their followers at the intra-national level. In short, an external threat often fosters internal harmony, enhances the individual's attachment to the symbols of a state, and perpetuates the development of nationalism. A strong sense of nationalism enables a country to follow a vigorous and assertive external policy. In conditions of a weak sense of nationhood, national energies are diverted toward maintaining the country's unity and territorial integrity, foreign policy is directed chiefly toward excluding subversive external influences, and there is always the fear that an external power may champion an internal minority's demands and thus cause the state to break up. In this situation strong external powers have to be appeased.

For example, some argue that behind Moscow's decision to invade Czechoslovakia in 1968 there lay a rationale rooted in Russian history and tradition. Malcolm Toon, a former United States Ambassador to the Soviet Union, notes that "centuries of invasions from both East and West have left their mark on the outlook of the Russian people and its rulers."<sup>26</sup> This suggests that if one is to comprehend Russian or Soviet foreign behaviour, one should be aware of Moscow's bitter and painful historical experience at the hand of foreign aggressors. Indeed, Russia was continually invaded by foreign enemies: in the more recent past, Napoleon in 1812, the

British and French in 1854-1856, and Germany in 1917. Britain, France, the US and Japan intervened during the Russian Civil War in 1918-1920, and the Nazi invasion and brutal occupation from 1941-1944 resulted in the loss of some twenty million lives. It seems irrefutable that these invasions have contributed significantly to the Russians' stand on the issue of their borders, which they traditionally saw as being "holy" or unchangeable. More importantly, in terms of foreign policy, protecting the homeland against external threat has, throughout Russian history, dominated the decisionmaking process regardless of who was controlling the process.

Past experience also influenced Iranian foreign policy during the reign of the Shah. During his tenure (1941-1979), he attempted to restore the old Persian Empire, and to make Iran one of the "five biggest powers" in the world. However, when Ayatollah Khomeini assumed power in 1979, religion began to determine Tehran's behaviour on the international scene. It was under the banner of Islam that Khomeini was able to rationalize massive human sacrifice, to strengthen his own authority, and to "satanize" his enemy. This last factor had a great impact on Iran's dealings with other nations. The 444-day standoff over the issue of the American hostages, and the reluctance to end the war with Iraq, illustrate the difficulties "the true Muslim believer" often has in making concessions.<sup>27</sup>

Besides being the product of a state's past experience, foreign policy also can be thought of as resulting from specific sets of political beliefs and ideologies. Ideology can be defined as a "set of ideas held by a number of people: it spells out what is valued and what is not; what must be maintained and what must be changed; it shapes accordingly the attitudes of those who share it."<sup>28</sup> Unlike the cultural and historical experience of a people, ideology tends to be more functional in that it incites people to action. According to Jensen, ideology influences the formulation and conduct of foreign policy in two ways: first, it provides a means for rationalizing foreign policy choices; and second, ideology represents the vehicle by which a state may be compelled to extend its belief system to another states through either messianic zeal or the use of force.<sup>29</sup>

This view seems empirically sound if one examines the prominent roles played by the United States and the Soviet Union in the international arena. Some attribute America's involvements in world affairs to an ideology which is characterized by belief in the superiority of the American economic and political system, a self-claimed responsibility to defend freedom and democracy wherever they are threatened, and a fear of Communism. According to Johnson, America's interests are "inseparable from our moral duties to mankind... we are determined to press forward not for our gain and our greatness alone, but rather for the gain and the good of all



mankind everywhere."<sup>30</sup> Similar beliefs were also reflected in Soviet ideology. Communist leaders believed that their state represented a superior civilization, that the destiny and salvation of the world rested in their hands, and that their mission was to help liberate nations from the misery of imperialism. According to Brezhnev, the "future of mankind... depends largely on the strength and might of our movement, on united action by the Communist and Worker Parties."<sup>31</sup> Thus ideology has an influence over foreign policy choices. It affects how leaders view the world, what things they see as important or unimportant, and what their basic predispositions are in responding to a given issue.

#### 2.3.2: The Domestic Environment

The second recurring theme in discussions of the foreign policy decisionmaking process is that what a country does in the international arena is a function of its domestic political environment. This environment includes, inter alia, a state's strategic culture.

This concept, observes Jones, derives from an attempt to escape the often unquestioned yet self-imposed "ethnocentric" limitations implicit in many strategic analyses by investigating approaches to military matters that are specifically nationalist.<sup>32</sup> In 1977, Snyder published the most extensive discussion of strategic culture. But while Snyder usefully defined the concept as the "sum total of

ideas, conditional emotional response, and patterns of habitual behaviour that members of a national strategic community have acquired through instruction of imitation", his discussion was narrowly focused on an assumed "nuclear strategic culture" and virtually ignored other issues.<sup>33</sup> Thus, in place of Snyder's definition of a strategic culture, Jones argues that the elements that interact to constitute any strategic culture must include the nature and geography of the state, the ethnic culture of its founding people, its subsequent history, its governmental system, its perception of security and definition of national goals, and its style of diplomacy and military strategy.<sup>34</sup> For instance, Jones finds that its culture has had an impact on the style of Russian warfare; on its predisposition to highly centralized and often autocratic political regimes; and on the heavy burden imposed by defense on the nation's socio-economic structure.<sup>35</sup>

All of these factors imply that foreign policy is not a thing in itself, that is to say, a policy that is foreign. Instead, foreign policy can be thought of as no more than the external manifestation of the government's interests beyond the boundaries of the state. This observation is certainly in line with the thoughts of some organizational theorists who are concerned not so much with the decisionmaking units themselves as with the domestic interests that impinge on them and exert varying degrees of influence on policy decisions.<sup>36</sup> Reynolds thus perceives foreign policy as consisting of

external actions which are constrained by the circumstances of the state whose decisionmakers are acting.<sup>37</sup> He refers to these circumstances as the domestic environment of decisionmakers, which includes inter alia, the state's political structure, its power capabilities, and its civil-military relations.

The relationship between the state's political structure and its foreign policy raises the following question: does adherence to a certain type of government confer any necessary advantages or disadvantages in the pursuit of foreign policy objectives? Those inclined to give a positive response argue that different political structures produce different foreign policy outputs. For instance, a number of writers have criticized democratic processes in foreign policy as being less effective than more authoritarian forms. According to Alexis de Tocqueville, the management of foreign policy requires knowledge, secrecy, judgment, planning, and perseverance, and all of these are qualities in which democratic systems are inferior to autocratic ones.<sup>38</sup> On the other hand, Waltz's study of American and British approaches to foreign policy finds that "democratic governments of the Western type are well able to compete with authoritarian states."<sup>39</sup> Similarly, Jensen argues that the difference between democratic and authoritarian regimes in the making of foreign policy lies more in procedure than in substance. He suggests that regardless of whether the political structure is

authoritarian or democratic, decisionmaking in foreign policy tends to be centralized as the president, general secretary, prime minister or chancellor assume the primary role in its making.<sup>40</sup>

This certainly is not the case, however, in a consociational form of government. In that state, decisions are always the outcome of intense cooperation and compromise among subcultures at the mass level, among leaders at the elite level, and between leaders and followers. Consociational societies can be defined as fragmented but stable, as models of government by an elite cartel, and having a tradition of elite accommodation.<sup>41</sup> A consociational model attempts to ensure the inclusion of all segments of the society in order to enhance the welfare of the state as a whole. However, consociationalism (or the politics of accommodation) is a serious business that places heavy burdens on political leadership. Leaders must not only be willing to compromise and to cooperate, but they must also provide the political and legal means through which inter-subcultural differences can be reconciled. Among these means, according to Lijphart, are the formula of government by grand coalition, a mutual veto or concurrent majority rule, the principle of proportional representation, and segmental autonomy.<sup>42</sup> If such measures are implemented, the decisionmaking process, as well as the implementation of any given public policy (foreign or domestic), should emerge as the outcome of mutual

agreement.<sup>43</sup> This means that all segments of the society are obliged to agree in order to provide government. Thus, the consociational model does not grant the central authority much leeway in choosing the policy best suited to the state's needs. It does not guarantee that a specific decision concerning national interest can be reached, and it does not allow national interest to take precedence over national equilibrium. The question is not so much one of choosing particular policy alternatives as it is one of elite accommodation. In short, consociationalism illustrates clearly the importance of the state's internal arrangements on the formulation and conduct of its external relations.

The significance of this can be seen in the widespread disposition to explain a state's external behaviour by reference to its economic strength. One variation of this is the theory of imperialism introduced by Hobson.<sup>44</sup> Hobson argues that imperialism results from maladjustments within the capitalist system in which the controllers of industry, usually represented as consisting of a wealthy minority, seek to reinvest their surplus capital in profit-making ventures abroad. He insists that it is finance capitalism that organizes and galvanizes the political, military, psychological, and religious-philanthropic forces into a coherent policy.<sup>45</sup> Hobson condemns imperialism as irrational and as bad business for the "parent" nation because it only profits certain groups, namely, the owners of shipbuilding and

armament industries, the export industries, and the aristocratic classes.<sup>46</sup> Most importantly, Hobson considers imperialism as a form of capitalist expansion. His example of India was a clear manifestation of his belief that imperialism guaranteed underdevelopment in the imperialised countries.<sup>47</sup>

Conservative theorists, on the other hand, view economic investments such as foreign aid and trade as benefiting the Third World. Rostow stretches his criticism of Hobson's theory of imperialism to the farthest extreme. He argues that colonialism was in fact beneficial to the colonies; it brought railways, telegraphs, scientific education, and also "set in motion ideas and sentiment which initiated the process by which a modern alternative to the traditional society was constructed out of the old culture."<sup>48</sup> This argument is partially validated by developing countries' continual efforts to attract foreign enterprises through an extensive array of incentives.

Neither theory provides definitive answers, but it is clear that economic factors do influence foreign policy in a variety of ways. Perhaps most important, economic factors have a critical role in determining whether a state can be a donor or must be a recipient of foreign aid, and whether a state has the ability to enter costly armament races, engage in trade, or achieve a favourable balance of payments.<sup>49</sup> In short, economic considerations are central to foreign policy choices, for economic resources form the basis of a state's

power capabilities and are essential for the implementation of most politics. The industrial sector is especially significant. A large industrial output yields great military power, and therefore great international influence and prestige. Even states which are militarily weak have been able - owing to their economic strength - to influence events on the international scene. The Arab oil boycott in 1973-1974 proved effective in getting other states to accept the Arab position regarding the Arab-Israeli conflict. The issue, then, is not one of military capabilities alone, but of a state's ability to translate its available economic resources into actual influence. Thus, a broader approach to global affairs, beyond the state's military capabilities, is required in order to explain foreign policy success.

In studying the domestic environment of foreign policy, we must pay special attention also to civil-military relations. The role of the military in a society is certainly related to, or depends upon, the state's form of government. There exists a genuine advantage for every state to require civil control over military affairs. In the Soviet Union, military affairs were managed by the Communist Party apparatus and, ultimately, by its political executive, the Politburo. National security is not only military security, but relates to overall political-strategic policy, including, for instance, economics. Furthermore, there is no concrete evidence to suggest that the military is more militant than

any other group in society. For instance, military spending is not limited to military interests alone: economic interests and, in some areas, the general public have a stake in decisions on military spending.<sup>50</sup> This suggests that civil-military relations have little meaning in isolation from the social or national setting which gives them substance.

This is in line with the view of Hoffman, who points out that domestic legitimacy is essential if the armed forces are to have any value as an instrument of foreign policy. He argues that an "army which is domestically illegitimate can have no efficiency in international relations."<sup>51</sup> The military cannot retain legitimacy unless it has wide social acceptance as a national instrument of foreign policy. The army, or senior military officers, must understand the society they serve: its essential make-up, political system, and fears and aspirations.<sup>52</sup> More significant still, the army will more easily be awarded legitimacy by society if it accepts civilian control over its military affairs. This notion is closely associated with the thought of Clausewitz, who rejects any rationale for war that exists outside the context of national political objectives. Clausewitz argues that there must be a balance of military means with political ends, that military means are the servant of the state's political will, and that the assurance of civilian control over the military should be considered a national priority. This principle has become over the years a "basic truth". It



is echoed significantly in the United States Army War College's curriculum study which states that "in simplest terms, military doctrine cannot be intelligently developed, nor the planning for the employment of military forces effectively accomplished, without an appreciation for war's political object."<sup>53</sup>

Any attempt by the military to conduct its own policy in isolation from the national political will may lead to national chaos. In short, a state's security concerns are too critical to be left to the generals. An important test of this concept occurred during the Korean War of 1950-1953. According to Paige, that war escalated dramatically when President Truman granted General MacArthur "full authority" to use the troops available to him at his own discretion.<sup>54</sup> Consequently the General felt free to order his forces to cross the 38th parallel in a dramatic move to occupy North Korea and to bring the war to a rapid conclusion. However, his ignorance of the Chinese factor allegedly prolonged the war for another eighteen months. This shows clearly how critical it is for civil authority, at least in a time of crisis, to retain tight control over the military establishment. President Truman regained control by eventually firing MacArthur, but only after the General's misjudgment proved costly.

Other domestic variables have a potentially significant impact on the formulation and conduct of foreign policy. The

most important are political parties, interest groups, the mass media, and public opinion.

Looking first at political parties, their impact on foreign policy differs from one polity to another. For instance, there is no doubt that in authoritarian regimes, usually organized around a one-party system, the party plays a particularly significant role. In democratic countries in which power is continually alternating between different political parties, there may still be considerable continuity in foreign policy. For example, although Britain's Labour Party campaigned vigorously in 1974 on an anti-Common Market platform, its position changed after it gained power.<sup>55</sup>

Another domestic factor influencing foreign policy is the role of interest groups. An interest group can be defined as "an organized body of individuals who share some goals and who try to influence public policy."<sup>56</sup> In so doing, an interest group attempts to represent its constituencies before the government, to open up the opportunity for ordinary citizens to participate in the political process, and to help to educate the public about specific political issues.<sup>57</sup> With respect to foreign policy, Berry argues that the impact of interest groups is extremely limited. Since each such group has no official position in the policy process, it cannot compete effectively against governmental groups which enjoy the advantage of authoritative information.<sup>58</sup> Perhaps only in cases in which an interest group is also an ethnic one can its

impact on foreign policy be empirically demonstrable. An ethnic group may become concerned about relations with countries whose people share the same ethnic background, and therefore affect foreign policy choices. In Western countries, Jewish groups are sympathetic towards Israel and Muslim groups towards Islamic states. Such correlations are not always direct, but they often are significant. For instance, the "French factor" in Canada alerted former Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau to "domesticate" Canadian foreign policy by equalizing Ottawa's foreign aid between Francophone and Anglophone countries in Africa.<sup>59</sup>

Of interest in this context is the ambivalent "realist-idealist" battle characterized by Adams in his discussion of the impact of public opinion on foreign policy. While Adams believed that the average person is capable of understanding political affairs, and of making sound political decisions, he also was convinced that citizens could easily become a "rude and insolent rabble bent on destruction of symbols of authority, oblivious to the needs of the nation, and interested only in their own selfish concerns."<sup>60</sup> This does not necessarily mean that public opinion is insignificant in the making of foreign policy. First, public opinion, or at least the decisionmakers perception's of that opinion, places certain constraints on the making of foreign policy, and restricts the kinds of alternatives considered. In a democratic polity, the fear of electoral punishment in itself

is a sufficient psychological reason that serves to limit what decisionmakers are likely to do. This personal cost was obvious to former President Johnson who, in compliance with the increasing opposition to the war in Vietnam, announced in March 1968 that he would not seek re-election.<sup>61</sup> Second, public opinion also may serve as a stimulus to public policy. Kegley and Wittkopf note that when the issue is specific, public opinion can precede rather than follow changes in foreign policy.<sup>62</sup> They note that a growing proportion of the American public favoured the admission of Mainland China into the United Nations at a time when most segments of the policy-making community in Washington remained in rigid opposition to it.<sup>63</sup> Finally, public opinion also serves as a resource that improves the negotiating position of government officials in dealing with foreign diplomats. It is well established that the more unified public opinion is, and the more supportive it is of official government policy, the stronger is the leadership's bargaining position with other nations.<sup>64</sup> For example, as the SALT II negotiations entered their final phase, the Carter Administration sought to take advantage of the Senate's hostility towards a SALT agreement as a way of inducing the Soviets to be more forthcoming in the negotiations.<sup>65</sup>

A particularly significant component in the public opinion-foreign policy linkage is the role played by the mass media. First, at the mass level, the media have a great

impact in forming the opinion of those who follow foreign events, and who are attentive to external issues. Second, the media may stimulate changes in policy-makers' attitudes by being the reflector of their intentions, and by transmitting the flow of information about foreign events to the masses. Finally, thanks to their tendency of bringing the most salient issues to the forefront of public attention, the media have the ability to define the framework within which policy debate takes place.<sup>66</sup> All of these factors suggest that the media have the ability to define the public agenda, a function which gives them a de facto role of being the "fourth branch of government." The effects of such a role cannot be lightly dismissed. White, writing on the media's critical role in setting the American political agenda and in shaping its content, explains:

The power of the press in American is a primordial one. It sets the agenda of public discussion; and sweeping political power is unrestrained by any law. It determines what people will talk and think about... No major act of the American Congress, no foreign policy adventure, no act of diplomacy, no great social reform can succeed in the United States unless the press prepares the public mind.<sup>67</sup>

### 2.3.3: The External Environment

While recognizing the importance of domestic factors, many scholars of international relations nonetheless consider the external context to be the prime determinant of foreign

policy. According to Jensen, "if there were no external determinants, there would be no foreign policy."<sup>68</sup> In this sense, foreign policies are not made in a vacuum, but "they are made in relation to other bodies similarly acting in the global arena."<sup>69</sup> This view incorporates the notion that the hyphenated term "inter-national relations" is about action, reaction, and interactions among political entities called nation-states. Kaplan has written that "international patterns of behaviour are related to the characteristics of the entities participating in international politics and to the function they perform."<sup>70</sup> In short, states' decisions to project their power outside their boundaries are based on their positions within the international system and on their perceptions of each others' might.

An examination of the external environment of foreign policy thus brings us to the issue of a nation's capability to exercise power. Questions are raised as to whether a state can organize sufficient resources (means) to meet existing or proposed commitments (ends). Additional questions are raised as to whether the pursuit of objectives might be undermined or compromised by the means selected. Here the concept of national power is thought of in terms of the capacity to control or influence others. Much of the confusion with respect to this concept stems from a failure to distinguish between the capacity to act and the actual exercise of power. For instance, many argue that the realist idea of power

politics - a concept which defines international relations as a continual struggle for power - has been altered with the advent of nuclear weapons. In fact, since the early 1950s the superpowers have indeed shown great restraint against each other. Yet, such a transformation in the conduct of relations between Moscow and Washington has not eliminated their influence in the international arena. For instance, while refraining from the use of nuclear weapons, both superpowers sought to advance their positions through other, non-military means. Competition took place mainly in the areas of trade, finance, aid, and technical assistance. Of course, military power enhances a state's position in regional and international settings, but it is not by any means the sole asset for the conduct of an effective foreign policy. This requires a discussion of the characteristics of the international system in which foreign policy occurs.

For the realists, the international system is one based on nation-states as its dominant actors. Such a view of global politics has been closely associated with the writings of Morgenthau, Kaplan, Organski, Waltz and Deutsch. These writers commonly perceive a world in which politics is continually characterized by active or potential interactions among nations, and one in which states are the chief forms, or the ultimate means, for epitomizing or resolving the struggle for power between nations. The most significant results of this situation are the prevailing anarchy in the international

system; the absence of any central or supranational authority that is generally accepted as having the right to make binding rules; and the readiness of states to use force whenever circumstances permit or require. To state it simply, "because some states may at any time use force, all states must be prepared to do so."<sup>71</sup> But we do not expect a state to start fighting just any other states. Indeed, the potentially disastrous outcome of a war has forced states to realize the necessity of cooperation. For instance, nuclear weapons led Washington and Moscow to recognize the necessity of avoiding nuclear confrontations. It follows that the degree of constraint imposed on foreign policy is determined by the losses that decisionmakers believe they and their state will suffer by violating the status quo.<sup>72</sup> Thus the anarchic nature of the international system has both allowed states to resort to the use of force, and also served to limit aggression and violence among them.

Waltz, while emphasizing the anarchic nature of the international political system, distinguishes between anarchic and hierarchical structure. By this he means that, while power and authority in the international system are widely decentralized, anarchy need not mean disorder or chaos. What provides structure to the international system is "the coaction of self-regarding units.... Structures emerge from the coexistence of states. No state intends to participate in the formation of a structure by which it and others will be



constrained. International-political systems, like economic markets, are individualist in origin, spontaneously generated, and unintended."<sup>73</sup> Further, he predicts "more specifically that states will display characteristics common to competitors: namely, that they will imitate each other and become socialized to their system."<sup>74</sup> In his study of seven historical international systems Luard likewise finds that the system itself shapes the character of the participants, so that they become similar in terms of motives, means, stratification, internal structure, roles, norms, and institutions.<sup>75</sup> Such similarities are not merely a result of copying the styles and modes of behaviour of other states; they are also products of systemic structures that affect all participants similarly. For example, a system that is dominated by international tension tends to produce states that are suspicious and cautious in their foreign relations.

Thus Masters suggests that "if we speak of international anarchy, it would be well to bear in mind that it is an ordered anarchy."<sup>76</sup> He points, for example, to the pervasiveness of international law. Master's argument is noteworthy in that it challenges the conventional notion that a resort to force follows from the weakness, or the irrelevance, of international law. He contends that force, in the form of self-help, retaliation and deterrence, may be the means by which states, acting in the absence of a central authority, may seek to preserve norms.<sup>77</sup> The aspect of

international law related to force, and the aspect of international law that is related to custom and convention, are combined in such a way, Masters argues, that "the limitations as well as the importance of both violence and cooperation in world politics must therefore be equally emphasized in any total assessment of the international system."<sup>78</sup> For Bull too, the absence of a central authority historically has not prevented the international system from becoming also an international society.<sup>79</sup> He declares:

My contention is that the element of a society has always been present, and remains present, in the modern international system, although only as one of the elements in it, whose survival is sometimes precarious. The modern international system in fact reflects all three of the elements singled out, respectively, by the Hobbesian, the Kantian and the Grotian traditions: the element of war and the struggle for power among states, the element of transnational solidarity and conflict, cutting across the divisions among states, and the element of co-operation and regulated intercourse among states.<sup>80</sup>

Such is the context of international relations. The arena is one, paradoxically, of ordered anarchy. In general, states do recognize constraints on the exercise of their sovereignty and power. These constraints, founded in the three sources of self-interest, morality, and custom, help to define the nature of the international political system. The result is a picture of global affairs that includes a number of elements, some of which may be more prominent than others

at a particular moment, but each of which will be exhibited at various points over the long term. In the context of this chapter, the external environment of foreign policy will be discussed from three essential standpoints: the systemic, regional, and state levels.

Perhaps the most significant systemic characteristic affecting the foreign policy of a state is the way power is distributed in the international system. This is the concept of the balance of power. It describes a system that is dominated by major powers, whose presence is crucial to the operation of the system as a whole. As Kaplan states,

The system tends to be maintained by the fact that even should any nation desire to become predominant itself, it must, to protect its own interests, act to prevent any other nation from accomplishing such an objective.<sup>81</sup>

This suggests that the international system is one in which national actors negotiate, fight, or stop fighting, to constrain those actors who subscribe to supranational organizational principles.<sup>82</sup> In other words, the balance of power system is based on the ability of states to react to the efforts of others to change the power balance of the system, thereby producing stability and a certain level of international peace. In short, the balance of power remains a means by which power is managed within a decentralized international system.<sup>83</sup> As a result, Claude concludes, "twentieth-century efforts to replace the system have at most

introduced modifications of its operative mechanism; today, the balance of power system exists by default."<sup>84</sup> It is clear that despite the capacity of both superpowers to moderate and absorb destabilizing changes, anarchy at the regional level persists.

Geographical location is among the most important sources of any nation's foreign policy. In particular, the regional setting of a state's foreign policy is characterized by the level and degree of interaction between regional units, and by the level of power and the structure of relations within the region.<sup>85</sup> A neighbourhood enemy cannot be ignored, but a distant enemy can be. Likewise a neighbourhood friend is more capable of rendering help and assistance than is a distant friend. But the impact of geography is not unchanging. It is often said that we live in a global village. This also means, unfortunately, that in the event of war, we live in a single theatre. Communications and transportation technologies have contracted distances. Enemies have acquired the ability to strike earlier, faster, and deeper. Neighbours, when they are strong, have acquired the ability to penetrate into political, social, and economic life in a comprehensive and pervasive manner, and to threaten the very essence of national sovereignty. Perhaps it is for this reason that a state's geographical location affects the level of its defense spending. States which are located in areas of tension such as the Middle East and Indo-China are found to engage in

reciprocal arms buildups. Yet the contention that warring entities need to resolve their disputes in neighbouring space is vulnerable to some contradictory data. For instance, conflict between the Americans and Vietnamese was not settled in contiguous space. The fact is that the United States had a long military reach, and this brought it into geographical contact with Vietnam. In short, the regional setting of foreign policy need not be a geographical region per se.<sup>86</sup>

The final element that has considerable impact on a state's choices in foreign policy within the external environment is the reciprocal impact of action and reaction between states. Any focus on one state's action alone is not sufficient to explain the way in which it formulates its foreign policy. Foreign policy involves essentially interaction, not just action or reaction. An action initiated by state A acts as a stimulus to state B and produces a response from B, and so on.<sup>87</sup> It is this type of interaction which forces decisionmakers to pay considerable attention to the behaviour of other states in order to get clues as to how such states might respond to them in the future. The chances of a successful foreign policy, says Reynolds, "are reduced if insufficient account is taken of what other states or groups have done or are doing, or are likely to do in the future, in response to the particular policy in question or to some other stimulus in a different part of the international arena."<sup>88</sup>

In an extreme case, this implies that knowing one's

enemies is vitally important for the planning of foreign policy. Every year states employ thousands of people and spend untold billions gathering and analyzing intelligence about each other or about potential enemies. Bowie defines intelligence as the "knowledge and analysis designed to assist action."<sup>89</sup> For Raborn, the term refers to "information which has been carefully evaluated as to its accuracy and significance."<sup>90</sup> The importance of the intelligence dimension of a state can be seen in the process of evaluating its accuracy and assessing its significance in the context of national security decisionmaking. It has been argued that intelligence estimates are useful only if they are acceptable to the people who have to work on them. This does not necessarily mean that intelligence ought to produce a decision in all cases, but it is expected to "ease the pain" of decisionmakers by increasing the probability of the "correct decision."<sup>91</sup> At any rate, the intelligence setting can be seen as a procedural mechanism that includes determining, collecting, evaluating, and disseminating the type of information most needed by planners, decisionmakers, and those responsible for implementing decision.<sup>92</sup> In time of crisis, the intelligence agencies of a state are expected to foresee potential conflicts, compare strengths, monitor current developments, and be able to warn of imminent external danger.<sup>93</sup> The point needing emphasis here is that intelligence is an important ingredient in the conduct of an

effective foreign policy. The capacity to obtain information about another country's capabilities and intentions is a powerful instrument in the hands of national decisionmakers. Ransom states that "nothing is more crucial in the making of a national decision than the relationship between intelligence and policy, or, in a broader sense, between knowledge and action."<sup>94</sup>

The complexity of inter-state relations rises as a third party becomes more involved in the interaction that has taken place between two states. A third party does not have to be a state-international organizations and alliance systems also fit into that category. Numerous examples can be cited of the roles played by third parties in mediating, or involving themselves in, a situation of conflict and so determining its outcome. Interventions by outside powers in the 1956 Suez War, by alliances in the 1962 Cuban missile crisis, and by the UN in the 1973 Middle East War, are but a few illustrations of such involvements. In retrospect, this means that the overall management of the international system is not solely based on the nation-state's ability to control events.

There is no doubt that the task of understanding the external environment of foreign policy is complex. Students of decisionmaking have suggested various ways of analyzing this dimension. To make this complexity manageable, Braybrooke and Lindblom suggest the "decision situation" as a framework for analyzing the process and outcome of foreign

policy choices. In their view, it is important to explore the specific circumstances surrounding a given decision in order to comprehend why certain choices are made.<sup>95</sup> Questions then arise as to how decisionmakers define the situation confronting them, how they see other actors and their intentions, and how they define the goals of their own government. In asking these questions, students of decisionmaking must keep in mind that some situations are more highly structured than others, that the urgency of the situation and the pressure to take action may vary widely, and that the nature of the problem, political or military, also may have some implications for how, and by whom, it is handled.<sup>96</sup> Furthermore, decisionmakers in one state should comprehend fully the consequences of the specific policy they are initiating in terms of the likely responses of others. In short, a "decision situation" framework encompasses the psychological, external, and internal setting in which foreign policy choices are made.

#### 2.4: War As An Instrument of Foreign Policy

Since Herodotus and Thucydides, scholars as well as laymen have speculated about the nature, causes, and consequences of human conflict. War is, undoubtedly, a nebulous concept. For present purposes, however, war is regarded as the state of sustained hostilities between the armed forces of two or more organized groups, like nation-



states, who seek to fulfil their goals in a manner that entails human casualties.<sup>97</sup> The importance of this definition of war is that it excludes many examples of violent conflict, such as gang "wars", race riots, or individual crimes. It is the element of human casualties which has made war one of the most undesirable forms of societal relations. Partly for this reason, an understanding of the causes of war may help to explain how peace can be more readily achieved. But this task is a rather complicated matter, for "war may be a phenomenon about which little is known...that is of practical value."<sup>98</sup> Also, the "empirical approach," as Waltz notes, "is not sufficient", and its insights tend to be "complicated in their variety and in their contradictory qualities."<sup>99</sup>

This does not undermine in any way the importance of war for the study of international relations. Throughout history, war has served as a tool for advancing one state's power over another, and as a way of changing, preserving, and regulating the conduct of world affairs.<sup>100</sup> In terms of this last function, for instance, global war has been seen as the ultimate sanction against those nations who threaten the equilibrium of the system; as a way of discerning which state is to act as world policeman in an anarchical system; and as a method of replacing states which could no longer function as managers of the system by more able ones.<sup>101</sup> Wars, particularly since 1500, can be divided into two categories: "those fought within the system for the express purposes of

changing the power relations within it", and those "fought between defenders of the status quo and those who challenge it."<sup>102</sup> In addition, there is a third category known as insurgent warfare. It can be defined as a conflict that "pits a largely regular, territorially based army against irregular or semi-irregular guerilla units."<sup>103</sup> An enormous body of literature has been devoted to examining the significance of this type of military engagement because insurgent wars have been occurring with greater frequency in our time, because they have met with frequent and relative successes, and because the advent of nuclear weapons has altered the idea of total war in favour of the less destructive option of subversion.<sup>104</sup>

The phenomenon of war is thus essential for understanding the course of international relations. For war, argues Winham, "has had the capacity to shape political relations among nations."<sup>105</sup> An illustration of this argument is given by Aron. He refers to international relations as "a science of peace and war."<sup>106</sup> For Aron, an international system is "the ensemble constituted by political units that maintain regular relations with each other and that are capable of being implicated in a generalized war."<sup>107</sup> Aron contends that relations among nations are often marked by conflict, that conflict occurs because states seek incompatible goals, and that war is no less a natural phenomenon of international relations than peace. He declares that "inter-state relations

present one original feature which distinguishes them from all other social relations: they take place within the shadow of war, or, to use a more rigorous expression, relations among states, involve, in essence, the alternative of war and peace."<sup>108</sup>

Almost all of the significant theories of war in modern political thought have been based either implicitly or explicitly on the nature of the international system - the third of Waltz's famous images.<sup>109</sup> The system, which is made up primarily of nation-states, has been described as one of "self-help" in which one state is pitted against another; where one state's security is another's insecurity; and where the competitive nature of the arena has served only to ensure paranoia or mistrust. In short, states operate within a system that is "policed" by self-interest and, ultimately, in an environment in which competition, rivalry and fear prevail. The most significant result of this prevailing anarchy in the international system is the widespread use of force in relations between states. History provides numerous cases of the willingness of states to resort to war or to any other sort of coercive act in order to achieve their ends. One explanation of this is offered by Waltz:

Each state preserves its own interests, however, defined, in the way it judges best. Force is a means of achieving the external ends of states because there exists no consistent, reliable process of reconciling the conflicts of interest that inevitably arise among similar units

in a condition of anarchy.<sup>110</sup>

It is in the light of this background that the realists have elaborated the concept of world politics as power politics. Such a view of world politics has been closely associated with the writings of Morgenthau. His theory outlines a world where sovereign nations vie for power, where a state's national interest is identified with national survival, and where states are compelled to protect their physical, political, and cultural identities against the encroachments of other states. "It cannot be denied", writes Morgenthau, "that throughout historic time, states have met each other in contests for power."<sup>111</sup> This means that "[i]nternational politics, like all politics, is a struggle for power."<sup>112</sup> But while power can take many forms, economic as well as military, the realists consider war to be the dominant instrument and ultimate manifestation of struggle between nations.<sup>113</sup> As Morgenthau puts it: "All history shows that nations active in international politics are continuously preparing for, actively involved in, or recovering from organized violence in the form of war."<sup>114</sup>

This link between war and international politics is fundamental to the realist approach to the interpretation of events. History is seen as a testing-ground for theoretical hypotheses, and as a storehouse of data. What matters to the student of international politics is conduct, rather than motives; it is the task of theorists to attempt to organize a

variety of data on unique events in terms of a coherent set of theoretical generalizations. This means that a theory must be judged not by some preconceived abstract principle or moral concept unrelated to power, but by its ability to bring order and meaning to a mass of phenomena which otherwise would remain disconnected and unintelligible. In Morgenthau's view, a theory must meet a dual test: an empirical and a logical one.<sup>115</sup> Throughout this process the policy-maker has a responsibility to make decisions in the light of potential consequences. For, the realists insist, those responsible for the safety, security, and welfare of a nation-state and its citizens must keep in mind the political consequences of their acts.

Karl von Clausewitz's work, On War, is one of the most important studies of this particular element of international relations. Its significance stems from the fact that the book deals with the fundamental nature of war, that it gives an understanding of what underlies war, and that it explains the whole of war.<sup>116</sup> Winham argues that despite the fact that war is a multi-dimensional activity, "Clausewitz was able to examine it from different levels, including the political, strategic, tactical and even technical."<sup>117</sup>

Fundamental to Clausewitzian thought is the link between war and national policy: the notion that "war is nothing but a continuation of political intercourse with an admixture of other means."<sup>118</sup> This view implies that war cannot be

divorced from political life, that policy creates war, and that war is an instrument of the political art and not a creature with a life of its own. Clausewitz declares: "War can never be separated from political intercourse, and if ... this occurs anywhere ... we have with us a senseless thing without an object."<sup>119</sup> In short, war and politics are inseparably connected; war belongs to policy; and the former is a continuation of the latter through the application of other means. To emphasize the importance of this observation, Clausewitz rejects subordination of the political point of view to the military, arguing that policy creates and guides war.<sup>120</sup> Thus Clausewitz, not surprisingly, suggests that "the minister of war should not be soldier, but a statesman who knows just enough about war not to expect results from military means and measures which they cannot produce."<sup>121</sup>

Even the massive technological changes that have permeated the practice of warfare have not altered the relevance of Clausewitz to the use of the military instrument by nations. First is the argument that in war the forces employed should be directed against the enemy's most important and most vulnerable point. Clausewitz observes that "a centre of gravity, a centre of power movement, will form itself upon which everything depends; and against this centre of gravity of the enemy the concentrated blow of all the forces must be directed."<sup>122</sup> Clausewitz does not rule out the possibility that efforts which are directed towards the centre of gravity

may yield success, but he argues that the mere destruction of the enemy may obscure the political objectives of the war. He states that "the more it will be concerned with the destruction of the enemy, the more closely the political aim and the military object coincide, and the more purely military, and the less political, war seems to be."<sup>123</sup> If this is the case, then war should not have been waged at all. "No war is begun, or at least, no war should be begun," he writes, "if people acted wisely, without first finding an answer to the question: what is to be attained by and in war."<sup>124</sup>

The second Clausewitzian argument concerning the use of the military instrument maintains that a war should be completed as quickly as possible. This is the ideal model of war. Incorporated in it are the Clausewitzian assumptions that war is a zero-sum game, that the aim of the parties involved includes the total destruction of the enemy's capacity to resist, and that "war once begun should move quickly to a conclusive outcome."<sup>125</sup> Yet in practice the previous arguments may not be valid. Thus, in place of the ideal model of war, Clausewitz introduces the concept of "friction". This refers to the uncertainty of combat, and is known today as the "fog of war". Included in this is the notion that fear, the play of politics, and misinformation create conditions in which plans, policies and objectives have to be altered or rethought. In short, Clausewitz realizes

that an ideal model of war based on rational decisionmaking and accurate information is simply a fiction.<sup>126</sup>

These ideas are in line with the thoughts of Luttwak. Like Clausewitz, Luttwak does not see a straightforward "engineering" solution for war because of the complexity arising from the interactions among its political, psychological, and military dimensions. Thus, in place of the linear thinking of warfare, Luttwak introduces the "paradoxical logic" of strategy as a broader concept that conditions all forms of war and its reciprocal activity.<sup>127</sup> According to Luttwak, every war has a paradoxical logic and its own art of the dialectics.

First, although everything in war is very simple, even the simplest thing is difficult: accidents, mistakes, emotion, and the unexpected, all create "friction" that blocks the smooth running of the military machine. Luttwak contends that war is not a single explosion of violence, but it extends over time, with the dialectics of the antagonists acting and reacting -- a process that weakens even the most offensive and exposes it to an unexpected defeat.<sup>128</sup> Second, in war, avoiding the obvious approach to an objective was, at one point in history, the most successful strategy. Nevertheless, once it is clear, the best approach ceases to be such, because the enemy would react appropriately. It follows, then, that the best approach, because it is evidently the worst, becomes the best. In strategy, therefore, a course of action tends to



become retroactive.<sup>129</sup> Third, Luttwak echoes the Clausewitzian view that nothing in war is ever final and that even success may lead to defeat. He illustrates this paradox with a sequence of events from the Second World War. He states that the German victory on the European Continent in 1940 had deprived the British of any means to carry on the war except by air. Furthermore, because precision bombing in daylight proved too costly, the British Bomber Command had to fly at night and attack only large German cities. Thus, the victory of the German army paradoxically brought the destruction of their cities.<sup>130</sup> Finally, Luttwak's paradoxical logic can be summed up as follows: the military requirements for effective defense tend to create a politically far more dangerous situation. Conversely, a military situation with which no one is happy may produce a political situation of remarkable stability.

In order to understand the paradoxical logic of war, Luttwak develops an analytical scheme that recognizes the vertical and horizontal dimensions of strategy. The vertical dimension is made up of the plans and actions of each party to a conflict, and the horizontal dimension refers to the conflicts and competitions between antagonists on each of five interlocked levels of strategy.<sup>131</sup> These levels are: (1) the technical level, where the single performance of weapons determines the conduct of operations; (2) the tactical level, where weapons are deployed for offensive or defensive

measures; (3) the operational level, when one must decide whether the object will be one of attrition or manoeuvre; (4) the theatre level embraces all directly interdependent operations such as the guerilla operation; and (5) the level of grand strategy, at which military and political objectives meet.<sup>132</sup>

There is no doubt that the outcomes of a war must be assessed in relation to the goals that are being pursued. But what can be done about the paradoxical logic that determines the developments in war? Luttwak argues that the self-defeating effect of the paradoxical logic can be circumvented by conducting policies that are seemingly contradictory; by obtaining the capacity to confront the adversary with the unexpected; and by planning a relatively effective coordination between the vertical and horizontal dimensions of strategy. But these remedies may have no existence in reality, and Luttwak's thesis may simply end as a method of analysis. The last forty years have witnessed, beyond doubt, that the greater the threat of escalation posed by the presence of nuclear weapons, the less likely they are to be used, but the more effective they are as a deterrent.<sup>133</sup>

This means that the catastrophic consequence of a possible nuclear confrontation has restrained the superpowers from resorting to the use of force against one another. In short, nuclear weapons have increased the utility of military force in the perceptual rather than in the actual context, and

limited the conflict between nuclear powers to the political. Yet, such a transformation in the conduct of relations between the nuclear powers has not eliminated their influence in the international arena. As a result, military power has become a medium of bargaining in which the ability to exercise political control over others remains an indicator of a state's military strength. For this reason, states have traditionally increased their armaments to elevate their relative status vis-à-vis potential adversaries. This is another reminder of the Clausewitzian theme which considers the relationship between politics and military powers as inexorably interconnected, with the former directing and guiding the latter to achieve some purpose.

It is this interplay between diplomacy and force that gives war its gamelike quality. This concept is of great importance since all game theorists agree that international relations can be best conceptualized as a non-zero-sum game, in which one party's gain does not necessarily equate, in a two-player game, to another party's loss.<sup>134</sup> Schelling views international strategic situations as essentially "bargaining situations." From this approach, he attempts to develop a theory in which war is considered as a process of bargaining whereby conflict and cooperation are not mutually exclusive.<sup>135</sup> Evidence suggests that mutual understanding by opposing belligerents led to the non-use of gas weaponry in the Second World War, and it also imposed various restrictions

upon the conduct of the Korean War with respect to geographical boundaries, kinds of weapons employed, and the types of military operations permitted.<sup>136</sup>

Most recently, and prior to the war in the Gulf, Secretary of State James Baker and Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Azia met in Geneva on 9 January 1991 to discuss the possibility of avoiding military confrontation between their two countries while military preparations were underway.<sup>137</sup> These examples, which illustrate the possible cooperation among belligerents during periods of war, indicated that the opponents may, out of self-interest, attempt to limit the war's destruction; that the purpose of military strategy, which in the past frequently meant completely destroying the enemy's capacity to resist, has to be replaced by a new kind of military diplomacy; and that war is not necessarily an alternative to bargaining, but a process of bargaining. This was clearly the case during Israel's invasion of Lebanon when negotiations between the Israeli Defence Forces and the Palestinians were conducted at the rhythm of hostilities (see Chapter Five).

## 2.5: Anticipated Errors In Foreign Policy

Many factors account for a state's failure to achieve its foreign policy objectives. For the purpose of this study, however, we place emphasis on three of the factors that impair the effectiveness of foreign policy options.<sup>138</sup> These factors

are: the politics of folly, ethnocentrism, and misperception. First, the politics of folly refers to a phenomenon which cuts across national boundaries regardless of place or period, and which undercuts the effectiveness of foreign policy choices. According to Tuchman, folly refers to the pursuit by governments of policies contrary to their own national interests.<sup>139</sup> For a policy to be qualified as folly, it must have been perceived as counter-productive in its own time, it must have had a feasible alternative course of action, and it must be the product of a group and not of an individual ruler. In her historical study of blundering statecraft from Troy to Vietnam, Tuchman finds that folly appears to be independent of era or locality, unrelated to type of political regime, and it is not usually a result of a grand political design or complicated manoeuvre. Instead, folly is simply the result of decisionmakers ignorant of policy choices and their implementation, who interpret the world in terms of a preconceived notion, not allowing themselves to be deflected by the facts, and who refuse to benefit from the historical experiences of other states. Tuchman cites the German decision to resume unrestricted submarine warfare in 1916 and the Japanese decision to attack Pearl Harbour in 1941 as cases of military folly. In both cases, contrary voices warned against the course taken, but to no avail. The folly in both cases, argues Tuchman, stems from self-imprisonment in the "we-have-no-alternative" argument, and in the underestimation

of the opponent.<sup>140</sup> Above all, folly is the attempt to obtain objectives in short order. It is perhaps for that reason that some three-fifths of wars fought between 1910 and 1965 have been lost by the initiating governments.<sup>141</sup>

Some authors hold ethnocentrism and misperception responsible for spectacular political-military folly. In his discussion of ethnocentrism, Booth finds that decisionmakers' belief in national superiority, the way they see their nation as the center of the universe, and their inability to see the world through another's eyes, have caused a plethora of strategic problems and failures.<sup>142</sup> Stein argues that one actor's incorrect assessment of another's intentions plays a determinative role in the onset of conflict. He cites, for instance, the grave importance of misperception in the causation of two world wars.<sup>143</sup> For his part, Jervis cites the decisionmaker's beliefs about his own political system, his previous experience, and his understanding of international history, as the main sources which contribute to his misperception of international relations and thus influence his perceptual threshold for various phenomena. In most cases, misperception occurs because decisionmakers tend to perceive what they expect, because they tend to overestimate the other actors' ability to understand their motive, and because of their overall tendency to see other states as more hostile than they are.<sup>144</sup> In short, misperception is a relevant concept in the study of

international crises because it leads the parties involved to expect an outcome other than what the actual equilibrium solution for the situation might require.<sup>145</sup>

The crux of Jervis's framework is that decisionmakers have a set of theories or perception, their attitudinal prism, according to which they formulate their decision. For Israeli decisionmakers, the attitudinal prism is characterized by religious tradition, the Diaspora experience, Zionism, and the state's ethnic culture. This includes its internal political arrangements, its military doctrine, its civil-military relations, and its regional and international environments. We turn to these factors in the next chapter.

## 2.6: Conclusion

This chapter has examined foreign policy under the conditions of war and peace, and within the context of psychological, domestic, and international environments. It has also examined the major theories in the field. These range from political to economic and military explanations of why nations act as they do on the international scene. Despite its inherent complexity, it seems likely that a foreign policy perspective will continue to be a useful approach to the study of international politics, and that analysts will probably continue to apply various environments to discrete cases.

It has been argued that the requirement of too much data,

the inordinate complexity of the scheme, and the lack of theory render foreign policy analysis a retrospective process, incapable of guiding decisionmakers in choosing a policy or an option that is most likely to achieve national objectives at acceptable costs and risks. It is true that process analysis alone neither constitutes nor builds theory. But theory building, argue Robinson and Majak, "hinges upon our ability to relate the growing store of descriptive knowledge about how decisions are made to the outcomes and effects of those decisions."<sup>146</sup>



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## CHAPTER THREE

### THE FOREIGN POLICY SYSTEM OF ISRAEL

#### 3.1: Introduction

This chapter examines Israel's foreign policy system by means of the three environments introduced in the last chapter. We examine first the psychological environment, which incorporates a discussion of the history of the Jewish people, including their religious tradition, the Diaspora experience, and the Holocaust. Also involved in this dimension is an examination of the ethnic and ideological culture of the state's founding people, Zionism, and the outlook and idiosyncrasies of its leaders. Second, the domestic environment is concerned with relevant features of Israel's political system, its economic capability, civil-military relations, and the roles of interest groups, the mass media, and the public. Finally, in relation to the external environment we focus on Tel Aviv's relations with its neighbouring Arab states, the United States, the Soviet Union, and the United Nations. Then the chapter outlines the ways in which these environments, or some of their incorporated elements, have traditionally affected Israel's employment of war as an instrument of that state's foreign policy. With respect to the literature itself, all materials and other interpretations dealing with the foreign policy system of Israel and its strategic thinking are based on the period

before 1982 primarily.

### 3.2: The Environments of Israel's Foreign Policy

According to Brecher, the foreign policy decisions of a state reveal both initiating and reactive elements. He provides six conditions to assess what he calls the "initiating-reactive mix" in foreign policy. These conditions are as follows: (1) the state's geo-political position in the global system; (2) the state's power configuration within a subordinate system; (3) the importance of the subordinate system and its resources to the dominant struggle between the superpowers; (4) the image of competitive access held by all states; (5) the set of pressures on an initiation-oriented elite which derive from the internal balance of social, economic, and political forces; and (6) the relative stability or turmoil within the system and elite goals vis-à-vis actors.<sup>1</sup>

In applying these conditions to Israel's foreign policy, Brecher finds a genuine mix of initiating potential and reactive stimuli. He contends that Israel's place within a highly competitive zone, the legacy of its military triumph against its enemies, and its ability to maintain a viable client-patron relationship with the United States, enhance that state's maneuverability in global affairs.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, Brecher argues that the United States' ability to influence Israel's options (as was demonstrated in Tel Aviv's

decision to withdraw from Sinai on 8 November 1956), the presence of internal pressures such as the demands of border settlements (which have influenced the timing, size, and place of reprisals), and the relentless hostility of the Arab states, create a predominantly reactive strain in Israel's foreign policy behaviour.<sup>3</sup> An analysis of the various elements associated with Israel's foreign policy environments may usefully advance our understanding of its behaviour in international affairs.

### 3.2.1: The psychological environment

The psychological environment of Israel's foreign policy leads to discussion of the history of the Jewish people and their ethnic culture. The importance of this environment is twofold: it establishes the Jewish connection with Palestine in its historical setting, and, in light of Chapter Two, it determines the attitudinal prism of Israel's decisionmakers. The Jewishness of Israel occupies a pre-eminent place in the making of its political culture: it dominates the thought, feeling, belief, and behaviour of the entire society.<sup>4</sup> In fact, for many Jews, the creation of Israel in 1948 represents the fulfilment of a divine prophecy. According to Cohen, the Bible give the Jews a special place in divine affection, a strong sense of shared national destiny, and a belief in their unique status as God's Chosen People.<sup>5</sup>

For a Jew, it is always important to remember that God

promised Abraham and his descendants the land of Canaan (i.e., Palestine or Israel proper, the West Bank and Gaza Strip) forever. Hence, in accordance with the divine plan, Abraham and his family left the land of Ur (probably present-day Iraq) and came into the Promised Land. But, due to a severe drought, grandson, Jacob or Israel, and his entire family moved to Egypt and settled in the land of Goshen. It was in Egypt that the seventy souls of Israel multiplied and prospered rapidly to such an extent that the Pharaohs had to take drastic measures to keep them under control. The Israelites remained in Egypt for 430 years, at the end of which God appointed Moses to lead them out of their misery and back into Palestine. After many trials, during which God forced the Israelites to wander in the wilderness because of their sinfulness, Moses was able to bring them to the gates of the Promised Land. There he died, his mission accomplished, and it was Joshua who finally led the Children of Abraham across the Jordan River and established them in Palestine.<sup>6</sup>

Reflecting on its birth, Gray contends that Israel was going to be the most special of states, because it was founded upon a dream.<sup>7</sup> Such a peculiarity is evident in any study of the impact of Jewishness on Israel's foreign policy. For instance, the goal of giving every Jew the right to settle in and become a citizen of Israel is a vital part of the state's national interest. In addition, because it is the only Jewish state in the world, Israel has granted itself the

responsibility of protecting the well-being of Jews everywhere. Finally, Israel's determination to maintain a close contact with Jewish communities worldwide has influenced its relations with those states in which Jews reside.<sup>8</sup>

It should be remembered that during Biblical times, the Israelites were successful only when their actions pleased God. Moses had made it clear to his followers that God's promises always obliged them to be obedient and faithful to the covenant and divine law. When Israel failed to meet God's standards of loyalty, it was destroyed by its enemies. From the time of Abraham until the second century A.D., Jewish Kingdoms rose and fell, and Palestine came under the rule of the Babylonians, Assyrians, Persians, Greeks, and Romans. For their part, the Romans lowered the final curtain on biblical Israel by destroying the Temple in Jerusalem in A.D. 70, crushing the revolt led by Shim'on Bar Kochba in A.D. 135, and forcing the majority of Jews into exile.<sup>9</sup> This is an important symbolic event in Jewish memories. Since then, Jewish history ceased to be the history of Palestine, and it began to be the history of Jewish communities dispersed over much of the world.

But the Jews, while scattered to every distant corner of the world, soon dreamed of returning to Palestine. According to Cohen, the Jews were chosen by God not only because of the covenant He made with their forefathers, but also because they were expected to bear the penalty for misdemeanour.<sup>10</sup> It

follows that all misfortune, such as the destructions of the Temple, the Expulsion from Spain in 1492, the Chmelnicki massacres in the Ukraine in 1647, the pogroms which befell many Jewish communities in Russia under Alexander III, and the emergence of French anti-Semitism in 1880, must be seen not as a denial of Jews' special status but its affirmation.<sup>11</sup> In a way, argues Safran, the destruction of the Temple and scattering of the Jews "could not be accidental or definitive, but served a certain purpose and had to have a sequel. That purpose was viewed as the chastising of the Jews in Exile, and the sequel was viewed as redemption and Return to the land God gave to Abraham."<sup>12</sup> In other words, their story in exile and their dream to return have come to define the condition of the Jews and their expected destiny: "In a certain sense all Jewish history is a prelude to the formation of Israel. Jerusalem, the dream of the return to Zion, is a recurring theme in Jewish sacred literature."<sup>13</sup>

The most significant event which inspired world Jewry to work for their return to Zion was the indescribable horror of the Holocaust.<sup>14</sup> It is estimated that about six million of Europe's eight million Jews were slaughtered by the Nazis between 1933 and 1945. During these years, the Jews perished in "extermination camps, execution sites, ghettos, slave labour camps, and on the death marches."<sup>15</sup> Eisenberg describes the systematic attempt by the Nazis to destroy European Jewry as "a crime without equals."<sup>16</sup> For him, the

Holocaust had "sensitized the world to the lethal power of prejudice and race-hatred. Anti-Semitism and racism were the secret weapons the Nazis used in their assault on civilization."<sup>17</sup> It was against this background that European Jews started to harbour the ideas of Zionism. This called for their final return to Palestine, to live under a government of their own choice, as the only means to ensure their survival.

Regarding this last, the Holocaust had intensified Jewish immigration and had permitted a gradual build up of the Yishuv (the historical name for the Palestine Jewish community). O'Brien observes that between 1920 and 1923. Jewish immigration had been running at an annual rate of about 8,000. In 1924, the rate jumped to about 13,000, and in 1925, to over 33,000. But, when Adolf Hitler came to power in Germany in 1933, his planned repression of the Jews precipitated the largest wave of immigration in the whole period preceding the establishment of Israel. It is estimated that between 1933 and 1939 nearly 225,000 Jews came to Palestine, and in 1947 there were 650,000 Jews who represented a third of Palestine's population.<sup>18</sup> This illustrates not only that the Yishuv had grown to be a substantial community, but that "its overall potentialities had greatly expanded by the injection of new capital and vast numbers of excellently trained professionals, technicians, entrepreneurs, and highly educated people generally."<sup>19</sup>

Historically, Jewish interest in Palestine was religious



and humanitarian, but not political. Evidence suggests that the few pioneers who settled in Palestine before 1850 did so largely on religious grounds.<sup>20</sup> Even Leon Pinsker, the founder of Russian Zionism, did not specifically insist on Palestine as the site of the envisaged state, but rather mentioned it as only one possibility alongside any place in America. However, the intensification of anti-Semitism in Russia in the 1880s gave rise to the creation of Chovevei Tzion (Lovers of Zion) in 1882. This group advocated Jewish settlement in Palestine as a practical measure of relief, rather than as a religious ideal.<sup>21</sup> A decade later, political Zionism was born.

Political Zionism owes much of its existence to Theodor Herzl, the "founder of political Zionism."<sup>22</sup> In the 1890s, he argued that assimilation of Jews in Europe was not realizable, that the Jewish question was not religious or social, but national, and that anti-Semitism would never be conquered until the Jews formed a nation of their own.<sup>23</sup> In a more practical vein, Herzl envisaged a "Society of Jews" to organize the Jewish masses for emigration, to find a suitable place for Jewish settlement, and to negotiate the acquisition of a national territory with the European powers.<sup>24</sup> To this end, Herzl convened the First World Zionist Congress in Basle in 1897. The Congress, which was attended by representatives of Jewish groups from seventeen countries, most of them from the Russian Empire, established the World Zionist Organization

to advance Jewish nationalism, and to facilitate the creation for the Jewish people of a home in Palestine secured by public law.<sup>25</sup> To attain this objective, the Congress called upon world Jewry to promote the Jewish colonization of Palestine, to organize world Jewry by means of institutions in each country containing Jews, to foster Jewish nationalism, and to obtain government consent to the attainment of the aim of Zionism.<sup>26</sup> Above all, the Congress asserted that Jews everywhere constituted a single nation for which it sought to secure a national home in Palestine; and it laid out the basis of the Jewish state. As Herzl later noted: "If I were to sum up the Basel Congress in one word - which I shall not do openly - it would be this: at Basle I founded the Jewish State."<sup>27</sup> Finally, on 14 May 1948, David Ben-Gurion, the first Prime Minister of Israel, proclaimed the establishment of the Jewish State in Palestine.<sup>28</sup> The Zionist dream became a tangible reality.

Even so, it remains too tempting to perceive Zionism as being homogeneous. In fact there are two different visions of Zionism: Socialist Zionism and Revisionist Zionism. First, in declaring the independence of Israel in 1948, Ben-Gurion called for Jews to return and pioneer their new land, and urged the Arab inhabitants of Israel to play their part in the development of the state, with full and equal citizenship and due representation in all its bodies and institutions. He also offered peace to all the neighbouring Arab states, and

invited them to cooperate with Israel for the common good of all.<sup>29</sup> Of course, Ben-Gurion was also interested in establishing a secure state bounded by its biblical borders. He therefore rejected the internationalization of Jerusalem on the ground that Jewish possession of the Holy City was vital to the definition of the state itself.<sup>30</sup> Yet on the other hand, he saw the occupation of the Sinai, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and the Golan Heights in June 1967, even though fulfilling the biblical requirements of Israel, mainly as strategic manoeuvres designed to force the Arab States to recognize the de facto existence of Israel. For instance, after Israel's stunning victory in that war, Ben-Gurion was quick to suggest that all the land captured from the Arabs (except Jerusalem) should be returned in exchange for peace.<sup>31</sup> In short, Socialist Zionism is considered as less disposed to pursue wars of conquest and more attached to the importance of the social well-being of the nation. As Ben-Gurion noted: "The state of Israel will be judged not by its wealth or military might, nor by its technological skills, but by its moral worth and human values... Merely to be like all other people is not enough."<sup>32</sup>

In contrast, Revisionist Zionism is much more aggressive. It stresses a resilient nation based upon military prowess and strength. The Revisionist Zionists had a vision of a fully liberated Israel with sovereignty over all of so-called "Eretz Yisrael", thus legitimizing the State because it fulfils the

land of the "Chosen People". In essence, the definition of Israel as a state is not completely satisfied, according to the Talmud, unless the Holy Land is encompassed by the borders of the modern state.

Despite these two "competing" visions of Zionism, there still is a very strong sense of unity and solidarity within Israel. This is founded on religion, language, and a belief in the universal unity of Jewish people, the imperative of immigration, and the primacy of national defense, and support for all sacrifices required in that connection.<sup>33</sup> Friedman sees the differences between Ben-Gurion and Begin, or between Shamir and Peres, in terms of tactics rather than ends: "[t]hey all called the West Bank Judea and Samaria; they all believed that Israel's military occupation was benign, the most enlightened in history; and they all seemed prepared to set their ideological differences aside and maintain the status quo forever."<sup>34</sup> He argues that Ben-Gurion accepted the notion of partition of Palestine only as a better option over the continuation of the British Mandate, and not because he was willing to relinquish the "historical right over the whole land of Israel."<sup>35</sup> Besides, it was under the Labour Party from 1967 to 1977, and not under the Likud, that Israel decided to occupy the West Bank and laid the foundation of Jewish settlements in that area.<sup>36</sup> Even so, the divergence between Revisionist and Socialist Zionists is socially divisive, as each form of Zionism is supported by different

ethnic groups within Israel. Generally speaking, the Ashkenazi or European Jew supports Socialist Zionism, while the Oriental or Sephardic Jew is identified closely with the Revisionist vision of Zionism. The implications of such a division for partisan politics are important. The Labour Alignment draws its support primarily from the Ashkenazi, while the Likud Bloc draws its power from the Orientals.<sup>37</sup> Over the years, it was Ben-Gurion's vision that guided Israel for the first three decades of its existence. But in 1977 Israel elected Begin as a prime minister, and it is essentially his vision that has dominated the nation since.<sup>38</sup>

The political upheaval of 1977 thus had a significant demographic basis. The ethnic division among Israelis has grown unevenly as the result of the Jewish immigration over the last forty-five years. For instance, in 1948 there was an 80/20 ratio between Ashkenazim and Orientals, but the Orientals now make up 55 percent of the Jewish population. Since the Labour Movement and the Likud Bloc are "ethnic" parties, the Orientals' demographic strength is responsible for moving the orientation of Israel's politics towards the right.<sup>39</sup> Moreover, the last two decades have witnessed a gradual rightward tendency among the majority of voters, who have come to perceive favourably the Likud Bloc's vision of Israel as a defence mechanism against the rapid growth of the Arab population. As Gutmann observes, within Israel proper the Arabs were a minority, but Tel Aviv's military victory in

1967 brought more than one million Arabs under Israeli military rule. By the late 1980s, Arabs represented 38 percent of the Israeli population. It is thus no surprise that many Israelis have come to acknowledge the high Arab birthrate as a major demographic problem, and gradually to move towards the Likud Bloc. This was -- and still is -- determined to hold on to the West Bank, open it up to further Jewish settlement, and make it an integral part of Eretz Yisrael.<sup>40</sup>

In a more practical vein, Peretz suggests three reasons for Labour's declining popularity: Golda Meir's government was held accountable for the nearly ruinous costs of the Yom Kippur War of 1973; the Labour Movement failed to become a brokerage party; and the Labour government failed in the mid-1970s to provide a solution for the country's economic problems.<sup>41</sup> More importantly, the Labour Movement was dissipated as the old idealism of Ben-Gurion, Meir, and Pinchas Sapir was shattered due to the Labour party's conflicting views on the national and territorial claims of Zionism. For instance, while Perez (a Rafi) opposed the establishment of a Palestinian state, Allon (an Adhut Haavoda) was more willing to compromise with the Arabs.<sup>42</sup>

On a broader scale, the "generational factor" has contributed to the transformation of Israeli society during the last twenty years. This suggests a distinction between the generation of the founding fathers (represented by Ben-

Gurion, Eshkol and Meir) and the second generation of the 1970s (represented by Rabin, Peres, and Eban). To give one example, while Ben-Gurion perceived the Middle East as a political system in itself with components representing the core, periphery, and outer ring, none of the "Younger Men" has a very clearly articulated image of the region.<sup>43</sup> In short, the leadership of the second generation has been criticized for its lack of "independent world views", the necessary acumen of rulership, and authority.<sup>44</sup> This may be an unduly harsh judgement. It is nonetheless a typical criticism of the post-revolutionary leadership. For his part, Eban downplays the "two-pole thesis" as an oversimplified distortion of sophisticated and complex images of foreign policy. As he states: "There are hawks dressed in the feathers of doves and vice versa."<sup>45</sup> Meir similarly argues that although there are differences of style, approaches, and experience between the old and new leaderships, these differences are not as significant as the similarities.<sup>46</sup> Whether the "Younger Men" will live up to Meir's expectation remains to be seen. What is important, however, is that Labour's weakness in the mid-1970s meant not only a gain for the Likud, but also offered the religious camp the opportunity to hold the balance of power between Labour and Likud, and to dictate which of the two would serve as the dominant partner of the coalition.<sup>47</sup>

Brecher argues that foreign policy choices derive from images of the environment held by decisionmakers. As we saw

in Chapter 2, he introduces the concept of an attitudinal prism -- a collection of images through which events are perceived. A key assumption in the present framework of the psychological environment of foreign policy is that this prism is shaped by three interacting variables: political culture, historical legacy, and the personality traits of decisionmakers.<sup>48</sup>

In the case of Israel, the attitudinal prism of its high policy elite comprises four main components. First, is the notion that the Jews have a divine claim to the land of Palestine. This means, in the words of Ben-Gurion, that the state of Israel was made by and for the Jewish people, and the Arabs were its invaders for 1300 years.<sup>49</sup> This claim also means that Israel has a messianic mission to be a "light unto the nations", to participate in the making of world peace, and to assume an active role in operations designed to assist developing countries.<sup>50</sup> Second, it is assumed that the fate of world Jewry and the survival of Israel are profoundly interconnected. Thus, the destruction of six million Jews in Nazi-occupied Europe was "a ringing cry for Israel to rise, to be strong and prosperous, to safeguard her peace and security, and to prevent such a disaster from ever again overwhelming the Jewish people."<sup>51</sup> Third, Israel is located in a hostile region, lacks recognition from its neighbouring Arab states, and is confronted with a permanent challenge to its security.<sup>52</sup> This image of the Arabs as an implacable threat



is a matter of faith for Israeli decisionmakers, creating the necessity for activism and militancy in their behaviour.<sup>53</sup> Finally, there are the personality traits of the decisionmakers. Brecher argues that the most striking dichotomy in Israel's inner circle is between decisiveness and hesitancy, extremism and compromise, ruthlessness and compassion, and rigidity and flexibility.<sup>54</sup> For instance, while Ben-Gurion viewed the Arabs as enemies and advocated the permanent use of force until they accepted Israel's right to exist, Moshe Sharett perceived them as people, not just enemies, and supported the application of diplomacy and the rational search for reconciliation by compromise.<sup>55</sup>

### 3.2.2: The domestic environment

The domestic environment of Israel's foreign policy requires a discussion of those political institutions which have a direct bearing on Israel's external behaviour, its economic and military capabilities, its military doctrine, its civil-military relations, and the roles of interest groups, public opinion, and the mass media.

Israel is a parliamentary democratic republic, with a system based on an unwritten constitution and on a series of "Basic Laws" passed by the parliament. At least in theory, the Knesset is supreme, in the sense that it can invalidate, amend, and make any law whatsoever. From a legal perspective, the possibility exists that the Knesset can totally alter the

nature of the regime and change completely the structure of the government by the same process that it adopts in enacting the simplest of laws.<sup>56</sup> Saphron attributes the absence of a constitution to the failure of any political party, or any combination of parties, to produce a comprehensive constitutional program that might subvert the existing, ad hoc arrangements.<sup>57</sup> By 1985 Israel had adopted eight Basic Laws, dealing with the Knesset (1958), the land of Israel (1960), the President (1964), the government (1968), the state economy (1975), the army (1976), Jerusalem as the Capital of Israel (1980), and the Judiciary (1984).<sup>58</sup>

In the executive, the President is elected by the Knesset for a five-year term and for a maximum of two consecutive terms. He can be impeached, dismissed, and deposed by the Knesset; but he has only ceremonial functions. For example, the President formally signs treaties, appoints diplomats and judges, receives ambassadors, and signs all laws, but all of these functions are executed only after they are ratified or recommended by the Cabinet or the Knesset.<sup>59</sup> This status thus provides an assurance against conflict between the presidency and other branches of government.<sup>60</sup>

The Cabinet forms the political executive. The Cabinet lacks the right to dissolve parliament. Further, a Cabinet's tenure may be terminated only when the Knesset's term comes to an end, when a Prime Minister resigns, or when the Knesset passes a vote of no confidence against the Cabinet. Even so,

the Cabinet still enjoys broad capacities in law as well as in practice. The Cabinet leads the Knesset in most essential functions, determines all internal and external policies, possesses the initiative in legislation, issues the regulations necessary for the execution of the law, and concludes treaties with other countries without reference to the Knesset. All in all, remarks Brecher, "a declaration of war, the conclusion of peace, the making of treaties, the appointment of envoys, in fact all legal acts concerning the external world, were made exclusive prerogatives of the governments."<sup>61</sup>

A distinctive feature of Israeli politics is the electoral system. Israeli voters cast their ballot for party list, not individual candidates, in a single national constituency, and each party presents the voters with a list of 120 names as its choices for the Knesset seats. After the election, seats are allocated to those parties which have received at least one percent of the total number of votes cast, while the distribution of seats among the party lists is determined by dividing the number of valid votes obtained by all the parties securing the minimum percentage of votes (i.e., one percent) by the number of Knesset members (i.e., 120).

This complicated formula usually benefits the larger parties,<sup>62</sup> but it has also encouraged a multiplicity of parties. In particular, it has forced each party to set its

own foreign policy priorities and present them to the voters during election campaigns. The differences can be seen in Maki's attachments to Moscow (until 1965), Mapam's eroding pro-Soviet neutralism, Ahdut Haavoda's verbal commitment to non-alignment, Mapai's pro-western neutralism, and Herut's preference for alignment with the West.<sup>61</sup> Yet, Brecher maintains that there is no evidence to suggest that Israeli elections influence the content of strategic foreign policy, the decision process, or the manner of implementation.<sup>64</sup> The national preoccupation with security stipulates a national consensus on major foreign policy concerns. Reich argues that Israel is perhaps unique among states in having enemies on all of its borders.<sup>65</sup> But Israel's geo-strategic situation does not dictate the rules to be applied by various governments. At best, it represents a guideline for foreign policy. Even so, one may still appreciate the influence that a general election in Israel has over the conduct of the peace process between Tel Aviv and the Arabs.<sup>66</sup>

Israel's electoral system has also ensured that no single party can obtain the necessary majority to govern alone, and has guaranteed that Israel can only be ruled by coalition governments. The Labour Movement, for instance, which dominated the Israeli polity for three decades after 1948, is an amalgam of various socialist parties such as the Mapam, Mapai, Rafi, and Ahdut Haavoda. The Likud Bloc is comprised of the Progressive Party, the General Zionist Party, and the

Herut. Moreover, Israel also has been ruled -- at least on three occasions (1967, 1984, and 1988) -- by "national unity" coalition cabinets based on the principle of power sharing between Labour and the Likud.<sup>67</sup> This type of government by a grand coalition is an essential element of Israeli consociationalism. Lijphart cites the segmental cleavages among Jews of Western and Eastern origins, the segmental autonomy of each group, and the principle of mutual-segmental veto, as strong consociational elements incorporated into the Israeli polity.<sup>68</sup> He attributes the success of consociationalism to the relative balance of power between the Socialist and the Likud camps, to the existence of an external threat, and to Israel's long tradition of accommodation. However, it is significant that "the technique of balancing smaller parties in the coalition has not been applied to foreign policy; it has been most conspicuous in economic matters ... and in religious questions."<sup>69</sup>

Despite its importance,<sup>70</sup> the Knesset plays a marginal role in foreign policy. For instance, treaties do not require the approval of the Parliament; they are merely announced and are published by the Cabinet within twenty days.<sup>71</sup> The Knesset's main contribution to foreign policy takes place in the parliamentary committees, each of which is responsible for a specific policy area. In general, committees have the right to hold meetings behind closed doors, to inquire into the subjects under their jurisdiction, and to report on the

efficiency of government business.<sup>72</sup> Most significant is the role played by the Committee on Foreign Affairs and Security, which has broad legislative and administrative powers concerning the state's foreign relations, its armed forces, and its security.<sup>73</sup> This committee deals with all bills on security and foreign policy after their first readings in the Knesset; it shares with the Finance Committee the responsibility for the second reading of the Defence Budget; and it is expected to approve or disapprove major Cabinet decisions. For instance, if the general mobilization of troops is not approved by the committee within ten days, or if the committee does not agree to a special mobilization of troops within two months, these decisions must be terminated.<sup>74</sup> In short, the Committee on Foreign Affairs and Security represents "the pulse" of the Knesset in foreign policy.<sup>75</sup> However, the constitutional principle of Knesset supremacy is in practice circumscribed by the Cabinet, which controls the Knesset and its agenda through a strict method of party discipline.

The absence of a written constitution symbolizes the country's political weakness as well as its strength. For instance, Israel's strength is illustrated by the fact that democracy has endured through pragmatic arrangements worked out by the political forces active in it. However, there is always the danger that such arrangements may make the system so rigid as to prevent it eventually from making required

adjustments. Israel's political system grants power to the legislature without conventional checks or legal balances by other branches of government. On the other hand, the fusion of power between the Knesset and the executive allows the Cabinet to hold the key to the entire political structure. Thus the Cabinet enjoys authority to control the country's foreign relations, to exercise emergency power in a time of crisis, and in practice to pass the legislation which it wishes to have enacted. In short, it is at the Cabinet level that foreign policy decisions are rendered.

Israel's demographic and economic resources have consistently influenced the making of its foreign policy. The state faces a substantial quantitative demographic disadvantage. Israelis speak constantly of the Arabs' demographic strength, pointing out that only 4.2 million Jews are facing 120 million Arabs. In a military sense, this means that while the Arabs can maintain large standing armies, Tel Aviv must rely substantially on mobilizing civilian reservists who must be kept in a high state of readiness. Evidence suggests, for instance, that the Arab states' success in mobilizing large numbers of their citizens for the 1973 War forced Israel into "scraping the bottom of the barrel and searching for even more efficient use of an almost maximally tapped pool of manpower."<sup>76</sup>

There is another source of Israel's demographic fear. Within its 1948 borders, Jews constituted 83 percent of the

population. However, after the 1967 War what the country gained in terms of territories it lost in terms of cohesion (see maps #3 and #4). Now Jews constitute only about 65 percent of the population.<sup>77</sup> If the present Arab birthrate continues to climb, some experts project that over the next few decades Israel's Jewish population will be reduced to a powerless minority.<sup>78</sup> This means, argues Skutel, that "Arab fertility will peacefully achieve what terrorist attacks and Arab armies have failed to do, i.e., destroying Israel as an exclusive reserve of world Jewry."<sup>79</sup> Such a fear has undoubtedly put some constraints on Israel's foreign policy elite. For instance, decisions to integrate the Arab community into the life of the state do not necessarily signify transfer of Israel's sovereignty over these areas, especially if the population there becomes more nationalistic.<sup>80</sup>

Israel's limited economic resources have an acute impact on the state's external behaviour. In the first two decades of its existence, the Israeli economy grew rapidly at rates roughly comparable to those of Japan, Finland, and New Zealand.<sup>81</sup> This record was attained despite limited natural resources, scarce sources of energy, and an economic boycott imposed by the country's Arab neighbours.<sup>82</sup> Such progress would have been impossible without an exceptionally large flow of capital into the country. Safran estimates that between 1950 and 1973 Israel received about \$10 billion from the US



government in grants-in-aid and loans, contributions from world Jewry, and also from bond sales, direct foreign investments, and German government reparation payments to the Israeli government.<sup>83</sup> For these reasons, there is active government participation in foreign trade.<sup>84</sup> Crittenden notes that the "ratio of the trade deficit to national output was steadily declining, from 26 percent in 1952 to about 14 percent in 1966, primarily because of a very successful export performance."<sup>85</sup> It seems that Israel was about to achieve economic self-sufficiency when the wars of 1967 and 1973 shattered that possibility. Israel then had to purchase expensive new military hardware, which sent defense expenditures abroad soaring to more than \$2 billion in 1975.<sup>86</sup> Besides, the global inflation of 1974 and 1975 hit Israel hard because the country imports most of its raw materials. As a result, the balance-of-payment deficits jumped from \$1 billion in 1973 to \$4 billion in 1974.<sup>87</sup>

Israel's economic situation is closely tied to its strategic situation. Israel allocates about 30 percent of its Gross National Product to military expenditures. Besides, the absence of peace in the Middle East has meant a dependency on foreign aid. Moreover, the reliance of its economy on exports creates vulnerabilities should the international environment move increasingly toward protectionist trading blocs. Of most significance is the fact that the share of loans in the financing of Israel's import surplus underlies a mounting

foreign debt. Israel receives about \$3 billion as part of an annual economic and military assistance package from the United States. Such assistance, essential as it is for the operation of the Israeli economy, has created fear that dependency on foreign aid, especially from the US, may well allow Washington to influence Tel Aviv's foreign policy decisions. Israeli decisionmakers are nonetheless compelled to shape foreign policy in such a way that secures and maximizes external assistance.<sup>88</sup>

Schiff argues that Israel's embattled status creates a special tension and dynamic that thrusts the military deep into the nation's political life.<sup>89</sup> Initially, the Israeli Defence Forces' organization followed the model of the British Army. Today, the General Staff assumes supreme command of the IDF, including the air force, the navy, and the land force. In essence, the General Staff combines three functions: first, it constitutes the "Brain of the Army" and deals with short - and long-range concepts at the strategic and higher tactical levels; second, it serves as the headquarters of the ground forces; and, finally, it functions as a theatre headquarters for all military operations. It is true that air and sea battles are directed by the Air Force and Navy respectively, but both are under the overall guidance of the Chief of the General Staff.<sup>90</sup> Thus, although the air force and the navy enjoy the status of separate arms, in wartime their commanders assume de facto responsibility as the Chief

of Staff's professional advisors. For his part, the Chief of Staff is also the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces and is solely responsible to the Cabinet through the Minister of Defense.<sup>91</sup> The latter's responsibility includes contacts with other governmental and non-governmental bodies in all matters concerning the establishment of settlements in which the Defense Ministry has an interest. For example, the Defense Ministry is concerned with budgeting and directing major projects of development and production. It should be noted that the heads of the budget, research, and development departments serve as advisors to the General Staff.<sup>92</sup> This, in turn, gives the General Staff a primary role in military policy in both peace and war. Schiff concludes that this type of centralization and unification of command has facilitated the conduct of fighting since 1948.<sup>93</sup>

Peri stresses that "the Israeli pattern of military-political relations is based on the instrumentalist principle that the army should be subordinate to the civil authority and should serve as the professional instrument of the state's political institutions."<sup>94</sup> Over the years, however, the IDF has come to play a primary and a disproportionate role vis-à-vis the civil authority in determining and influencing Israel's foreign policy-making. The historical background of the Jewish community in Mandatory Palestine, the centrality of defense to national existence, the heavy and lasting imprint of Ben-Gurion, and the state's continuous need to maintain a

capacity for total mobilization, can be cited as the main factors which have influenced the structure of civil-military relations in Israel.<sup>95</sup>

There are four more practical reasons for IDF dominance over the state's national security decisionmaking process. First, at the legal level, the IDF is not subordinate to civil authority because the foundations of government are not constitutionally entrenched and, hence, there is no constitutional mechanism for a national security decisionmaking process. Further, the Basic Laws make only two indirect references to institutional procedures: one enables the government to act through ministerial committees, and the second stipulates that the government shall appoint, at the suggestion of the Prime Minister, the Cabinet Secretary and determine his functions. These measures mean that ministerial committees lack a sense of permanence, and that the extent of the Cabinet Secretary's power is unclear.<sup>96</sup> In 1968 a Basic Law stipulated that the IDF and the Chief of the General Staff are subject to the authority of the government, that the Minister of Defense is in charge of the Army on behalf of the government, and that the Chief of the General Staff shall be appointed by the government upon the recommendation of the Minister of Defense. Although it confirms the principle of civil control over the military, this Law fails to clarify certain ambiguities, such as who is the Commander-in-Chief, and to whom - besides the Cabinet - the Chief of the General

Staff is subordinate.<sup>97</sup>

Second, at the leadership level, the Army is free to run its own affairs thanks to the precedent set up by Ben-Gurion. As he combined the offices of Defense Minister and Prime Minister from 1948 - 1963, he came to embody both the political and the military leaderships. His approach to civil-military relations incorporated two mutually exclusive elements. While he believed that the Army should not determine national policy, Ben-Gurion tried to prevent partisan political encroachment on the military. He strove to make defense an autonomous sphere based on national consensus. To this end, Ben-Gurion tended to resolve defense issues behind closed doors without the advice, consent, and knowledge of the Knesset and the Cabinet, a practice that naturally allowed considerable involvement by the IDF in defense policy-making at the political level.

Safram observes that it was under Ben-Gurion's aegis that the Defense Ministry and the IDF started initiating and pursuing projects without obtaining authorization from elected politicians. There is evidence that the Sinai Campaign, for instance, was reported to some ministers and parliamentary leaders only after it was already a fait accompli.<sup>98</sup> Of course, the IDF's secretive military planning can be justified easily on the basis that the issue of Israel's security is so sensitive that it cannot be disclosed publicly; that a public debate on defense is laden with a deep emotional rather than

rational overtones; and that decisions in Israel must be taken very quickly.<sup>99</sup> The issue of the IDF's role in shaping defense policy has thus dogged Israel in the years following Ben-Gurion's retirement.

Third, at the administrative level, the lack of an effective civilian control over the military is caused by the lack of coordination between the foreign and defense ministries. For example, the visit of South African Prime Minister Vorster in 1976 was arranged solely by the Defense Ministry, without any consultation with the Foreign Ministry and the Cabinet. As Ben-Meir observes, this is not the way to go about taking decisions on important political questions.<sup>100</sup> The IDF is able to conduct its business independently from other governmental agencies in part because it has at its disposal the most sophisticated, complex, and efficient staff system in Israel. In other words, the IDF's domination of the strategic decisionmaking process is epitomized by the fact that it has the requisite tools for policy planning and evaluation, coherent thinking, and the systematic presentation of proposals. Consequently, it is neither the Cabinet nor the Prime Minister, but the Defense Minister -- who is dependent for his information on the bureaucracy -- who has a real influence on the size and allocation of the defense budget. The IDF also enjoys a predominance in the area of intelligence assessment.<sup>101</sup> Indeed, Perlmutter suggests that "[t]he intelligence, planning and operational branches of the IDF, as

well as the chief of staff, model Israel's security doctrine. Rarely do civilian leaders make inroads into their decisionmaking process...."<sup>102</sup>

Finally, at the social level the IDF is important because it is an integral part of Israeli society. The fact that the armed forces and reservists comprise large numbers of citizens; that one-fifth of the nation's labour force is connected directly or indirectly with defense work; and that the influx of former senior officers into politics - officers who retain connections with colleagues still in the armed forces - all allows the IDF to exert influence on the decisionmaking process.<sup>103</sup> Thus, it is not surprising to find that Israelis are deeply involved in military matters, and that they look at certain issues from a military perspective: in short, they are "militarized". As Safran states, "the comprehensiveness of Israel's defense effort has tended at one and the same time to civilize the military and militarize the civilian."<sup>104</sup>

Thus, the IDF's hegemony over the national security decisionmaking process is felt in almost every area. Israel is perhaps the only democracy where the order of battle, the development and procurement of major weaponry systems, and the allocation of the defense budget, are all determined by the defense establishment alone.<sup>105</sup> But this does not necessarily mean that the IDF's intrusion into politics resembles the political role of the armed forces in many Third World

countries. As far as is known, no Israeli Cabinet has been toppled by military pressures. For instance, the IDF carried out the government's orders, though reluctantly, in withdrawing its forces from Sinai and the Gaza Strip after the 1956 campaign. More recently, and in accordance with the Camp David Agreement between Tel Aviv and Cairo, the IDF helped in evacuating settlers from the Raffah area in April 1982. These two events are concrete evidence of the Army's acceptance of political decisions.<sup>106</sup> Indeed, the shadow cast by the military over the civilian authority has fluctuated over the years, throughout which the IDF has remained a guardian of Israeli democracy. Perlmutter describes civil-military relations in Israel best when he states that the "nature of the IDF is that it is at once separate but loyal, autonomous but a servant, nonideological but protective of the government."<sup>107</sup>

To summarize the main characteristics of the strategic decisionmaking process in Israel: first, the military organization is focused on its operational mission or combat. Second, the unity of the IDF's command contributes to operational efficiency and flexibility. Third, the top echelon of the governmental structure for defense, from the Prime Minister and the Cabinet down to the Chief of the General Staff, lacks legal definition and clarity over the distribution of duties and authority. Finally, firm civilian control of the military is exercised only to a limited degree



by the Cabinet and the Knesset. Reflecting on these characteristics, Perlmutter offers the following lessons about the place of the IDF in the Israeli polity. First, in the absence of charismatic figures such as Ben-Gurion, there are no groups or institutions that can compete with the IDF. Second, in spite of the unchallenged position of the Army as an arbiter of Israeli foreign policy, the nation retains a democratic political culture. Finally, the IDF is an army of commanders, not administrators.<sup>108</sup>

We now turn to the final element of the domestic environment of Israel's foreign policy system: interest groups, the mass media, and public opinion.

Interest groups, including government groups, vary in influence, durability, and the nature of the demands they transmit to the circle of decisionmaking authority. Inside government, for example, the Defense Establishment is the most secretive, and yet the most influential, group in Israel's foreign policy system. Composed of the Zahal's leaders, its members are concerned about the probable effect of political decisions on the state's security position. Evidence suggests that the military officer corps later probed the events leading to the Six Day War of 1967.<sup>109</sup> Also, members of the General Staff play a vital role in deciding on the acquisition and sale of arms, in staffing some of Israel's diplomatic missions abroad, and in providing military assistance to other states.<sup>110</sup> In short, top military circles have been a major

source of pressure on the foreign policy decisionmaking process because, in Israel, foreign policy is perceived as no more than security policy.<sup>111</sup>

As for the foreign service community, this group performs various foreign policy functions: it implements strategic-level policy; it is involved in the formulation of tactical decisions; and it is expected to recommend specific policy actions to those who are in a position to decide.<sup>112</sup> This group placed an "operative pressure" on decisions regarding the issue of Israel's diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China between 1954 and 1956, and on Israel's decision to vote against a US-sponsored resolution on Arab refugees at the 1956 General Assembly.<sup>113</sup>

Several ethnic groups deserve mention. The 30,000 Druzes remain loyal to the state of Israel, although they are Arabs in culture and in language (See Appendix 1). For instance, in the 1973 Arab-Israeli War about 150 Druzes died in the Israeli military service. Israeli Druzes were later recognized as a religious community with the right to adjudicate their own laws regarding personal matters. Significantly being an Israeli Druze came to be seen as an identity separate from the Arab one. Even so, the Druzes' participation in Israeli society is complicated, because "it is difficult for a non-Jew to identify fully with the state in the ideological sense."<sup>114</sup> Israeli Druzes concentrate their efforts on maintaining a spiritual connection with other Druze communities in Syria,

Jordan, and Lebanon. Developments in these countries affect Israeli Druzes as they try to place pressure on their own government to assure the well-being of these communities in any Arab-Israeli confrontation.

Finally, there are those interest groups such as the Kena'anim (the Canaanites) which advocate radical means to retain all occupied territories, raising the Jewish birthrate, and making alliance with Jordan. Other groups, consisting of academics and commentators, oppose nuclear proliferation in the Middle East. Finally, there are groups which emerge from special conditions and generate pressure on specific issues. For example, the Land of Israel Movement arose out of the Six Day War, and demands the retention of all of the occupied territories captured by Tel Aviv in that war.<sup>115</sup>

The mass media share with interest groups the potential to influence the process and the outcome of Israel's foreign policy system. The influence of the media is so significant that it has led Brecher to conclude that the communication network is the link between all foreign policy environments.<sup>116</sup> Today, Israel's decisionmakers derive much of their information from the written word, the spoken word, and television, as well as from Tel Aviv's representatives abroad. These channels of communication are present within the foreign policy system, and they have considerable influence in forming the images about the world held by decisionmakers. It should be noted that the government

operates the radio and television stations, and that newspaper reports which deal with sensitive military issues are subject to military censorship. For their part, editors have imposed self-censorship, while continuing to disagree with the government on the nature of information which allegedly endangers national security.<sup>117</sup>

Diplomatic cables are a principal medium of communication within the foreign service. They help bring information from world capitals into the Israeli Foreign Office, and they disseminate instructions to Israeli embassies abroad. But decisionmakers share unequal access to information. For instance, within the Foreign Ministry the total access to code cables is confined to the Minister, the Director-General, his Deputy, the Head of the Research Department, and the Heads of the Bureaux of the Minister. Other foreign service officials, such as the Assistant Director-General, advisors, and heads of department, receive only those cables which are related directly to their sphere of responsibility.<sup>118</sup> As expected, the uneven distribution of information among decisionmakers has created divergent perceptions of world politics and Israel's role in it.<sup>119</sup>

There is no doubt that the mass media shape Israeli public opinion on domestic and international issues. Elizur and Salpeter argue that the great expansion of the role of the broadcasting services, and the increase in the weight of independent newspapers, have considerably changed the nature

of the influence of the mass media on public opinion.<sup>120</sup> For Brecher, the public "has not been a discernible policy advocate, except in the form of spasmodic clusters of letters to the editors."<sup>121</sup> He argues that it is through the parties and interest groups that the public makes its views known on domestic and foreign issues.<sup>122</sup> For example, prior to the Six Day War, media advocacy of the creation of an emergency government was a reflection of an increasingly impatient public's dual demands for a military response to the external threat and for a national coalition cabinet.<sup>123</sup>

In his study of Social Change in Israel, Stone identifies trends that have characterized Israeli public attitudes to war and peace.<sup>124</sup> First, there is an immediate, intense, and consistent relationship between Israelis and those events which have the potential for affecting the national well-being. This strong involvement by Israelis in national affairs derives from the fact that throughout its existence, Israel has experienced a constant threat to its legitimacy as a nation. Second, Israelis react most positively to prospects for peace, as was the case after President Anwar el-Sadat visited Jerusalem in November 1979. Third, the majority of Israelis believe that the Arabs' aim is to destroy Israel. Fourth, a growing minority show an increased interest in the possibility of reaching a peace settlement with Arab countries. Finally, Israelis, while going through an era of relative peace, divert their attention to the same economic

issues familiar in most modern states.<sup>125</sup> These trends are of great significance in examining the role of the Israeli public in the making of foreign policy. Security-related events are the most dominant influences on public opinion. Further, foreign policy decisions are expected to be scrutinized thoroughly by the public. Decisionmakers must calculate their options carefully before finalizing their decisions, or risk facing a public uprising.

In summary, the state's political structure, its economic capability, its civil-military relations, and the roles played by interest groups, the mass media, and public opinion are identified in this study as domestic forces that invariably affect choices among foreign policy options. While not all these forces affect the decisionmaking process at any given time, a discussion of these components provides a framework for the analysis of decisions. This suggests the following general themes. First, Israel's constitutional and conventional political order is very complex. Second, the country's economic capability is heavily dependent upon foreign aid for capital investment, raw materials, and technological advancement. Third, there is no firm civil control over the military, but the Zahal has continued to respect the country's democratic tradition. Fourth, there is an array of interest groups, of which the defense establishment and the civil service community are the most influential. Finally, the mass media constitute an

indispensable source of information for decisionmakers on Israel's external setting.<sup>126</sup>

### 3.2.3: The external environment

An understanding of Israel's military doctrine can help us to understand the significance of that state's regional and international settings. This, however, is not to be found in any comprehensive formal statement forwarded by the Israeli government. Rather, the views contained in Israel's military doctrine have evolved out of its search for answers to the issues stemming from various conditioning factors, including the perceived Arab threat, geographic pressures, and demographic constraints.

Israel is located in a hostile region, and is surrounded by an enemy (i.e., the Arab camp) whose aim is seen to be not a military victory but the liquidation of the entire Jewish State. Tel Aviv has fought five major wars with the Arabs and recently has been considered the leading force against international terrorism. Needless to say, these wars plus countless skirmishes have left their mark on Israel's national consciousness. While for some states the issue of national security is a matter of concern, for Israel it is an obsession. In other words, the Arabs' refusal to recognize the Jewish State has made Israel's struggle a matter of survival.<sup>127</sup> In addition to the economic and demographic constraints discussed earlier, Israel's military thinking has

been consistently influenced by the country's limited geographic resource. Its area is very small (approximately 20,700 km<sup>2</sup>) and its territory is a border zone in which its strategic "depth" remains within range of the enemy's artillery. This means that in a time of war, Israel is deprived of advance warning against approaching aircraft or other types of incursion.<sup>128</sup>

To cope with these limitations, Israel has developed a set of strategic rules at the political and the military-operational levels.<sup>129</sup> In a general sense, Israeli decisionmakers have elaborated a concept of deterrence which is fundamentally conditioned by their perception of the limitations of conventional warfare. For instance, should deterrence fail, Tel Aviv must be prepared to apply its military superiority to inflict significant punishment, and to impress the Arabs with these capabilities as early as possible. Thus, in order to prevent the outbreak of war, Israel has at various times unveiled as a casus belli certain political and military actions that might place the Jewish State in special danger such as Arab interference with freedom of navigation in the Strait of Tiran, a Syrian military intervention in Jordan, or Iraq's possible possession of nuclear weapons.<sup>130</sup>

Closely related to the notion of deterrence is Israel's retention of the option of preemptive strike to prevent serious deterioration in its strategic situation. First, at



the political level, this includes achieving defensible borders to preserve the state's autonomous image and to reduce a dependency on American military aid; establishing an understanding and a friendly alliance with external great powers; and avoiding any compliance with terrorists' demands.<sup>131</sup> Second, at the military level, Israel's strategic safety requires bringing any war to a conclusion as quickly as possible to minimize Israeli casualties; going to the offensive instead of limiting itself to defensive protective tactics; carrying the fight to the heart of the enemy's territory, exploiting the line of least resistance, or the line of least expectation, in military operations; and employing decentralized operations to exploit its superior "battle-management" capability.<sup>132</sup> Regarding this last, Horowitz argues that the Zahal is especially effective at decentralized operations. "[S]uch operations stress the initiative of low-level commanders--down to battalion and even company level. Israeli officers are trained to improvise on the spot, to exploit developing opportunities, and to take initiative without necessarily waiting for higher authority's approval."<sup>133</sup> As for its organization in combat, Eshel remarks that

In principle, the IDF is organized into multimission formations adapting to the various combat situations. The basic formation is the Ugdah, a division sized force, which normally contains several armoured brigades. In combat, the division will receive elite infantry and

special forces under command, while retaining its own support elements such as artillery and armoured engineers.<sup>134</sup>

Finally, in fulfilling its military objectives, Israel must depend on the speed of its paratroop brigades, firepower, tactical air support, and intelligence at all times. Above all, Israelis are convinced that they must extend their state's defense perimeter away from the country's vulnerable demographic and industrial core; that a policy of restraint invites additional violence; and that Israel must exact twice the price for every attack. Here the "time factor" plays a decisive role in all Israeli operational planning. Schiff argues that this factor takes on additional importance because of Israel's limited resources, its sensitivity to losses, and the fact that its military power is based on the reserves. For these reasons Israel's strategy has always been designed to ensure that the Arabs would not achieve any territorial gains in war, and that Israel would attain her objectives in the first stages of the battle.<sup>135</sup> Only in this way could the precarious existence of the Jewish State be secured.

In summing up the elements which are conducive to its strategic strength, one finds Israel enjoying geographical, social, economic, military, and political advantages and opportunities. Although Israel's small size denies it the safety margin of strategic depth, this same geographical factor enables its army to rapidly concentrate its forces on one front, or shift these forces from one front to another.

Furthermore, Israel's central position within the Arab World not only allows it to block communication and coordination among Arab armies, but also affords it the chance to make sequential attacks against individual members of an adversary coalition.<sup>136</sup> Further, the state's internal unity in the face of external danger also adds to its strategic strength. The syndrome "we have nowhere to go" compels the Israelis to come together for forceful action against enemies. Even competing political parties have a tendency to joining hands in crisis, in the case of the National Unity Cabinet of 1967. Besides, Israeli strategists are aware that their modernized, westernized, industrialized, state enjoys special military advantages over the less developed enemy. Differences in internal cohesion mean that while all Israel's power is "usable" in war, the Arabs have to tie down forces for the defense of regimes.<sup>137</sup>

Mintz and Ward argue that in Israel the military budget is employed as a political-economic instrument to help manage the economy, and to provide a favourable election climate for the incumbents.<sup>138</sup> Thus, nearly 50 percent of all industrial investment in Israel is made in the defense sector; manufacturing and services of defense items are significant in terms of employment, revenues, and exports in all sectors of the society; and the competitive election dynamic between Likud and Labour makes it difficult for the incumbents to "just say no" for increased spending on defense.<sup>139</sup> In short,

the military sector is essential for Israel's economic well-being. As Mintz and Ward state,

Even in highly security conscious societies such as Israel, the government uses the defense budget at the margins to respond to political and economic pressures. While security considerations play the key role in influencing military spending, electoral competition and concerns for the economic well-being of major corporations also influence spending. The military in Israel is the government's single most important fiscal mechanism for stimulating the economy and influencing elections, and the government is simply not able to overlook its political and economic significance.<sup>140</sup>

In sum, it is impossible to understand Israel's regional relations in isolation from the history and nature of IDF: its role in society, its successful performance, and its organization. Schiff considers the IDF to be a unique citizens' militia. It was created after the War of Independence in 1948 to defend the country's sovereignty, to save Jews from their enemies, and to provide them with a haven where they can live in peace. Besides, the IDF also serves as a melting pot for the hundreds of thousands of Jewish immigrants who share no more than faith and the hope of living in the Promised Land.

The original foundation of the IDF can be traced back to the successive waves of immigrants who came and settled in Palestine at the turn of the twentieth century.<sup>141</sup> These early Jewish pioneers were represented over a period of forty

years by a number of underground defense organizations. Among them were the Hashomer (the Watchmen), the Haganah (the General Foundation of Labour), and the Irgun (National Military Organization). Undoubtedly, the Haganah stood as the most effective and the best organized underground group. It was the first organization to seek the assistance of Jews abroad in recruiting men, raising funds, and obtaining weapons. Most significantly, the amendment of the Haganah's constitution in 1943 represented the most affirmative stage in the development of the IDF. The new constitution stipulated that men and women from the age of seventeen would be recruited for basic military training, followed by a year and a half of active service. Trainees would then be transferred to reserve units. This process was, as Schiff observes, the embryonic structure of the IDF.<sup>142</sup>

Out of these underground organizations, which fought the War of Independence in 1947 and 1948, a strong army emerged. Today, the IDF holds a uniquely central position in Israeli society. Most Israelis are directly involved in the IDF, either through their own service in the reserve, or through their families and jobs. In a way, Israelis grow up in a society closely identified with the army. Schiff perceives this phenomenon not so much in terms of social militarism, but as a reflection of the nation's precarious existence. As a result, Israel has succeeded in establishing the largest per capita army in the world. It is estimated that out of a

population of some 4.2 millions, the IDF can field an army of half a million soldiers.<sup>143</sup>

This does not necessarily mean that quantity (i.e., the number of soldiers) can be transformed into a qualitative military superiority. Perhaps it is for this reason that Israel's military strategists have emphasized the notion of a "farmers' army." Ben-Gurion envisioned agricultural education as a mechanism to create a harmony between the immigrants and the land. This process is of great significance because the "[t]rue frontier of the State of Israel", says Yigal Allon, "moves according to the movement and location of Jewish workers of the land. Without Jewish settlement, defense of the country is not possible even if we double the force of the army."<sup>144</sup> Thus the first settlers thought in nationalist terms and regarded their modest villages as forward positions that one day would play a role in determining the borders of the Jewish State. Their aspiration was fulfilled on 29 November 1947 when the UN General Assembly adopted the Partition Resolution that called for the division of Palestine into a Jewish and an Arab state, while leaving Jerusalem under international administration. Israel won the War of Independence which immediately followed, but its security remained a major priority. The fathers of the new state realized quickly the necessity of establishing a large reserve and a standing army. Compulsory service is three years for men and twenty months for women.<sup>145</sup> But recruiting a vast

population into the army was only half the battle. The next aim was to decide on the structure and character of the IDF. For the latter, this meant achieving a proper organization and obtaining weapons of high quality.<sup>146</sup>

In probing the secrets of the IDF's military success, one is compelled to conclude that the Israelis' determination to fight to the bitter end offers a plausible explanation. In that sense, the contributions of the air force, the navy, and the military intelligence service have been decisive tools in shaping Israel's military superiority over Arab armies. For his part, Ezer Weizmann argues that "the talent of the nation is to be found in the Israeli Air Force [IAF]". The IAF was born with the assistance of France and hundreds of volunteers from abroad. Over the years, it has remained an "exclusive club" within the IDF, its uniqueness stemming from the fact that the Israeli pilot is a superb aerial warrior. The IAF reached its heyday in June 1967, when its airplanes destroyed the entire air force of Egypt, Jordan, and Syria within a few hours. In addition, the IAF took part in a number of impressive operations following the Yom Kippur War of 1973. For example, its planes transported the troops that liberated Israeli hostages at the Entebbe Airport in Uganda on 14 June 1976, and also it destroyed the newly completed Iraqi atomic reactor on 7 June 1981.<sup>147</sup> Nakdimon describes this last operation in these terms: "The reactor attack was completed in a single swoop, with only the briefest of intervals -- mere

seconds -- between one plan and the next."<sup>148</sup>

The Israeli Naval Force (the INF) is also an important element within the framework of the country's strategy of national defence. Equipped with advanced weapon systems, the INF is bolstered by a large number of French and Israeli-built missile boats and is concentrated in the Mediterranean Sea. In considering the significance of the INF at wartime, Schiff observes, for instance, that the only good news in the first days of the Yom Kippur War came from the sea. During that war the INF adopted an offensive approach that had completely crippled the Egyptian and Syrian fleets, without the loss of a single vessel.<sup>149</sup>

Schiff argues that without good intelligence, the presence of a Jewish minority in the region would have been untenable.<sup>150</sup> Jewish intelligence occupied a central role within the Haganah organization, and upon it Israel's intelligence was built. Today, the intelligence community encompasses four separate branches: Military Intelligence, the Institute for Intelligence and Special Duties (Mossad), the General Security (Shin Bet), and the Center for Research and Strategic Planning.<sup>151</sup> In 1950, a Committee of Service Chiefs was established to coordinate the various Israeli intelligence agencies and set priorities for their work. Initially, it was understood that Shin Bet would focus exclusively on matters of internal security, while Military Intelligence would limit its inquiry to strictly military



affairs. Even so, a jurisdictional dispute broke out between Military Intelligence and Mossad over who was responsible for controlling Jewish and Arab agents. Over the years, it also seems that Military Intelligence has broadened its research endeavors to include assessments of the political, social, and the economic resources of the Arab states.<sup>152</sup>

During the last forty years, Israeli intelligence has earned a reputation for being an "omnipotent monster." For example, before Israel's invasion of Sinai in 1956, the intelligence network had prepared a detailed deception that created the impression that Tel Aviv intended to attack Jordan. As a result, when Operation Musketeer began on 29 October 1956, the Egyptians were confused and not able to comprehend the scope of Tel Aviv's military intentions.<sup>153</sup> The intelligence system also played a decisive role in obtaining secret information about developments in Arab armies. Without doubt, such information was the principal factor behind the IAF's success in June 1967. Thus, the Six-Day War was for Israel like a "game of chess" in which Tel Aviv knew the other side's moves in advance. More recently, the intelligence system has become engaged in a new type of war against Palestinian and international terrorism. But it was not until the Munich massacre of 1972, in which eleven Israeli athletes were murdered by Arab terrorists, that Tel Aviv took its war against the PLO outside the Middle East. As a result, between 1972 and 1980 Israeli agents managed to

assassinate eight Palestinian leaders, including Ali Hassan Salameh, Yasser Arafat's chief advisor, in 1976.<sup>154</sup> These events gave a great boost in prestige to military intelligence. It had become increasingly involved in the making of political decisions, and its chief was often seen seated at the Cabinet table when policy questions were discussed.<sup>155</sup>

Over the same period, however, the IDF also experienced many painful reversals, and Schiff holds the Intelligence community responsible for them. For example, in 1973 Israel almost suffered a major defeat because the intelligence network, although it knew of an Egyptian and Syrian plan to attack, was preoccupied with its own perception of the Arabs' military capability. The erroneous Israeli perception held that: Cairo and Damascus would not go to war with Israel as long as they lacked the ability to vie with the IAF; that the Arabs were not able to reverse the status quo which emerged out of the 1967 war; and that the IDF was capable of quickly negating any Arab military gains.<sup>156</sup> When the war actually broke out on 6 October 1973, the IDF therefore was rushed into action in panic and disorder, and it subsequently paid heavily for the intelligence community's failure to properly evaluate the information it had collected prior to the attack. As a result, the intelligence community underwent a major reassessment. The Agranat Commission recommended that the Prime Minister appoint a Special Advisor on Intelligence

Affairs, that a Special Research Department be established within Mossad, and that the Research Center in the Foreign Ministry be reorganized. For the IDF, the 1973 war meant that it must calculate its moves and respond according to the situation in the field, not on the premises of anyone's preconception.<sup>157</sup>

Of course, the IDF's strategy has been developed to enable it to face regular Arab armies and to maintain a high level of preparedness. This does not mean that the IDF adopts a static strategy of defense. On the contrary, the search for effective defense measures is always subject to an open debate. For example, between 1967 and 1970 a debate arose around the question of how to defend the Suez Canal during the War of Attrition. The choice then was between a defense based on a fortified line or by mobile forces. The final decision, adopted in 1969, was something of a compromise between the two approaches. It called for constructing a fortified line along the Canal (also known as Bar-Lev Line), which was to be supported by a mobile striking force stationed behind it. Although such a pragmatic defense measure was not in line with the character of the IDF, it appeared after all as an attempt to wage a static war in the most mobile way possible.<sup>158</sup>

Discussion of Israel's military doctrine brings us to an examination of that state's foreign policy at regional and international levels. First, at the regional level, Israel's foreign policy is bound up with its relationship with the Arab

states which surround it, and with the wars which have been fought in the area since the Jewish State's proclamation of statehood on 14 May 1948. This approach thus views Tel Aviv's regional setting within the context of the "Arab-Israeli conflict", with a core consisting of the so-called "Arab-Front States" (i.e., Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon) and a non-territorial entity (i.e., the PLO).<sup>159</sup> Second, at the international level, the external environment is examined primarily from the standpoint of Israel's relations with the United Nations, the United States, and the Soviet Union. In short, Arab hostility and East-West rivalries are crucial components of Israel's external setting.

A sustained armed struggle has characterized Israel's relationship with the four core Arab states and the Palestinians. From a military perspective, Israel has emerged victorious in all its wars with the Arabs. The Jewish State arose in the midst of battle in 1948, launched a successful preemptive strike against Egypt in 1956, captured more land in the Six-Day War of 1967, achieved a qualified victory against the Syrian and Egyptian armies at the later stage of the Yom Kippur War of 1973, and waged a campaign of quick retaliatory assaults against those countries which were being used as bases for raids on Israel by the Fedayeen (guerrillas).

Thus, over the first thirty years of its existence, Israel was able to expand its territory and enhance its physical security (see map #5). For example, by the time the

first Arab-Israeli war ended in 1949, Tel Aviv had extended its boundaries well beyond those provided by the UN General Assembly Partition Plan Resolution of 29 November 1947.<sup>160</sup> On the other hand, a comparable Arab state did not emerge in those Palestinian areas not taken by Israel, thanks to Egypt's takeover of the Gaza Strip and Jordan's annexation of the West Bank.<sup>161</sup> Furthermore, in the 1967 War, Israeli forces captured the Sinai Peninsula, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and the Golan Heights. Even in the 1973 War, when Tel Aviv was caught unprepared for the Egyptian and the Syrian offensive, the IDF still managed to reverse an imminent early defeat, pushing beyond the Golan Heights and crossing west of the Suez Canal.<sup>162</sup> Today's Israel in effect divides the Arab world into two, hence severing the land links between Egypt and the Fertile Crescent.

The state of the armed struggle is not the only course of action that characterizes the Arab-Israeli relationship. Regional belligerents also have employed diplomatic efforts to narrow their differences. In his book Breakthrough, Moshe Dayan discloses many secret meetings he held with King Hassan of Morocco, the Egyptian Deputy Prime Minister, and King Hussein of Jordan.<sup>163</sup> Recent reports also indicate that King Hussein, who publicly refuses to hold bilateral peace talks with Tel Aviv, had over twenty encounters with Israeli leaders in the early 1970s, and even shared military intelligence with the IDF to fight the Palestinian guerrillas.<sup>164</sup> The most

significant of all these diplomatic efforts to solve the conflict was President Sadat's visit to Jerusalem on 19 November 1977 to argue for peace before the Knesset. His mission was not fruitless; in September 1978 Tel Aviv and Cairo signed the Camp David Accord. The Accord stipulated that relations between the two countries would be normalized in return for an Israeli withdrawal from Sinai; and it specified guidelines for granting the Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip a limited autonomy.<sup>165</sup>

Egypt thus became the first Arab country to recognize the existence of Israel. Furthermore, the agreement between President Sadat and Prime Minister Begin at Camp David shows that the peace process in the Middle East cannot be realized in isolation from external actors, including the UN and the superpowers. For example, during the early years of the Arab-Israeli conflict the UN had introduced its own solution to the crisis, as incorporated in the General Assembly Partition Plan of 29 November 1947; it had supervised the armistice agreements between Israel and Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan respectively in 1949; and it had established the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA).<sup>166</sup> The UN also deployed its Emergency Force in Sinai in 1957, and again in Sinai and the Golan Heights in 1973 to police a neutral zone between the belligerents. In March 1978, the Security Council introduced the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) to oversee the withdrawal of the Israeli forces from

that country. Most significantly, the UN had attempted to provide a framework for a possible peace settlement in the Middle East. For instance, on 22 November 1967, the Security Council passed Resolution 242, which calls for an Israeli withdrawal from territories occupied in the recent conflict, recognition of the right of all states in the region to live in peace, and a just solution to the refugee problem.<sup>167</sup>

As for Israel's relations with the big powers, Ben-Gurion used to tell his ministers that "if you are pursuing a policy that may lead to war, it is vital to have a great power behind you."<sup>168</sup> Indeed, the Jewish State enjoyed enormous external support for almost all of its military moves. In 1948, for instance, Israel's legal status was recognized by Moscow, Washington, and the majority of the members of the UN General Assembly. In 1956, Israel's Sinai Campaign was coordinated in advance with Paris and London. Had it not been for this cooperation, remarks Dayan, Operation Musketeer might not have begun when it did and would certainly have been of a different nature.<sup>169</sup> The same thing can be said about the wars of 1967 and 1973. Tel Aviv had come to depend more and more on Washington's support, both political and military. The American airlift of supplies to Israel helped it gain the upper hand a few days prior to the ceasefire agreement of 22 October 1973.<sup>170</sup>

The relationship between Tel Aviv and Washington is a crucial feature of the foreign policy system of Israel. It

cannot be understood unless it is related to the whole system of the Cold War era. Only three times had Moscow and Washington joined efforts to solve the Arab-Israeli dispute. Both superpowers supported the UN Partition Plan and recognized Israel's territorial integrity. Furthermore, during the Yom Kippur War President Nixon and General Secretary Brezhnev sponsored a ceasefire that ended the war on 22 October 1973.<sup>171</sup> Finally, on 1 October 1977, Secretary of State Vance and Foreign Minister Gromyko jointly released a statement calling for the convening of a Geneva conference on the Middle East. In essence, the statement reiterated the language of the Security Council Resolution 242, and recognized "the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people."<sup>172</sup>

On the other hand, the two superpowers had employed every means to establish a foothold of influence in the Middle East. Emotional, ideological, economic and geopolitical factors had precipitated superpower involvement. Initially, the Soviet Union voted for the creation of Israel in 1947. But as the Americans expressed their moral commitment to maintaining the security of Israel, the Soviets become ever more associated with the Arab cause. For instance, by concluding a deal with Czechoslovakia in September 1955, Egypt became the first Third World state to receive Soviet arms in the post-Stalin era.<sup>173</sup> The Arab-Soviet relationship reached its peak when Moscow signed treaties of friendship and cooperation with Cairo in



1971 and Damascus in 1980.<sup>174</sup> With this, the Soviets were able to establish a military presence in Egypt and Syria at times when they feared a growing American commitment to Israel.<sup>175</sup>

According to Ball, "American's involvement in the Middle East has been marked by a gradual retrogression from neutrality to partnership."<sup>176</sup> In the early phase of the Arab-Israeli conflict, Washington supported UN efforts to end the fighting; it refused to sell arms to Israel unless such arms sales were coordinated with London and Paris; and it exerted pressure on Tel Aviv to withdraw its forces from Sinai in 1956. However, with the advance of the Cold War, the Johnson Administration started to provide Israel with both defensive and offensive weapons. The rationale behind this development was that Israel had become "a strategic worth" to Washington.<sup>177</sup> Over the next two decades American aid to Israel increased rapidly. By 1980 the United States had become Tel Aviv's primary arms supplier, economic benefactor, and main political supporter. Between 1962 and 1984 American military and economic aid was estimated at a total of \$28 billion.<sup>178</sup> On the peace process, the United States did not have a neutral approach toward the conflict. For instance, in 1975 the United States made a secret commitment not to recognize or negotiate with the PLO so long as the latter did not recognize Israel's right to exist and did not accept Security Council Resolution 242.<sup>179</sup>

Safran describes the relationship between Israel and the United States as exceptional in the history of international relations.<sup>180</sup> Many factors account for the special connection between the two countries. First, there is the moral factor. The idea of a Jewish State elicits a strong sympathy from the American public. "Modern Israel", asserts Friedman, "is not viewed by most Christians as a new country or a new story, but rather as the modern extension of a very old country and a very old drama involving God and man."<sup>181</sup> Second, from a political perspective, Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East. America, remarks, Safran, "could hardly fail to respond to calls for support and aid from a truly free small country and still maintain its claim to lead the Free World against the forces of tyranny."<sup>182</sup> Third, the relationship is enhanced by the role played by American Jews. The so-called Jewish Lobby is considered to be one of the most influential organizations in Washington. Groups give financial aid to the government of Israel; organize Jews across the United States to vote for those candidates who are most supportive of economic aid to Tel Aviv and its policies; and sponsor many educational and cultural projects which have established an American presence in every aspect of Israeli life.<sup>183</sup> These activities, contends Safran, have created an "organic" link between Washington and Tel Aviv.<sup>184</sup> Finally, the general American sympathy toward the Jewish cause has been shaped by the propaganda conducted by the state of Israel itself to

enhance its image abroad. The Israeli Foreign Ministry has published hundreds of articles dealing with foreign policy in many American journals and magazines. It produces radio programs about Israeli topics and distributes them to about 550 radio stations around the United States. Finally, every year Israel invites about 500 American opinion makers to visit the Holy Land and write about it after they return home.<sup>185</sup>

American-Israeli cooperation is only one facet of Washington's policy in the Middle East. U.S. reliance on oil imports from the region is usually viewed as an essential ingredient in the thinking of American foreign policy-makers. Keeping Washington's image well respected among Middle East countries, especially among moderate Arab oil producers, is an important American objective. These relationships reduce the need of governments to rely on Washington's physical power, and also undermine Moscow's influence in the region. To this end, since the mid-1940s, the United States has pursued a remarkably consistent policy aimed at achieving a number of objectives: (1) to prevent the Soviet Union from gaining a presence in the region; (2) to maintain the independence of all states in the area; (3) to secure the flow of oil and other vital materials; (4) to secure the survival and security of Israel; and, finally, (5) to bring about a de facto settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict.<sup>186</sup>

The pursuit of these goals has created difficulties between the two countries. The U.S. expects full Israeli

cooperation and the consultation an alliance relationship usually involves. But when it comes to Middle East politics, Tel Aviv insists on its freedom of decision and action. This highlights the lack of coordination between the two countries. For instance, Tel Aviv's preemptive strike against the Arabs in 1967 embarrassed Washington because it occurred on the same day that the American Vice-President was to arrive in Cairo.<sup>4</sup> Other difficulties in Israeli-American relations are related to the fact that both nations do not share the same understanding of how the peace process in the region should be conducted. For example, what the United States identifies as the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Israel (especially the Likud coalition) refers to as Judea and Samaria, and therefore not subjects for bargaining or negotiation.

It seems that the United States cannot control Tel Aviv's regional behaviour, because diplomacy -- the art of restraining the exercise of power -- cannot function against an over-armed state like Israel.<sup>188</sup> Historically, the continued shipment of American arms to Israel has not encouraged Tel Aviv to make concessions concerning the peace process. Instead, Israel's growing confidence in its military superiority has reinforced its claim to an independent judgement. Here lies the crux of Israeli-American difficulties. American political support and economic aid are essential for Israel's survival. What is needed, is for Tel Aviv to recast its relations with Washington in a way that

would take into account United States interests and objectives. Otherwise Israel may lose a vital ingredient of its foreign policy system.

### 3.3: War as an Instrument of Israel's foreign policy: The 1956 and 1967 Wars

Israel's preoccupation with security is highlighted clearly in two cases, which we will examine in this section: the Sinai Campaign of 1956 and the Six-Day War of 1967. The Yom Kippur War of 1973 will not be referred to here because the decision to go to war then was not Israel's.

Israel's psychological environment is shaped by the perception held by its leadership of their state's security position. In the 1950s Israeli decisionmakers perceived the Arabs as an enemy intent on destroying the Jewish State. For them, this was evident in President Nasser's decision to close the Gulf of Aqaba to Israeli navigation, and in his support for Fedayeen raids into Israel. This last, argues Brecher, "defined the territorial setting of active conflict: the result was intolerable disruption of civilian life, with grave effects on national morale, and a rising barometer of perceived threat to Israel's existence."<sup>189</sup>

As we saw earlier, Israel's foreign policy decisions are made at the Cabinet level. The influence exercised by Ben-Gurion over the decisionmaking process; the tendency to keep Cabinet deliberations on foreign affairs behind closed doors; and the fact that Israeli ministers regard themselves as

foreign policy experts -- these factors have created a situation in which the Cabinet is the main channel for crisis decisions.<sup>190</sup> Yet, not all ministers share the same influence over foreign policy matters. An "Inner Circle" of ministers frames guidelines and outlines the options for Israel's foreign policy. For instance, between 1949 and 1953, the Prime Minister-Defense Minister, and the Foreign Minister, constituted a "duumvirate"; that is, when they agreed, Cabinet approval was guaranteed.<sup>191</sup> This phenomenon in decisionmaking continued over the next two decades. Prime Minister Eshkol termed his Inner Circle of decisionmakers a "miniature Cabinet". Prime Minister Meir referred to it as a "kitchen Cabinet" which was developed into a de facto national security council.<sup>192</sup> It should be noted, however, that the Inner Circle lacks legal authority. Its decisions are not binding on the Cabinet because ministers representing the coalition partners are excluded from its deliberations. As a result, a practice voting inside the Cabinet takes place on major issues, and all ministers must accept the majority decision.<sup>193</sup> This practice has made the Cabinet the final arbiter of foreign policy decisions.

The decision on Sinai in 1956 was approved by Israel's seventh Cabinet, which was formed in November 1955. This Cabinet comprised influential decisionmakers such as Ben-Gurion as Prime Minister and Defense Minister and Meir as Foreign Minister. Sinai was not discussed in Cabinet meetings

until 28 October 1956, when Cabinet authorized Operation Kadesh to begin on the following day. In fact, the decision was taken by Ben-Gurion three days before the invasion. He had consulted Meir (the Foreign Minister), Dayan and Peres (from the Defense Establishment), and Eban (a senior member in the Foreign Service). These people played a crucial role in shaping Israel's Sinai decision. They shared a similar image of the superpowers, expecting friendliness from the United States and hostility from the Soviet Union. They were confident of military victory, preoccupied with Nasser's growing popularity, and concerned about the military imbalance resulting from the Soviet-Egyptian arms deal.<sup>194</sup> On the other hand, none of them were concerned about the state's economic capability. The final decision to launch the Campaign was made by the Tzahal and the Defense Ministry. These groups functioned in effect as a permanent arms lobby. For instance, it was the Defense Ministry which took the initiative to align Israel, militarily and politically, with France. This implies that the Sinai decision was dominated mostly by considerations external to the region.<sup>195</sup>

On the international scene, London and Paris were shaken by Nasser's declaration on 26 July 1956 of the nationalization of the Suez Canal Company. To the French and the British, the Suez Canal was an important means of communication with their overseas territories. Also, Egyptian support to the Algerian rebels, who at the time were fighting for independence, had

alienated Paris from Cairo. Finally, the Soviet arms deals with Damascus and Cairo were catalysts in Israel's decision to ally itself with Britain and France, and to attack Egypt. In short, the Suez Affair offered Tel Aviv the possibility that, in a future conflict against Egypt, Israel would not fight alone.<sup>196</sup>

As planned by the three countries, the IDF invaded the Sinai Peninsula on 29 October 1956. It was a preemptive strike designed to destroy the military forces of Egypt before it was too late to undermine Nasser's prestige in the Arab world; to force Cairo to open the Suez Canal and the Gulf of Agaba to Israeli shipping; and to reopen the whole question of an Arab-Israeli settlement.<sup>197</sup> The operation was carried out successfully; Egyptian forces were pushed into the western bank of the Canal.

But the military operation constituted only one aspect of the conflict. Israel's decision to attack Egypt had proven to be a miscalculation. Israeli leaders failed to realize that the Cold War was going through a profound transformation from the rigidity of the Stalin era to the inter-bloc dialogue beginning in May 1955. According to Brecher, "Soviet-American competition for Middle East or world hegemony did not find expression in Israeli elite images relevant to the Sinai issue."<sup>198</sup> Moscow and Washington sponsored two Security Council Resolutions calling upon Israel to withdraw its forces, and upon France and Britain to cease the use of force



around the Canal zone; but they were vetoed by London and Paris. Then a third resolution was introduced proposing reference of the Suez crisis to the General Assembly. That resolution passed because it dealt with a procedural matter to which the veto does not apply. Finally, on 7 November the General Assembly adopted a resolution calling for the withdrawal of all invading forces from Egypt under the supervision of the United Nations Emergency Force. By 22 December, London and Paris had evacuated their forces from Egypt. Tel Aviv did so on 9 March 1957, after extreme pressure exerted by President Eisenhower, who insisted on unconditional Israeli evacuation of Sinai.

In short, Israel's Sinai decision had fallen short of fulfilling its objectives. First, a peace treaty was not concluded between Tel Aviv and Cairo. Second, Egyptian sovereignty over Sinai and the Canal was restored. Third, Nasser's prestige was enhanced. Finally, the Suez crisis produced a severe strain in American-Israeli relations.<sup>199</sup>

The issue of security was also the underlying psychological factor leading Israel to launch the Six-Day War in 1967. Many pre-decision events contributed to the heightening of tension between the Jewish State and its neighbours. Chief among them were the Mutual Defense Pacts between Egypt and Syria, and between Egypt and Jordan; the increased guerrilla attacks against Israel from Syria and Lebanon; and Egypt's decisions to close the Gulf of Aqaba to

Israeli ships, to remove the UNEF from its borderland with Israel, and to mobilize its troops in Sinai.<sup>200</sup> The events were considered a casus belli by Israeli decisionmakers. Indeed, Israel's fear for its existence was echoed by Rabin, who asserted that "[w]e have no alternative but to answer the challenge forced upon us, because the problem is not freedom of navigation, the challenge is the existence of the State of Israel, and this is a war for that very existence."<sup>201</sup>

On 4 June 1967, the Cabinet decided to take military action to shield Israel from the existing ring of aggression. But unlike the 1956 decision, this time the Cabinet met daily throughout the crisis, and was involved in "collective cable reading."<sup>202</sup> The Inner Circle of the high policy elite consisted of Eshkol (the Prime Minister), Eban (now Foreign Minister), Dayan (the Defense Minister), the army chiefs, and a number of military and diplomatic advisors. The prevailing consensus within the Inner Circle was shaped by the intensity of the crisis, especially in the light of Cairo's decisions to mobilize its troops in Sinai and to close the Gulf of Aqaba.<sup>203</sup> On 3 June, the Inner Circle decided to take a military action against Egypt. The next day, the Cabinet approved that decision by a unanimous vote, authorizing the Prime Minister and the Defense Minister to determine the time of the operation.<sup>204</sup> The Third Arab-Israeli War began on 5 June 1967.

Israel's economy on the eve of the Six-Day war was not a

factor conducive for the state to go to war. Beginning in 1964 there had been a sharp decline in both GNP and immigration, widespread unemployment, inflation, and escalating imports.<sup>205</sup> On the other hand, the balance of military capability was characterized by Arab quantitative superiority in manpower and Israeli qualitative superiority in training, skill, leadership, and motivation.<sup>206</sup> Confident about its capability to win a military confrontation, the IDF played a major role in finalizing Israel's decision to go to war.

The Mapai was an "intra-governing-party interest group" which emerged in May 1967. This group was successful in securing Dayan's appointment as Defense Minister, as the only person capable of maximizing Israel's potential for victory.<sup>207</sup> Finally, three daily newspapers-Ha'aretz, Ma'arive, and Yediot Aharonot-performed an opinion-forming function. These newspapers urged the establishment of a national unity Cabinet to strengthen the power of national decision at times of high regional tension. In short, "Israeli press advocacy reflected-and helped to crystallize-an increasingly impatient public opinion, articulating their dual demand for a military response to the external threat and for a national coalition."<sup>208</sup>

At the international level, the global system was dominated by Soviet-American rivalry as both superpowers attempted to create a patron relationship with actors in the

Middle East conflict core. Thus, unlike the 1956 crisis, this time Israel was assured by President Johnson that it would not be isolated should a war start. Moreover, while Washington, Paris, and London warned Tel Aviv not to be the first to "start" the war, the Soviets made no attempt to restrain President Nasser from escalating the situation to the level of military confrontation.<sup>209</sup> The UN Secretary General's decision to withdraw the UNEF in compliance with the Egyptian demand then played a fatal role in the ensuing crisis.

Israel achieved a decisive victory in 1967, occupying areas about twice its size; namely, the Sinai Peninsula, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and the Golan Heights. In retrospect, the war allowed Israel to negotiate from a position of strength in search of a peace settlement. This was implicitly reaffirmed by Security Council Resolution 242, which called for an Israeli withdrawal from occupied territories, and the right of all states in the region to live in peace. But this initiative had brought no tangible results. Instead, the war had awakened Palestinian nationalism, brought the Arabs closer to the Soviet bloc, and planted the seeds for the 1973 war. As for American-Israeli relations, the crisis had undermined Washington's role as a mediator in the conflict and its capacity for influencing Israel's foreign policy.<sup>210</sup>

If there is any lesson to be drawn from Israel's decisions in 1956 and 1967, it is that war, when it is applied

to foreign policy objectives, has assured Tel Aviv only a military victory and not a wholly political one. It is apparent from the preceding analysis that the coordination among the Prime Minister's Office, the Defense Ministry, and the Foreign Ministry was an essential factor in shaping Israel's decisions to go to war in 1956 and 1967. However, such coordination was based on the personalities of those who occupied these offices and not on a clear jurisdictional division of power between the three institutions. This also was due to the fact that between 1948 and 1967, the Prime Minister combined the prime ministership with either the Defense or the Foreign portfolios.<sup>211</sup> On the other hand, the clash of personalities between Ben-Gurion and Foreign Minister Sharett did not serve Israel's security objective. For example, while Sharett was negotiating an arms deal with Washington, Ben-Gurion authorized a military raid over the Syrian border and, as a result, "the negotiations went up in smoke."<sup>212</sup> In short, the difference in personality between the two was so crucial that it was only when Sharett resigned on 18 June 1956, that the Sinai campaign became possible.<sup>213</sup>

Ben-Gurion's influence over decisionmaking had precluded the emergence of any formal consultative process between the Prime Minister's Office and the Cabinet. For instance, in 1956 Ben-Gurion did not inform the Cabinet of his decision to attack Egypt until one day before the invasion. The Cabinet could have reversed it and war could have been avoided; but in

those days Cabinet dissension was "unthinkable."<sup>214</sup> Nor had the relationship between the Foreign Ministry and the Defense Ministry been a smooth or equal one. Instead, rivalry between the two institutions was a constant feature of their interactions. For example, in 1955 the Defense Ministry interfered in foreign policy issues and negotiated an arms deal with France without even consulting the country's ambassador to Paris.<sup>215</sup> On another occasion, the Defense establishment carried out its raid on Beirut Airport on 1 January 1969, and blew up 12 airplanes of the Lebanese national airlines, despite the Foreign Ministry's warning of dire reaction from Paris. Had the Defense Ministry listened to Eban, the French decision to impose a total military embargo on Tel Aviv could have been avoided.<sup>216</sup>

The rationale which accords the Defense Ministry a primary responsibility in foreign policy areas is that Israel is under siege, and that the state's security requires "action not papers."<sup>217</sup> In a more practical vein, Peres attributes the friction between the two institutions to the following (1) the fact that the two ministries were not developed in accordance with a legal plan; (2) the lack of national thinking on foreign affairs; and (3) the high status and respect accorded the IDF in the nation.<sup>218</sup> Brecher adds that Israel's permanent security concern has allowed the Defense Ministry to maintain a close relationship with all major branches of the bureaucracy, including foreign affairs,

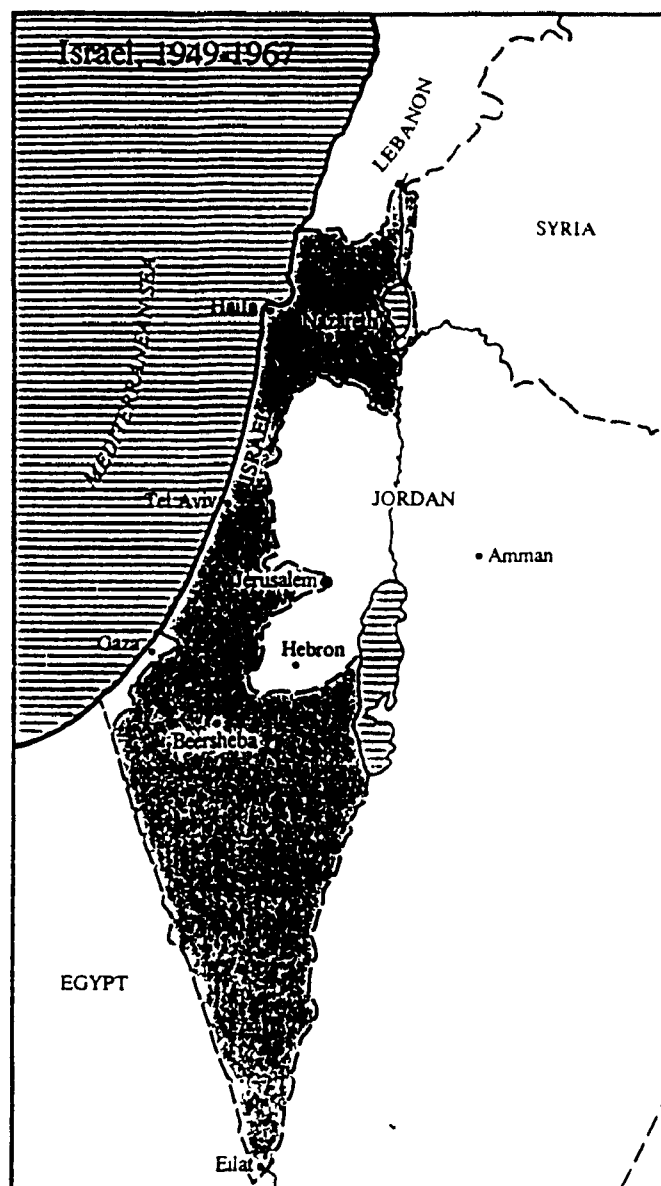
finance, commerce, labour, education, and agriculture.<sup>219</sup>

Whatever the reasons for this state of affairs, there can be no doubt that the disproportionate roles played by the Prime Minister's Office and the Defense Ministry need to be corrected. According to Ben-Meir, Israel cannot afford to maintain a primitive and faulty decisionmaking process in an area which for it is a matter of survival. As he states: "In view of the severe strategic challenges it faces, Israel, perhaps more than any other country, needs an improved, effective, and modern decisionmaking process."<sup>220</sup>

#### 3.4: Conclusion

This chapter has examined the foreign policy system of Israel within the context of its psychological, domestic, and external environments. Throughout this inquiry one is able to identify some important constraints on Israel's foreign policy options. Israel is a state under siege; it is governed by a coalition government; its decisionmakers lack the necessary legal tools for conducting an effective foreign policy; it has limited economic capability; it lacks recognition within the Middle East conflict core; and it depends on the United States for economic aid, military assistance, and political support. Even so, the Jewish State has endured -- a fact that has validated the process and the outcome of its foreign policy system. The study turns now to the character of the Lebanese polity and the making of modern Lebanon.

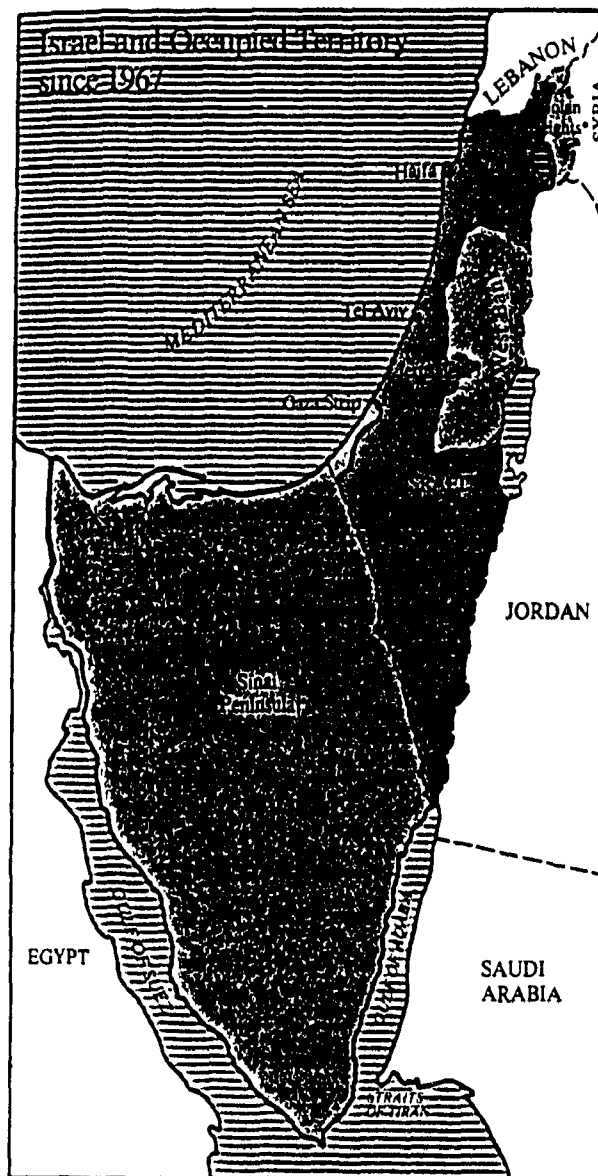
MAP #3: THE STATE OF ISRAEL BEFORE THE 1967 WAR



SOURCE: J. Carter, *The Blood of Abraham*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1985



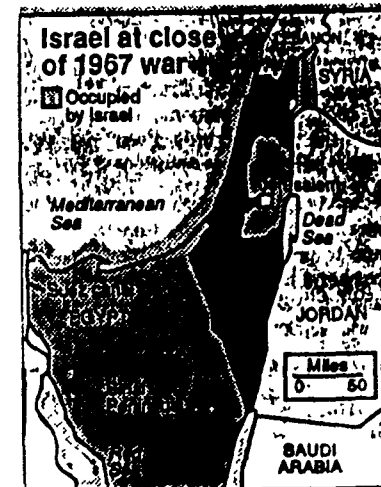
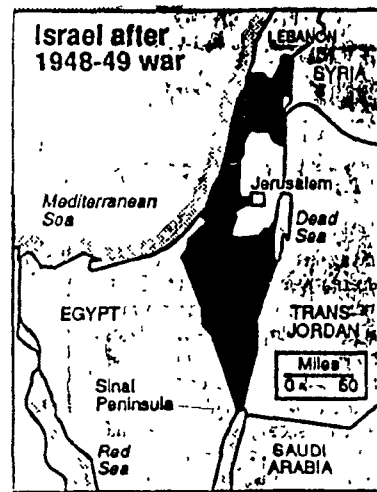
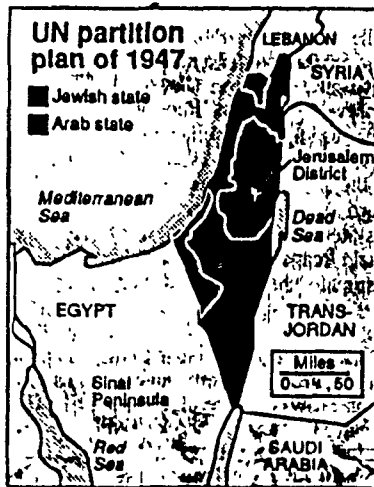
MAP #4: THE STATE OF ISRAEL AFTER THE 1967 WAR



\*A portion of the Golan Heights was returned to Syria in May 1974.  
 †The Sinai Peninsula was returned to Egypt in April 1982

SOURCE: J. Carter, The Blood of Abraham.

MAP #5: ISRAEL'S TERRITORIAL EXPANSION, 1947-1967



SOURCE: The Globe and Mail, 18 June 1988, p. D2.

# ENDNOTES

1. M. Brecher, The Foreign Policy System of Israel: Setting, Images, Process, (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), pp. 15-16.
2. Ibid., p. 17.
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4. Ibid., p. 230.
5. R. Cohen, "Israel: The Cultural Roots", Contemporary Review, Vol. 248, No. 1442, March 1986, p. 114.
6. N. Safran, Israel: The Embattled Ally, (Cambridge: the Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1978), p. 7. See also Carter, The Blood of Abraham, p. 5.
7. J. Gray, "Israel at 40: A State Under Siege", The Globe and Mail, 18 June 1988, p. D1.
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10. R. Cohen, "Israel: The Cultural Roots", Contemporary Review, Vol. 248, No. 1442, March 1986, p. 114.
11. C. O'Brien, The Siege: The Saga of Israel and Zionism, (New York: Simon and Schuster, Inc., 1981), pp. 25-80. See also Safran, Israel: The Embattled Ally, pp. 10-13.
12. Safran, Israel: The Embattled Ally, p. 13.
13. McGruder, "A Study of Israeli Decisionmaking", p. 5.
14. The "holocaust" is a term that Jews themselves have chosen to describe their suffering under Nazi Germany. The word "Holocaust" derives from the Greek "holokaustom" referring to a sacrificial offering that is "consumed entirely by flames." In Hebrew it means "olah," literally "what is brought up", rendered in English as "an offering made by fire unto the Lord", "burnt offering", or "whole burnt offering". More commonly, the term "Holocaust" is used to define a total "destruction", or "disaster", as well as "tragedy" and "catastrophe". See A. Eisenberg, Witness to the Holocaust, (New York: The Pilgrim Press, 1981), p. 2; see also L.

Dawidowicz, The War Against the Jews: 1933-1945, (Toronto: Bantam Books, 1975), pp. xxxvii and 2.

15. M. Gilbert, The Holocaust, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1985), p. 18.

16. Eisenberg, Witness to the Holocaust, p. 1.

17. Ibid., p. 627.

18. The waves of Jewish immigration are known in Zionist historiography as Aliyot, plural of the Hebrew term Aliya, denoting ascent or immigration to the Holy Land. Between 1882 and 1939 there were five Aliyot and each one had its own characteristics, made a particular impact on the existing population, and brought its special contribution to the development of Israel's people as a whole. Safran, Israel: The Embattled Ally, pp. 83-89.

19. Ibid., p. 27.

20. F. Khouri, The Arab-Israeli Dilemma, (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1968), p. 3.

21. Safran, Israel: The Embattled Ally, p. 17.

22. Ibid., p. 18.

23. Ibid., p. 19. See also Peretz, The Middle East Today, (New York: Praeger, 1983), p. 276, O'Brien, The Siege, p. 71, W. Lagneur and B. Rubin, (eds.), The Israel-Arab Reader: A Documentary History of the Middle East Conflict, (New York: Penguin Books, 1969), pp. 6-11.

24. Ibid., p. 20. See also, G. Lenczowski, The Middle East in World Affairs, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980), p. 388.

25. Lacqueur and Rubin, (eds.), The Israeli-Arab Reader, p. 11.

26. Ibid., p. 12.

27. It should be noted that in The Jewish State Herzl had expressed preference for Palestine as the site of the Jewish state because of its historical association with the Jews, but he was willing to consider a suitable place anywhere else. See O'Brien, The Siege, p. 80; also Lenczowski, The Middle East In World Affairs, p. 389.

28. Laqueur and Rubin, (eds.), The Israel-Arab Reader, pp. 125-128; see also Khouri, The Arab-Israeli Dilemma, pp. 68-101; Lenczowski, The Middle East In World Affairs, pp. 391-410.
29. P. Martin, "Two Competing Visions", The Globe and Mail, 18 June 1988, p. D2.
30. M. Brecher, Decisions in Israel's Foreign Policy, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975), p. 9.
31. B. Kimmerling, "Change and Continuity in Zionist Territorial Orientations and Politics", Comparative Politics, Vol. 14, No. 2, 1982, p. 197.
32. Martin, "Two Competing Visions", p. 32.
33. Safran, Israel: The Embattled Ally, pp. 92-94.
34. T. Friedman, From Beirut to Jerusalem, (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1989), p. 257.
35. Ibid., p. 259.
36. Ibid., p. 260.
37. O. Seliktar, "Ethnic Stratification and Foreign Policy in Israel: The Attitude of Oriental Jews Toward the Arab-Israeli Conflict", The Middle East Journal, Vol. 38, No. 1, 1984, p. 15.
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42. Ibid., p. 313.
43. Brecher, The Foreign Policy System of Israel, p. 368. See also, Y. Elizur and E. Salpeter, Who Rules Israel?, (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1973), pp. 320-328.
44. E. Gutmann, "The Politics of the Second Generation", in P. Chelkowski and R. Pranger, (eds.), Iedology and Power in the Middle East, p. 304.
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53. Ibid.
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61. Brecher, The Foreign Policy System of Israel, p. 126.
62. Safran, Israel: The Embattled Ally, p. 129. See also Reich, "State of Israel", p. 255.
63. Brecher, The Foreign Policy System of Israel, p. 118.
64. Ibid., p. 125.
65. Reich, "State of Israel", pp. 271-272.
66. Brecher, The Foreign Policy System of Israel, p. 122.
67. The Mail Star, 23 December 1988, p. 37. See also W. Smith, "The Great Divide", Time, 14 November 1988, pp. 28-33.
68. A. Lijphart, Democracy in Plural Societies, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), pp. 129-132.
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72. Safran, Israel: The Embattled Ally, p. 129.
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78. H. Skutel, "Israel's Demographic Dilemma", International Perspectives, March-April, 1987, p.21.
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80. E. Azar and R. McLaurin, "The Population Problem: The Demographic Imperative in Arab-Israeli Settlement", Middle East Focus, Vol. 1, No. 3, September 1978, p. 21.
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82. The Arabs' economic boycott of Israel is intended to prevent Arab states, and discourage non-Arabs, from directly or indirectly contributing to Israel's economic and military strength. See N. Turck, "The Arab Boycott of Israel", Foreign Affairs, Vol. 55, No. 7, April, 1977, p. 472. See also Safran, Israel: The Embattled Ally, p. 109.
83. Ibid., p. 110.
84. Ibid., pp. 111-120.
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88. Brecher, The Foreign Policy System of Israel, p. 110.
89. Z. Schiff, A History of the Israeli Army, (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1987), p. 230.
90. Zahal is the Hebrew acronym and nickname for the IDF or Israeli Defense Forces. See A. Yariv, "Military Organizations and Policy-making in Israel", in R. Art, V. Davis, and S. Huntington, (Eds.), Reorganizing America's Defense: Leadership in War and Peace, (Washington: Pergamon Brassey's, 1985), p. 112.
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92. Yariv, "Military Organizations and Policy-making in Israel", p. 123.
93. Schiff, A History of the Israeli Army, p. 123.
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96. Ibid., p. 97.



97. Yariv, "Military Organizations and Policymaking in Israel", p. 110.
98. Safran, Israel: The Embattled Ally, p. 321. See also Schiff, A History of the Israeli Army, p. 232.
99. Ben-Meir, National Security Decisionmaking, pp. 92-93.
100. Ibid., p. 82.
101. Ibid., pp. 85-90.
102. A Perlmutter, "The Dynamics of Israeli National Security Decisionmaking", In R. Art, V. Davis, and S. Huntington, (Eds.), Reorganizing America's Defense: Leadership in War and Peace, p. 131.
103. Schiff, A History of the Israeli Army, p. 231. See also Safran, Israel: The Embattled Ally, p. 324.
104. Ibid., p. 326.
105. Ben-Meir, National Security Decisionmaking, p. 90.
106. See Yariv, "Military Organizations and Policymaking in Israel", p. 129. See also Safran, Israel: The Embattled Ally, p. 319.
107. Perlmutter, "The Dynamics of Israeli National Security Decisionmaking", p. 135.
108. Ibid., pp. 133-135.
109. Brecher, The Foreign Policy System of Israel, p. 135. See also Brecher, Decisions In Israel's Foreign Policy, pp. 327-328.
110. Ibid., p. 136.
111. Ibid., p. 137.
112. "Tactical decisions are indissolubly linked to strategic (high-policy) decisions and are always of lesser significance. They may precede, and serve as pre-decisional stages for a strategic decision: for example, Sinai Campaign (alignment with France -- 20 September 1956 ---; and the Six Day War (mobilization of reserve, delay in military action, and formation of the National Unity Government -- 16 May-1 June 1967). They may also follow strategic decisions, from which they logically derive and without which they could not have occurred: for example, Jerusalem (the annexation of East Jerusalem in June 1967 ---); and Reparations (acceptance of

direct negotiations with Bonn -- in January 1951 ---)." Brecher, Decisions In Israel's Foreign Policy, p. 2. See also Brecher, The Foreign Policy System of Israel, pp. 144-145.

113. Ibid., p. 145.

114. W. Zenner and L. Kasdan, "The Israeli Druzes: Economics and Identity", Midstream, Vol. 28, No. 5, May, 1977, p. 45.

115. Brecher, The Foreign Policy System of Israel, pp. 155-258.

116. Ibid., p. 183.

117. Y. Elizur and E. Salpeter, Who Rules Israel?, (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1973), p. 190.

118. Brecher, The Foreign Policy System of Israel, p. 186.

119. Ibid., p. 185.

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124. R. Stone, Social Change in Israel: Attitudes and Events, 1967-1979, (New York: Praeger, 1982).

125. Ibid., pp. 300-334.

126. Some of these conclusions are cited in Brecher, The Foreign Policy System of Israel, pp. 545-548.

127. Ben-Horin and Posen, Israel's Strategic Doctrine, pp. 224-227.

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130. Ibid., pp. 16-18.

131. Ibid., p. 42. See also Schiff, A History of the Israeli Army, pp. 51-62 and pp. 114-124.

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136. Ben-Horin and Posen, Israel's Strategic Doctrine, p. 10.
137. Ibid., p. 10. See also McGruder, "A Study of Israeli Decisionmaking", p. 52.
138. A. Mintz and M. Ward, "The Political Economy of Military Spending in Israel", American Political Science Review, Vol. 83, No. 2, June 1989, p. 521.
139. Ibid., pp. 523-530.
140. Ibid., p. 531.
141. Schiff, A History of the Israeli Army, p. vi.
142. Ibid., p. 9.
143. Ibid., p. 123.
144. Ibid., p. 58.
145. S. Rolbant, The Israeli Soldier: Profile of an Army, (New York: S. Barnes and Co., Inc., 1970), pp. 136-142. See also V. Dickerson, "The Role of Women in the Defence Force of Israel", V A W C Military Research Program Paper, (Pennsylvania: United States Army War College, 1974).
146. As for regular army service, women are not required to fight in combat. Instead, their military service is confined to assisting the army in its administrative, social, and educational units, as well as holding other jobs to meet manpower shortages by being telephone operators, signalers, and typists. See Schiff, A History of the Israeli Army, p. 156.
147. Ibid., pp. 158-162. See also Ben-Horin and Posen, Israel's Strategic Doctrine, pp. 44-45.
148. S. Nakdiman, First Strike, (New York: Summit Books, 1987), p. 218.
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150. Ibid., p. 5.
151. Ibid., pp. 191-193.
152. Ibid., pp. 193-194.
153. Ibid., p. 197.
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156. Ibid., p. 200-201. See also E. Barak, "On Intelligence", IDF Journal, Vol. IV, No. 1, Winter 1987, pp. 11-15.
157. Ibid., p. 203.
158. The War of Attrition is a reference to Egypt's stated aim of wearing Israel down by hammering away at her defenses and inflicting consistently heavy losses. Ibid., pp. 178 and 181.
159. The Palestinian Liberation Organization is a coalition of groups including the Fatah, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), Al-Saiqa (sponsored by the Syrian Ba'ath Party), and several others. J.N. Westwood, The History of the Middle East Wars, (Toronto: Royce Publications, 1984), p. 184.
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161. Carter, The Blood of Abraham, p. 36.
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180. Safran, Israel: The Embattled Ally, p. 332.
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188. Ball, Error and Betrayal in Lebanon, p. 98.
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190. Y. Ben-Meir, National Security Decisionmaking: The Israeli Case, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1986), pp. 92-102. See also Brecher, The Foreign Policy System of Israel, p. 409.
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192. Ibid., pp. 410-415. See also Ben-Meir, National Security Decisionmaking: The Israeli Case, pp. 104-105.
193. Ibid., p. 107.
194. Brecher, Decisions in Israel's Foreign Policy, pp. 234-249.
195. Ibid., p. 232.
196. Lenczowski, The Middle East In World Affairs, pp. 531-536.
197. Ibid., p. 432.
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201. Brecher, Decisions In Israel's Foreign Policy, p. 334.
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203. Ibid., p. 351.
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**PART II: ENTER LEBANON**



## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE MAKING OF MODERN LEBANON

#### 4.1: Introduction

An understanding of the emergence and history of the Lebanese state is essential for assessing the effects of Israel's invasion in 1982, and the success and failure of Tel Aviv's policy in that country. The recent history of Lebanon has been a troubled and violent one. Since 1975 the country has been engulfed in a multidimensional strife which has brought into question not only the continued viability of the state itself, but also the whole issue of the Arab-Israeli conflict. For instance, while the involvement of various Lebanese groups in the fighting has given the civil war its characteristic sectarian quality, the external military interventions by Palestinians, Syria and Israel have provided a broader regional context to the Lebanese impasse. Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982 thus underlines the linkage between Lebanon's fragmented internal politics and the overall Middle East peace process.

This chapter will concentrate on the making of modern Lebanon. It focuses on the emergence of the Lebanese state in the context of international politics, the nature of its society, and the basis of its political system until the outbreak of the civil war in 1975. For those who are concerned with the Lebanese impasse in the last two decades,

a reappraisal of the cooperative and competitive elements which were inherited in the Lebanese polity before the mid-1970s seems essential. The significance and developments in the civil war will be discussed in Part III in the context of our analysis of the Israeli decision to intervene in 1982. Throughout, the chapter will attempt to identify the major players involved in the Lebanese drama whom Israel had to deal with, politically or otherwise, during its military intervention in Lebanon's war.

Implicit in this is the importance of recognizing the Lebanese state as an actor with varying degrees of autonomy to shape its own domestic and foreign policies. Of course, Lebanon remains a part of the Arab world, but such a characterization is inadequate, given the historical development of the state, its consociational politics, and the pluralistic nature of its society. In other words, the emphasis on regional dynamics, especially in analyses dealing with intra-Arab relations or the Arab-Israeli conflict, has inhibited the emergence of relevant conceptual frameworks. From an empirical perspective, it would have been easier to examine Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982 within such a regional context. It remains the case, however, that Lebanese elites had played a major role in the making of modern Lebanon, and were ultimately responsible for the eventual collapse of their political system in 1975. Furthermore, because Lebanon's ruling elites did little to promote nation-

building, they, intentionally or otherwise, opened the door for foreign interventions in the state's internal affairs. This connection paves the way for further investigation, not only of intra-Lebanese politics, but also of the question of how alliances between domestic groups and external powers can influence the country's very existence.

#### 4.2: The Emergence of the Lebanese Republic

The Lebanese Republic gained its final boundaries in 1920 and became an independent political entity in 1943. As a name, "Lebanon" was a Semite geographical expression frequently mentioned in the Bible in reference to the snowy caps which cover the mountain peaks throughout the year.<sup>1</sup> It is from this association between Lebanon and the Mountains that the identification of the area as Mount Lebanon originally emerged. Mount Lebanon itself is located south of the Akkar region; and as it continues southwards, the same range becomes known as the Shouf Mountains, and, further south, as Jabal Amil. (See map #6)

Throughout its history, the isolated and rugged terrain of the mountains traditionally has provided refuge for persecuted minority groups, notably the Maronites, the Shiites and the Druzes.<sup>2</sup> Even when the Ottoman Turks conquered the whole Arab East, the "mountaineers" were able to maintain a certain degree of religious exclusiveness and also a degree of administrative autonomy. Indeed, it was during the Ottoman

period (1516-1917) that a political system that was uniquely "Lebanese" in nature -- that is, one that was both separate from the regime of its neighbours and embodied important elements of internal, inter-communal coexistence -- began to emerge on the slopes of Mount Lebanon.<sup>3</sup> The issue of Lebanese identity, then, is as much a question of geography as it is of political history. The argument that Lebanon is part of Syria is meaningless because there was no nation-state called Syria from which Mount Lebanon was artificially carved.<sup>4</sup> 'As a political entity,' Gemayel contends, "Lebanon's history stretches back in a direct line almost five centuries, and Mount Lebanon's distinct autonomous status throughout the Ottoman era is indicative of the recognition that Lebanon could never be viewed as simply another convenient administrative unit in the empire."<sup>5</sup>

Cobban argues that stability, both regional and local, was the driving force behind the emergence of the system which developed on Mount Lebanon. Regionally, Turkish rule in the Levant, which lasted for four hundred years, had met with no serious challenge as the Maronite and Druze communities continued to enjoy a wide measure of self-rule in matters related to personal status and education. Locally, Hourani cites the ethnic division of the population, the system of lordship, the autonomy of the local rulers, a distinctive economy and the emergence of the Arabic language, as elements conducive to the internal stability of the Mount.<sup>6</sup>

Cooperation between the Maronites and the Druzes was essential to Mount Lebanon's ability to survive as a distinct entity. Their inter-sectarian system is also known as the system of lordship, because the security of the individual in the mountains was based on the strength of the family, allegiance to the village community, and the support that the family, or groups of families, could give to single lord.<sup>7</sup> Under the lordships of Fakhr al-Din II (1585-1635) and Bashir II (1788-1849) Mount Lebanon enjoyed virtual independence within the framework of the Ottoman Empire. Fakhr al-Din's ambition was threefold: to extend his authority into other parts of Ottoman Syria, to sever all relations with the Porte, and to set Mount Lebanon on the road to economic progress. In a practical vein, the emir imported Italian agricultural experts and encouraged improved farming methods. He also welcomed Christian missionaries, raised an army of 40,000 professional soldiers, and extended his domain as far north as the Syrian city of Palmyra and southward to the Sinai Peninsula. This resulted in his capture and execution by the Porte, which viewed such activities with extreme suspicion.<sup>8</sup>

The greater Mount Lebanon that Fakhr al-Din II envisaged did not come about, but was attempted again by Bashir II. Bashir hastened to expand his territory by openly welcoming the Egyptian army of Muhammad Ali against the Porte in 1831. This explicit support for Ali led to Bashir's downfall in 1840 and drew Mount Lebanon back into the international arena.<sup>9</sup>

After nine years of Egyptian Occupation, Druze and Christian representatives met on 20 June 1840 and declared their opposition to both the emir and the Egyptians. As the news became known, the European powers (Great Britain, France, Russian, Prussia and Austria) reached an agreement with the Porte, and warned Ali to withdraw his troops from Mount Lebanon and other parts of Syria. When Ali rejected this demand, British and French troops joined Turkish military units in driving the Egyptians from their last foothold in the region. Bashir himself was exiled to Malta, where he died in 1850.<sup>10</sup>

These events abruptly ended the emirate and marked the beginning of a new pattern of relationships between Mount Lebanon and Europe. The great powers approached the "Lebanese question" with the aim of promoting and protecting their military and economic interests. They achieved this easily by claiming to be the associated protectors of the "mountaineers." The Maronites now were supported by the French, the Druzes by the British, and the Orthodox Christians by the Russians.<sup>11</sup> Another type of direct European involvement in the affairs of the "mountaineers" was evident also in the new plan reached between the great powers and the Porte in 1842 for the governing of the Mount. This was the double Qa'immagamiyya, or district presidency, which divided Mount Lebanon into two administrative districts: a northern district to be administered by a Maronite and a southern

district to be administered by a Druze governor, with the final authority resting in the Porte.<sup>12</sup>

The double Oa'immagamiyya typified a decentralized political system. But such a facile division took scant account of the demography of Mount Lebanon. The folly was in having Christians living under a Druze Oa'immagam, and Druzes living under a Christian counterpart. Worse still, many Druzes lived in the Christian district while the Christians of the southern part vastly outnumbered the Druzes living there. This division led to severe communal upheaval and widespread violence between 1842 and 1860.<sup>13</sup> What started as a general uprising by Christian peasants against both Christian and Druze landlords turned into a religious war between the Christians and the Druzes. In a few weeks of fighting, approximately 11,000 Maronites were killed before order was restored by the Porte, bowing to the extreme pressure exerted by Paris and London.<sup>14</sup>

In order to rectify the situation, a new settlement, the Reglement Organique, was worked out by the European powers and the Porte on 9 June 1861. The new agreement gave Mount Lebanon the legal status of an autonomous province -- a Mutesarrifiyya - within the Ottoman Empire. Now Mount Lebanon was to be governed by a Christian who was non-Lebanese, but who was still a subject of the Empire and responsible to Istanbul. His appointment by the Sultan was subject to the approval of the European powers. In the administrative

sphere, a council of twelve locally elected members drawn from each of the religious communities was to assist the provincial governor. Mount Lebanon was to be divided into seven administrative districts, each with a local ruler chosen by the governor from the prevalent religious groups. The budget was to be financed by local taxes supplemented when necessary by the Porte. Finally, the "mountaineers" were to be exempt from military service.<sup>15</sup> In short, the Reglement Organique corrected all the mistakes of the Oa'immagamiyya. The arrangement of twin administrations was finally abolished, and the Mount was again reunited.

The Mutesarrifiyya ended the turbulence which had plagued Lebanon since 1840 and initiated a period of peace which was to last for over fifty years. During this time Mount Lebanon gained a reputation for prosperity, peace, good government and contentment. The establishment of the Mutesarrifiyya not only brought the basis of a modern administration and allowed for the development of communications, but it also encouraged economic planning and awakened interests in the cultural field. Of most significance, the Mutesarrifiyya afforded the Lebanese identify a legal definition for the first time: "To be Lebanese was to enjoy the citizenship in the Mutesarrifiyya and the various privileges that went with it."<sup>16</sup>

It was into this dynamic society that the First World War erupted. The advanced of the Allied forces northward via Palestine, and the subsequent collapse of the Ottoman



administration in Beirut on 1 October 1917, had offered the British and the French the opportunities to fulfil their imperialist ambitions in the Levant. On 16 May 1916, Paris and London concluded the Sykes-Picot Agreement on the division of the Fertile Crescent.<sup>17</sup> Under this accord, France was granted dominion over Mount Lebanon and Syria, while Britain was to exercise influence in Iraq and Palestine (that is, present-day Iraq, Jordan and Israel). (See map #7) Finally, on 28 April 1920, the League of Nations ratified the Agreement and awarded France and Britain a "mandate" to rule over their respective areas of influence until such time as the newly established entities were "ready" for independence.<sup>18</sup>

In Mount Lebanon, the Maronites welcomed the news of the French Mandate. They resented the territorial limits of the Mutesarrifiyya, arguing that Mount Lebanon could not develop to its full potential unless its territory was enlarged to include the coastal cities of Tripoli, Beirut, Sidon, Tyre and the Beqaa region. In compliance with these demands, on 1 September 1920 General Henri Gouraud (the French High Commissioner) - despite strong protests from Sunni Muslims, who supported a union with the Arab Muslim world - proclaimed the state of Grand Liban with its present borders. (See map #8).

Finally, in 1926 General Gouraud proclaimed a Constitution that effectively transformed the state of Greater Lebanon into the Lebanese Republic. The Constitution

entrenched some of the elements that already had become established between 1516 and 1917. Chief among them was the principle that Lebanon should embody a form of coexistence between the religious groupings of its population. The constitution provided for an elected president and parliament, and prescribed no state religion nor a religion for the head of state. These matters were to be settled by an unwritten agreement between the two elites according to circumstances. However, after 1937 a tradition developed making a Maronite president of the Republic, a Sunni Prime Minister, and a Shiite Speaker for the Chamber of Deputies. Regarding the latter, the Constitution established a Parliament with a membership ratio of six Christians (thirty seats) to five Muslims (twenty-five seats), which reflected the numerical strength of each community at that time. A presidential election was held in the summer of 1943, and Bishara al-Khoury (a Maronite) was elected president. Immediately after his inauguration, President al-Khoury called on Riyadh al-Sulh (a Sunni) to be his first Prime Minister.<sup>19</sup>

As soon as the "Cabinet of independence" was formed, the Lebanese opened negotiations with the Free French regime aimed at the total termination of the mandate. When the French leaders rejected this demand, the Lebanese Parliament convened on 8 November 1943 and unanimously amended the constitution, thus virtually abolishing all mandatory restrictions on Lebanon's sovereign status. In response, the French declared

martial law, arrested the president and his leading ministers, suspended the amended Constitution and appointed the notoriously pro-French Emile Edde as Chief of State. These measures helped unite Christian and Muslim Lebanese against the French. In the face of angry demonstrations coupled with pressures from London and Washington, the President and other Cabinet ministers were released on 22 November 1943. Lebanon, in effect, became an independent state.<sup>20</sup>

The Lebanese Republic's attainment of independence in 1943 was possible because of "a lucky combination of external and internal factors."<sup>21</sup> Externally, the Lebanese were fortunate that their move toward independence was supported by London, Washington and Moscow. Of course, Britain's position on La Question du Liban was no mere gesture of goodwill towards the Lebanese. Rather, British reluctance to see the re-emergence of French influence in the region was most likely London's first priority at this time.<sup>22</sup> The same thing can be said about the Americans, who supported the termination of the French Mandate in order to increase their own influence in Lebanese politics. As for the Soviet Union, it was in no position to support the French, but was in a desperate need for British and American assistance to defeat the Germans.<sup>23</sup> On the other hand, it should be noted that the French-Maronite historical connection cannot be dismissed as another factor which contributed to Lebanon's struggle for independence. Salibi argues that it was France who had taken the military

and political initiatives between 1861 and 1920 which resulted in the establishment of the Mutesarrifiyya of Mount Lebanon and the subsequent creation of Greater Lebanon. Of course, French actions in both cases were geared to serve the political interests of the Maronites, who thought that Christian national aspirations could be fulfilled only within the framework of Lebanese statehood. But it is safe to conclude that it is with the Maronites' struggle for independence that the story of modern Lebanon "begins to differ from other Arab stories and acquire a special character."<sup>24</sup>

Internally, the Druzes' and Shiites' acceptance of Maronite-Sunni cooperation as the basis for the governance of Lebanon also can be seen as a positive element which promoted independence. The Druzes - who share with the Maronites the historical basis of the inter-sect system-accepted this new formula after receiving assurance that their homeland on the Shouf Mountains would not come under any threat. According to Jumblatt, the Druzes supported an independent Lebanon because "they advocate democracy, enjoyed beauty, and cherish liberty and freedom."<sup>25</sup> As for the Shiites, they ceased to oppose the newly established Lebanese Republic, as they "gradually realized that their status of a large minority in Lebanon was better for their community than that of a small minority in predominantly Sunni Syria."<sup>26</sup>

Finally, the economic boom Beirut had experienced during

the Second World War gave the capital's business community a foretaste of the future which might wait it under the "Cedar Flag". From 1940-1944 inclusive, Allied expenditures in Lebanon and Syria totalled 76 million pounds sterling; from 1939 to 1945 inclusive, these countries had a surplus of 607 million Lebanese-Syrian pounds in their account. It is probably safe to conclude that a high proportion of these military expenditures had been made in Beirut, whose port played a vital role in the Allied armies' supply operations in the region.<sup>27</sup> Daher cites the liberal economic policy conducted by France, Beirut's location at the crossroads of the Middle East, the development of the tourist industry, and the employment of 40,000 Lebanese in the military institutions of the Allied forces, as the leading factors making for Lebanon's economic prosperity during the Second World War.<sup>28</sup>

From a historical perspective, the "mountaineers" had suffered much destruction and humiliation from foreign military interventions. Politically, however, the emergence of the Lebanese Republic had evolved through three stages, signified by the dates of 1860, 1917 and 1939. The communal uprising of 1860 ended the two-and-a-half century history of Lebanon as a feudal princedom; the First World War ended a half century during which Mount Lebanon gained provincial autonomy and expanded its boundaries; and the Second World War terminated the French Mandate and ushered in the Lebanese Republic.

#### 4.3: The Nature of Lebanese Society

Hudson cites religious divisions, a cult of leadership, and a hierarchical family structure, as the main characteristics of Lebanese society.<sup>29</sup> To begin with the last, the Lebanese are family oriented. An individual's loyalty to family usually takes precedence over any other commitments. As characterized by a strict parental authority and deep concerns for both the nuclear and the extended family, a family member depends on relatives to find him or her a job in a family firm or business.<sup>30</sup> A related and more dangerous feature of the Lebanese way of life are the blood feuds between rival families or clans. Especially in cases of a kinsman slain or a daughter seduced, the honour of the family could be restored only by blood. For instance, when Kamal Jumblatt, the Druze leader, was assassinated on 16 March 1977, his followers took revenge on the neighbouring Maronites and slaughtered hundreds of them.<sup>31</sup> This tactic also has been employed to settle disputes between families of the same community. This was the case when Tony Franjieh, a Maronite notable in the north, was killed on 13 June 1978. In subsequent months his supporters took revenge and killed about 300 followers of the Gemayel family.<sup>32</sup>

In Lebanon, politics is a family affair. Khoury explains that "confessional and politics in Lebanon is in part characterized by the familial rivalries within the various subcommunes and by overlapping ties among the ruling elites of

the various factions."<sup>33</sup> No more than thirty families have dominated the Lebanese political scene for the last two centuries. Families such as al-Sulh, Salam and Karami (Sunni), Eddé, Shamoun, Franjieh and Gemayel (Maronite), Jumblatt and Arslan (Druze), and al-As'ad and Hamadeh (Shiite) have provided Lebanon with its traditional leadership (notables or Zu-ama), and have given the society its feudal character.<sup>34</sup>

Feudalism originated during the Ottoman era whereas, for administrative purposes, temporal powers were vested in the hands of the religious communities. Although the French Mandate tried to revise this system, the traditional power of the Za'im remains an important factor in the political and social life of the country. The Za'im has reinforced control over his followers by fulfilling the demands of his commune and subcommune. He has done this by assuming the roles of mediator, allocator and arbitrator. Since the relationship between the leader and his client is essentially feudal, the leader acts as an intermediary link between his client and the government. As an allocator, he distributes favours (jobs and social welfare benefits) to his people and subcommune. And in times of inter-communal rivalries, the leader plays the role of an arbiter in re-establishing equilibrium between the subcommunes involved. Because the traditional independence of the religious communities makes it almost impossible for a Za'im to recruit people from outside his own fief, his

remaining task is to provide for the betterment of his client group in all ways, economic and social, in exchange for their political support.<sup>35</sup> In short, the Zu-ama system is interspersed throughout the Lebanese socio-political structure to the extent that Lebanon's society cannot be understood without major allowance for this element.<sup>36</sup>

Religion is also important to understanding Lebanese society. What Mount Lebanon gained in terms of territory in 1920, it lost in terms of cohesion. For example, the Maronites were an overwhelming majority on Mount Lebanon and the largest single community, while the Christian communities together exceeded the Muslims by only a small margin in the expanded state.<sup>37</sup>

This observation is of great significance because it underlines the pluralistic nature of Lebanese society. In Lebanon religion is an essential factor in political identity, and the religious composition of the population has a great impact on the political process. According to the latest unofficial estimates, about 40 percent of the population belongs to various Christian denominations -- the Maronite, the Orthodox (Greek and Armenian), the Catholic (Greek, Armenian and Roman) and the small Protestant community. The Muslims make up the other 60 percent, and are divided into Shiite, Sunni and Druze sects. These communities are important politically because they are traditionally the primary social organizations through which political stability



has been maintained or challenged. In one way they resemble the religious-ideological segments of European consociational democracies, and they usually are referred to as "Lebanon's spiritual families."<sup>38</sup>

Khalidi describes the intra-Lebanese question as an issue of identity and loyalty.<sup>39</sup> On the one hand, Christians by and large see themselves as constituting a distinctive cultural, religious and even ethnic group. They are obsessed by fears of submersion in, or assimilation by, an ocean of Arabism and Islam. To them, Lebanon reflects the special and enduring historical circumstances that made it a "nation."<sup>40</sup> On the other hand, Muslims think of themselves as an integral part of the Arab world. They equate "Lebanism" with Islamic Arabism. To them, Lebanon is meaningless in any other context.<sup>41</sup> In essence, there is a fundamental disagreement among Lebanese over the historicity of their country. Even historical figures are not immune to such controversy. For example, while the Christians consider Fakhr al-Din II the founder of the Lebanese State, the Muslims regard him as an Arab hero who opposed the tyranny of the Ottoman Turks.<sup>42</sup> It should be noted that the twin crises of identity and loyalty are inextricably linked to the question of who is to be the "top dog" politically and economically in the country. For years the Muslims have resented Christian dominance of the Republic. For them, the question of Lebanon coincides with the essence of Islam. A Muslim will not accept or endorse any but a

Muslim ruler and Islamic rules.<sup>43</sup>

Ethnically, however, no matter how the Christians identify themselves, they are - like the Muslims - Arabs.<sup>44</sup> Salibi argues quite convincingly that all the major indigenous groups still found in Lebanon today can be traced back to the successive waves of tribes from the Arabian Peninsula who settled in the region between the fifth and the eleventh centuries A.D.<sup>45</sup> Even the Maronites, who consider themselves a distinct group, are often described as Christianized Arab tribes who made their way to the northern part of present-day Syria.<sup>46</sup> Indeed, with the exception of the Armenians and the Kurds (the two ethnic groups still exist in Lebanon), there are no genetic or racial differences between Lebanese from different communities.<sup>47</sup> Today, Lebanese still share with their Arab neighbours the basic structure of their language as well as many of their most intimate and enduring cultural and social traditions. Moreover, it was Christian Arabs who became the first to advocate Arab nationalism, to provide the inspiration for the romantic historical novels of Islam, and to publish works on Islamic law and jurisprudence.<sup>48</sup> This is an indication of the fact that the Christian Arabs have felt closer to the Muslim Arabs than to other Christians living in Islamic countries outside the Arab world.<sup>49</sup>

Historically, however, the tension between religion and ethnicity in Lebanon has created three kinds of Arab identification. There are "real" Arabs, quasi-Arabs, and

those who are hardly Arabs at all. The "real" Arabs are the Muslim Arabs, for whom an Arab identity and Islam are synonymous. The quasi-Arabs are the Orthodox and Catholic Lebanese. They identify themselves as Arabs and wish that the Muslims would accept them whole-heartedly. Not surprisingly, these Christian Arabs are strong advocates of secularism. Finally, there are the Lebanese Maronites, who have gone to the opposite extreme. They are, or consider themselves to be, Lebanese or Mediterraneans, or even Phoenicians, and all three are utterly unlike anything Arab. Thus a circular tension has emerged: the Maronites are defiantly different, and the Muslims distrust them. In return, the Maronites distrust the majority and look to the West for support, which in turn exacerbates the majority's view of them, and so it goes.<sup>50</sup>

In discussing the different religious groups in Lebanon, Khoury makes a useful distinction between the concepts of "sect" and "minority." He defines a "sect" as a geographically compact group which generally maintains the necessary instruments of social control outside the central authority's sphere of influence. On the other hand, he calls a "minority" a group which is much more broadly dispersed territorially and which is more vulnerable to the whims of the central authority than are the compact and generally well-defended "sects."<sup>51</sup> While a minority's leaders are expected to cooperate with the state in order to fulfil their community's political demands, the leaders of a sect are

concerned with maximizing the prerogatives of the sect, even when these conflict with the interests of the state. According to this definition, Lebanon has historically contained three identifiable sects (the Maronite, the Druze and Shiite), and three minorities (the Sunni, Greek Orthodox and Greek Catholic). To appreciate this distinction, one must examine the circumstances under which each of these sects and minorities were established in Lebanon and the manner in which they developed. (See Appendix 1)

Another approach to understanding the sectarian, communal or segmental divisions among the Lebanese is to examine the future aspirations of each group. Tueni divides the Lebanese communities into three groups, all of which are engaged in a search for something they do not possess. The Maronites and the Druzes seek security, the Shiites and Sunnis want a "Lebanese Islam", and the Christian minorities are in search of "unity."<sup>52</sup> According to Tueni, the two mountain communities (Maronite and Druze) actually have much in common. They share a military history that is mixed with religious history; they are two "nations-in-arms". Yet if these two share some minority instances, evidence suggests that the Shiites and Sunnis differ in almost all historical, social and political characteristics. As opposed to the Shiite traditions of revolt and martyrdom, the Sunnis are more at ease with conformity and order. Meanwhile, the other Christian minorities (Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant) have

opted for the low-key role of serving as "conciliators" in Lebanon's body politic.<sup>53</sup>

Drawing a line between plural ideologies and political realities is another way to understand the nature of Lebanese society. This requires an examination of party politics in Lebanon and its relation to the society at large. Lebanon's parties are divided along religious lines and to a large extent represent the modern facade of the communal system which lies behind it. In fact, it would be too simplistic to categorize them as being either on the right or left of the political spectrum. For example, the Progressive Socialist Party's ideology is a mixture of French socialism, Indian pacifism and Lebanese Druze traditionalism. The government structure will be discussed later in this chapter.

There are about 260 or so parties and military organizations in Lebanon.<sup>54</sup> For the purpose of this study, however, only the Phalanges Libanaises, Amal (Hope), the Progressive Socialist Party, the Arab Nationalist Movement and the Syrian Nationalist Socialist Party need be discussed with respect to their principles and current status. (See Appendix 2) These parties are chosen because they represent, either collectively or individually, the three major ideologies (i.e., Lebanese Nationalism, Arab Nationalism and Syrian Nationalism) which have dominated Lebanese political thought since the mid-1930s and, also, because they reflect the pluralistic nature of Lebanon and the communal division of the

Lebanese. (See Table #1)

Finally, it is possible to identify some common characteristics among all Lebanon's communities.<sup>55</sup> First, all speak the same language, wear the same clothes, listen to the same music and eat the same food. Second, it is well established in Lebanon that communal identity takes precedence over the national one. One may find numerous types of communal nationalism (for example, someone may be Maronite first and Lebanese second, or Arab first and Lebanese second), but there is no genuine national sentiment.<sup>56</sup> Third, members of each community are divided between their feudal leaders (the Maronites and the Druzes), between the moderate and radical elements (the Shiites), and between the traditional leadership and the younger generation (the Sunnis). Fourth, all communities believe in the concept of Lebanon as the historical refuge for those who valued freedom and fled persecutions. Having been persecuted at the hands of the Byzantines (the Maronites), the Ottoman (the Shiites), the Melchites (the Catholic), the Wahhabi Muslims (the Druzes and the Orthodox) and the French (the Sunnis) - all communities came to accept L'Asile du Liban as an "article of faith."<sup>57</sup>

Fifth, and central to the topic of this study, all communities have historically had similar desires to establish connections with external powers to protect their interests and the interests of their patrons. The Maronites, for instance, welcomed the Crusaders in 1099 A.D., established a

union with Rome in the course of the twelfth century, and sought French protection in 1860.<sup>58</sup> Similarly, the Shiites, the Druzes, the Orthodox and the Sunnis sought protection respectively from Persia, Britain, Russia and the Ottoman Empire.

Sixth, all communities compete to strengthen their positions in the Lebanese polity. Twice in this century (1958 and 1975) the Muslims have challenged the Christian economic and political dominance of the country; and in both cases the Christians rejected Muslim demands for a more equitable distribution of power on the ground that if the system is changed they will become "a defenceless and persecuted minority."<sup>59</sup>

Finally, all communities want to preserve their country's independence, unity and territorial integrity. "Even those on the Muslim side of Lebanon who had a tradition of unitarianism", argues Tueni, "reinterpreted their Arabism in a manner that emphasized their attachment to an independent, united Lebanon."<sup>60</sup> Amin Gemayel reiterates this theme, noting that "We are all Lebanese: rich and poor, urban and rural, Muslim and Christian, young and old, mountain dwellers and inhabitants of the coastal plains - we have all played a part in developing the nation, and we all share the Lebanese way of life."<sup>61</sup> This process was imagined by one sociologist in the following manner: "The Lebanese unity is a shrub planted by the Druzes, raised by the Maronites and blessed by the Sunnis

when it has grown. Now we all eat its fruit."<sup>62</sup> Today, then, there is a country called Lebanon whose communities have come to identify themselves as Lebanese regardless of their religious affiliations and loyalties. They have bequeathed to the country its pluralist nature, underlined its precarious existence, and defined it as a political entity. In short, the emergence of Lebanese statehood in 1943 was essentially a reflection of the precarious social contract within its communal system.

#### 4.4: The Lebanese Polity

The communal fragmentation among the Lebanese prompted the emergence of a political system that was able, between 1943 and 1975, to unite a heterogeneous population against difficult odds. According to Jabbra, Lebanon's stability in these years was due to its consociational democracy, or to what he calls "the cooperative elements" which have been incorporated into the Lebanese system.<sup>63</sup>

To begin with, Lebanon is a parliamentary republic. The country is divided administratively into five departments: Beirut, Mount Lebanon, North Lebanon, South Lebanon and the Beqaa. For all its cultural divisions, the country is formally a unitary state, and the departments are entirely responsible to the central government. Although municipalities elect officials and have unofficial mayors, the local government is controlled directly from Beirut. The head



of state is the President of the Republic, elected for a six-year term by the secret ballot and a two-thirds majority vote of the Chamber of Deputies (99 members) on a first ballot. On other matters, a simple majority is sufficient. The Constitution gives the President considerable powers, including the power to "promulgate urgent legislation by decree, to veto bills, to dissolve the Parliament, and to appoint and dismiss the Prime Minister and the Cabinet."<sup>64</sup> As a result, it has always been the Cabinet, not the President, that must retain the confidence of the Parliament in order to govern. Moreover, Cabinet Ministers are responsible collectively for all the acts of the government and individually for their respective departments. They may be selected in whole or in part either from among the members of the Chamber or from outside that body. Members of the Chamber are elected directly by the people every four years in accordance with the country's electoral law. Between 1943 and 1975, Lebanon had five presidents and nine parliaments. During the same period the country experienced one short civil war in 1958 and an attempted coup d'état in 1961.

The prevailing economic philosophy in Lebanon has favoured unrestricted private enterprise, and the government derives most of its income from tourism, trade, transportation, communications and banking. (See Tables #2 and #3) Regarding this last, the expansion of banking services were greatly aided by the government's policy of non-

intervention in the economy and by a law of bank secrecy that put numbered accounts on a strictly confidential basis. For instance, in 1951 there were five banks in Beirut, but fifteen years later, there were 93, as well as a large number of branches of foreign banks.<sup>65</sup> In short, between 1950 and 1956 Lebanon experienced impressive economic progress as the real net national product rose at the rate of 6.5 percent per annum. (See Table #4) During the same period, the annual per capita gross national product was estimated at over \$350, or twice that of any other country in the region except of the oil sheikhdoms.<sup>66</sup> Many assert that such prosperity was not accidental but due mainly to the smooth development of the country's democratic system and its relative stability.

Such a system was depicted generally as an association of Christian and Muslim communities living together in a spirit of cooperation and mutual respect. From a constitutional perspective, the system requires checks and balances, and it permits no group to win at the expense of the majority or, indeed, to prevail at all over the long run without a broad basis of consent. This is evident in two ways. First, the Constitution prohibits the President (a Maronite by convention) from signing a decree without the Prime Minister's approval (traditionally a Sunni), as well as that of the Cabinet Minister involved. Instead, the President is expected to rule through his Cabinet, and together with the Prime Minister and other Ministers, he must conduct Cabinet

deliberations in secret. In short, governmental power at the highest level of the executive branch must be shared.<sup>67</sup>

Secondly, the system is designed to make government pragmatic and representative. For example, the only religious provision in the Constitution (sec. 95) states: "For the sake of justice and amity, the confessional communities should be equitably represented in public employment and in the composition of the ministry, provided that such measures will not harm the general welfare of the state."<sup>68</sup> This means that no community is to be systematically excluded, nor should any one dominate. To this end, the Constitution grants all religious communities the right to maintain their own educational, social, recreational and welfare organizations and to have jurisdiction over private matters such as marriage, divorce and inheritance (sec. 9 and 10).<sup>69</sup> In short, the viability of the Lebanese system, argues Chiha, depends on the maintenance of the traditional relationship between Lebanon's spiritual families.<sup>70</sup>

The "unwritten agreement" of the "National Pact", which was concluded in 1943 between Bishara al-Khoury (a Maronite and the first President of independent Lebanon) and Riad al-Sulh (a Sunni and the country's first Prime Minister), is considered to be an essential consociational element in the Lebanese system. The Pact provided a basis for national unity and helped Lebanon gain its independence from France in 1943.<sup>71</sup> The principles of the Pact can be summed up in the

following manner. First, Lebanon was to be a completely independent and sovereign state. The essence of this agreement was the Muslim's renunciation of the aim of Arab union in return for Christian's renunciation of Western (or French) protection. It presumably was hoped that with the passage of time both Muslims and Christians would acquire a sense of being Lebanese - no more and no less.<sup>72</sup>

The second consociational principle embodied in the Pact depicted Lebanon to be "neither Arab nor Western". Here, the new state was called upon to develop a cooperative relationship with the Arab world as long as such relations would not interrupt the country's cultural and spiritual links with the West.<sup>73</sup> This means, according to Daher, that "Lebanon's Arabism" is economic and not political and cultural. The country would maintain fraternal relations among all the Arab states to the extent that these relations provide it with much needed economic benefits.<sup>74</sup> Moreover, by prescribing Lebanon to have an Arab "face", the National Pact effectively had articulated the internal balance of powers: "[s]hould Lebanon lead too far West its Arab Muslim element will resist; should it lean too far toward the Arab East the Christians of the Mountain will fight. A domestic policy that brings Lebanon into excessively close relations with any country upsets the balance..."<sup>75</sup>

Finally, as noted earlier, the third element incorporated in the Pact called for the distribution of the leading

positions according to the convention of a Maronite President, a Sunni Prime Minister and a Shiite President of the Chamber of Deputies. Even Cabinet posts came under the purview of the various communities. Crow, in his study of the first twenty-six Cabinets (those of 1943-1961), finds the Minister of Foreign Affairs to have been always a Greek Orthodox, whereas the Minister of Defence tended to be a Druze, the Minister of Justice a Shiite, and so on.<sup>76</sup>

It is important to note that this distribution of power was based on the numerical strengths of each group, as determined in the census of 1932. Accordingly, a formula of six Christians to five Muslims was strictly adopted and extended to almost every branch of government, to the national army and to the civil service.<sup>77</sup> As a result, Christians were assured a special status and a dominant role in the Lebanese system. But, in essence, the National Pact was designed to blunt communal rivalries and reinforce communal cooperation. The prevailing philosophy at the time of the Pact was that minority rights and security could not be subject to the ups and downs of ordinary political processes. Rather, these rights would survive only if communal representation was built into the structure of the government itself.<sup>78</sup>

This arrangement has often been praised as a proportional system that produced compromise and harmony. For example, an electoral system based on the formula of plurality and multi-member constituencies reflected the important influence of

confessional considerations and helped to limit sectarianism as a dimension of electoral competition. This worked in two ways: first, the system provided for religious community representation in the Chamber of Deputies according to a fixed ratio of 54 Christians to 45 Muslims. Second, the system assigned each constituency enough seats to ensure its own sectarian balance. Usually a notable from the largest community of each constituency would be chosen from the electoral list. In order to win, the notable would be forced to find co-listers who could attract the largest possible share of votes from the minor communities.

For example, in constituency A, the electorate might vote for List One, consisting of one Maronite, one Orthodox and one Druze, whereas List Two would consist of another set of different candidates in the same categories. Inevitably, the race became that of one Druze against another, one Maronite against another, and so on. In most cases an independent would have no chance of winning while each candidate depended on votes from other religious groups as well as from within his or her own community. In this manner the list-system imposed moderation by equipping sectarian enclaves with political power. The Lebanese electoral system, argues Salibi, "was geared towards securing a majority of moderates in parliament, and it was these moderates who elected the president of the republic and who normally became premiers or cabinet ministers."<sup>79</sup> This means that the electoral formula

for electing deputies also affects the process of choosing a President. Evidence from the elections of the first three presidents indicates that none of them could have been elected without firm support from the major Muslim notables.<sup>80</sup> Moreover, since it was predetermined that the President would be a Maronite, the majority method did not entail a contest among the other communities. Suleiman describes such an arrangement as a "preset of proportional representation on a communal or religious basis."<sup>81</sup>

The importance of the National Pact also stems from the fact that it granted Lebanon the status of informal neutrality vis-à-vis the Arab-Israeli conflict. As noted earlier, the compromise of 1943 was the outcome of mutual concessions on the part of both Christian and Muslim Lebanese. On the one hand, the Muslims promised loyalty to Lebanon as an independent state and agreed to cease their demand for its incorporation within a larger Arab entity. On the other hand, the Christians agreed to regard Lebanon as a member of the Arab family of nations (specifically as a member of the Arab League) and to follow a national policy that did not run contrary to the general Arab interest. This dual commitment required Lebanon not to dismantle its cultural and spiritual ties with either the West or the Arab world.<sup>82</sup> Such a trend also was reinforced by the country's location and the nature of its natural resources. Given its small size (10,400 km<sup>2</sup>), its location as a "bridge" between the East and the West, its

economic dependency on trade and services, its military weakness, and the remittances from its emigrants living in many countries around the globe, Lebanese leaders were convinced that Lebanon must trade in order to survive. Thus, with the exception of the first Arab-Israeli war of 1947-1948, Lebanon traditionally had managed to refrain from anything but passive participation in the Arab-Israeli conflict, which led to a de facto peace on the Lebanese-Israeli frontier. The Armistice Agreement between Tel Aviv and Beirut, which was signed on 23 March 1949, had kept the border between the two states quiet for almost two decades, with Lebanon's neutrality being considered by Christians and Muslims alike as a shield for their country's autonomy and independence.<sup>83</sup>

The ruling elite's commitment to maintaining the system through compromise and cooperation must be seen as another consociational element that accounts for Lebanon's stability between 1943 and 1975. The elite upheld the principle of the National Pact and respected the provisions of the Constitution. They observed the principle of accommodation in forming Cabinets, honoured the six-five formula for confessional representation in the Chamber of Deputies, the civil service, as well as the army, and as able to fulfil the expectations of Lebanon's various interest groups. It was, in fact, "the crucial transmission belt without which orders, goods and services cannot be passed down from the patrons to the client populations. It is through such vectors that



popular support for the patrons is mustered and organized."<sup>84</sup> Moreover, the relative balance in size and power of all religious groups not only made it difficult for anyone to dominate the others, but also helped the elites to preserve their role within their respective communities by exploiting the differences, and by minimizing contacts, between or among the various groups.

The ability of these ruling elites to preserve the status quo was evident during the short-lived civil war of 1958. This eruption was precipitated by a combination of external and internal pressures. The overriding issue, however, was undoubtedly a Christian-Muslim struggle over the identity of the Lebanese state. As Muslim opinion began to rally around the nationalist banner of President Gamal Abdel-Nasser of Egypt, the Christians - represented by President Camille Shamoun - accepted the so-called "Eisenhower Doctrine", which enabled friendly governments to rely on American military help in the event of outside threat.<sup>85</sup> On the domestic front, President Shamoun alienated the Muslims by refusing to promise publicly that he would not request Parliament to amend the Constitution and re-elect him for another term. Yet the outcome of the 1957 parliamentary election, in which four Muslim notables lost their long-held seats, had convinced the opposition that the President intended to succeed himself. As a result, the situation quickly deteriorated, and an armed clash between Shamoun's supporters (the Kataeb and the Syrian

Nationalist Socialist Party) and the rebels (most of whom were Muslims) became inevitable.

The crisis lasted for only six months. Eventually, under the slogan of "no victories and no vanquished", the previous status quo was restored. But it was supplemented by another agreement, again unwritten, that divided administrative posts more equally between Christians and Muslims; and it introduced new social measures to prevent the spread of popular discontent at home. In essence, the new pact was based on the belief that the Muslims must be given an economic "stake" if they were to become "Lebanese patriots."<sup>86</sup>

#### 4.5: Conclusion

Lebanon's glorious past and its tragic present have made its modern history one of consensus and conflict. The strife of 1958 not only demonstrated the ability of the ruling elite to defuse the crisis, but also it illustrated both the precarious stability and the persistent dilemma of a plural society like Lebanon. It is true that the country had shown a remarkable ability to survive between 1943 and 1975. Many claim that its survival was due mainly to the politics of consociation which the Lebanese had adopted as their approach to government. However, when this approach failed in 1975 to respond to external and internal challenges, the Lebanese system simply collapsed. These changes encompass the total web of economic, military and diplomatic aspects of the

regional and international systems, as well as the whole pattern of political, social and ethno-religious values of the internal settings of Lebanon.

The ongoing civil war of 1975 indicates that consociational democracy cannot be expected to succeed in the absence of national consensus as well as regional stability. In other words, the elements that account for the resourcefulness and prosperity of Lebanon are also the same elements that fragment the society and destroy its modern infrastructure. The internal strains involve questions of identity, representation, the fragmented elite groups' unwillingness to cooperate, economic pressures, and the absence of a strong civic consciousness.<sup>87</sup> At the external level, foreign interference has been a constant feature of the Lebanese political scene. During the crises of 1860, 1958 and 1975, the Lebanese communities were able to establish links with external powers to promote their political and economic leverage. There is no doubt that foreign powers used these Lebanese crises to protect and enhance their own interests as well. In this sense, the current impasse must be seen within the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Haddad argues that Lebanon's weakness created a vacuum that drew in the Palestinian Liberation Organization, Syria and Israel, willingly or otherwise.<sup>88</sup> The war has become a war-by-proxy between Israel and the Lebanese Christians on one side, and the Arabs (Syria, the PLO and Lebanese Muslims) on the other.

This proved the case during the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in June 1982.<sup>89</sup>

**TABLE 1****LEBANON'S MOST INFLUENTIAL PARTIES**

<b>Party</b>	<b>Ideology</b>	<b>Religion</b>
The Phalanges Libanaises (al-Kataeb)	Lebanese Nationalism	Maronite
Amal (Hope)	Lebanese Nationalism	Shiite
The Progressive Socialist Party (PSP)	Lebanese Nationalism	Druze
The Arab Nationalist Movement (ANM)	Arab Nationalism	Sunni
The Syrian Nationalist Socialist Party (SNSP)	Syrian Nationalism	Secular

**TABLE 2****LEBANON: COMPOSITION OF EXPORTS (F.O.B.)  
(Lebanese - Million)**

	1970	1971	1972	1973
Animals and animal products	37	55	57	52
Fruits and other foodstuffs	101	124	140	153
Processed foods, beverages and tobacco	55	49	81	88
Chemical products	58	79	108	126
Textiles and textile products	57	80	122	172
Jewellery and precious metals	62	51	115	333
Metals and metal products	53	80	96	114
Mechanical and electrical machinery and equipment	66	99	124	168
Transportation equipment	48	58	127	150
Other industrial exports	100	122	166	208
Other exports	14	17	32	36
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>651</b>	<b>851</b>	<b>1,168</b>	<b>1,598</b>

Source: S. Makdisi, Financial Policy and Economic Growth, New York: Columbia University Press, 1979, p. 139.

TABLE 3: LEBANON: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF GROSS DOMESTIC  
PRODUCT BY SECTOR

	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974
Agriculture, livestock, and fisheries	11.9	11.6	11.4	11.2	10.2	9.5	9.2	8.6	9.9	9.5	9.2
Water power	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.1	2.0	2.0	2.1
Industry and Handicraft	12.8	13.1	13.2	12.9	12.9	13.4	13.6	13.9	13.9	14.6	16.6
Construction	5.6	5.7	6.0	5.1	4.5	4.7	4.5	4.4	4.9	4.2	4.0
Transportation and communication	8.1	8.3	8.0	8.6	8.9	8.4	8.2	8.1	7.6	7.2	7.0
Housing	7.8	7.6	7.3	7.9	7.8	8.4	8.8	9.2	8.8	8.6	8.4
Financial Services	3.4	3.5	3.7	3.9	3.9	3.2	3.4	3.6	3.7	4.0	3.8
Other Services	8.5	9.1	9.2	8.8	9.3	10.1	9.9	9.7	10.8	11.0	11.5
Trade	32.1	30.8	30.6	30.4	31.8	31.4	31.4	31.9	31.5	31.7	30.6
Administration	7.6	8.1	8.3	8.8	8.4	8.6	8.7	8.4	7.5	7.1	6.8

SOURCE: S. Makdisi, Financial Policy and Economic Growth, New York: Columbia University Press, 1979, p. 141

TABLE 4: INDUSTRIAL ORIGIN OF NET DOMESTIC PRODUCT

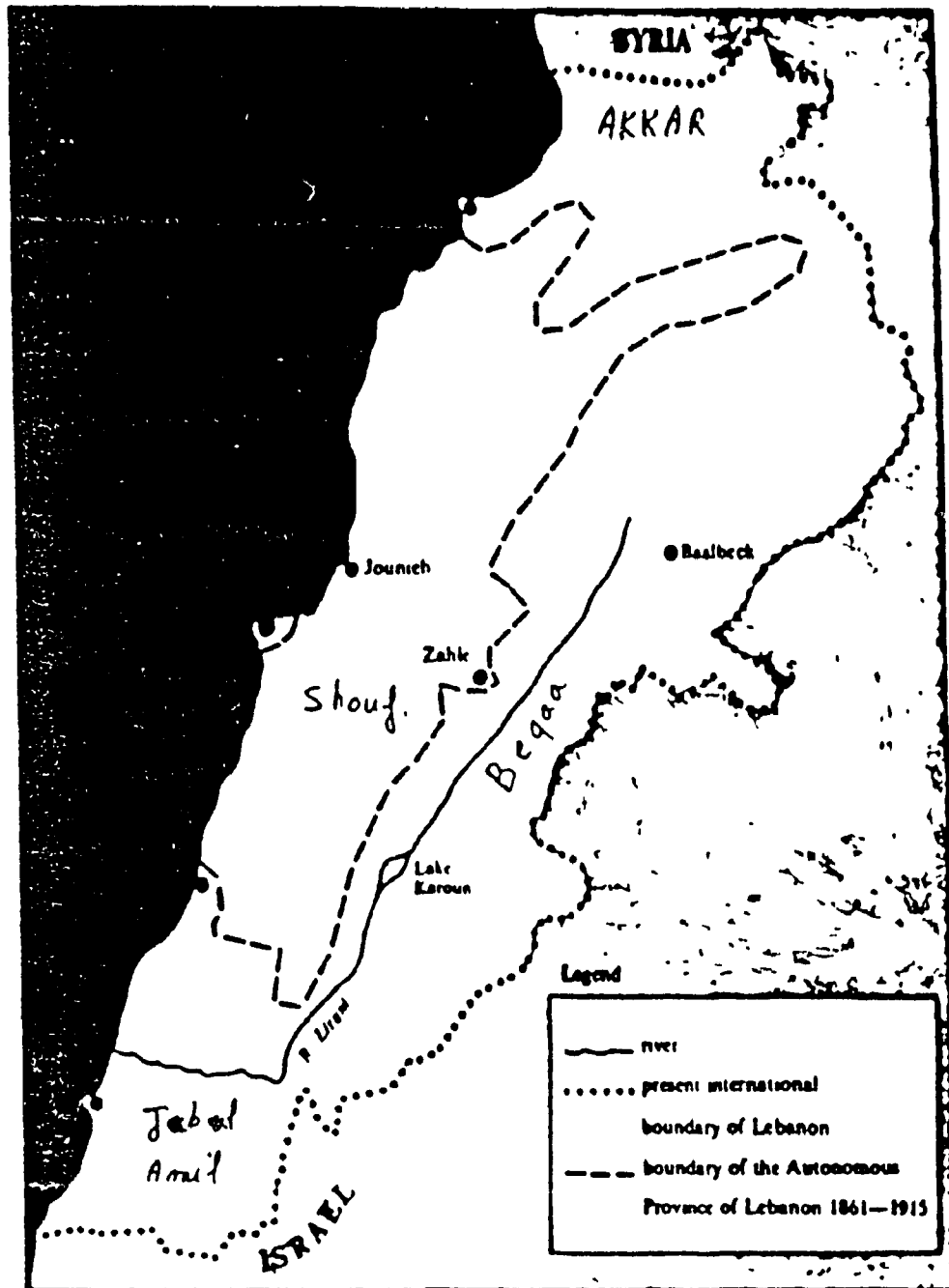
	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956
Agriculture, forestry, Hunting, fishing	206	211	216	221	226	223	231
Mining, quarrying	133	135	155	161	166	175	183
Manufacturing							
Construction	43	35	48	47	60	60	50
Transportation, storage, Communication	44	46	45	50	60	75	78
Wholesale, retail trade	300	337	333	344	368	407	410
Banking, Insurance, real estate	40	43	50	51	57	70	80
Ownership of dwellings	96	97	98	101	112	116	130
Public administration and defence	72	64	64	71	73	83	95
Services	100	103	106	122	134	165	160
NET DOMESTIC PRODUCT AT FACTOR COST	1033	1071	1115	1168	1256	1374	1417

SOURCES:

Statistical Office of the United Nations, Yearbook of National Accounts Statistics: 1957,  
New York: United Nations, 1968, p. 151.

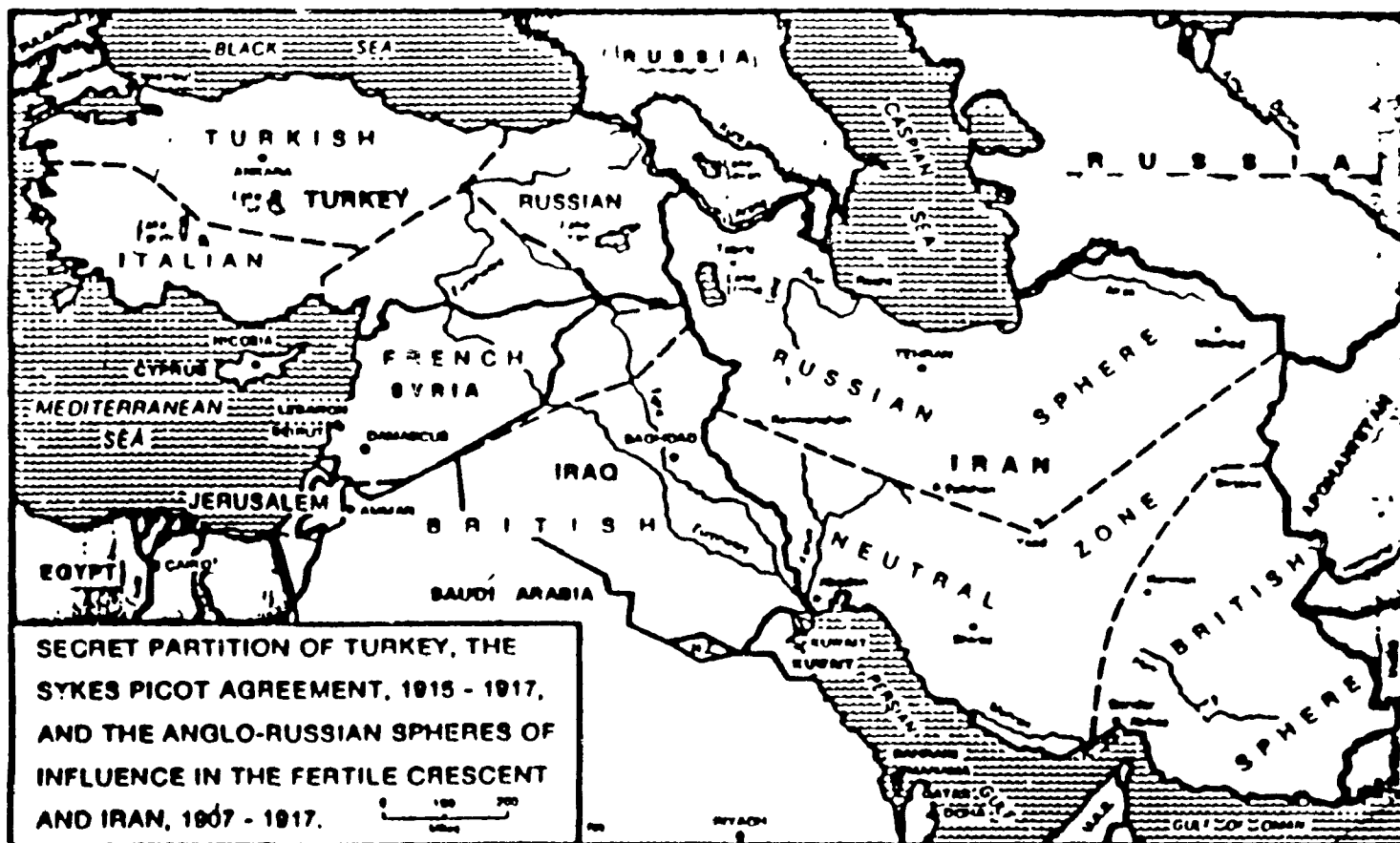


MAP #6: MOUNT LEBANON



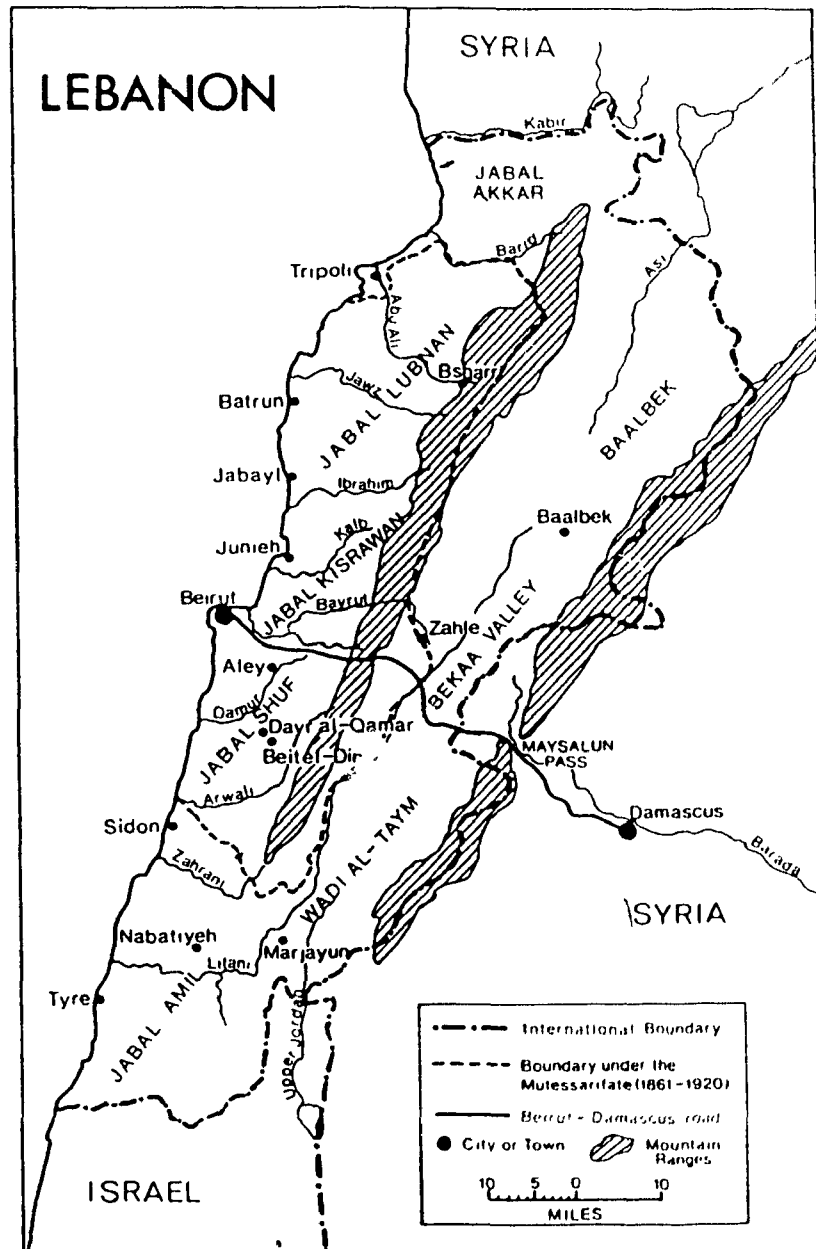
SOURCE: Itamar Rabinovich, *The War For Lebanon: 1970-1983*,  
(Ithaca: Cornell University Press), 1984, p. 20.

MAP #7: THE SYKES \_ PICOT AGREEMENT



SOURCE: Yahya Armajani & Thomas Ricks, *Middle East Past and Present*,  
 (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1986), p. 222.

MAP #8: GRAND LIBAN



SOURCE: K. Salibi, A House of Many Mansions, p. vi.

ENDNOTES

1. G.E. Khalaf, Lebanon In the Bible: A Theological and Historical Study, (Mansourieh el-Metn: Dar Manhal Al-Hayat, 1985), pp. 9-11 (Arabic).
2. K. Salibi, A House of Many Mansions: The History of Lebanon Reconsidered, (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988), pp. 135-138.
3. H. Cobban, The Making of Modern Lebanon, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1985), p. 35.
4. Greater Syria refers to the area that is bound by the Mediterranean, the Taurus Mountains, the Euphrates and the desert of Arabia. It includes present-day Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Israel (formerly Palestine). See D. Gilmour, Lebanon: The Fractured Country, (London: Sphere Books Limited, 1984), p. 65. See also Carter, The Blood of Abraham, p. 64.
5. A. Gemayel, "The Price and the Promise", Foreign Affairs, Vol. 63, No. 4, 1985, p. 759. See also Salibi, A House of Many Mansions, pp. 69-70.
6. Cited by Cobban, The Making of Modern Lebanon, pp. 35-38.
7. Ibid., pp. 35-37.
8. Ibid., pp. 37-38. See also P. Hitti, A Short History of Lebanon, (London: Macmillan, 1965), pp. 161-166.
9. Hitti, A Short History of Lebanon, p. 187.
10. Ibid., p. 188; see also Cobban, The Making of Modern Lebanon, p. 79.
11. K. Salibi, The Modern History of Lebanon, (New York: Caravan Books, 1965), pp. 78-79. See also Cobban, The Making of Modern Lebanon, p. 46.
12. Salibi, The Modern History of Lebanon, p. 63.
13. Ibid., p. 64. Cobban, The Making of Modern Lebanon, p. 46.
14. Ibid., p. 64. See also Cobban, The Making of Modern Lebanon, pp. 42-49.
15. Ibid., pp. 80-102. See also Cobban, The Making of Modern Lebanon, pp. 42-49.

16. K. Salibi, "The Lebanese Identity", Middle East Review, Vol. IX, No. 1, 1976, p. 8.
17. The Fertile Crescent refers to the area lying between the Nile, the Tigris and the Euphrates basins. See G. Lenczowski, The Middle East in World Affairs, pp. 76-77. See also Carter, The Blood of Abraham, p. 91.
18. Salibi, The Modern History of Lebanon, p. 164.
19. Ibid., p. 167. See also Cobban, The Making of Modern Lebanon, p. 70; see also Hitti, A Short History of Lebanon, pp. 220-223.
20. Salibi, The Modern History of Lebanon, pp. 189-190. See also Hitti, A Short History of Lebanon, p. 223; M. Daher, Lebanon: Independence and the National Pact, (Beirut: Dar al-Matbu'at al-Sharqiyyat, 1984), pp. 159-223 (Arabic).
21. Cobban, The Making of Modern Lebanon, p. 72.
22. Ibid., p. 72.
23. H. Hallak, Political Trends in Lebanon: 1943-1952, (Beirut: Center for Arab Development, 1981), pp. 124-125. (Arabic).
24. K. Salibi, "The Historical Perspective", in N. Shehadi and D. Mills, (Eds.), Lebanon: A History of Conflict and Consensus, (London: Centre for Lebanese Studies and I.B. Tauris & Co., Ltd., 1988), p. 7.
25. K. Jumblatt, This is My Will, (Al-Mukhtara: Dar al-Takadom, 1987), p. 33 (Arabic).
26. Salibi, The Modern History of Lebanon, p. 169.
27. Cobban, The Making of Modern Lebanon, pp. 72-75.
28. Daher, Lebanon: Independence and the National Pact, pp. 47-80.
29. M. Hudson, "Pluralism, Power, and Democracy in Lebanon", Brooklyn College, City University of New York and Yale Political Data Program, Revised Version, 1967, p. 5
30. N. Jabbra and J. Jabbra, Voyageurs To A Rocky Shore: the Lebanese and Syrians of Nova Scotia, (Halifax: Institute of Public Affairs, Dalhousie University, 1984), p. 122. See also L. Khater, The Lebanese Traditions and Customs, Vol. 1 (Beirut: Dar Lahad Khater, 1985), p. 221 (Arabic).

31. Gilmour, Lebanon: The Fractured Country, p. 13.
32. J. Randal, Going All The Way: Christian Warlords, Israeli Adventures, and The War in Lebanon, (New York: Vintage Books, 1984), p. 132.
33. Confessionalism is defined as a political arrangement whereby different ethnic and religious groups (confessions) are balanced to perpetuate the status quo. See E. Khoury, The Crisis in the Lebanese System: Confessionalism and Chaos, (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1976), p. 20.
34. A notable or Za'im is defined as the holder of a fief who might not be a minister, nor a deputy, but whose power is revered and depended upon by his followers for all sorts of services. I. Rabinovitch, The War For Lebanon: 1970-1983, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984), p. 25. See also Gilmour, Lebanon: The Fractured Country, pp. 34-35, E. Salem, Modernization Without Revolution-Lebanon's Experience, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973), p. 13.
35. Khoury, The Crisis in the Lebanese System: Confessionalism and Chaos, pp. 13-14.
36. Salem, Modernization Without Revolution - Lebanon's Experience, p. 13.
37. Cobban, The Making of Modern Lebanon, p. 16.
38. The latest official consensus was conducted in 1932. See Lijphart, Democracy in Plural Societies, p. 148.
39. W. Khalidi, Conflict and Violence in Lebanon, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979), p. 146.
40. P. Naaman, "The Maronites and Lebanon", An Address Delivered to the Third World Maronite Congress, 1985, pp. 1-2. See also W. Haddad, Lebanon: The Politics of Revolving Doors, (Washington, D.C.: Praeger, 1985), pp. 5-6.
41. Salibi, A House of Many Mansions, p. 160.
42. Ibid., p. 169.
43. H. al-Kuwatly, Lebanon: Between Arabism and Islam, (Beirut: The Islamic Center for Information and Development, 1982), pp. 10-11 (Arabic).
44. N. Jabbra and J. Jabbra define an Arab "as a person whose mother tongue is a dialect of Arabic, who shares in the Arab culture, and who is probably but not necessarily a Muslim.

Moreover, he believes (and it is believed) that he is descended from the ancient Arabs, and he may be a citizen of a state belonging to Arab League. He probably looks like a Mediterranean, and he identifies himself (and is identified) as an Arab". See Jabbra and Jabbra, Voyageurs to a Rocky Shore, p. 70.

45. Cited in Cobban, The Making of Modern Lebanon, p. 15.

46. Ibid., p. 17.

47. G. Corm, "Myths and Realities of the Lebanese Conflict", in Shehadi and Mills, (eds.), Lebanon: A History of Conflict and Consensus, p. 261.

48. Salibi, A House of Many Mansions, pp. 44-45 and 225-226.

49. Ibid., p. 225.

50. Jabbra and Jabbra, Voyageurs to a Rocky Shore, p. 69.

51. Cited in Cobban, The Making of Modern Lebanon, p. 15.

52. G. Tueni, Une Guerre Pour Les Autres, (Paris: Editions Lettres, 1985), p. 68.

53. Ibid., p. 115.

54. Al-Huda, 2 July 1982, p. 7.

55. These common characteristics were cited by two political scientists: Dr. Salim Daher and Mr. Iskandar Succar (a doctoral candidate) in interviews conducted on 5 and 6 October 1990.

56. Haddad, Lebanon: The Politics of Revolving Doors, p. 7. See also Friedman, From Beirut to Jerusalem, p. 46.

57. Salibi, A House of Many Mansions, pp. 130-150.

58. R. Betts, Christians in the Arab East, (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1975), p. 48. See also W. Stewart and R. Suro, "Arabs Who Look to the West", Time, 5 March 1984, p. 36, Salibi, The Modern History of Lebanon, p. xxiii, Cobban, The Making of Modern Lebanon, p. 73, J. Muir, "Lebanon: Arena of Conflict, Crucible of Peace", The Middle East Journal, Vol. 38, No. 2, Spring 1984.

59. Khoury, The Crisis in the Lebanese System, p. 30.

60. G. Tueni, "Lebanon: A New Republic?", Foreign Affairs, Vol. 61, No. 1, 1982, p. 91. See also N. Swed, "Lebanon and The Sunnis", Al-Deyar, 27 October 1990, p. 11.
61. A. Gemayel, "The Price and the Promise", p. 760.
62. H. Faris, "Political Institutions of the Lebanese Republic: Past Performance as a Basis for Change", Third World Affairs 1988, (Plymouth: Latimer Trend, 1988), p. 136.
63. The period discussed covers the political structure in Lebanon between 1943 to 1975. J. Jabbra, "The Lessons of Lebanon", Middle East Focus, Vol. 9, No. 1, 1986, p. 17.
64. Hudson, "Pluralism, Power, and Democracy in Lebanon", p. 16.
65. Gilmour, Lebanon: The Fractured Country, p. 6.
66. C. Issawi, "Economic Development and Political Liberalism in Lebanon", L. Binder, (ed.), Politics In Lebanon, (New York: John Wiley & Sons Inc., 1966), p. 70.
67. Haddad, Lebanon: The Politics of Revolving Doors, pp. 22-23.
68. Khoury, The Crisis in the Lebanese System, p. 5.
69. L. Binder, "Political Change in Lebanon", in L. Binder (ed.), Politics In Lebanon, p. 295. See also A. Zein, "Liberation Unification and Democracy", in E. Rabatt et al, Lebanon and Confessionalism, (Beirut: Dar al-Fann Waladab, 1985), p. 48. (Arabic)
70. Cited in Salibi, "The Lebanese Identity", p. 10.
71. G. Tueni describes the National Pact as "the organic and structural expression of the emergence of a new society and a new culture; it is the framework within which the natural contradictions of such an evolution were expected to be resolved. See Tueni, "Lebanon: A New Republic?", p. 89.
72. D. Pipes, "The Real Problem", Foreign Policy, No. 51, Summer 1983, p. 143.
73. M. Daher, Lebanon: Independence and the National Pact, p. 246.
74. Ibid., p. 244.
75. Hudson, "Pluralism, Power, and Democracy In Lebanon", p. 14.



76. Betts, Christians In the Arab East, p. 196.
77. Khoury, The Crisis in the Lebanese System, pp. 5-8.
78. M. Hudson, "The Lebanese Crisis: The Limits of Consociational Democracy", Journal of Palestinian Studies, No. 19/20, Spring/Summer, 1976, p. 111.
79. Salibi, A House of Many Mansions, p. 187.
80. Hudson, "Pluralism, Power, and Democracy in Lebanon", pp. 23-24.
81. Cited in Lijphart, Democracy in Plural Societies, p. 149
82. Hallak, Political Trends in Lebanon: 1943-1952, p. 179. See also M. Daher, Lebanon: Independence and the National Pact, pp. 244-245.
83. Jabbra, "The Lessons of Lebanon", p. 18. See also Haddad, Lebanon: The Politics of Revolving Doors, p. 27.
84. S. Khalaf and G. Denoeux, "Urban Networks and Political Conflict in Lebanon", in Shehadi and Mills, (eds.), Lebanon: A History of Conflict and Consensus, p. 184.
85. Khoury, The Crisis In The Lebanese System, pp. 13-14.
86. Ibid., pp. 102-187. See also Binder, "Political Change In Lebanon", p. 309. Betts, Christians In the Arab East, pp. 190-194, Salibi, Crossroads to Civil War: Lebanon 1958-1976, (New York: Caravan, 1976), pp. 2-3.
87. S. Daher, "Towards A Peaceful Future", Al-Deyar, 8 November 1990, p. 25. (Arabic)
88. Haddad, Lebanon: The Politics of Revolving Doors, p. 28.
89. The common usage of Christian versus Muslim characteristics is only one dimension given to explain the continued Lebanese crisis. The nature of the conflict is that of political and economic determinism - essentially that of rival political elements supported by opposing external actors each with its own stake in the resolution of the crisis. Besides, no group could claim to represent neither the Christians nor the Muslims because groups are predominantly, but not exclusively, comprised of one religious affiliation. For instance, while Christian militias are by and large Maronite, the leftist oriented groups share both Muslim and Christian (other than Maronite) leadership. In essence, Lebanese militias represent only the politically and/or militarily active members of their community. Thus, in the

subsequent chapters references will be made to each faction's political and military roles during the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 without being troubled by the fallacious framework of the Christian-Israeli camp versus the Muslim-Arab coalition.

**PART III**  
**THE ISRAELI INVASION AND BEYOND**

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE ISRAELI INVASION OF LEBANON, 1982: I. ENVIRONMENTS AND OBJECTIVES

#### 5.1: Introduction

On 6 June 1982, Israel's well planned invasion of Lebanon began. Unlike previous Arab-Israeli wars, this military operation had been long expected. For instance, while attending President Sadat's funeral in Cairo in October 1981, Prime Minister Begin informed Alexander Haig, then the American Secretary of State, that Tel Aviv had begun planning a military move into Lebanon.<sup>1</sup> Again, on 5 December 1981, Ariel Sharon, Israel's Defense Minister, told Philip Habib, Washington's Special Envoy to the Middle East, of his country's intention to "eradicate the PLO in Lebanon."<sup>2</sup> Two months later, Haig met with Israel's Intelligence Chief, Yehshua Saguy, who spoke of mounting a major operation in South Lebanon.<sup>3</sup> Three weeks before the war started, Sharon visited Washington and told Haig that "war could break out any minute, even as we sit here talking."<sup>4</sup> Finally, on 30 May 1982, Rafael Eitan, Israel's Chief of Staff, in a well publicized speech to a school gathering in Tiberias, revealed the clearest indication of Tel Aviv's intention by stating that "only a military operation can give us peace. It is not true that there is no military solution of the problem of the

terrorists."<sup>5</sup>

The wealth of speculations about a possible Israeli military venture into Lebanon was not confined only to official circles. For example, on 8 April 1982, John Chancellor, an NBC commentator, gave the evening news audience details of Israel's combat plan in Lebanon. As subsequent events proved, Chancellor's revelations about the Israeli war plan were accurate.<sup>6</sup> The same can be said about Ze-ev Schiff's article in Ha-aretz on 7 April 1982, in which he explained thoroughly the political objectives of Israel's Lebanon war.<sup>7</sup> As for the Lebanese, their press had debated and interpreted for months Israel's likely military move into their country. Bashir Gemayel, the leader of the Lebanese Forces and Israel's "chief" in Lebanon, informed the press on 27 May 1982 that Tel Aviv's invasion of Lebanon "is a question of when, not if."<sup>8</sup> Ironically enough, Gemayel informed Atalla Atalla, the head of the PLO's military intelligence, of the prospect of an Israeli invasion.<sup>9</sup> In fact, beginning in 1982 Yasser Arafat, the Chairman of the PLO, was constantly "sombre", and on a number of occasions he expressed alarm that the Israelis were going to invade Lebanon "any minute now."<sup>10</sup> He even warned Begin not to face him on the battlefield: "Do not try to break me in Lebanon. You will not succeed."<sup>11</sup> Finally, both Syria and Egypt also knew in advance that a major Israeli intervention in Lebanon was under consideration. But while Damascus was concerned about a possible attack

against its forces in Lebanon, Cairo was surprised by the area covered by the invasion.<sup>12</sup> In short, Jansen concludes, "Thus, by the end of May, plans for the Israeli attack into Lebanon were ready, the determination to put them into effect was well established, and the forces with which to do so were ready to move."<sup>13</sup>

As is the case in analyzing any state's decision to wage war, this invasion has raised many questions concerning its timing and objectives. This chapter aims to answer these and related questions. It is divided into two parts. The first investigates the psychological, internal, and external environments which were present before June 1982. The second part examines the major goals that Tel Aviv intended to achieve from its military operation in Lebanon. Implicit in this is the assumption that understanding the environments which surrounded Israel's decision to invade will help us discern the goals that the invasion was intended to achieve. It is also important to note that these environments and objectives are discussed in accordance with the categories introduced in the theoretical framework (See Chapter Two).

## 5.2: The Environments of Israel's Decision to Invade Lebanon

### 5.2.1: The Psychological Environment

First we discuss the general factors which influenced the Israeli leadership's perception of the enemy at the time the invasion occurred. This entails an examination of the impact

of religion, ideology and terrorism, and of Israel's assurance of its ability to prevail.

According to Harkabi, between 1948 and 1967 the awakening of a nationalistic Judaism had been a slow and evolving process.<sup>14</sup> He argues, however, that the Six Day War had radicalized Judaism because the conquest of parts of the historic land of Israel in this war was seen by some Jews as a manifestation of God's intervention - an intervention that entitled Israel to restore its sovereignty over the West Bank, now referred to by its biblical name as Judea and Samaria.<sup>15</sup> This is of great significance because the goal of "liberation of Jerusalem", and Jewish hostility towards Arabs, have their religious justification. For example, Jewish nationalism rejects on religious grounds the premise of a territorial compromise in exchange for peace with the Arabs, and considers the security problem associated with the occupation as secondary to keeping the religious promise. As Rabbi Kook states:

I tell you explicitly that the Torah forbids us to surrender even one inch of our liberated land. There are no conquests here and we are not occupying foreign lands; we are returning to our home, to the inheritance of our ancestors. There is no Arab land here, only the inheritance of our God -- and the more the world gets used to this thought the better it will be for them and for all of us.<sup>16</sup>

For this to happen, the Biblical promise of Eretz Yisrael

must be empirically transformed. This requires Israelis to dispossess all Arab inhabitants of the land, and then dwell in it. In other words, the Biblical Commandment to settle the land which was directed to the Jews in the past when they came out of Egypt must be seen as a proven means to hasten the "redemption" and the coming of the Messiah. In Rabbi Kahane's version,

The Arabs of Israel are a desecration of God's name. Their non-acceptance of Jewish sovereignty over the Land of Israel is a rejection of the sovereignty of the God of Israel and of his kingdom. Removing them from the land is therefore more than a political matter. It is a religious matter, a religious obligation to wipe out the desecration of God's name. Instead of worrying about the reactions of the Gentiles if we act, we should tremble at the thought of God's wrath if we do not act. Tragedy will befall us if we do not remove the Arabs from the land, since redemption can come at once in its full glory if we do, as God commands us.... Let us remove the Arabs from Israel and hasten the Redemption.<sup>17</sup>

This belief not only had spiritual significance, it also had a great influence over the political sentiment which increasingly dominated Israel in the late 1970s. In a way, "[t]he relationship between religion and policy has become more intimate; religion in the service of national policy, and national policy as the implementation of religious commandments."<sup>18</sup> Evidence of the increase in popularity of the nationalist-religious sentiment can be seen along the



following lines. First, Table #5 shows the gradual erosion of Labour and the rise of the Nationalist-Religious bloc. These figures refer to the average number of Knesset seats in each period. As indicated in this table, between 1949 and the early 1980s, the Nationalist-Religious bloc had gained an average of 18.7 Knesset seats, a rise of 44.5 percent.<sup>19</sup>

**TABLE 5**

**THE RISE OF THE NATIONALIST-RELIGIOUS  
BLOC IN THE KNESSET: 1949-1984**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Labour Seats</b>	<b>Nationalist-Religious Seats</b>
1949-51	61.7	42.0
1961-69	57.7	46.6
1973-84	43.5	60.7

**Source:** G. Schoken, "Israel in Election Year 1984", Foreign Affairs, Vol. 63, No. 1, 1984, p. 89. Figures are average number of seats per period.

Second, given the political strength of the Nationalist-Religious bloc in the Knesset in the early 1980s, Begin found it politically helpful to introduce a policy regarding Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip similar to that advocated by the Rabbis. For instance, on 29 September 1977, Begin's Cabinet adopted Sharon's plan for the defense of Judea and Samaria. In essence, the plan envisaged an increase of Jewish settlements as an integral feature of Israel's strategic defense.<sup>20</sup> In short, the plan called for the annexation of almost 75 percent of Judea and Samaria on the

basis that these territories were not occupied in 1967 but simply were reclaimed as indivisible parts of Eretz Yisrael.<sup>21</sup> As a result, between 1977 and 1982 the number of settlements in the "occupied territories" had increased from 34 to 71 with a total population of about 20,000 settlers.<sup>22</sup> The point to be emphasized is that the religious sentiment which dominated Israel in the late 1970s and early 1980s influenced that state's political agenda. During this period the mood within Israel was not conciliatory towards the Arabs. Quite the contrary, the continued expansion of settlements in the West Bank and Gaza, although it pleased the religious fundamentalist groups, had made it difficult for Tel Aviv to consider any peace formula that posited an Israeli withdrawal from any part of Eretz Yisrael. As Rubinstein states,

the extensive settlement operations in the territories, the confiscation and acquisition of land, the Israeli Defence Forces deployment there, the bases, the emergency stockpiles, the training fields, the economic integration of the territories, all have been perpetrated by Israel's latest government in a way that even a partial renunciation thereof will lead the entire country to collapse.<sup>23</sup>

Favourable to Israel's messianic realm was Begin's ideological doctrine, which was supported by most voters in the early 1980s. According to Harkabi, Begin's ideology "contained elements that were likely to attract religious people: ethnocentrism, hostility toward foreigners, and attachment to the land for historical reason based on God's

covenant with the Biblical Jews."<sup>24</sup> In his memoirs of the Irgun period, Begin describes Eretz Yisrael as encompassing "what came subsequently to be called Palestine on both sides of the Jordan River, that is to say not only Western Palestine, but also the territory formerly occupied by three of the twelve Hebrew tribes: Manasseh, Gad, and Reuben."<sup>25</sup> Moreover, the Jewish claim to these lands is implicit in the Talmudic tradition of fused time, whereby the past, present, and future are all considered to be joined into a single reference. In retrospect, Arab claims that they have rights to possession based on occupation, had no validity in Begin's eyes and, thus, need not be respected or recognized. In this context, Eretz Yisrael was, is, and always will be the homeland of the Jews.<sup>26</sup> Begin epitomized the dedication of his vision of Eretz Yisrael when he cried in 1948:

The homeland is historically and geographically an entity. Whoever fails to recognize our right to the entire homeland, does not recognize our right to any of its territories. We shall bear the vision of a full liberation. This is an historical rule: A line passing through or drawn by someone, as a separation between a nation's state and a people's country -- such an artificial line must disappear.<sup>27</sup>

Finally, in reflecting on Israel's victory in 1967, Begin notes that all of Israel had be restored and must never be given up. And "[s]ince then," Begin writes, "it is our duty, fathers and sons, to see to it that the artificial line which

disappeared never returns. We must not yield our natural and eternal right."<sup>28</sup>

In keeping with his commitment to preserving the territorial integrity of Eretz Yisrael, Begin rejected the UN Partition Plan 1947, declaring that "[t]he land has not been liberated but mutilated. Eretz Yisrael will be restored to the people of Israel -- all of it -- and forever."<sup>29</sup> And in 1970 Begin resigned from the national unity Cabinet because Golda Meir, then Israel's Prime Minister, accepted UN Resolution 242, which called on Israel to withdraw from territories occupied in the 1967 war.<sup>30</sup> In essence, Begin rejected the notion of a legitimate Palestinian nation, and viewed the Palestinian Problem as "the problem of marauding Arab bands killing Jews, engaging in terrorism, and refusing to accept the Jewish people's God-given right to the land of Israel from the Mediterranean to the Jordan."<sup>31</sup> Thus, Begin's support in the late 1970s for Jewish settlement in the West Bank was in conformity with his ideological orientation for achieving an independent Jewish control over Palestine. In other words, the placement of Jewish settlements in the West Bank was aimed at obstructing any future attempts to divide this area into separate Jewish and Arab enclaves.<sup>32</sup>

It is worth noting that all of Begin's policies toward the Arabs were indications of his ideological propensity to draw everything in terms of "white and black". Once he wrote that "never did we seek to do them [the Arabs] wrong. The

absolute historic truth is that they inflicted on themselves all the wrong done to them."<sup>33</sup> One of the clear revelations that comes out of Begin's statement, is that "[t]he Jews always offer all good and the Arabs are the source of all that is wrong."<sup>34</sup> Presumably, in Begin's history, "the Israelis have never done a single wrong in administering the West Bank territories. There were no conflicting legitimate interests over the succession rights to the land of the mandated territory of Palestine, but only one legitimate claim, that of the Jews, and one illegitimate claim, that of the Arabs...."<sup>35</sup>

As for Palestinian nationalism, Begin rejected negotiating with the PLO because its claim to Palestine embodied the political and physical annihilation of the state of Israel, and also because the PLO was a "terrorist group." Friedman argues that "[b]ecause Begin fundamentally rejected the notion of a legitimate Palestinian nation, with a legitimate claim to Palestine, anything done politically or militarily on behalf of this bogus Palestinian nationalism was viewed by him as illegitimate and potentially criminal."<sup>36</sup> It should be noted that "terrorism" is a term often used by Israeli decision-makers in the 1980s to refer to the most "despicable, morally repugnant and fearsome acts."<sup>37</sup> By labelling the PLO a terrorist group, Israeli leaders were hoping to make it the object of the deepest enmity.

For its part, the PLO had failed to paint a different image of itself. Frustrated by its inability to "liberate"

Palestine, the PLO hijacked or blew up passenger planes, planted bombs in supermarkets and on buses, held Israeli civilians hostages to bargain for the release of its fighters from Israeli prisons, and fired rockets at Jewish settlements near the Lebanese border.<sup>38</sup> In total, by 1982, Sharon claimed, Israel had suffered 1,002 casualties as a result of terrorist actions carried out by the PLO.<sup>39</sup>

This figure illustrates both Jewish fear and suffering. It also implies that Israelis were obsessed with the danger of Palestinian "terrorism." For example, in its discussion of Palestinian politics in June 1982, the Jerusalem Post contrived to use the words "terror" and "terrorist" 31 times in only 19 paragraphs.<sup>40</sup> Most significantly, it seems that Palestinian terrorism revived Israeli memories of the Holocaust; it indicated to them that the PLO was bent on annihilating their state; and it shaped their perception of Arafat as a "new Hitler" who had risen up to slaughter them.<sup>41</sup> For instance, in a letter to President Reagan, Begin likened Arafat to Hitler in his Berlin bunker: "My generation, dear Ron", Begin wrote, "swore on the altar of God that whoever proclaims his intent to destroy the Jewish state or the Jewish people, or both, seals his fate, so that whatever happened from Berlin will never happen again."<sup>42</sup>

The PLO employed terrorism as a means to exert pressure on Israel to withdraw from the occupied territories, to disrupt its orderly life and weaken its people's morale, and

to direct world attention to the existence and justness of the Palestinian cause.<sup>43</sup> By the late 1970s, the effectiveness of this technique, argues Helou, became apparent in the increased number of recognitions granted to the PLO on the international diplomatic stage.<sup>44</sup> For instance, in addition to the Venice Declaration of 1980, in which the European Economic Community (EEC) member-states called for direct negotiation between Israel and the PLO, Arafat had made frequent visits to Austria and Greece. In fact, notes Davis, the PLO had succeeded in being recognized by more countries than Israel.<sup>45</sup> Even in the United States voices such as those of former presidents Ford and Carter called upon the Reagan Administration to start dealing with Arafat.<sup>46</sup> What concerned Begin the most was the apparent spread of support inside Israel for direct negotiations between Israel and the PLO. Most prominent was an article written by Joseph Alpher, who served in Begin's office between 1977 and 1980. Alpher explicitly urged Tel Aviv to unilaterally recognize the PLO because the latter is the "major spokesman for the Palestinians and a major factor in Middle Eastern and international life."<sup>47</sup> Besides, it was the PLO that had defined and re-established the Palestinian identity. Palestinians, both inside and outside Palestine, came to identify themselves as such, they recognized the PLO as their sole representative, and they were willing to die for the cause.<sup>48</sup>

On the military front, by 1980 the PLO was able to put

together three infantry brigades (15,000 fighters), supported by several artillery units and a fledgling tank battalion.<sup>49</sup> This in itself shows that Israel's efforts to provide a military solution to the Palestinian question had simply failed. In July 1981, the PLO conducted a "two-week war" when its artillery and rocket launchers sent inhabitants of northern Galilee to shelters.<sup>50</sup> Schiff and Ya'ari state that "[d]espite all the IDF's advanced equipment, fire continued to rain down on the north. Day by day more PLO guns were put out of action, but in the meantime some 40 percent of the population of Kiryat Shmonah fled the town. That, too, was appalling: never had Israel witnessed such a mass exodus from a settlement under attack."<sup>51</sup> The war ended when Habib brokered a ceasefire agreement between Arafat and Begin. The ceasefire had been respected by both sides for the next year. But the danger remained that the PLO was still able to fire artillery on major settlements located in northern Israel. Thus the only way for Tel Aviv to eliminate that threat was through a surgical military operation on the ground. It was for this reason that Sharon argued that the ceasefire agreement with the PLO applied to all anti-Israeli activities, whether they occurred along the Israeli-Lebanese border or even in Western Europe.<sup>52</sup>

Indeed, it seems clear that between July 1981 and June 1982, Israel was waiting for the right moment to declare the ceasefire agreement void and null. The opportunity came on 3



June 1982 when a Palestinian commando attempted to assassinate Shlomo Agmon, Israel's Ambassador to London. In response, on 5 June 1982 Tel Aviv ordered a full-scale advance into Lebanon. The invasion, dubbed "Operation Peace for Galilee," signalled Israel's intention to protect its northern settlements from future terrorist attacks.

The prevailing consensus among Israelis at the time of the invasion was that the Jewish State had no alternative but to launch a formidable military operation against the PLO. Begin perceived his campaign against terrorism as a part of his people's unique struggle for survival in a hostile environment. Part of the reason, argues Friedman, is that Begin considered himself to be a "victim" and, thus, it would be almost impossible for him to evaluate himself or put limits on his own actions.<sup>53</sup> An illustration of this was evident in Begin's reply to Haig's urgent appeal to exercise restraint and refrain from any major military action. "Mr. Secretary, my dear friend", wrote Begin, "the man has not been born who will ever obtain from me consent to let Jews be killed by a bloodthirsty enemy and allow those who are responsible for the shedding of this blood to enjoy immunity."<sup>54</sup> Such a perspective accentuated the feeling that the war of June 1982, like all Arab-Israeli wars, was forced on Israel and that nothing could have been done to avoid it.

Israeli decisionmakers were convinced that Palestinians by and large did not want to make peace with Israel, and that

the establishment of a Palestinian state meant the eventual elimination of the Jewish State.<sup>55</sup> Sharon accordingly thought that the promotion of Israel's security implied both the expulsion of large numbers of Palestinians to neighbouring Arab countries, and the total incorporation of the West Bank into the larger Israeli economic, political, and military system.<sup>56</sup> In essence, Sharon's grand design for a well protected Israel meant the extension of his country's interests far beyond the Arab world to include Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, and up to Central and North Africa.<sup>57</sup> He had faith in Israel's military superiority, favoured a military solution to the Palestinian problem, and hoped that an invasion of Lebanon would provide the opportunity to implement his plan for the area.

To rephrase Sigler's argument, the June war of 1982 was likely because the stronger party (Israel) had the opportunity to impose its will on the weaker party (the PLO), who failed to appreciate the preponderance of power of its opponent.<sup>58</sup> For Harkabi, faith in Israel's military capacity became a "functional and psychological need."<sup>59</sup> In 1982, Israelis believed that their country was stronger than all the Arab forces combined, and that not even the Soviet Union could have dared to "raise a finger."<sup>60</sup>

This faith in Israel's military superiority also had been reinforced by the divisions within the Arab world. By the early 1980s, Egypt had long excluded itself from the Arab-

Israeli conflict after it signed a peace treaty with Tel Aviv in March 1979; Iraq was bogged down in its war against Iran; and Syria had become ever more dragged into the Lebanese morass.<sup>61</sup> Israel was naturally encouraged by these developments and was able to carry out its policy with apparent military and political impunity. For example, in 1981 Israeli jet fighters shot down two Syrian helicopters over Lebanon, and destroyed Iraq's nuclear reactor. Also, in the same year, Tel Aviv formally annexed the Golan Heights.<sup>62</sup> Above all, the outbreak of the Lebanese civil war in 1975 provided Israel with the opportunity to interfere in the internal affairs of that country. This was done easily by establishing a link with the Maronite forces. The Maronites were fighting the Palestinians and needed an ally. Israel supported the Maronite forces which, as opponents of the PLO and the Syrians, served Tel Aviv's interests by serving their own.<sup>63</sup> In short, the absence of any Arab military reaction had convinced Israeli leaders that their country was the "superpower" of the Middle East, that force was an effective instrument of politics, and that Israel's sovereignty could be assured by force alone.<sup>64</sup>

#### 5.2.2: The Domestic Environment

The internal environment of Israel's decision to invade Lebanon in 1982 encompasses the forces which dominated Israel's domestic political scene, including the Cabinet, the

state's economic capability, civil-military relations, and the roles played by interest groups, public opinion and the mass media in influencing the state's decision to go to war.

On 30 June 1981, the Likud coalition headed by Begin was re-elected to govern for another four-year term. (See Table #6).

**TABLE 6**  
**1981 KNESSET ELECTION RESULTS**

<b>Party</b>	<b>Seats</b>	<b>Votes</b>
Likud	48	718.762
Tahiya	3	44.559
Nationalist-Religious	6	94.930
Agudah	4	71.682
Labour Alignment	47	709.075
Shinui	2	29.060
Ratz	1	27.123
Yigal Hurwitz	2	30.997
Tami	3	44.539
Communist	4	65.870
Others	--	100.741
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<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>1.937.358</b>

**Source:** G. Schocken, "Israel in Election Year 1984", Foreign Affairs, p. 84.

In many ways Begin's personality was Likud's single most important electoral asset. First, Begin effectively played the socio-ethnic question, claiming that Oriental Jews had been systematically kept down by the Ashkenazi Labour establishment which had controlled the apparatus of the state for 30 years.<sup>65</sup> Second, by signing a peace treaty with Egypt, Begin was able to take credit for excluding Cairo from the

circle of Israel's enemies.<sup>66</sup> Third, Begin was able to reverse public dissatisfaction with his government's economic policy by introducing an "election budget" which provided for a number of "give away" programs and encouraged reckless spending by large segments of the population.<sup>67</sup> Fourth, Begin succeeded in re-defining the election debate to revolve around one single issue -- the security of Israel. Continued air strikes against Palestinian positions in Lebanon, the destruction of Iraq's nuclear reactor, and the Likud's interest in the promotion of settlements in Judea and Samaria, contributed considerably to Begin's popularity.<sup>68</sup> The Likud coalition was supported by two-thirds of Oriental Jews, who represented the majority of Israelis, by about 47 percent of votes in the army, and by the vast majority of settlers, who regarded Begin's policy as most closely identified with their own interests.<sup>69</sup> Consequently, the Likud squeaked through the victory in the Israeli election of 1981 as Begin formed a coalition Cabinet with a majority of one vote in the Knesset.

This Cabinet differed radically from Begin's Cabinet of 1977. The previous Cabinet did not have a Herut nucleus because its key ministers, Weizman and Dayan, were Labour party renegades. In fact, they had been responsible for restraining the Cabinet from plunging into military ventures, and were vital forces in making the peace agreement with Egypt possible.<sup>70</sup> Thus Begin's decision to replace them with Yitzhak Shamir and Sharon in his second Cabinet was an

indication that Israel was not about to make any further concessions towards the Arabs. In essence, Begin's decision epitomized the fundamental and far-reaching difference between the first Cabinet, which negotiated and signed the peace treaty with Egypt, and the second Cabinet, which decided on the war in Lebanon.<sup>71</sup> As Perlmutter wrote at the time:

The second Begin government is without a doubt the most hawkish government in Israel's history. The ruling quadrumvirate of Begin, Sharon, Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir, and Chief of Staff Rafael Eitan are all hawks in the Herut political tradition and philosophy, supported by National Religious Party (NRP) radicals, and sustained by the Eretz Yisrael true believers in the Renaissance Party. The Herut ruling party, the NRP and Renaissance form the base of the second Begin government's foreign policy and security policies. What the results of the June 1981 elections did was to legitimize Begin's new government and his foreign policy. His narrow victory was not exactly an overwhelming mandate; it seemed to indicate, nonetheless, that the electorate would at least allow Begin to fulfil his dream of a Complete Israel. The war in Lebanon is the logical outcome of that aspiration.<sup>72</sup>

In other words, with the appointment of Shamir and Sharon the new Cabinet was able to function as a collective body of like-minded ministers. For instance, in line with Sharon's belief in the wisdom of not negotiating with the Arabs, Shamir "never brought diplomatic alternatives before the Cabinet or presented the political risks and consequences involved."<sup>73</sup> In 1981 the Cabinet's inner circle, consisting of Begin,

Sharon and Shamir, made consecutive decisions to destroy Iraq's nuclear reactor, to wage "unremitting war" on the Palestinians in Lebanon, and not to implement the principle of Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza as agreed upon in the Camp David Accord.<sup>74</sup> All these decisions were a prelude to the eventual invasion of Lebanon. Thus when the news reached Jerusalem of the attack on its Ambassador to London, the Cabinet's response was a foregone conclusion. With the exception of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Energy Minister, who abstained from voting, the Cabinet approved the launching of Operation Peace for Galilee.<sup>75</sup>

As for the opposition, Labour Alignment leaders, Shimon Perez and Yitzhak Rabin, were informed in April of the government's intention to embark on a major military operation against the PLO.<sup>76</sup> Initially, the opposition leaders questioned the scope of the invasion, but when the war began its leadership adopted a supportive policy in accordance with the traditional consensual approach of rallying behind the flag in a time of natural crisis.<sup>77</sup> On the second day of the war, Perez urged Israelis to unite and support the army. "Whether we support or oppose this war", Perez declared, "we are all nationalists and, thus, we must take into consideration that our army must prevail at any cost."<sup>78</sup>

The national consensus in support of the war and the Cabinet approval of the operation can be seen as illustrations of Begin's prominent leadership. Schiff and Ya'ari note that

Begin's verbal reaction to the attack on Israel's Ambassador to London as "tantamount to an attack on the state of Israel" had become a Cabinet decision as soon as it was reported.<sup>79</sup> Begin's leadership was based on a total domination of the Likud coalition, coupled with an ability to restrict the manoeuvre of Cabinet officers and advisers. "The true locus of national security in this period," argues Ben-Meir, "was the mind, personality and psyche of one man--Menachem Begin."<sup>80</sup> Begin limited the role and function of his personal aides, saw no need for additional staff facilities, and alone took the necessary decisions and brought them for formal Cabinet approval.<sup>81</sup> He trusted his ministers, dismissed the idea of establishing an independent check on them, and depended solely on them for advice.<sup>82</sup> This mind-set also allowed Sharon to dominate the decisionmaking process regarding national security and defense issues.

As a former general and field commander, Sharon was popular in the army and the public. In the 1973 war, he emerged as a hero after he executed the brilliant counter-crossing of the Suez Canal and encirclement of the Egyptian Third Army on the Western side of the Canal.<sup>83</sup> Furthermore, as Minister of Agriculture in the early 1980s, Sharon's plan to promote settlements in the West Bank had gained him firm support among Oriental Jews, who called him "the King of Israel".<sup>84</sup> This had made Sharon a major electoral asset for Begin, who accorded him the defense portfolio on 5 August



1981. Upon assuming his new responsibility, Sharon made it clear that he intended to run the defense establishment his way. Thus, Sharon would become the sole link between the Cabinet and the army, control the large apparatus of the defense bureaucracy and the defense industry, and wrest strategical and tactical authority from the IDF.<sup>85</sup>

To this end, Sharon had managed to impose his own views on the General Staff by organizing a "national security unit", and turning it into his own general staff with its own situation room, special computer, and close associates.<sup>86</sup> His style of conducting defense matters in secret had brought him in to confrontation with the media. For example, in April 1982, Sharon tried to bar the press from covering the forced evacuation of the Sinai town of Yamit; the editors of major dailies took to the field to protest his edicts.<sup>87</sup> As Sharon's bureau in the Defense Ministry "took on the air of a Byzantine court", the General Staff, the Cabinet, and the public were not kept abreast of what exactly the minister was planning.<sup>88</sup> While Sharon was actually planning the invasion of Lebanon, he nonetheless made numerous statements assuring the public that war was not in Israel's interest, and that Tel Aviv would not be the first party to initiate hostilities against its neighbours.<sup>89</sup> Even when some ministers warned of the grave ramifications of the war plan against the PLO, Sharon was protected by the Prime Minister's unqualified support.<sup>90</sup> Above all, Sharon and Begin shared a mutual

understanding of the need to penetrate right down to "Arafat's bunker." Thus it was natural for the Prime Minister to give his Defense Minister a free hand to protect Eretz Yisrael.

As a result, by January 1982, Sharon had come to dominate, if not to monopolize, Israel's defense policy and, to a great extent, its foreign policy.<sup>91</sup> For instance, it was Sharon, and not the Foreign Minister, who negotiated an agreement on strategic cooperation with the United States in November 1981.<sup>92</sup> On other occasions, the Defense Minister, who believed himself to have a comprehensive view of Israel's national needs and its security problems, attempted to institute his own policy in the West Bank and Gaza, to handle Tel Aviv - Cairo relations, and to seek a diplomatic breakthrough in Africa.<sup>93</sup> In short, Sharon's success in dominating civil-military relations in the early 1980s had set the stage for him to be able to order the army into action, not only when Israel's vital interests were threatened by enemy forces, but, more dangerously, to use it in order to achieve political objectives even if such an action meant a change of the political map around Israel.<sup>94</sup> This was the way Sharon planned the invasion against Lebanon in the summer of 1982. Of course, it was Begin who would make the ultimate decision to go to war. Sharon, however, had played a crucial part in moving the Prime Minister in this direction.<sup>95</sup>

However, in planning the invasion, Sharon failed to take into account Israel's economic situation. In its effort to

revive the economy and reduce the country's dependence on foreign aid, the first Likud government of 1977 introduced a "new economic policy", designed to liberalize the country's financial sector. To this end, the government allowed the Israeli pound to compete against foreign currencies, and it reduced many of the subsidies on exports and on basic commodities.<sup>96</sup> It was hoped that these measures would stimulate exports, encourage foreign investment, force industry to be more competitive, promote the sale of Israeli goods abroad, and eventually give the people a "good life."<sup>97</sup> The new policy achieved a moderate success: in 1978 exports jumped by 25 percent, industrial exports went up at even faster rate, and foreign investment increased by more than 50 percent.<sup>98</sup> Even so, the Likud policy had proven to be insufficient to cope with the country's growing economic stagnation. Between 1977 and 1982, public expenditures had increased, the number of public employees had grown, wages had risen faster than productivity or inflation, domestic prices had soared, and the trade deficit had risen to about \$3 billion a year.<sup>99</sup> In short, the Likud government launched its military operation against Lebanon in 1982 at a time when the country was facing severe financial problems, including an inflation rate of about 400 percent a year, excessive consumption and low saving, rising labour costs, and distortion in the allocation of resources.<sup>100</sup>

The failure of the Likud government to provide a solution

to the country's economic problems in the early 1980s can be attributed to its economic inexperience. Simcha Ehrlich, then Israel's Finance Minister, was a politician and not an economic expert, and Begin knew "less about economics than the man on the street."<sup>101</sup> As Harkabi states: "The problem was that giving the people a good life was a short-term objective aimed at gaining popular support for the Likud, and was implemented without any regard for the consequences in the intermediate and long term as national resources dwindled and inflation soared."<sup>102</sup>

Thus by invading Lebanon, Begin calculated that Israelis would place the country's interests ahead of their selfish economic interests and throw their support behind the leadership. And so they did. An overwhelming majority of Israelis supported the government's decision to launch a war against the PLO as the best solution to Israel's security dilemma. In July 1982, for instance, a poll conducted by the Jersulem Post showed that 78 percent of Israelis said that the operation in Lebanon was definitely justified, another 16 percent approved it with some reservation, and only 5 percent opposed it.<sup>103</sup> The views of the majority of Israelis of the war in the summer of 1982 was best illustrated by a fifth generation Israeli who declared: "For us this was a holy war, a war for our survival. I don't care what the world thinks. Our lives are on the line, so I don't care."<sup>104</sup> In fact, during its initial phase the war had a few outspoken opponents

simply because the myths, fears, and expectations that drove Defense Minister Sharon and Prime Minister Menachem Begin to launch the invasion were widely shared...."<sup>105</sup>

It was this national consensus that made the Gush Emunim (Bloc of the Faithful) messianic Jewish settler movement the most influential interest group in the Likud government's decision to crush the PLO. Following Israel's withdrawal from Sinai and the eventual evacuation of Jewish settlements in April 1982, Gush Emunim began to coordinate all protests and other lobbying operations to prevent any further withdrawal from the remaining occupied territories.<sup>106</sup> It also engineered a dramatic clash between soldiers and settlers opposing withdrawal from Sinai in April 1982 so that "the memory of the psychological and political trauma would inhibit any future government with inclinations to evacuate settlements elsewhere."<sup>107</sup>

It is true that in 1982 the whole settlement movement represented only three percent of Israel's total population. But it was a highly vocal minority, and one which was able to influence a wide spectrum of Israeli society. As Schnall states:

There can be no doubt that Gush Emunim has had a profound influence upon the Israeli political system. To limit the analysis purely to the specifics of government policy would be to miss a significant part of its impact. The group has fundamentally influenced the fabric of Israeli society in ways that transcend the political marketplace and

relate to the heart of Israeli society.<sup>108</sup>

In other words, Gush Emunim's objective coincided with the political purpose of the Likud to the extent that Sharon encouraged the promotion of settlements on the West Bank which were legalised later by the Cabinet.<sup>109</sup> Even so, it remains difficult to establish a direct linkage between Gush Emunim's interests and Israel's invasion of Lebanon. However, it is safe to suggest that the settlement movement had influenced foreign policy makers on the crucial question of what to do about Palestinian nationalism. According to Gush Emunim, "secular Zionism justifies the return to Zion and the wars against the Arabs by a lack of choice, while religious Zionism justifies itself by faith and positive volition."<sup>110</sup> Thus, with his eye on Lebanon, Begin found it politically useful for his policies to be blessed by Rabbi Kuk Junior, the spiritual leader of Gush Emunim.<sup>111</sup> After his election in 1977, for example, Begin went from the President's office straight to Rabbi Kuk's residence to receive his blessing -- a gesture of reverence most unusual in secularist Israel.<sup>112</sup>

In this religious gesture, Begin tried to capitalize on the national mood, which was moving towards an extreme stand against Palestinians. In the early 1980s, the national consensus was that the PLO posed a serious threat to Israel, that terrorists had concentrated too much power in southern Lebanon, and that the IDF was the best means to provide

security for the Galilee settlements. The mass media reflected this sentiment to a great degree. In fact, instead of questioning the government's well-publicized plan to invade Lebanon, the media "abandoned themselves to jingoistic rapture and a festival of gloating at the enemy's undoing."<sup>113</sup> Prior to the invasion, television in effect put itself at the disposal of politicians; only occasionally were academics and military-political analysts invited to give their opinion on this sensitive issue.<sup>114</sup>

Even the press was busy reporting a one-sided view of the news. Hawkish views were expressed daily in Israel's major daily newspapers. For example, on 26 May 1980, Ha'aretz published an article by Sharon Yariv, the former head of military intelligence, in which he commented on the "widely held opinion" in favour of executing a future war plan to expel 800,000 Palestinians from the occupied territories.<sup>115</sup> A similar view was expressed in Yediot Aharonot on 15 January 1982 by Shlomo Gazit, who warned against evacuating any part of historic Eretz Yisrael.<sup>116</sup>

Moreover, the press published a detailed version of the plan to invade Lebanon without scrutinizing its implications. For example, on 29 March 1982, Marcus wrote in Ha'aretz that behind the official excuse of "we shall not tolerate shelling or terrorist actions" lies a strategic view to destroy the military infrastructure of the PLO, and that the "logical continuation of the struggle with the PLO in the territories

is in Lebanon."<sup>117</sup> In short, the press accepted the "threat from the north thesis, it exaggerated the firepower of the PLO, and it conducted numerous polls most of which showed a high level of support for the war."<sup>118</sup> Perhaps the gravity of the situation had made it difficult for the media to compete with the populist mentality and demagogues that the Likud brought with it while governing Israel. In a way, the media feared that it would have been seen as betraying the national cause had it questioned the Likud's war aims against the PLO, especially at a time when the state's external environment provided an additional basis for an attainable victory.

#### 5.2.3: The External Environment

Prior to its invasion of Lebanon, Israel was encouraged in its war plan by a favourable external environment. The military superiority of the IDF, the efficiency of the intelligence community, the turmoil in Lebanon itself, the division within the Arab world, and the American "green light", were some of the factors which convinced Israeli decision-makers that this was the moment to score a military victory against Israel's enemies in the Arab camp.

In 1982 Israel had highly sophisticated weaponry: 602 modern combat aircraft, 3,500 tanks, 1,100 artillery pieces, 4,000 armed personnel carriers, and 172,000 soldiers--rising to 400,000 when reservists were mobilized (see Table #7). In addition, the IDF had the ability to deploy eleven divisions



within 72 hours, and to fight and sustain war for about 28 days with all units engaged in the battlefield and without significant resupply.<sup>119</sup>

In comparison, Israel's adversaries were no match for the IDF. The PLO had 15,000 troops, 100 T-34 Soviet tanks of Second World War vintage, and a large number of artillery pieces, including 130 mm cannons, 160 mm mortars and "Stalin organ" multiple Katushya launchers, anti-aircraft guns, and ground-to-air missiles. Besides, the PLO had no airforce and no naval craft.<sup>120</sup> Syrian forces had been stationed in Lebanon since President Assad's military intervention in that country in June 1976. They included 30,000 soldiers, 612 tanks, 30 commando battalions, 150 armoured personnel carriers, 300 artillery pieces and anti-tank guns, and 30 batteries of surface-to-air SAM6 anticraft missiles positioned in eastern Lebanon since April 1981.<sup>121</sup>

Finally, the Lebanese army, which numbered about 23,000 soldiers, was in no position to defend the country against an Israeli incursion because it was as factionalized as Lebanon itself. According to Bulloch, the Lebanese army could not be used to fend off the Israeli attackers because such an action would have been "perceived as offering protection to the Palestinians, not defending national territory. It would also have been likely to cause conflict in the armed forces, as within the army, as in the country, some half of the people sympathised with the Israeli aim of destroying the PLO."<sup>122</sup>

In short, the Lebanese were preoccupied with their own civil strife, and were therefore unwilling or unable to turn their attention to the question of national unity and war.

It was during the Lebanese civil war that Mossad had begun to strengthen its ties with Maronite forces. By 1975 Tel Aviv was able to set the rules by which the game was to be played in this war-torn country. The dominant theory within the Mossad was that the Maronites' interests in driving the PLO out of Lebanon coincided with those of Israel.<sup>123</sup> For their part, the Maronites were in desperate need of arms to "slaughter the Palestinians".<sup>124</sup> Even before the outbreak of the civil war, Bashir Gemayel was said to have been recruited by the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) while working for a Washington law firm in the early 1970s, and to have been introduced by the CIA to its Israeli counterpart, the Mossad. "The CIA had played matchmakers," contends Woodward, "putting the Christians and the Israelis in touch with each other, making Bashir a shared CIA-Mossad intelligence asset."<sup>125</sup>

Over the years, Bashir had managed by intimidation and assassination to expand his influence within the Maronite community to the extent that Mossad came to consider him as a "regional influential".<sup>126</sup> He provided the Israelis with all kinds of intelligence, including telephone numbers to tap, a sewer map, and the locations of key Palestinian installations and headquarters.<sup>127</sup> In return, the Mossad provided most, if not all, of what Bashir had asked for in terms of military

assistance to conduct his war against his Lebanese and Arab enemies. This included considerable transfers of tanks, vehicles, artillery, and even uniforms.<sup>128</sup> By 1979 hundreds of Phalangists were sent to Israel for military training in the Haifa military base.<sup>129</sup> In the same year, Bashir permitted Mossad to set up a naval radar station in the port of Junieh in the heart of the Maronite enclave. It was in that station that Israel's plan for invading Lebanon was negotiated between Bashir and Mossad officers.<sup>130</sup>

Schiff and Ya'ari record that when Sharon visited Beirut in January 1982, former President Shamoun asked him: "Will you really come to Beirut, as you have said? Or is all this just talk?" Sharon replied: "We will get there! Don't you worry."<sup>131</sup> Now confident of their own strength, the Phalangists gave Eitan a lavish reception in the radio station, including "a full-dress parade with all the attendant regalia, the Israeli flag fluttering alongside its Lebanese counterpart, the band playing Hatikvah, Israel's national anthem."<sup>132</sup> Eitan was visibly moved by this fraternal encounter, and so were Mossad personnel. The idea of having an Arab friend serving Israel's interests while serving his own had fascinated Mossad officers, who perceived the Maronites as a persecuted minority surrounded -- like the Jewish one -- by a Muslim majority. In the early 1980s, Seale contends, "Israel's regional ambitions coincided with Bashir's local ambitions to re-establish Christian dominance in

Lebanon."<sup>133</sup>

Between 1975 and 1982 Lebanon was engulfed in a brutal and protracted conflict. The war brought great losses in human life, massive physical destruction, reduction of the Lebanese government's control to a small part of Beirut, and the division of Lebanon's territory among external forces and local baronies. As indicated in Map #9, much of north and east Lebanon was occupied by Syrian troops, initially dispatched as a peacekeeping "Arab Deterrent Force" by decision of the Arab League in October 1976 to end the civil war.<sup>134</sup> For their part, the Maronites consolidated the area north of Beirut into a semi-independent canton under the control of the Lebanese Forces headed by Bashir Gemayel.

In south Lebanon the situation was more complicated. The area became divided between the joint Lebanese-Palestinian forces, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), and the de facto forces of Major Sa'ad Haddad. The Palestinian forces consisted of splinter groups including the Fatah, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), and several others.<sup>135</sup> Helping these forces was the militia of the Lebanese National Movement, which included small military units from various Lebanese parties such as the Progressive Socialist Party, the Communist Party, various Nasserist groups, the Lebanese branches of the Syrian and Iraqi Ba'ath parties, and the Syrian Socialist Nationalist

Party.<sup>136</sup>

UNIFIL, consisting of 6,000 soldiers from Canada, France, Finland, Fiji, Ireland, Ghana, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Senegal and Sweden, was created by the UN Security Council on 19 March 1978 to supervise the withdrawal of the IDF from south Lebanon.<sup>137</sup> Israel invaded Lebanon on 14 March 1978 in retaliation for the killing of 37 Israelis by Palestinian guerrillas on the coast road of Haifa. As the IDF advanced into the south, the PLO retreated from many of its previously held bases. However, in compliance with Security Council Resolution 425, Tel Aviv withdrew its forces from everywhere in the south except the so-called "security belt zone" -- a six-mile-deep buffer along the Israeli-Lebanese border. Eventually, Israel handed over this part to its surrogate -- Major Haddad -- who declared it "the State of Free Lebanon" on 18 April 1979.<sup>138</sup>

Between 1975 and 1982 anarchy dominated Lebanon. The Lebanese government was impotent and at best symbolic. All internal armed factions had links with outside powers -- a fact that turned Lebanon into a complicated battlefield of many simultaneous struggles. As Jabbra and Jabbra state: "By early 1982 Lebanon had become an international battlefield and training camp, its sovereignty crippled by the deployment of militia, gangs, and foreign armies on its territory. Volunteers and mercenaries arrived from all parts of the world to liberate Jerusalem, avenge Chile, undergo training, or just

to hide."<sup>139</sup> The risk of an Arab-Israeli clash was ever-present as Tel Aviv became uneasy about both the continued Palestinian threat to its northern settlements, and the growing Syrian dominance over Lebanon. Above all, Lebanon's weakness had encouraged Tel Aviv to project its military power against Syria and the PLO just a few weeks before the Lebanese Parliament was due to select a new president for the republic.

Regional developments also played a role in determining the timing of the invasion. Chief among them was inter-Arab rivalry over the Cairo-Tel Aviv peace treaty of 1979. This was evident during the conference of Arab Foreign and Finance Ministers which was held in late March 1979 to impose sanctions against Egypt. The Arabs were divided between the moderate camp led by Saudi Arabia and the extreme one led by Syria.<sup>140</sup> The Arabs were further divided over the war between Iraq and Iran which began in September 1980. This war had weakened Baghdad's military posture and led to a deterioration in Syrian-Iraqi, Iraqi-Libyan, and Syrian-Jordanian relations.<sup>141</sup> In light of this, Tel Aviv was certain that it could direct its blow against Lebanon without having to worry about possible military retaliation from the Arab camp - as in 1981, when Israel had destroyed the Iraqi nuclear reactor and annexed the Golan Heights.

First, Israel's peace treaty with Egypt had removed the threat of serious Arab attack on the Jewish State. In the past, the combined military power of the Arab states,

including Egypt, had proven inadequate to stand up to the Israeli challenge. It followed that without Cairo's participation in any future conflict, no Arab state could be expected to prevail against Israel. O'Brien states: "Once Egypt, the most powerful partner, had withdrawn from the hostile Arab coalition, the government of Israel could reasonably calculate an action against the PLO in Lebanon would be unlikely to precipitate intervention by other Arab states."<sup>142</sup>

Secondly, even Syria, the country most concerned about an Israeli military action, was not in a position to confront the IDF in Lebanon. By 1982, Damascus was deeply isolated from most Arab states because of its support for Iran against Iraq in the Gulf War. In the meantime, Assad's regime was facing a challenge on the domestic front led by the Muslim Brotherhood in the northern city of Hama. Although Syrian Special Units succeeded in putting an end to this uprising, the image of Assad as a brutal dictator was well established on the international scene. It was estimated that about 25,000 people were killed when the Syrian army stormed the city of Hama in February 1982.<sup>143</sup> With these difficulties at home and abroad, Syria became increasingly isolated. Aware of Israel's intention to invade Lebanon, Syria was keeping the PLO there on a "tight rein" in order not to provide Tel Aviv with a pretext for war.<sup>144</sup> In short, Syria was unwilling to engage in warfare at a time and place dictated by Israel.

However, unable to prevent the outbreak of war, Syrian forces in Lebanon were willing to put up no more than token resistance provided that Israel only wanted to create a 25-mile security zone along its border with Lebanon. On 13 February 1982, a Syrian high-ranking diplomat was reported to have said: "If the Israeli intervention takes the form of strikes against the Palestinian positions and camps in Lebanon, Syria's intervention will remain limited...."<sup>145</sup>

However, what concerned Tel Aviv more was the extent to which the Soviet Union was willing to allow Syria, now its only client state in the Middle East, to be humiliated militarily at the hand of the Israeli army. On 10 October 1980, Moscow and Damascus signed a twenty-year Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation. The treaty, which guaranteed the Soviet Union's commitment to remove any threat to Syria's security, was Assad's only credible deterrent against Begin's dangerously overweening Israel.<sup>146</sup> After Egypt signed a peace treaty with Israel, Assad had looked for a strong ally to establish strategic parity with Israel. He found such an ally in Moscow. For their part, the Soviets perceived the Camp David Agreement as a process designed to reduce their influence in the region. In a way, Moscow feared that a powerful Israel would force other Arab states to lean toward Washington as the only power able to exert pressure on Tel-Aviv to pursue a peaceful settlement.<sup>147</sup> Thus supplying arms to Syria was Moscow's best option in opposing American



influence in the region. By 1982, Syria's armed forces consisted of three armed divisions, two mechanized divisions, six independent armed brigades, two missile regiments, and 400 combat aircraft.<sup>148</sup> If Soviet military assistance to Syria continued at the same pace, declared Sharon, Syrian armed forces would present Israel with a serious challenge within the next few years.<sup>149</sup> An Israeli preemptive strike against Syrian forces in Lebanon had to be carried out, therefore, and without any hesitation.

Thus, the Soviet Union was not ready to intervene should Tel Aviv attack, as long as the war was limited to the Lebanese theatre. Brezhnev was concerned over the difficulty both Washington and Moscow were experiencing in restraining their respective allies, and warned that a war in the Middle East had the potential of bringing the "whole world to the brink of catastrophe."<sup>150</sup> He did not rule out Moscow's willingness to continue competing with Washington for influence in the Middle East, but he would not allow that competition to threaten world peace. To this end, Brezhnev supported the convening of a superpower -- sponsored international peace conference on the Middle East, urged Damascus to accept the principle of Israel's right to exist, and opposed Syria's request for weapons that would give it strategic parity with Israel.<sup>151</sup> Even the terms of the 1980 Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation, which were understood correctly in Tel Aviv, did not oblige the Soviet Union to

defend Syrian troops stationed in Lebanon.<sup>152</sup> In fact, Moscow had on many occasions urged Syria to withdraw its troops from Lebanon, but to no avail. Perhaps it was for this reason that when, in April 1981, Israel destroyed two Syrian helicopters over east Lebanon, Moscow simply called upon Damascus and Tel Aviv to show restraint.<sup>153</sup> This meant for Israel that its military operation in Lebanon, and the eventual removal of the Syrian army from that country, would not prompt any serious Soviet reaction. On the other hand, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 made it difficult for Israeli decision-makers to base their anticipation of the likely Soviet reaction to a decision to invade Lebanon on simple inferences based on Moscow-Damascus relations. At any rate, Tel Aviv needed a powerful ally should the Soviet Union threaten to intervene. It found such a receptive ally in President Reagan's Administration.

Following the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, the Reagan Administration perceived the conflict in the Middle East more in terms of superpower relationships. The belief in Washington was that US influence in the Middle East was threatened and that very little stood between vital oil supplies and the Soviet Union. The alleged waning American influence in the region appeared to create a power vacuum in the area that the Soviets or their allies, Syria and the PLO, might fill. To counter the Communist threat, Washington sought to build a consensus of like-minded friends in the

region. This entailed outlining a policy of strategic cooperation with Israel, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia.<sup>154</sup> To this the Administration added an emphasis on the value of Israel as a strategic asset positively contributing to American security.<sup>155</sup> According to Reagan,

The fall of Iran has increased Israel's value as perhaps the only remaining strategic asset in the region on which the United States can truly rely.... Only by full appreciation of the critical role the state of Israel plays in our strategic calculus can we build the foundation for thwarting Moscow's designs on territories and resources vital to our security and our national well-being.<sup>156</sup>

In Lebanon, the US objective was to deter any Syrian presence there, and so negate any attempt by the Soviet Union to gain increased influence in the region. According to Reagan, "Lebanon is primarily an arena for competition between the United States and its vicious, cowardly and ruthless adversary in Moscow."<sup>157</sup>

This "good versus evil" image of world politics well suited Begin. He now could disguise his harsh policies towards the PLO and Syria as an action designed to impede the growing influence of the Soviets in the region. Begin was particularly encouraged when Haig spoke of the Syrian regime in "biting language" and reviled the PLO as a terrorist organization. Indeed, Haig sought to draw Lebanon into his "strategic consensus", knowing that only a military operation conducted by Israel could rid Lebanon of Syrian and PLO

influence.<sup>158</sup> On 26 May 1982 Haig told the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations that "[t]he time has come to take concerted action in support of both Lebanon's territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders and a strong central government capable of promoting a free, open, democratic, and traditionally pluralistic society."<sup>159</sup> With this, Begin and Sharon felt that they had secured American approval for the invasion of Lebanon--an invasion aimed at neutralizing Soviet clients in the Middle East, and thus serving US interests in the region.

As the interests of Tel Aviv and Washington seemed to converge over Lebanon, both countries signed a Memorandum of Understanding in November 1981. The Memorandum was designed against "the threat to peace and security of the region caused by the Soviet Union or Soviet-controlled forces from outside the region introduced into the region."<sup>160</sup> It also provided for mutual military exercises, joint readiness activities, cooperation in research and development, and defense trade.<sup>161</sup> This was interpreted in Tel Aviv as in effect an American permission for Israel to strike into Lebanon. Although the State Department suspended the Memorandum after the Likud government decided to apply Israeli law to the occupied Golan Heights in December 1981, continued US aid to Israel - which reached its highest in the fiscal year 1982 - had convinced many Israeli ministers that what Washington was saying in public was unlike what it was saying behind closed doors.<sup>162</sup>

In short, Israel would not have invaded Lebanon in 1982 unless it had received, or thought it had received, a "green light" from Washington.

Inexorably connected to Tel Aviv -- Washington relations were other pressing issues that hastened the overall decision to invade Lebanon. Of greatest significance was the growing unrest in the West Bank precipitated by Israel's reluctance to deal with the question of Palestinian autonomy as stipulated in the Camp David Accord. One manifestation of this was the decision taken by the Likud government in 1978 to dismiss elected mayors in the occupied territories who were "collaborating" with the PLO.<sup>163</sup> Washington expressed its displeasure over Israeli actions by "considering" the "peace plan" for the Middle East which Crown Prince Fahd of Saudi Arabia put forward in August 1981 as an "encouraging development."<sup>164</sup> The plan called for Israeli withdrawal from all Arab territories occupied in 1967, the establishment of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and the right of all states in the region to live in peace.<sup>165</sup> The Israeli reaction to the Saudi initiative was negative because it presented an alternative to the Camp David framework, which had no mention of the PLO or a Palestinian state.

Begin's greatest fear was that through Fahd's plan, which was in his assessment tacitly accepted by the American Administration, the PLO might manage to cease its internal feuding and present itself as a viable representative of the

Palestinian people inside and outside the occupied territories. Of particular concern to Israel was US approval for the sale of an Airborne Warning and Command System (AWACS) aircraft to Riyadh in October 1981; and the joint US-Egyptian military manoeuvres, "Operation Bright Star", on and around Egyptian territory.<sup>166</sup> From Israel's viewpoint, these developments had undermined Tel Aviv's position in the overall American policy framework for the Middle East. Partly in order to reinforce its role as the only strategic asset of the United States in the region, then, the Likud government decided to invade Lebanon, destroy the PLO, and hence stall any further talk over Palestinian autonomy. In such circumstances, it was felt that the United States would be compelled to side with Tel Aviv and to treat it as an ally.

### 5.3: The Objectives of Israel's Invasion of Lebanon

As we saw in Chapter 3 the Israeli Cabinet decides on the question of war and peace. In 1982, with the exception of three ministers who abstained, the Cabinet approved Sharon's plan to conduct a massive military operation against the PLO in Lebanon. As indicated earlier, many factors influenced the Cabinet's decision to go to war. Chief among them was the prominent roles played by Begin and Sharon, who shared a similar ideological doctrine regarding Israel's security. Besides, their view of the PLO as a terrorist organization was

widely accepted by most Israelis, who perceived the PLO as a dangerous threat to their survival as a nation. Neither the media nor the opposition parties had any critical input regarding Sharon's well-publicized plan to invade Lebanon. Needless to say, most Israelis were confident the IDF would prevail given its advanced weapons systems, the divisions within the Arab camp, and the sympathy that Israel was getting from Secretary of State Haig, who explicitly supported Tel Aviv in its campaign against international terrorism. In short, by June 1982, Israel as a whole was at war.

On 6 June 1982, the Israeli Cabinet issued a statement specifying the aims of the military operation launched by the IDF. The Cabinet had decided:

- (1) To instruct the IDF to place all of the civilian population of the Galilee beyond the range of the terrorists' fire from Lebanon where they, their bases, and their headquarters are concentrated.
- (2) The name of the operation is Peace for Galilee.
- (3) During the operation the Syrian army will not be attacked unless it attacks our forces.
- (4) Israel continues to aspire to the signing of a peace treaty with independent Lebanon, its territorial integrity preserved.<sup>167</sup>

According to this official version, Israel's war objectives were twofold: (1) to push the Palestinian Resistance to 40 km from Israel's border; and (2) to create a friendly regime in Lebanon willing to sign a peace treaty with Tel Aviv. Sharon

articulated these goals in the following statement:

I am talking about an action that will mean destroying the terrorist organization in Lebanon in such a way that they will not be able to rebuild their military and political base. It is impossible to do this without running into the Syrians. The question is how to preserve the advantage of such a new situation, for there is nothing worse than a military operation on our part one day and having them renew the shelling of Kiryat Shmonah the next. It is possible to achieve a long lasting change on condition that a legitimate regime emerges in Lebanon, not a puppet government; that it signs a peace treaty with Israel; and that it becomes part of the free world.<sup>168</sup>

A close reading of Sharon's statement reveals that the invasion was meant to achieve objectives larger than those declared by the Cabinet on the first day of the invasion. First, the destruction of the PLO's military and political bases in Lebanon meant that the invasion was not to be limited to south Lebanon but was also to include Beirut, where the PLO's headquarters was located. If this was achieved, the PLO would be removed from Lebanon; its influence over the West Bank and Gaza would promptly wither; and, finally, the Palestinians would be left with no alternative but to seek an outlet for their political aspirations in Jordan.<sup>169</sup> According to Saunders, "the most important Israeli objective was to resolve the Palestinian problem once and for all, by making the remaining Palestinians merely an ethnic minority within an enlarged Israel, and ultimately by transforming



Jordan into a Republic of Palestine, with an accepted Palestinian diaspora elsewhere."<sup>170</sup> As Foreign Minister Shamir had envisaged, the only Palestinian "homeland" was to be Jordan, as "eastern Palestine."<sup>171</sup> Shamir ruled out the possibility of establishing a Palestinian state in the occupied territories because such a state "is a prescription for anarchy, a threat to both Israel and Jordan, and a likely base for terrorist and Soviet penetration."<sup>172</sup> Thus Israel invaded Lebanon in 1982 to put an end to the Palestinian national movement, and not merely to determine how many Palestinian fighters should remain there.

The second political objective of Israel's war in Lebanon was to help to install a pro-Israeli regime in Beirut by securing the election of Bashir Gemayel as President of the Republic. It was well established in the summer of 1982 that the country with the greatest influence on the Lebanese political scene was likely to impose the presidential candidate it preferred. In 1976, for instance, the Syrian military presence ensured the election of Elias Sarkis. This time Israel was in no position to let the Syrians "appoint" the new president for Lebanon. In other words, a Lebanese government willing to sign a peace treaty with Israel could not come into being unless the Syrian army was forced to withdraw from Lebanon.

In short, the Israeli objective was not merely to reinforce the security belt along the Lebanese-Israeli border

by pushing PLO fighters 40 km inside Lebanon. Instead, the objectives of the war can be related to three different, and yet, overlapping contexts: (1) Lebanon and the future of Israel's security; (2) Palestinian nationalism and the future of peace in the Middle East; and (3) Syria and the future of the Israeli-Syrian deterrence dialogue over Lebanon. Although these objectives are closely connected, they are discussed here separately for analytical purposes and clarity. A thorough examination of these objectives has a direct bearing on the study, since it provides the means for assessing the success and failure of Israel's invasion of Lebanon.

#### 5.3.1: The Lebanese Context

Israel's northward outlook was not born of Lebanon's latest civil unrest. South Lebanon always was seen as a part of the promised land described in the Old Testament. Some Zionists had lobbied Britain to include southern Lebanon as part of Palestine when the process of dismembering the Ottoman Empire began. Thus the Zionist Organization proposed to the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 that the Jewish state should be extended to a point just south of Sidon on the Mediterranean coast. (See Map #10)<sup>173</sup> It should be noted that the Zionists emphasized the economic justification for their northern boundary proposal, and ignored the security aspect. The area of south Lebanon was under French control, which made it unrealistic for Zionist organizations to question the

intentions of an ostensible ally willing to protect their interests in Palestine. They based their argument on the need for water in what they hoped would someday be a Jewish state. The claim rested in part on the pretext that other parties had failed to exploit those resources, and on the presumed mutual benefits for Lebanon and the future Jewish state resulting from Zionist exploitation of the resource. This was expressed clearly in a Memorandum of 3 February 1919:

The Hermon is Palestine's real Father of Waters and cannot be severed from it without striking at the very root of its economic life. The Herman not only needs reforestation but also other works before it can again adequately serve as the water reservoir of the country. It must therefore be wholly under the control of those who will most willingly as well as most adequately restore it to its maximum utility. Some international arrangement must be made whereby the riparian rights of the peoples dwelling south of the Litani River may be fully protected. Properly cared for, these head waters can be made to serve in the development of the Lebanon as well as the Palestine.<sup>174</sup>

The British reaction to the Zionist frontier claim was favourable. Its endorsement was based on Lord Curzon's interpretation of the Old Testament. Curzon argued that the boundaries of Palestine must be defined in accordance with its ancient concept of Dan to Beersheba, hence including the Litani River. On the other hand, some Lebanese leaders were successful in lobbying France to reject the British formula. In February 1920 Paris sealed the fate of the Zionist proposal

by specifically including the Litani River within Lebanon.<sup>175</sup> And on 1 September 1920, Paris proclaimed the state of Greater Lebanon with its present borders. Even after Israel was created, the determination of many Zionists to salvage the Litani River remained intact. This was clearly reflected in a letter from Weizman to Curzon dated 30 October 1920. Weizman argued that "the Litani is of little use to the well-watered Lebanon and...if Palestine were cut off from the Litany...she could not be economically independent."<sup>176</sup>

The Zionist appreciation of the importance of southern Lebanon can be seen also in the writings of Israeli leaders. In the late 1940s, well before the PLO was established, Moshe Sharett emphasized "Israel's plans to destabilize, indeed dismember, Lebanon and install a puppet regime pliable to Israel diktat."<sup>177</sup> Ben-Gurion had even suggested the overthrow of the Lebanese government in the first year of Israel's existence. "We should prepare to go over to the offensive with the aim of smashing Lebanon, Transjordan and Syria," he said. "The weak point of the Arab coalition is Lebanon for its regime is artificial and easy to undermine. A Christian state should be established, with its southern border on the Litani River. We will make peace with it."<sup>178</sup> Dayan later laid down the details of such a plan. He believed that "all that is needed is to find an officer, even at the rank of Captain, to win him over or buy his co-operation so as to declare himself the saviour of the Maronite population."<sup>179</sup>

Then, according to Dayan, "the Israeli army will enter Lebanon, occupy the relevant territory and form a Christian government in alliance with Israel. The territory south of the Litany will be annexed to Israel and everything will fall into place."<sup>180</sup>

To this end, the Zionists sought the establishment of a "symbiotic alliance" with the Christian Maronite community in Lebanon. Indeed, the vision of what one Zionist leader described as "a Jewish-Christian front in the Arab ocean," was reinforced first by the close relationship between Palestine's Jewish community and several Maronite leaders from the 1920s to the 1940s. Those Maronite leaders sought a community of fate between themselves and Jews against the pressure of Islam. They therefore supported the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine and requested the incorporation of southern Lebanon, and its predominantly Muslim population, into the Jewish national homeland. On 5 August 1947, the Maronite Archbishop of Beirut sent a memorandum to the UN Conciliation Commission on Palestine in which he suggested the establishment of a Christian state in Lebanon, as well as a Jewish state in Palestine. "Lebanon as well as Palestine," he declared, "should remain permanent homes for the minorities in the Arab world."<sup>181</sup> Moreover, the Archbishop denied Lebanon and Palestine their Arab characters, arguing that both places should be recognized as final homelands for Christians and Jews respectively.<sup>182</sup>

This implied that the boundary of Greater Lebanon was not satisfactory to these Maronite nationalists, because it reduced the overwhelming majority status they once enjoyed within the context of Mount Lebanon. Recent research has revealed that Emile Edde, a leading Maronite nationalist who served as President of Lebanon under the French Mandate between 1936 and 1941, suggested that south Lebanon be detached from Lebanon and transformed into an autonomous Shiite state under French administration.<sup>183</sup> Even after Lebanon became independent in 1943, Bishar al-Khoury -- the first President of the Republic -- denied the south its "Lebaneseness" and withheld developmental assistance.<sup>184</sup>

The broad political significance of south Lebanon can be summarized as follows: whereas the Zionists were deprived of an area which they thought they needed, the Maronite nationalists considered it irrelevant to their survival. This asymmetry between the Zionist ambition to annex south Lebanon and the Maronites' indifference toward the region set the stage for enormous difficulties between Tel Aviv and Beirut.<sup>185</sup> It is true that Lebanon was the first Arab country to sign a General Armistice Agreement (GAA) with Israel, on 23 March 1949. But the GAA was not a peace treaty. Between 1948 and 1982 Lebanon and Israel remained technically in a state of war, as was evident in the many instances when IDF units crossed the borders deep into south Lebanon. In so doing, Tel Aviv had hoped to gain access to the water of the Litani

River. This indicates that Tel Aviv never really renounced the traditional Zionist claim to south Lebanon. For instance, in the wake of Israel's stunning victory in 1967, Dayan demanded a major adjustment of his country's border with Lebanon.<sup>186</sup>

Until the early 1970s, Israel's boundary with Lebanon had been the most peaceful of all Israeli borders, and Lebanon was the only Arab country among Israel's neighbours not to lose any part of its territory. However, the subsequent infiltration of the PLO, and its frequent raids from Lebanon into Galilee, had convinced many Israelis of the necessity of implementing Ben-Gurion's earlier grand design.

The year 1976 proved decisive. Tel Aviv now became an active part of the Lebanese political equilibrium. This process began with the establishment of a puppet regime along the Lebanese-Israeli border and ended with the shipment of arms and other materials to the Maronite forces in East Beirut. For instance, in May 1976 several Christian villages in south Lebanon came under pressure from Muslim Lebanese and Palestinian units, and these eventually appealed to Israel for help. Israel responded by opening its borders with Lebanon in the so-called "good fence program."<sup>187</sup> Although the program had a humanitarian aspect, it would be more accurate to view it in the context of a comprehensive Israeli security policy. "Under the guise of humanitarian aid to the beleaguered Christians in the border area", argues Randal, "Israel moved

in militarily and economically, provided jobs in Israel for Christian Lebanese, and smuggled Israeli goods north into the rest of Lebanon."<sup>188</sup> In other words, by providing the Maronites with such vital services as water, medical care, employment, markets for agricultural products, and access to Israeli manufactured goods, Tel Aviv hoped to turn them into collaborators against the PLO.<sup>189</sup> Besides, the program can be seen as an attempt to exclude all non-Lebanese forces from the south and replace them with a pro-Israeli, southern Lebanese militia.<sup>190</sup> To this end, Tel Aviv began to arm and train Haddad's forces to serve as "sand bags" or a buffer zone between the PLO's fighters and the Galilee.

A similar development took place in East Beirut. Tel Aviv started to provide the Maronite militia there with fuel, heavy artillery, US Super Sherman tanks, sophisticated electronic gear and uniforms. Essentially, this was done in order not to allow the PLO and its Lebanese allies to establish their dominance over the whole country. From the start of the Lebanese civil war in 1975, Rabin made it clear to the Maronite leadership that Tel Aviv was willing to help them help themselves, but would not commit the IDF to intervene and fight on their behalf.<sup>191</sup> Rabin was reluctant to become heavily involved in Lebanese internal affairs. He assumed that deeper commitments would lead to military entanglement; and that, in turn, might cause strain in Israeli-American relations, increase the prospects of unity in



the Arab world, and lead to a war with Syria over issues unrelated to Israel's security interests.<sup>192</sup> Besides, Rabin was convinced that the Maronite leaderships could not be trusted, given their own connections with the Syrian regime.<sup>193</sup> Thus under Rabin, Israel's initial involvement in Lebanon "included only support of Maronite forces which, as opponents of the PLO and the Syrians, served Tel Aviv's interests by serving their own."<sup>194</sup>

This policy experienced a sharp turnabout in May 1977 when the Likud coalition led by Begin achieved its first national electoral victory. Upon assuming office as Prime Minister, Begin started making pro-Maronite statements. He openly compared them to the Jews of the Warsaw Ghetto in 1941, announced that the IDF was ready to intervene in Lebanon, and warned that his government would not permit the Maronite community to be destroyed.<sup>195</sup> This last suggested that Israel's association with the Maronites' plight was to be seen more as a moral duty than as a matter of national self-interest. Most significantly, the Maronites' quest for Israel's help provided Begin with the opportunity to capitalize on the idea of influencing events in a neighbouring Arab state.<sup>196</sup> As expected, Tel Aviv stepped up the shipments of arms to Maronite forces, and in March 1978 the IDF invaded south Lebanon in order to destroy PLO bases there and to extend the "good fence" territory. Having achieved the military objective of the invasion, and before its troops

withdrew, Israel handed over to Haddad and his militia 23 strategic positions in the south. These formed the foundation of what Tel Aviv referred to as its "security belt", and what Haddad proclaimed on 18 April 1979 as the "State of Free Lebanon."<sup>197</sup>

In East Beirut, Israel helped Bashir Gemayel establish firm control over the Maronite enclave. Between 1976 and 1981, Bashir challenged the old Maronite leaderships, who had fostered the liberalism of the "merchant republic" of Lebanon. He forced Raymond Edde out of his home base in Byblos in 1976; ordered the killing of Tony Franjieh (the former President's son and the leader of the Marada, which controlled a small portion of northern Lebanon) on 13 June 1978; crushed the militia of former President Shamoun on 7 July 1980; and successfully integrated most of the Maronite militia into the homogeneous body known as the Lebanese Forces.<sup>198</sup> This last development allowed Bashir to challenge the Syrian army in Beirut and in the Beqaa Valley between 1978 and 1981.

Bashir understood Begin's pledge to save the Maronites as an indication of Israel's willingness to help him without reservation in his efforts to force the Syrians and the PLO out of Lebanon. To test Begin's commitment, Bashir deployed a unit of the Lebanese Forces in the Beqaa town of Zahle, which served as an essential link between Damascus and the Syrian units in Beirut. The Syrian reaction was brutal and massive: Zahle was heavily shelled, and the Syrian artillery

bombarded the strategic Maronite position on Mount Sanin, thus threatening the very heart of Bashir's canton. Bashir approached the Israeli liaison in Junieh and demanded an immediate Israeli intervention. The Syrians, he claimed, were closing in on Zahle, and if the city fell, the whole of the Beqaa would be annexed. For him the battle of Zahle had become the "war of Lebanon."<sup>199</sup> While the Syrians and the Lebanese Forces were engaged in a fierce battle, Israeli jet fighters attacked and destroyed two Syrian helicopters. The crisis lasted for four months. Finally, Damascus agreed not to enter the city, in return for the withdrawal of the Lebanese Forces' units from it.

The battle of Zahle proved to be the battle of the Lebanese presidential election held in the summer of 1982. Because he was able to stand up to the Syrian challenge, Bashir emerged from the Zahle crisis as a hero, "a self-assured leader who inspired confidence and strength."<sup>200</sup> Now confident of Israeli support, Bashir announced on 29 November 1981 -- perhaps in an implicit reference to himself -- that Lebanon needed a president capable of imposing a "Lebanese solution" on the crisis.<sup>201</sup> On many occasions Bashir spelt out what he meant by a Lebanese solution; it arose from his desire to obtain a Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon, to bring the PLO under the control of the Lebanese authority, and to rebuild Lebanon on the basis of Parliamentary democracy.<sup>202</sup>

Thus it seems that Bashir's objectives -- especially

those regarding the PLO and Syria -- coincided with those of Israel. The end of Elias Sarkis' presidency (1976-1982) provided Bashir with a legitimate platform from which he could try to impose his will. For this to happen, Bashir needed the support of 66 out of 99 deputies to the Lebanese Parliament. A list of those deputies was prepared by Sharon himself.<sup>203</sup> Sharon spoke of political order in Lebanon as vital to Israel's national security. "Israel's objective," contends Sharon, "is to see to it that Lebanon becomes an independent state that will live with us in peace and be an integral part of the free world...."<sup>204</sup>

Beside these concerns, there was an economic aspect of Israel's invasion of Lebanon. Historically, Israel had harboured certain economic aspirations toward Lebanon, including its aim of obtaining access to, or possibly control over, the waters of the Litani River. Thus when Sharon spoke of establishing a buffer zone in Lebanon, he also meant the annexation of part of Lebanese territory. Ne-eman argued that a long stay in Lebanon by the IDF would offer Israel a chance "of reaching a stage of socio-economic development in the nearby region which, geographically and historically, is an integral part of Eretz Yisrael."<sup>205</sup> What Ne-eman did not add was that a war in Lebanon, and the eventual destruction of Beirut, would pave the way for Tel Aviv to replace the Lebanese capital as the financial centre of the Middle East.

In short, Israel's decision to invade Lebanon had

military, political, and economic aspects. In invading Lebanon, Israel aimed to strengthen and expand the territory of the "security belt" along the Lebanese border, to establish a new political order in Lebanon, and to have control over the Litani water resources.

### 5.3.2: The Palestinian Context

Another set of goals behind Israel's invasion of Lebanon was to destroy the PLO military infrastructure in Lebanon and "root out" its headquarters there as an essential step to demonstrating to the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza that their dream of establishing an independent state would never be fulfilled. As Saunders states:

The Israeli invasion of Lebanon, to repeat, was designed to destroy once and for all any hope among the people of the West Bank and Gaza that the process of shaping the Palestinian people into a nation could succeed. It was designed to break any final resistance to total Israeli control and to pave the way for making life so difficult for those who valued their freedom and political self-expression that they would eventually leave for Jordan.<sup>206</sup>

This link between the destruction of the PLO and the demoralization of the Palestinians in the occupied territories was in accordance with Sharon's assumption: that if the PLO lost its military strength, its political status as a partner in any future political accommodation would also be diminished.<sup>207</sup> In essence, Sharon hoped that the physical

annihilation of the PLO in Lebanon would allow Israel to speed up the eventual integration of Judea and Samaria, to expand Jewish settlements there, and to encourage Palestinians to overthrow the Hashemite Kingdom and convert Jordan into a Palestinian state.<sup>208</sup> Thus, like Shamir and Begin, Sharon also believed that "Jordan is Palestine. The capital of Palestine is Amman. If Palestinian Arabs want to find their political expression, they will have to do it in Amman."<sup>209</sup>

In brief, the Israeli-Palestinian war in Lebanon meant, from the Israeli perspective, destroying Palestinian nationalism by eliminating the PLO. The two were inexorably interconnected. Fisk explains:

What made the invasion more understandable, however, was the Israelis' belief that they could never control the occupied Palestinian West Bank and Gaza -- captured in the 1967 War -- as long as the PLO remained alive. The Israelis believed, correctly, that the people of the occupied territories drew their political will from the PLO. If the Israeli government wanted to increase the number of illegal Jewish settlements in the West Bank, even to annex the area, it could never do so unless the Palestinians in Beirut were neutralised. If the Israelis did not crush the PLO, then the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza might one day rise up against them. The PLO therefore had to be finished off.<sup>210</sup>

As we saw in Chapter 4, it was only with the creation of the PLO in 1964 that Palestinians had an organized national movement of their own. Prior to this, Palestinian nationalism was weak or non-existent. During the Mandate, the Palestinian

community was socially backward, economically underdeveloped, and politically divided. In a sense, the emergence of Israel in 1948 reflected the economic and political backwardness of Palestinian society.<sup>211</sup> For instance, whereas the Zionist movement was well organized, Palestinian politics reflected the structures of a society still emerging from feudalism and British occupation.<sup>212</sup>

At the turn of the century, nearly 73 percent of Palestinians lived in rural areas, and their political life was controlled by the landowning class.<sup>213</sup> Indeed, the system of patron-client relationships gave landowners influence that extended to the level of the individual household. As a result, Palestinians lacked a strong sense of national consciousness as most villages were divided between, and protected by, two prominent families: the Husseini and the Nashashibi.<sup>214</sup> Members of these families quietly sold land to Zionists while, at the same time, expressing their commitment to the national position.<sup>215</sup> They even, in the case of the Khalidi family, proposed the division of Palestine into two autonomous entities, Arab and Jewish, under British supervision.<sup>216</sup> In short, as the number of Jewish settlements grew throughout the 1920s and 1930s, Palestinians were unable to organize; their feudal division exacerbated the religious division between Christian and Muslim elites. As both communities vied for political influence, the Christians were wary of the pan-Islamic trends in Arab political life, while

the Muslims were suspicious of the Christian ties to the French and British.<sup>217</sup> This implied that the threat of Zionism was not sufficient to unite Christian and Muslim Palestinians against their common enemy. On the other hand, Jews were united, well organized, and supported by Great Britain, which appeared to be promoting the idea of a Jewish homeland as outlined in the Balfour Declaration in 1917.<sup>218</sup> In short, between 1920 and the 1950s Palestinians were unable to stop Zionist immigration, to reverse the United Nations Partition Plan for Palestine in their favour, or to establish their own particularist identity.

Only sporadically did Palestinians express their nationalistic sentiment. In 1929, for example, Palestinians attacked Jewish villages killing 133 Jews. This incident was sparked by conflict over access to the Muslim and Jewish holy places in Jerusalem. To contain the situation, London responded favourably to Palestinian demands by promising to stop Jewish immigration and to ban land transfers. This, however, did not represent a shift in British policy on Palestine, for London never abandoned its rejection of the establishment of a Palestinian state. For example, upon the outbreak of the second Palestinian revolt in 1936, Britain established the Peel Commission to inquire into the causes of the rebellion. The Peel Report proposed the partition of Palestine into Jewish and British, not Palestinian, enclaves.<sup>219</sup>



Finally, the first Arab-Israeli war of 1947-1948 proved to be a disaster for Palestinians. It also marked the beginning of the issue of Palestinian refugees. Altogether about one million fled their homes. Most sought refuge in the West Bank and Gaza, while others went into exile with hopes that Arab armies would soon defeat the Israelis. When the Israelis proved unexpectedly resilient, most Palestinians remained in refugee camps in Jordan, Syria, Egypt, and Lebanon.<sup>220</sup> While Israel did readmit some refugees, its resources were taxed by the influx of 1.3 million Jews from Africa, Asia, and Europe. Only Israel and Jordan accorded the refugees rights to citizenship and representation. Other Arab states preferred to keep the Palestinians as second-class citizens and to use their plight as a weapon in the Arab-Israeli conflict.<sup>221</sup> This was exemplified by the fact that between 1948 and 1967 a Palestinian state did not emerge in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Rather, these territories fell under Jordanian and Egyptian administrations respectively. "To the outside world", argues McDowall, "the conflict became interstatal, between Israel and neighbouring Arab states. The Palestinian dimension did not go beyond the future of the refugees."<sup>222</sup>

By the mid-1950s, Palestinians became convinced that Arab regimes were incapable of liberating Palestine. Two political trends emerged in the Palestinian diaspora that would lay the foundation for the PLO. The first, led by Dr. George Habbash,

called for Arab unity and the transformation of the Arab world into a revolutionary force as the sine qua non for the liberation of Palestine. The second trend, represented by the Palestine National Liberation Movement (Fatah), emphasized a more conservative and nationalist line in defense of the Palestinian interest.<sup>223</sup> Both groups, however, adopted armed struggle in pursuit of their objectives.

It was within this complex environment of increasing Palestinian activism that the PLO was created in 1964 by the Arab League "to organize the people to enable them to carry out their role in liberating their homeland and determining their destiny."<sup>224</sup> With this the Palestinians finally had their own political organization. The Palestinian Liberation Army was formed in the same year to act as the military arm of the PLO. Shortly after, the PLO began to offer Palestinian refugees a variety of services such as health, through the Palestinian Red Crescent Society; economic aid, through the SAMED, the PLO's economic institution, which is divided into three sectors including agriculture, light industries and film processing; and other educational and cultural activities through the Palestine Research Centre.<sup>225</sup> In essence, the PLO can be thought of as having the status of a government-in-exile. Its constitution provided for a Palestinian National Council (PNC), which is also known as the Palestinian Parliament-in-exile. It is composed of 394 members chosen through an informal process influenced by the Fedayeen groups,

trade unions, popular associations, and independents. Its responsibilities include drafting the PLO's policies, organizing its programs, and electing its Executive Committee, whose members act as ministers in dealing with matters like welfare, education, information, health, and the military (see Table #8). Since 1969, Arafat has been the Chairman of the PLO's Executive Committee, whose aim has been to raise the issue of the Palestinian national claim to the centre of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Arafat tried to avoid taking positions on internal Arab political issues and concentrated instead on waging a "peoples' war" against Israel. The PLO reached a peak in power in the late 1960s when it established a de facto state in Jordan.<sup>226</sup> After the 1967 War, Palestinians came to realize that they must depend on their own strength to further their cause. To this end, the PLO started to build its military bases in Jordan. The PLO's greatest moment of glory came in March 1968 when Palestinian fighters engaged in, and inflicted heavy casualties on, much larger Israeli forces at Karamah -- a village about four miles east of the Jordan River where much of the PLO's command network had been established. As a result of this battle, the PLO's popularity soared across the Arab world. Cobban contends: "Karamah is the Arabic world for honour; and as news of Fatah's defense of Karamah was broadcast through the Arab news media, it did indeed seem to much of public opinion throughout the Arab world that the

group had also defended Karameh on behalf of them all."<sup>22</sup>

This alerted King Hussein, who feared that the growth of the PLO's military strength would eventually undermine his status as the heir to Arab Palestine. Because the King was reluctant to allow the PLO to use Jordan as the base for its military operations against Israel, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) urged Arafat to take a much more radical and ideological approach to the Arab-Israeli conflict. As a result, the PLO's relations with the Jordanian government began to worsen. A civil war broke out in 1970, which resulted in the expulsion of the Palestinian commandos from Jordan. Following "Black September", as the expulsion became known, the PLO infiltrated Lebanon. There they found a much more responsive and sympathetic society. Indeed, the PLO's move into Lebanon meant that the former would become a significant factor in Lebanese politics. The delicate balance of power between the various Lebanese communities and the Palestinian-Lebanese left alliance encouraged Palestinians to settle and become prosperous. It also permitted the Muslim majority to challenge the balance of 1943, and it forced the Maronite forces to seek support in Tel Aviv. As a result, the Lebanese system collapsed, and in 1975 a civil war erupted.

The intrinsically unstable nature of Lebanese society, illustrated by the division among Lebanese over the presence of the Palestinian Resistance on Lebanon's soil, encouraged

the PLO to form an embryonic Palestinian society free from the control of the host government. Arafat argues that the PLO was not "defeated militarily in Jordan, but above all politically. We resisted for several weeks in Amman but we had no political support since no political figure was against the king."<sup>228</sup> Thus Arafat's first concern in Lebanon was to acquire the political backing he had lacked in Jordan. He found that in Kamal Jumblatt, the leader of the Lebanese National Movement, and other Sunni leaderships. As those leaders continued to show their support and sympathy for the Palestinian Resistance, the PLO was able to become a "state within a state". According to Said, "It was in Lebanon that a good proportion of the Palestinian bureaucracy was to be found; it was in Lebanon that Palestinian culture, economic, and social institutions were to develop; and it was in Lebanon that the Palestinian identity began really to re-coalesce."<sup>229</sup> Indeed, by the early 1970s, the PLO had employed 15,000 armed guerrillas, 6,500 full-time industrial workers, and 4,000 part-time staff.<sup>230</sup> Throughout this process, the authority and sovereignty of the Lebanese state was subverted by the activities of the Palestinian commandos. The PLO occupied the offices of municipal governments in the south, established its own "revolutionary courts" to dispense justice, set up roadblocks to supervise vehicular traffic, collected customs in the ports of Tyre and Sidon, and became the sole instrument of rule in the area stretching from West Beirut to the Israeli

border.<sup>231</sup>

The years 1968-1969 proved critical in the relationship between Lebanon and the PLO. As guerrilla raids on Israel's northern settlements brought Israeli retaliation against Lebanese villages in the south, the Lebanese authorities began contemplating measures to curb the Palestinian Resistance.<sup>232</sup> In a televised address to the Lebanese people on 6 May 1968, President Charles Helou (1964-1970) stated that Lebanon "could only support the rightful cause of Palestinian Liberation within the limits that guaranteed the continued sovereignty and security of the Lebanese Republic."<sup>233</sup> As expected, the President's proposal polarized the Lebanese along sectarian lines. For instance, the Maronite leaders argued that Lebanon's best defense against Israel was to curb Palestinian commando movements in the country, so as not to provide Israel with a pretext to attack. On the other hand, the radical parties and the Sunni leadership retorted that Tel Aviv needed no excuse to attack Lebanon, that the Israelis had their eyes fixed on the annexation of the Litani River, whose waters they needed, and that the function of the Lebanese army was defense against Israel and not the restriction of the legitimate activity of Palestinian commandos operating on Arab territory.<sup>234</sup>

With the outbreak of repeated skirmishes between the Lebanese army and the PLO, pressures mounted on the Lebanese government to seek an accommodation with the Palestinian

military presence. Conservative and radical Arab regimes alike openly condemned the efforts of the Lebanese army to liquidate the Palestinian Resistance, pronounced themselves in favour of armed struggle as the natural right of the Palestinian people, and argued that the presence of the PLO was not incompatible with the sovereignty of an Arab state.<sup>235</sup> Given its military weakness, the Lebanese government was eventually forced to conclude the Cairo Agreement with the PLO on 3 October 1969.

Although the 1969 Agreement was intended to accommodate Lebanese autonomy with Palestinian interests, in reality it was a betrayal of the former's sovereignty. In effect, the accord legitimized the Palestinian military presence and allowed the Resistance to use Lebanese territory for commando activities against Israel. Moreover, it permitted the PLO to exercise extra-territorial rights over the refugee camps. In retrospect, the agreement did little to protect Lebanon's interests. Rather, it injected the PLO as a destabilizing element into the country's internal delicate equilibrium and polarized the Lebanese along confessional lines.<sup>236</sup> According to a public opinion poll conducted in 1969, 73 percent of Muslims, compared with only 26 percent of Christians, expressed support for the PLO.<sup>237</sup> Worse still, since the PLO behaved as if the road to Palestine led through Beirut, the Maronites became convinced that their prerogatives could not be preserved without terminating the terms of the Cairo

Agreement and eradicating the PLO military presence. They began to build up their militia to meet the challenge. But, like the Lebanese army before them, they proved incapable of achieving a clear victory over the PLO. Consequently, they abandoned the Cairo Agreement and opted for collaboration with the Israelis.

The Cairo Agreement thus served to legitimize the PLO's military activities against Israel across the Lebanese border. After the 1973 War, Arab governments appeared to rally behind the PLO. At the Rabat Summit in October 1974, the Arab League recognized the PLO as "the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people." Furthermore, Arab states would be committed "to restoring the national rights of the Palestinian people in accordance with resolutions that will be accepted by the PLO."<sup>238</sup> The Rabat Resolution had several effects upon the conduct of Arab-Israeli relations. By granting the PLO a de facto veto on any Middle East peace initiative, the Palestinians would have to be a party to all multilateral negotiations. Most significantly, the Rabat Resolution handed the responsibility for the destiny of the Palestinians to the PLO. Subsequently, Arafat was invited to address the UN General Assembly, and the PLO was admitted to observer status in the UN. With such recognition of the PLO, Salah Khalaf, deputy chairman of the PLO and Arafat's righthand man, declared that "all our objectives on the international scene had thus been reached."<sup>239</sup> The PLO used its observer status



in the UN to great effect, and also as a means to establish diplomatic missions in more than 100 countries.<sup>240</sup>

In the mid-1970s, however, the PLO was trapped physically and politically in the Lebanese civil war. Although in the early phase of the war, Fatah refused to intervene, it was forced to engage in desperate fighting to save the refugee camps in East Beirut, and to prevent the Syrian troops which invaded Lebanon in June 1976 from controlling PLO's "independent decision."<sup>241</sup> Though badly mauled by the fighting in Lebanon, the PLO managed to survive. President Sadat's visit to Jerusalem in 1977 opened up the possibility for the PLO and Damascus to form a new alliance against Sadat and the "isolationist" forces in Lebanon.

On 24 July 1981, Israel and the PLO reached a ceasefire agreement arranged by Ambassador Habib. The ceasefire remained in effect until April 1982, when Israel resumed its bombing of the PLO's military bases in the south and West Beirut. This time the PLO did not respond, in order not to give Sharon a pretext to invade. The ceasefire was widely considered to be a political victory for the PLO. Although Arafat did not deal directly with Israel, he portrayed the ceasefire as an implicit Israeli recognition of the PLO. Moreover, Arafat's respect for the ceasefire had serious political implications for the Israeli authorities. It enhanced the legitimacy of the PLO as a responsible partner in any negotiation regarding the future of the occupied

territories. Thus Israel's decision to invade Lebanon in 1982, argues Porath,

resulted from the fact that the ceasefire had held...Yasser Arafat had succeeded in doing the impossible. He managed an indirect agreement, through American mediation, with Israel and even managed to keep it for a whole year... this was a disaster for Israel. If the PLO agreed upon and maintained a ceasefire, they may in the future agree to a more far-reaching political settlement and maintain that too.<sup>242</sup>

In other words, the PLO was attacked in 1982 "not because it was assaulting Israelis but because it was not assaulting them."<sup>243</sup> As long as the PLO's military and diplomatic strength was maintained, Israel could not implement its version of autonomy in the occupied territories. Since the signing of the Camp David Accord, Tel Aviv had not been able to find alternative leaderships in the West Bank and Gaza willing to negotiate the future of these territories. To those Palestinians, the PLO became

their means to reassert and reaffirm a denied national identity, to recover a suppressed history, to safeguard a popular heritage, to rebuild demolished institutions, to maintain national unity threatened by physical dispersion, and to struggle for usurped homeland and denied national rights. In brief, the PLO is the Palestinian people's quest to resurrect their national existence.<sup>244</sup>

Thus the crushing of the PLO in Lebanon was seen by the

Begin government as the only way in which the remaining Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza would be left with no option but to accept a limited degree of autonomy. In short, behind Israel's justification for the invasion - of not tolerating terrorist activities across Lebanon's border - lay the underlying objective of crushing the PLO and, with it, Palestinian nationalism.

#### 5.3.3: The Syrian Context

In articulating the goals of its military operation in Lebanon, the Israeli government gave the impression that it had no desire to attack Syrian forces there. But the presence of these forces in Lebanon was incompatible with Israel's design to establish a friendly regime in that country. Syria's occupation of almost three-quarters of Lebanon constituted the main obstacle to the election of Bashir Gemayel as the new President of the Republic. In other words, it would be impossible to reverse the situation in Tel Aviv's favour without, to use Sharon's words, "taking care of the Syrians."<sup>245</sup> Thus Israel's expressed objectives, if they were to be attained, would have meant in practice the eventual expulsion of the Syrian army.

By 1982, Israel's leading decision-makers had long changed their perception of Syria's role in Lebanon. In 1976 Israel had reached a tacit understanding with Damascus regarding the latter's military intervention in the Lebanese

civil war. The so-called "red line" agreement, brokered by Washington, was revealed in 1983 by former Prime Minister Rabin. Under its terms, Jerusalem agreed to the entry of Syrian troops into parts of Lebanon if: (1) the Syrians did not proceed 10 km south of the Beirut-Damascus highway; (2) the Syrians did not deploy ground-to-air missiles on Lebanese territory; and (3) Syria did not conduct aerial attacks against targets in Lebanon or deploy naval units in Lebanese waters.<sup>246</sup>

Because the 1976 agreement was unwritten, it remained controversial and subject to unilateral geographical revision. For example, when in January 1977 Syria moved a small unit of its forces beyond the Litani River deep inside south Lebanon, Tel Aviv considered this move a violation of the "red line" agreement and threatened to respond with military action. Eventually, Syria withdrew its forces northward and the crisis was contained.<sup>247</sup> The "red line" agreement was violated again in April 1981, when Israel shot down two Syrian helicopters over the Beqaa Valley, and Syria responded promptly by placing ground-to-air missiles in eastern Lebanon. Although Israel indicated its intention to destroy the missiles, President Assad insisted on his right to protect his troops in Lebanon. The crisis was defused on the understanding that Damascus would keep its missiles in place, but would not use them against Israel's reconnaissance flights over Lebanon.<sup>248</sup> Between 1976 and 1982, President Assad thus persisted in

imposing control over Lebanon. He once told a Lebanese delegation: "Do not concern yourselves with the red line which the Americans and the Israelis are talking about. It does not exist, in any event I cannot see it."<sup>249</sup> In short, when it came to Lebanon, Assad was prepared to take risks.

The main instance of high-risk Syrian decisionmaking came on 5 June 1976, when Assad, acting on a verbal request from the Lebanese government, ordered 30,000 of his troops into Lebanon in order to stop the civil war, to prevent any of Lebanon's factions from acquiring decisive power, and to bring about a national reconciliation.<sup>250</sup> Syria had other undeclared aims. These included liquidation of the PLO, prevention of the establishment of a fundamentalist Muslim state hostile to the Syrian Alawite regime, and the blocking of the creation of a "Christian Israel."<sup>251</sup> Above all, Assad saw the Lebanese civil war as a plot to partition Lebanon into Christian and Palestinian states. Syria had no choice but to destroy any possibility of the first, because it would have been a dangerous precedent, and also to control the second, in order not to raise apprehension in Israel.<sup>252</sup> Assad believed that if the Christians were

driven by Palestinian and Muslim pressure to set up a sectarian statelet of their own, Arab nationalism as a bond between Arabs would be discredited, Islam would be made to seem intolerant, the Palestinian programme for a secular democratic state embracing Muslims, Christians and Jews would appear hollow, and Israel would reign supreme over a

balkanized Levant.<sup>253</sup>

At any rate, it is clear the Syrians perceived the Lebanese crisis in the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict. To them, a weak Lebanon meant a weak Syria. As one Syrian official put it: "It is difficult to distinguish between the security of Lebanon in the wider sense of the word, and the security of Syria."<sup>254</sup> Syria's security thus took precedence over Lebanon's sovereignty. In that sense, Assad's decision to intervene was essentially aimed both at preventing Israel from gaining a credible pretext there, and also at giving Syria a greater role in Middle Eastern affairs. The latter aim reflected a longer-term Syrian strategy.

Before Assad came to power in November 1970, the Arab world was divided between two poles, headed by Iraq and Egypt. Syria's influence could only swing things in favour of either Baghdad or Cairo. This came to an end in the early 1970s as Assad successfully cemented his leadership inside Syria by adopting policies of social and economic liberalism, and by controlling the country through the intelligence service, the regular army, and the Ba'ath Party paramilitary force.<sup>255</sup> According to Assad, unless Syria was stable and strong, there could be no hope of recovering the territories lost to Israel in 1967.<sup>256</sup> Thus in the wake of the 1973 War, Assad set out to make himself the unquestioned arbitrator of Middle Eastern affairs. To this end, he promoted the concept of Greater

Syria, thus pressing Jordan, the PLO, and Lebanon into his orbit. In March and June 1975, Assad signed agreements of political and military union with the PLO and Jordan respectively. When President Sadat of Egypt visited Jerusalem, Assad signed a Charter for Joint National Action with Iraq on 26 October 1978. And in Lebanon, Syria began to support the Lebanese Left-Palestinian alliance against the Maronite forces, who showed no enthusiasm for opposing Cairo's peace plan with Tel Aviv. Consequently, a stalemate developed between 1978 and 1982 during which Syria stepped up its military efforts to crush Maronite forces. In short, the premise underlying Assad's policies, argues Seale, was this: "only a United Arab Levant can force Israel back to its 1967 lines and thereby recover the West Bank and Gaza for the Palestinians; only a united Levant can be strong enough to deter further Israeli aggression."<sup>257</sup>

It is true that when President Assad was asked if he was planning to build a Greater Syria, he pretended to be baffled. "There is no Greater Syria", he answered, "only Syria, which was divided and subdivided by the Allies after the First World War."<sup>258</sup> Greater Syria, Assad explained, "was a term that the Allies invented to conceal this partition from the world and to convey the false impression that whoever tries to reunite the country is somehow an aggressor."<sup>259</sup> For him, what the West "pretends are four separate peoples -- Syrians, Lebanese, Jordanians, and Palestinians -- are actually one, with a

single language, a single culture, and family ties that extend throughout the region."<sup>260</sup> In reality, however, it seems that the outbreak of the Lebanese civil war in 1975 offered Assad the opportunity to put his concept of Greater Syria into practice. Indeed, Assad's ambition regarding Lebanon derived more from historical realities than political dreams. These countries did not achieve their separate status until the mid-1940s, but historical, cultural, and family ties still bind their populations. From a geographical perspective, the port of Beirut is Damascus' main link with the Mediterranean, while Syria serves as Lebanon's land route to Arab markets. For 28 years, both countries had used the same currency, and it was by tradition that the new Lebanese President's first foreign trip was to Damascus.<sup>261</sup>

For these reasons, since the mid-1940s successive Syrian regimes have not recognized Lebanon's separate entity. The Syrians have often taken the view that Lebanon is an integral part of Syria, that its boundaries were carved out of Syrian territory at the beginning of the French Mandate in 1920, and that the unity between the two countries should be restored. Over the years, Damascus capitalized on every opportunity to make itself the power broker in the Lebanese political arena, and to ensure that no Lebanese leader could act in ways prejudicial to Syrian interests. Relations between the two countries, therefore, have been characterized by continuing tension over economic matters, and differing positions on



relations with the West and on the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The most notable case was Syria's military intervention in the Lebanese civil war of 1958. The fact that Lebanon accepted the Eisenhower Doctrine in 1957 made it vulnerable to a Syrian accusation that Beirut was "consorting with the enemy." The same accusation was repeated in 1969 after clashes between the Lebanese army and the Palestinian commandos. In this instance, Syria supported the PLO and accused Beirut of collaborating with Tel Aviv.<sup>262</sup> Finally, with the collapse of the Lebanese political system in 1975, Syria seized the opportunity to involve itself directly in Lebanese affairs. Throughout, Assad opposed all Arab and international initiatives to solve the Lebanese crisis. In Assad's words, "No one can stand against Syria. If Syria is unable to bring peace to Lebanon, no one else will be able to do it."<sup>263</sup> For instance, Assad ignored the Soviet Union's disapproval of his military intervention, stating that "it was difficult for them to understand the nature of our relations with Lebanon."<sup>264</sup> Even when President Sarkis requested on 23 June 1981 the total withdrawal of Syrian forces, Syria's Foreign Minister responded that "[i]t should be clear to everyone that when we entered Lebanon, we did it for national considerations. Our presence or withdrawal from Lebanon is linked to these considerations and no one else is involved in such a decision."<sup>265</sup>

Yet the way in which Syria became involved in the

Lebanese impasse unveiled its desire to become an indispensable factor in Lebanese affairs and to begin slowly "digesting" Lebanon. Between 1975 and 1982 Syria maintained its policy of "freezing the conflict" by opposing the emergence of single, strongly-based local force there. This was done in accordance with Assad's strategy of "interchangeable alliances" on the Lebanese political scene. His periodic agreements and quarrels with the Palestinians, the Maronites, and the Lebanese National Movement are a good example of his "open game" politics. In 1978, for instance, Assad turned against the same Maronite forces he had first intervened to save, and developed ties with the Lebanese left and the Palestinian forces he had moved to check.<sup>266</sup> But Assad did not see everything in Lebanon as a game. Concerned about rumours that the Maronite forces were in collusion with Israel, and outraged by President Sadat's visit to Jerusalem, Assad began supporting the PLO and the Lebanese left to counter these adverse developments. In other words, Assad could not afford to lose the Lebanese card after Egypt left the Arab-Israeli conflict. On the other hand, Israel could not afford to let Syria and the PLO control Lebanon and launch terrorist activities against its northern settlements.

In short, the region slid toward war because Syria and Israel were engaged in a contest for the Levant as a whole. The 1982 War can in a sense be seen as a contest between Greater Syria and Greater Israel.<sup>267</sup> By ordering a full-scale

advance into Lebanon, the Israeli government hoped to force Syrian forces out of that country, to break up the Syrian-Palestinian alliance there, and to weaken Assad's regime and further divide his state.<sup>268</sup> Regarding this last, part of the Israeli calculation was that the violent opposition to Assad from the Sunni majority might have intensified after Syria received a military defeat in Lebanon. The collapse of Assad might then have precipitated the division of Syria into three different regions: a Sunni area, a Druze area, and an Alawite area.<sup>269</sup> If this was to happen, Tel Aviv would dominate the Arab region "from the Nile to the Euphrates."

#### 5.4: Conclusion

This chapter has examined the environments and objectives of Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982. In that year, Tel Aviv enjoyed favourable circumstances for a winnable war. First, the psychological environment was characterized by strong religious, ideological, and nationalistic sentiments on the part of Israelis. In the early 1980s, most Israelis considered the West Bank and Gaza Strip as integral parts of Eretz Yisrael, feared Palestinian terrorism, and were confident of their military superiority as the only means to assure their survival in a hostile region. Second, the internal environment included a stable democracy, a civil-military relationship functioning in the tradition of the past, and a cohesive team of decision-makers represented by

the strong leadership of Sharon and Begin. Finally, the external environment combined a strong army, a divided enemy, and expected American political and military support.

By invading Lebanon in 1982 Israel aimed to destroy the PLO's military infrastructure, establish a new regime in Lebanon, and force the Syrian army out of that country. Throughout, this Chapter has placed emphasis on three interconnected issues: Israel and the evolution of Palestinian nationalism, Israel and the development of its northward policy towards Lebanon, and the Israeli-Syrian deterrent dialogue in the Levant. These issues have been examined thoroughly in order to determine the success and failure of Israel's Lebanon war. It is against this background of Israel's objectives in the 1982 war that the end result of its military campaign can be assessed in the next chapter.

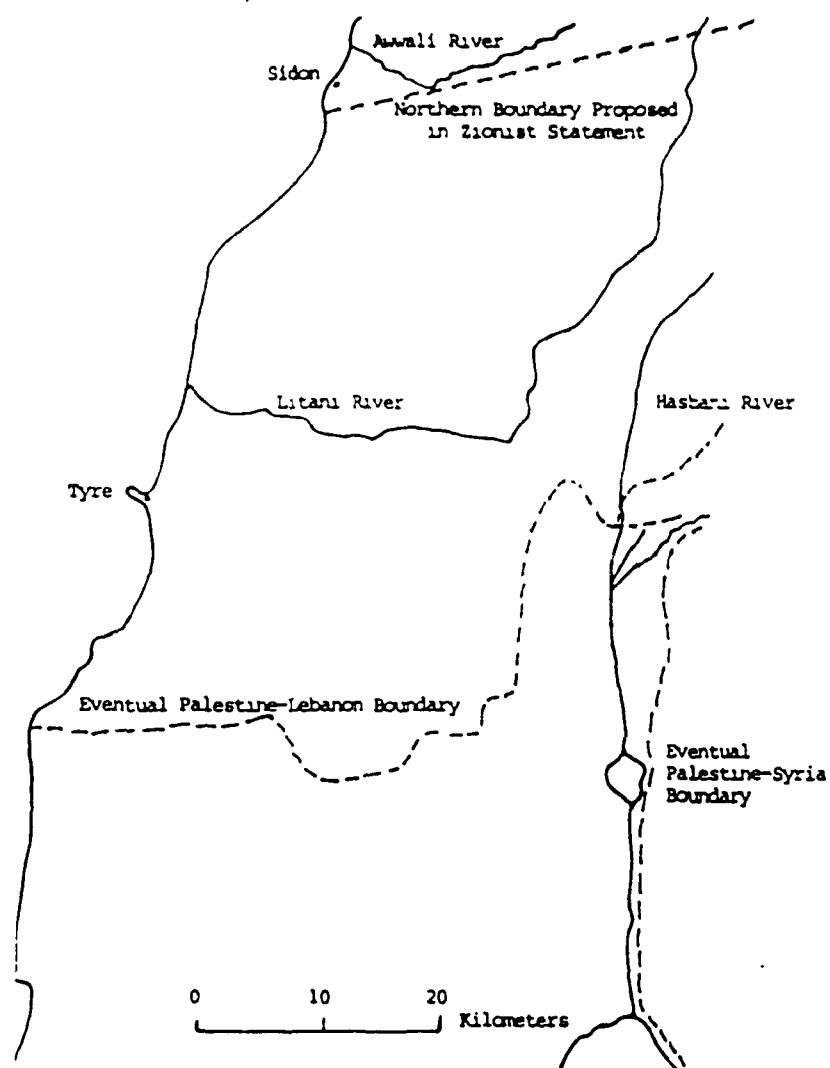
TABLE #7: ISRAEL'S MILITARY STRENGTHS, 1981-1982

Population 4,000,000	Naval 9 000 (3,300 conscripts), 10,000 on mobilization
Military service men 36 months, women 24 months (Jews and Druse only, Christians may volunteer) Annual training for reservists thereafter up to age 54 for men up to 38 (or marriage) for women	3 Type 206 submarines
Total armed forces 172,000 (120,300 conscripts), mobilization to 400,000 in about 24 hours	2 <i>Alia</i> corvettes with 4 <i>Gabriel</i> SSM, 1 hel
Estimated GNP 1980 \$23 bn *	22 FAC(M) 10 <i>Reshef</i> with <i>Gabriel</i> and <i>Harpoon</i> SSM, 12 <i>Saar</i> 2/3 with 6-8 <i>Gabriel</i>
Defence expenditure 1981 62.94 bn shekels (\$7.34 bn) *	40 coastal patrol craft( 32 <i>Dabur</i> 2 <i>Dvora</i> 6 <i>Hawk</i>
\$1 = \$ 8.58 (1981), \$ 4.03 (1980)	3 ex-US LSM, 6 LCT
	4 <i>Seascan</i> 1124N MR ac
	Naval cdo 300
	(On order 2 <i>Saar</i> 5, 3 <i>Reshef</i> FAC(M), <i>Alia</i> corvettes 2 <i>Flagstaff</i> II hydrofoils with <i>Harpoon</i> SSM, 3 <i>Seascan</i> MR ac)
Army: 135,000 (110,000 conscripts, male and female), 450,000 on mobilization, incl civil defence units	Bases Haifa Ashdod, Sharm-el-Sheikh, Eilat
11 arm'd divs	Air Force: 28,000 (7,000 conscripts, mostly in AD) 37 000 on mobilization, 602 combat ac (incl perhaps 150 in store), 32 armed hel.
33 arm'd bdes (3 tk, 1 mech inf bns)	13 FGA/interceptor sqns 1 with 25 F/TF-15, 5 with 138 F-4E 3 with 27 <i>Mirage</i> III C/B, 3 with 85 <i>Kfir</i> -C2, 1 with 53 F-16A/B
3 mech inf bdes (5 are para-trained)	6 FGA sqns with 246 A-4E/H/M/N <i>Skylark</i> (most in store)
12 territorial/border inf bdes with <i>Nahal</i> militia	1 recce sqn with 14 RF-4E, 2 OV-10E, 4 E-2C AEW, 2 RU-21J, 2 C-130, 4 Boeing 707 ECM ac.
15 arty bdes (each 5 bns of 3 btvs)	Tpts incl 4 Boeing 707, 22 C-130E/H, 21 C-47, 2 KC-130H (tankers), 6 <i>Arava</i> 8 <i>Islander</i>
3,500 med tks, incl 1,100 <i>Centurion</i> 650 M-48, 810 M-60, 250 T-54/-55, 150 T-62, 100 <i>Mer-kava</i> I/II, about 4,000 AFV incl <i>Shoet</i> Mk 2 arm'd cars, RBY <i>Ramla</i> BRDM-1/-2 recce veh, M-2/-3, 4,000 M-113, BTR-40/-50(OT-62)/-60P/-152 APC, 130mm 60 M-107 175mm SP guns 30 M-101 105mm, 30 122mm towed, 500 155mm <i>Sherman</i> Soltam M-68/ 71 120 M-109 155mm 48 M-110 203mm SP how 122mm 135mm 240mm 290mm MRL, <i>Lance</i> SSM, 900 81mm, 120mm and 160mm mor (some SP), <i>Zeev</i> (Wolf) RL 106mm RCL <i>TOW</i> <i>Cobra</i> <i>Dragon</i> <i>Picket</i> ATGW 2 btvs with 24 <i>Vulcan</i> / <i>Chaparral</i> 20mm gun/msl systems, 900 20mm 30mm and 40mm AA guns, <i>Redeve</i>	Liaison 15 Do-27, 11 Do-28D, 18 Cessna U-206 23 Cessna 185, 3 <i>Westwind</i>
(On order 325 M-60 med tks 800 M-113 APC, 200 M-109A1B SP 155mm how, M-107 175mm SP guns, <i>Lance</i> SSM <i>TOW</i> <i>Dragon</i> ATGW)	Trainers incl 28 TA-4H, 50 <i>Kfir</i> (incl TC-2), 85 <i>Magister</i> 12 <i>Queen Air</i> 36 <i>Super Cub</i>
	Hel incl 10 <i>Super Frelon</i> , 33 CH-53D, 12 AH-1G/S, 29 Bell 206, 24 Bell 212, 25 UH-1D 20 Hughes 500MD hel
	15 SAM bns with <i>Improved Hawk</i>
	AAM <i>Sidewinder</i> , AIM-7E/F <i>Sparrow</i> <i>Shafir</i>
	ASM <i>Luz</i> , <i>Maverick</i> , <i>Shrike</i> , <i>Walleve</i> , <i>Bullpup</i>
	(On order 15 F-15, 22 F-16A fighters, 6 AH-1G/S gunships, 10 Hughes 500MD hel, 600 <i>Maverick</i> ASM, 600 <i>Sidewinder</i> AAM)
	RESERVES (all services) 504,000
	Para-Military Forces 4,500 Border Guards
	BTR-152 APC <i>Coastguard</i> 3 ex-US PBR, 3 patrol craft

SOURCE: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, The Military Balance: 1981-1982, (Colchester: Spottiswood Ballantyne, Ltd., 1982), p. 52.

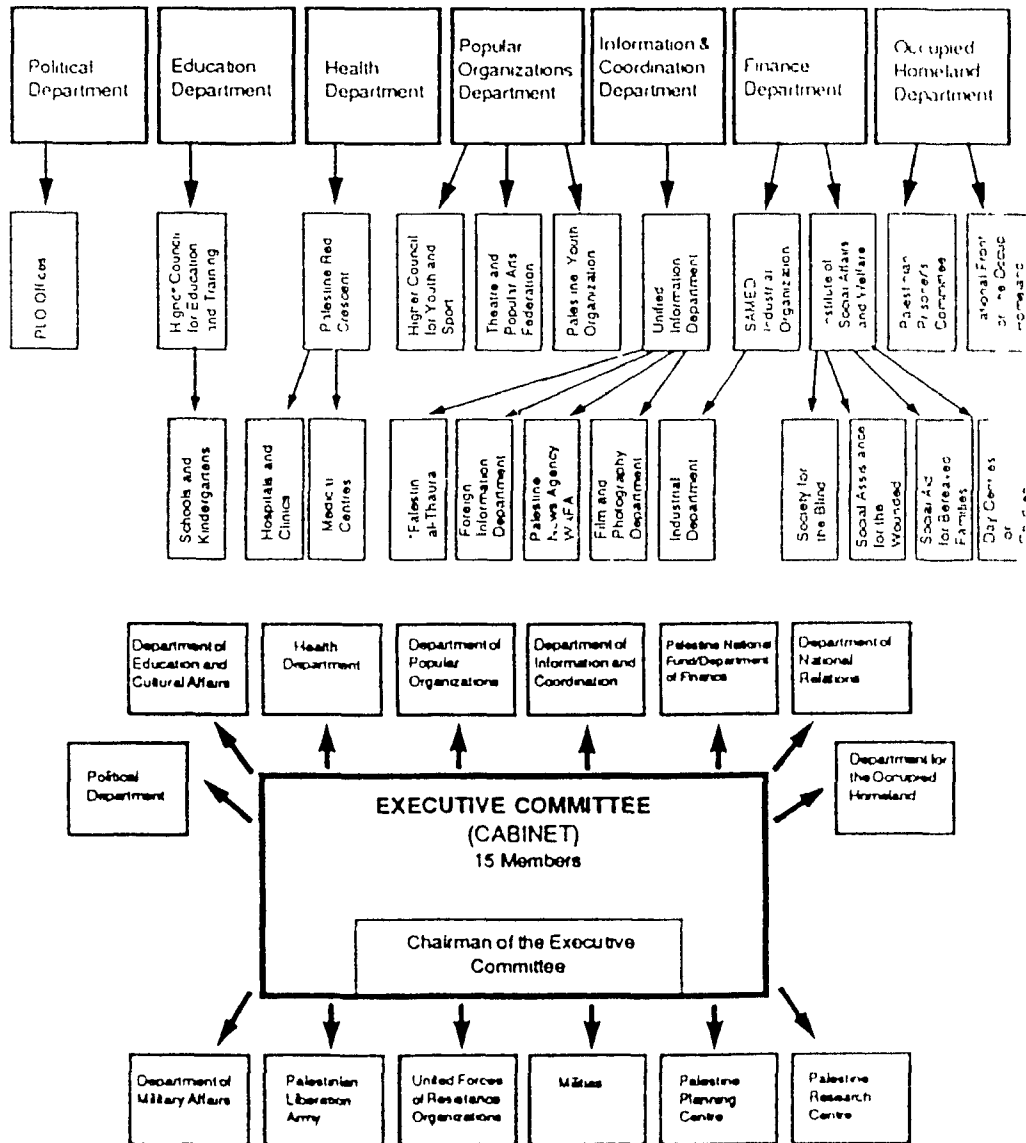


MAP #10: THE ZIONIST ORGANIZATION'S PROPOSAL FOR THE ISRAELI-  
LEBANESE FRONTIER



SOURCE: F. Hbf, Galilee Divided: The Israel-Lebanon Frontier, 1916-1984, p. 6.

TABLE #8: STRUCTURE OF THE PLO



SOURCE: Palestine and the Palestinians: A Handbook, p. 83.



**ENDNOTES**

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2. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 66. See also Schiff, A History of the Israeli Army, p. 245.
3. Schiff, A History of the Israeli Army, p. 246.
4. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 73.
5. M. Jansen, The Battle of Beirut, p. 2.
6. Z. Schiff, "The Green Light", Foreign Policy, No. 50, Spring 1983, p. 81. See also Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 59.
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12. J. Bulloch, Final Conflict: The War In the Lebanon, p. 49.
13. Jansen, The Battle of Beirut, p. 2.
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21. Ibid., pp. 355-356 and 359.
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26. O. Seliktar, "The New Zionism", Foreign Policy, No. 51, Summer, 1983, p. 124. See also P. Martin, "Two Competing Visions", The Globe and Mail, 18 June 1988, p. D2.
27. Begin, The Revolt: Story of the Irgun, p. 24.
28. Martin, "Two Competing Visions", p. D2.
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30. Ibid., p. 1076.
31. Friedman, From Beirut to Jerusalem, p. 143.
32. Lustick, "Israeli Politics and American Foreign Policy", p. 381.
33. H. Adelman, "Begin and Diaspora Dissent", Middle East Focus, Vol. 3, No. 4, November 1980, p. 16.
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38. For more information on PLO's military activities, see J. Groff, "Terrorists or Freedom Fighters? Soldiers or Savages?", In Palestine and Palestinians: A Handbook, (Toronto: The Near East Cultural and Education Foundation of

Canada, 1984), p. 84. See also F. Hoff, Galilee Divided: The Israel-Lebanon Frontier, 1916-1984, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1985), pp. 74-76; see also C. Hoy and V. Ostrovsky, By Way of Deception: A Devastating Insider's Portrait of the Mossad, (Toronto: Stoddart Publishing Co., Ltd., 1990), Chapters 9 and 10.

39. Jansen, The Battle of Beirut, p. 13.

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61. Rabinovich, The War for Lebanon: 1970-1983, p. 128.
62. Ibid., pp. 117 and 131. See also Ball, Error and Betrayal in Lebanon, pp. 33.
63. J. Campbell, "The Middle East: A House of Containment Built on Shifting Sands", Foreign Affairs, Vol. 61, No. 3, 1982, p. 613.
64. H. Saunders, "An Israeli-Palestinian Peace", Foreign Affairs, Vol. 61, No. 1, 1982, p. 103.
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66. Gutmann, "Begin's Israel: The end of an Era?", p. 692.
67. Ibid., p. 693.
68. Gilmour, Lebanon: The Fractured Country, p. 159.
69. Bulloch, Final Conflict, p. 13.
70. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 38. See also O'Brien, The Seige, p. 612.
71. Ibid., p. 38.
72. A. Perlmutter, "Begin's Rhetoric and Sharon's Tactics", Foreign Affairs, Vol. 61, No. 1, 1982, p. 71.

73. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 39.
74. Perlmutter, "Begin's Rhetoric and Sharon's Tactics", p. 72. See also Gilmour, Lebanon: The Fractured Country, p. 159.
75. It should be noted that when the decision to invade was brought up for a vote, no one minister had actually voted against the war plan. Deputy Prime Minister Simcha Erlich and Energy Minister Yitzhak Berman, both of the Liberal Party, had simply abstained. Their disapproval of the war had no significant impact on the course of events. Even the Communication Minister Mordechai Zippori who articulated his fears and criticism of the "unduly vague" war plan, had joined the majority in voting in favour. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, pp. 105-106. See also I. Rabinovich, The War For Lebanon: 1970-1983, pp. 133-134.
76. Bulloch, Final Conflict, p. 190.
77. Gutmann, "Begin's Israel: The End of an Era?", p. 697.
78. S. Shifer, Snow Ball: The Secrets of Israel's Invasion of Lebanon, (Beirut: Dar al-Mrouj, 1985), p. 105 (Arabic).
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81. Ibid., pp. 112-113.
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88. Ibid., pp. 40-41.
89. Sharon admitted at a press conference held on 18 June 1982, that he started to plan the war the first day he became Defense Minister. See E. Agres, "The War In Lebanon", in H.

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96. Grittenden, "Israel's Economic Plight", p. 1008.

97. Ibid., p. 1008. See also Harkabi, Israel's Fateful Hour, p. 104.

98. Ibid., p. 1008.

99. Ibid., p. 1009. See also Ball, Error and Betrayal in Lebanon, p. 131; See also R. Bellan, "Israel's Inflation and Economic Performance," Middle East Focus, Vol. 7, No. 5, 1985, p. 5.

100. Safran, Israel: The Embattled Ally, pp. 120-123. See also Ball, Error and Betrayal in Lebanon, p. 117.

101. Gittenden, "Israel's Economic Plights", p. 1010.

102. Harkabi, Israel's Fateful Hour, p. 104.

103. Time, 12 July 1982, p. 29.

104. Time, 19 July 1982, p. 11.

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114. Harkabi, Israel's Fateful Hour, p. 195.
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121. Seale, Asad, pp. 370-377. See also The International Institute for Strategic Studies, The Military Balance: 1981-1982, pp. 53-54; See also Gabriel, Operation Peace for Galilee: The Israeli-Palestinian War in Lebanon, p. 233.
122. Bulloch, Final Conflict, p. 12.
123. For detail information on the Maronite Forces see L. Snider, "The Lebanese Forces: Their Origins and Role in Lebanon's Politics", The Middle East Journal, Vol. 38, No. 1, 1984. See also Jabbra and Jabbra, "Lebanon: Gateway To Peace In the Middle East?", p. 594.
124. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 16.
125. There is no hard evidence to validate Woodward's assumption of Bashir's close connection with the CIA. But Paul Ariss, one of Bashir's intelligence staff, told Barbara

Newman that Bashir was getting help from the CIA and the Mossad. According to Newman the CIA had trained some of the Bashir's operatives. See B. Woodward, Veil: The Secret Wars of the CIA 1981-1987, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987), p. 217. See also B. Newman, The Covenant: Love and Death in Beirut, pp. 100 and 221; See also Hoy and Ostronsky, By Way of Deception, Chapter 13.

126. Seale, Asad, p. 369.

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130. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 50.

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133. Seale, Assad, p. 369.

134. K. Pakradouni, Stillborn Peace, (Beirut: Fiches du Monde Arabe, 1985), p. 59.

135. See E. Said, "The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)", in Palestine and Palestinians: A Handbook, pp. 77-83.

136. Jabbra and Jabbra, "Lebanon: Gateway To Peace In the Middle East", 589-600.

137. See also Rabinovich, The War for Lebanon: 1970-1983, p. 233.

138. In 1976, Major Haddad and his unit were sent to south Lebanon on the order of the Lebanese Army command to re-establish order there. However, when the Lebanese government signed an agreement with the PLO in July 1977, thus re-defining the relationship between the two authorities, Haddad rejected it because it seemed to compromise Lebanese sovereignty and began recruiting additional troops from the Christian villages. Over the years, Haddad found in Israel a strong ally willing to offer him help against the Palestinians. For the Israelis, Haddad was a Lebanese nationalist whose forces could be used as "sand bags" protecting Israeli settlements from Palestinian terrorist attacks. See Jabbra and Jabbra, "Lebanon: Gateway To Peace In the Middle East", pp. 598-600.



139. Ibid., p. 600.
140. Evron, War and Intervention in Lebanon, p. 83.
141. Helou, "The Israeli Invasion of Lebanon: Reasons and Consequences", p. 43.
142. O'Brien, The Siege, p. 618.
143. Ibid., p. 619. See also P. Seale, sAsad, pp. 332-334; See also Friedman, From Beirut to Jerusalem, pp. 76-87.
144. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 70.
145. C. O'Brien, The Siege, p. 620.
146. D. Spechler, "The Politics of Intervention: The Soviet Union and the Crisis in Lebanon", Studies in Comparative Communism, Vol. XX, No. 2, 1987, p. 121. See also Seale, Assad, p. 347.
147. D. Pipes, "East and West in the Middle East", Middle East Focus, Vol. 7, No. 6, 1985, p. 10.
148. Rabinovich, The War For Lebanon: 1970-1983, p. 131. See also The International Institute for Strategic Studies, The Military Balance 1980-1981, pp. 57-58.
149. Ibid., p. 131.
150. Spechler, "The Politics of Intervention: The Soviet Union and the Crisis in Lebanon", p. 117.
151. Ibid., pp. 117-119.
152. Time, 19 July 1982, p. 15.
153. K. Ja'far, "Syria and the Soviet Union", Contemporary Affairs, (London: Riad El-Rayes Books, 1987), p. 54.
154. S. Spiegel, The Other Arab-Israeli Conflict, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1985), pp. 400-401. See also J. Nathen and J. Oliver, United States Foreign Policy and World Order, (Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1985), pp. 457-462; See also W. Zartman, "The Power of American Purposes", Middle East Journal, Vol. 35, No. 5, 1981, pp. 167-168.
155. H. Cobban, "The U.S.-Israeli Relationship in the Reagan Era", Conflict Quarterly, Vol. IX, No. 2, 1989, p. 8. See also Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 31.

156. Spiegel, The Other Arab-Israeli Conflict, p. 406.

157. One must not confuse Reagan's rhetoric with American policy in the Middle East. Schiff argues, however, that Washington's vague murmuring and apparent indifference were interpreted by the Israeli government as a "green light" for Operation Peace for Galilee. See Newsweek, 7 November 1983, p. 93; See also Schiff, "The Green Light", p. 74.

158. R. Gromoll, "The May 17 Accord: Studies of Diplomacy and Negotiations on Troop Withdrawals from Lebanon", Case Study In International Negotiation, (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh: The Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, 1987), p. 12.

159. C. O'Brien, The Siege, p. 621; See also U.S. Department of State Bulletin, July 1982, pp. 44-47.

160. H. Cobban, "The U.S.-Israeli Relationship in the Reagan Era", p. 9.

161. Ibid., p. 9. See also Spiegel, The Other Arab-Israeli Conflict, p. 410.

162. The approved 1982 American assistance to Israel reached a record of \$2.6 billion. Of that, \$750 million dollars were foreign military sales, and \$785 million were cash grant. In addition, Israel received \$3 billion dollars over 3 years as part of the \$4.8 billion peace package. Most of this amount was spent on imports from the United States. See Ball, Error and Betrayal In Lebanon, pp. 117-118; See also Grittenden, "Israel's Economic Plight", p. 1013.

163. Saunders, "An Israeli-Palestinian Peace", p. 117. See also N. Chomsky, The Fateful Triangle, pp. 204-205.

164. Campbell, "The Middle East: A House of Containment Built on Shifting Sands", p. 617.

165. Ibid., p. 617.

166. Ibid., p. 618. See also Spiegel, The Other Arab-Israeli Conflict, pp. 408-409; See also H. Cobban, "The U.S.-Israeli Relationship In the Reagan Era", p. 9.

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168. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 42.

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170. Saunders, "An Israeli-Palestinian Peace", p. 101.

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180. Ibid., p. 163.
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182. Al-Bena, No: 701, 16 September 1989, pp. 25-27.
183. M. Zamir, "Emile Edde and the Territorial Integrity of Lebanon", Middle Eastern Studies, Vol. 14, No. 2, 1978, pp. 232-233.
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185. Hof, Galilee Divided, p. 26.
186. M. Hudson, "Fedayeen Are Forcing Lebanon's Hand," Middle East, Vol. 10, No. 1, 1970, p. 7.
187. Hof, Galilee Divided, p. 80. See also Evron, War and International in Lebanon, p. 69; see also Randal, Going All the Way, p. 199.
188. Randal, Going All The Way, p. 199.
189. Hof, Galilee Divided, p. 80.
190. Ibid., p. 80.

191. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 18. See also Randal, Going All The Way, p. 201.
192. Evron, War and Intervention In Lebanon, p. 43.
193. Ibid., pp. 43-44.
194. Campbell, "The Middle East: A House of Containment Built on Shifting Sands", p. 613.
195. Randal, Going All The Way, p. 214.
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197. Jabbra and Jabbra, "Lebanon: Gateway to Peace In the Middle East", p. 599.
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199. Jabbra and Jabbra, "Lebanon: Gateway to Peace In the Middle East", p. 592.
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202. Newsweek, 17 August 1981. See also The Washington Post, 24 August 1982.
203. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 42.
204. Ibid., p. 42.
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210. Fisk, Pity The Nation, p. 231.
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218. On 2 November 1917, Arthur Balfour, the British Foreign Minister, declared in the form of a letter to Lord Rothschild, the President of British Zionist Federation, that "His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country." W. Laqueur and R. Rubin, (eds.), The Israel-Arab Reader, p. 18.
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220. Marshall, Intifada: Zionism, Imperialism and Palestinian Resistance, p. 72.
221. M. Sid-Ahmed, "The Shifting sands of Peace In The Middle East", International Security, Vol. 5, No. 1, 1980, p. 154.
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226. A. Yadfah and Y. Chann, PLO Strategy and Tactics, (London: Croom Helm, 1981), pp. 22-28.
227. H. Cobban, The PLO: People, Power and Politics, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1984), p. 42.
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229. E. Said, "The Palestine Liberation Organization", In Palestine and Palestinians: A Handbook, p. 80.

230. Al-Deyar, 26 September 1990. (Arabic). See also J. Running and S. Bennett, "Foreigners In Their Own Land", Equinox, No. 14, 1984.

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232. The Israeli retaliatory actions against Lebanon in connection with the commando operations which proceeded from the Lebanese territory was in line with the Israeli policy since the early 1950s. Israel held Lebanon, as a sovereign state, responsible for activities originating in or carried through its territory. The purpose, argues Rabinovich, was to demonstrate to Lebanon the price it would pay for the freedom of operation given to or seized by Palestinians. See Rabinovich, The War for Lebanon 1970-1983, p. 41.

233. K. Salibi, Crossroads to Civil War -- Lebanon: 1958-1976, (New York: Caravan, 1976), p. 40.

234. Ibid., p. 38.

235. Ibid., p. 42.

236. Ibid., pp. 42-44.

237. Haddad, Lebanon: The Politics of Revolving Doors, p. 42.

238. Laqueur and Rubin, (eds.), The Israel-Arab Reader, p. 518.

239. Marshall, Intifada: Zionism, Imperialism and Palestinian Resistance, p. 134.

240. Carter, The Blood of Abraham, p. 111.

241. Ibid., p. 163.

242. Cited in Gilmour, Lebanon: The Fractured Country, p. 163.

243. Ibid., p. 163.

244. Carter, The Blood Of Abraham, p. 125.

245. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 43.

246. Seale, Asad, pp. 279-280. See also Spiegel, The Other Arab-Israeli Conflict, pp. 412-413.

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248. Seale, Asad, p. 371.
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250. Time, 20 October 1986.
251. Seale, Asad, p. 275.
252. K. Pakradouni, Curse of a Nation: From Lebanon's War to the Gulf War, (Beirut: Trans-Orient Publications, Ltd., 1991), pp. 114-115.
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265. Haddad, Lebanon: The Politics of Revolving Doors, p. 61.
266. C. Dickey, "Assad and His Allies: Reconcilable Differences?", Foreign Affairs, Vol. 66, No. 1, 1987, p. 61.
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## CHAPTER SIX

### THE ISRAELI INVASION OF LEBANON, 1982:

#### II. THE FAILURE OF A SUCCESS

##### 6.1: Introduction

This chapter assesses the success and failure of Israel's invasion of Lebanon in June 1982. Were the objectives of the invasion, as set out by the Likud government, achieved? The discussion is divided into two parts. The first examines Tel Aviv's military victory and immediate political achievements. This includes an analysis of the military operation executed by the IDF against Syrian and Palestinian forces, the election of Bashir Gemayel as President of Lebanon, and the signing of the 17 May 1983 Accord between Tel Aviv and Beirut. The second part examines Israel's failure to reap the political fruit of its military success: a failure that was epitomized by the assassination of Bashir Gemayel on 14 September 1982, the decision taken by Amin Gemayel, who succeeded his slain brother as President, to abrogate the 17 May Accord on 23 February 1984, the continued presence of Syrian forces in Lebanon, the emergence of the "Palestinian uprising" in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and the eroding support among Israelis and the international community for the Likud's war efforts. It will be argued that Israel's war in Lebanon yielded for those who orchestrated it nothing but disappointments over unexpected and undesired results.

## 6.2: Israel's Military and Political Successes

An interesting causal chain of events led up to Israel's invasion of Lebanon. Following the assassination attempt against its Ambassador to London on 3 June 1982, the Begin government ordered heavy air raids against PLO targets in South Lebanon and in and around West Beirut. The scale of these raids was such that it was difficult for the PLO to refrain from some form of retaliation.<sup>1</sup> When the PLO responded with an artillery attack against Galilee settlements, the Israeli Cabinet decided to move into Lebanon in force.

The London incident thus provided Tel Aviv with the long-awaited pretext to invade Lebanon.<sup>2</sup> The irony of the situation was that the attack on Ambassador Argov was carried out by the Abu-Nidal group, which was not a part of the PLO. It had in fact already tried to assassinate Arafat himself, accusing him of being "the Jewess's son."<sup>3</sup> According to Evron, the Abu-Nidal action was sponsored by Iraqi intelligence, and was designed to provoke an Israeli military response culminating in an Israeli-Syrian confrontation. Thus Iraq, a rival of Syria, would secure its Syrian flank.<sup>4</sup> But all of this did not matter to Chief of Staff Eitan, who dismissed such a fastidious distinction between the Abu-Nidal group and the PLO: "Abu-Nidal, Abu-Shmidal," he was reported to have said, "we have to strike at the PLO."<sup>5</sup> For Moshe Arens, then Israel's Ambassador to Washington, all Palestinian

groups were "of the same mafia-type octopus that works out of Lebanon."<sup>6</sup> The Israeli reaction to the information released by Scotland Yard on the identity of the attackers was best described by the Washington Post: "the assassination attempt was an embarrassment for the PLO, which claims to represent all Palestinians, but ... tends to be selective about accepting responsibility for acts of Palestinian violence."<sup>7</sup> Whether the PLO was indeed responsible for the attack was of less significance than the fact that the Likud Cabinet was eager to implement its military plan against it.

At least three plans were prepared by the IDF for an invasion of Lebanon. The first plan called for a campaign against the PLO in the south to stamp out artillery and terrorist attacks on Israeli border settlements. This operation would avoid an engagement with the Syrians at all costs. The second plan also called for a strike against the PLO without a war with Syrians, but the IDF forces were to advance as far north as Beirut to link up with their Phalangist allies, who would eventually enter the city and destroy PLO forces left there. It was reported that Bashir Gemayel told Eitan, when they met in East Beirut in February 1982, to "leave Beirut to us", meaning that the Phalangist militia would capture the western half of the city from Palestinian and Syrian regulars.<sup>8</sup> The third plan, or "Operation Big Pines", envisioned a war against both the PLO and Syrian forces, and the eventual encirclement of West

Beirut. Upon reaching Beirut, the IDF was to coordinate its efforts with Phalange forces, who would bear the brunt of the fighting.<sup>9</sup>

From the outset, Eitan and Sharon advocated the implementation of "Operation Big Pines". Both wanted to send the IDF into the Maronite enclave in Eastern Beirut to link up with Gemayel's forces, and strike at the PLO's headquarters in West Beirut. Eitan and Sharon considered Bashir Gemayel "a full partner" in the war against the PLO, and even believed that the Phalange forces would finish the job that the IDF had started, that is the expulsion of the PLO from Lebanon.<sup>10</sup> However, in the early stages of the war Begin, probably concerned over possible Soviet reaction, declared that Syrian units in Lebanon would not be attacked unless they attacked the IDF first. He even appealed to President Assad not to commit his forces to combat: "From this podium I call on President Assad to instruct the Syrian army not to attack Israeli soldiers, in which case they will not be harmed at all."<sup>11</sup>

This assurance, together with Israel's identification of the 40-kilometre limit, indicated that Tel Aviv had opted for the first or second plan. But the landing of a large amphibious force at a point north of Sidon on 7 June was of major political significance, for it extended the operation beyond the 40-kilometre zone limit (See Map #11). It was the Cabinet which took the decision to invade Lebanon, but it was

Sharon who had day-to-day control of the operation. According to Eitan, Sharon did not instruct the army to limit its advance to the 40-kilometre zone.<sup>12</sup> Thus, having won the Cabinet approval for a limited military operation, it was not so difficult for Sharon to orchestrate events to expand the war once it had begun. Eliahu Ben-Elissar, Chairman of the Knesset Defence Committee, explained that it was all "a question of the momentum of battle. There was such a swift advance along the coastal road by our armour that we found ourselves swept along after Damour in order to protect what we had achieved."<sup>13</sup> In other words, the expansion of the war beyond the 40-kilometre limit was justified as a necessary measure to protect Israel's troops. "Operation Peace for Galilee", then was to be replaced by "Operation Big Pines."

The IDF deployed into Lebanon an estimated 80,000 soldiers, 1,240 tanks, and 1,520 armoured personnel carriers.<sup>14</sup> These were organized into nine divisions, and crossed the border in strength at three locations. The western front stretched immediately along the coast from the border to Beirut. The central sector extended from Marjaoun up toward the north through Jezzine and the Shouf region. Finally, the eastern zone extended through Hasbaiya toward Rachaiya, striking through the centre of the Beqaa Valley at Joub Jannine (See Map #12). Each of the battlefield sectors had its own commander. The western and central fronts came under the command of Major-General Amir Drori and his deputy,

Major-General Uri Simchoni. Their mission was to seal off Tyre and Sidon, and so trap the PLO inside the two cities, and then push rapidly toward Beirut. This plan of attack, argues Gabriel, "was typical of the IDF in its emphasis on rapid advance, heavy armour, and bypassing strong points of resistance and surprising the enemy on the run."<sup>15</sup>

The success of the plan in the central front depended on the IDF's ability to capture the Beaufort Castle and the key junction north of Nabitiya to secure the road toward Jezzine and the Beirut-Damascus highway. Having accomplished this, another battalion was to break off from this advance and move toward the coast to trap the PLO at Sidon.<sup>16</sup> Finally, in the eastern sector, the Israelis assembled their largest force, comprising 800 tanks and 38,000 soldiers under the command of Major General Avigdor Ben Gal. A hero of the 1973 War, Ben Gal was called home from a sabbatical at Harvard University to conduct the war against the Syrians in the Beqaa Valley.<sup>17</sup> His mission was to prevent the Syrian forces from either moving to the west or retreating toward Damascus. In other words, Ben Gal's objective was to deprive the Syrians of any chance to intervene in the battle along the coastal road and to capture the Beirut-Damascus highway. Even if the Syrians chose not to intervene, Ben Gal's flanking movements to their east and west were meant to put them at a severe disadvantage.<sup>18</sup>

Israel's military advance into Lebanon began at 11:00

a.m. on 6 June 1982. Israelis were concerned over how to break through UNIFIL lines. It was possible, for instance, that some of the peacekeeping units might use their anti-tank weapons to stop or to delay the invasion. But nothing of the sort happened. UNIFIL was in no way equipped to stop a large and determined invading army. General William Callaghan, the Irish commander of the force, protested strongly when Eitan gave him 28 minutes' notice of Israel's intention to attack and of its expectation that UNIFIL would present no physical difficulty.<sup>19</sup> However, having realized that there was no point in armed resistance, Callaghan ordered his soldiers to do what they could to block advancing forces, and to stay in their positions until their safety was seriously imperilled.<sup>20</sup> The deployment of UNIFIL in south Lebanon "was geared to the purpose of observations and of being observed -- and not on defense positions that could block full-scale military divisions."<sup>21</sup> Given such a mandate, UNIFIL had no choice but to stand back. The IDF by-passed UNIFIL positions without any difficulty. Schiff and Ya'ari contend that "the UN peacekeeping troops appeared to be stunned by the number of tanks rumbling toward them in two columns. They made no attempt to stop the armour; on the contrary, after regaining their wits some of the UN soldiers began to wave amiably, and one soldier even flashed a V sign with his fingers. The tank crews assumed that such goodwill was motivated more by an instinct for self-preservation than true support for their

cause."<sup>22</sup>

The war was not expanded to include Syrian forces until 8 June 1982. In the first two days of the invasion, Tel Aviv repeatedly affirmed its position not to attack the Syrian army in Lebanon. This left the impression that the deployment of Ben Gal's forces on the eastern front was no more than a precautionary measure aimed at protecting the IDF's manoeuvres in the western<sup>1</sup> and central thrusts. Apparently, President Assad believed Israel's intentions and did everything he could to avoid a showdown with the IDF. For instance, as the border crossing began, the Syrians withdrew their forces from checkpoints in the south, decided not to deploy their contingent stationed in Beirut to protect the city's coastal approaches, and made no hostile moves against Ben Gal's forces massed only yards in front of them.<sup>23</sup> Yet the war went all the way into the Beqaa Valley and did engage the Syrians. This development suggests that the Israeli decision to delay a confrontation with the Syrian army was strictly a tactical move designed to deceive the Syrians into thinking that the IDF was indeed engaging in a limited military operation against the PLO.<sup>24</sup>

Another explanation of the delay is the difficulty Sharon had in convincing Begin of the necessity to strike at the Syrians and drive them out of the Beqaa. On 8 June, Begin once again asked US envoy Habib -- whom President Reagan had despatched hurriedly to the area to arrange a ceasefire -- to



assure Assad that Tel Aviv was not planning to attack Syrian forces provided he remove the SAMs from the Beqaa and secure the withdrawal of PLO's fighters and equipment located behind the Syrian lines within 40 kilometres of the Israeli border.<sup>25</sup> But even before Habib had received Assad's reply to Begin's message, the entire SAM network in the Beqaa was destroyed by the Israeli airplanes.<sup>26</sup> It was from this point that the Syrian phase of Israel's Lebanon war simply unrolled.

What prompted the Israeli Cabinet to finally give Sharon permission to attack the missiles and risk a major ground operation with the Syrian army? As the IDF continued its advance to the east and west, the Syrian army became outflanked and its SAM batteries came within range of the IDF's mobile artillery. To compensate for this, President Assad moved an additional six batteries into the northern Beqaa but these were to be located out of range of Israeli artillery and close enough to protect Syrian troops from air attack should the IAF strike.<sup>27</sup> This new development made it easier for Sharon to argue that bombardment of the missiles was to protect ground forces in the coastal zone.<sup>28</sup> The next day, on 9 June 1982, 92 Israeli planes struck and destroyed most of the SAM batteries stationed in the Beqaa Valley.<sup>29</sup> The Syrians scrambled their own air force to stop the Israeli raiders. But the MiGs were no match for the IAF's F-15 and F-16 air fighters. Over three days, the Syrians lost about 79 MiG-21s and MiG-23s, representing 15 percent of their entire

air force and almost 25 percent of their first-line fighters. No Israeli aircraft were hit by the SAMs or by Syrian interceptors.<sup>30</sup>

In discussing the destruction of the missiles and the results of the air battle, Sharon describes the IAF's achievements as a "turning point of the war."<sup>31</sup> With the missiles and aircraft gone, Israel had complete air superiority, and Syrian ground forces were now at the mercy of Israeli aircraft. Sharon's objective was to cut the Beirut-Damascus highway to tighten the noose on the Palestinian and Syrian forces in West Beirut and, ultimately, to prevent Assad from influencing future political developments in the Lebanese capital. But unlike the air fight, the ground battles proved costly for the IDF. Although outnumbered and without air cover, the Syrians fought well. Using anti-tanks weapons, T-72 tanks, and French Gazelle helicopters, the Syrians managed to stop the ground offensive. In short, the IDF was unable to capture the Beirut-Damascus highway before a ceasefire was announced on 11 June. Indeed, it was not until 25 June that the IDF was able to control the highway from Baabda to Sofar, thus finally depriving Assad of any leverage over the battle for West Beirut (See Map #13). From a military perspective, Syria lost about 1,200 soldiers dead, 3,000 wounded, and 296 taken prisoner. Equipment losses included over 300 tanks, 140 armoured personnel carriers, 80 artillery pieces, 19 SAM batteries, 6 helicopters, and 79 aircraft.<sup>32</sup> Besides, in

accepting the 11 June ceasefire, President Assad was accused by the PLO of abandoning the Palestinian cause.<sup>33</sup> This "insult" was added to Assad's military injury. It should be noted that the commander of the Syrian forces in Beirut, Brigadier-General Omar Halal, was ordered to defend the city in disregard of the 11 June ceasefire. On that day President Assad broadcast a passionate appeal to General Halal's unit to keep fighting: "Beloved ones, I am living with you day and night .... Beirut's arabism is a trust in your hands .... I ask you to remain steadfast: martyrdom or victory!"<sup>34</sup>

But by the time of this appeal, West Beirut was virtually under siege. On 13 June, the Israeli forces established a territorial link with the Maronite militia in the vicinity of Baabda, where they were greeted by Bashir Gemayel and his deputy (See Map #14). Unlike its war against the Syrians in the eastern front, the IDF did not face significant resistance in the central and western zones. The IDF succeeded in a few days in seizing all Palestinian strongholds in South Lebanon. The IDF's tactic was "to surround cities and towns so swiftly, and then to pound them from land, sea and air. After a couple of days of this there would be a timid probing attack: if there were resistance the pounding would resume."<sup>35</sup> In the case of Sidon, for instance, the Israelis employed a concentrated pounding of the town, leaflets and loudspeakers urging the inhabitants to leave or surrender, and an Israeli infantry attack to "clean out" what was left.<sup>36</sup>

The fighting in the South was expected to last longer, but it did not. In the face of the IDF's rapid advance, the PLO decided to withdraw its forces northward to reinforce its position in West Beirut. According to Bulloch, "Palestinian leaders had trained their men in mobile warfare: they were to hit where they could, but to withdraw as soon as they were in any danger of capture or encirclement."<sup>37</sup> Thus, when two PLO officers announced their intention to leave Beirut to join their units in Sidon, Salah Khalaf advised them not to do so because "the Jews are coming here."<sup>38</sup> He was correct. Only six days into the war, the IDF had occupied South Lebanon and liquidated the PLO's presence there.

The PLO's military weakness was not due to shortage of arms, but to the pitiful performance of its senior officers. Most fled the South in the first few hours of the invasion, leaving behind semi-regular troops who quickly stripped off their uniforms and tried to melt into the local population or hide behind Syrian lines in the Beqaa Valley.<sup>39</sup> As a result, most of the tenacious battles were carried out by poorly trained militiamen in the refugee camps who were not defending PLO military positions per se, but their own homes and families.<sup>40</sup> In short, the PLO's plan for holding off the invaders was not implemented. The most striking evidence of this was the failure on the part of the Palestinians to blow up the bridges, or mine the roads and passes, which link Beirut with the southern front.<sup>41</sup> Orders to do otherwise were

not carried out simply because the local command lost control over developments in the battlefield and failed to coordinate their units. As a result, Arafat and his senior commanders in West Beirut were completely out of touch with the South and unaware of what was happening at the front. When on 13 June a Palestinian field officer reported to Arafat that "Jewish forces just drove by us," the PLO Chairman exclaimed: "Are you mad! What are you talking about!"<sup>42</sup> Although he was warned of an imminent Israeli invasion (see Chapter Five), Arafat never imagined that one day the IDF would besiege his "mini-state" in West Beirut. Thus, between 13 and 15 June 1982, Arafat comforted himself with the illusion that his men were confusing the Israelis with the Phalangists.<sup>43</sup>

In short, the day Israel completed its encirclement of West Beirut (13 June) was characterized by great confusion and panic behaviour among PLO fighters (See Map #15). Some Palestinians even burned their personal documents and prepared to take refuge in foreign embassies.<sup>44</sup> It was assumed that had Sharon continued with an immediate assault on the PLO, the IDF would have captured West Beirut. But Tel Aviv opted instead for negotiations through American envoy Habib, who understood that coercive diplomacy was the best means to ensure the evacuation of the PLO from the Lebanese capital. Thus, for Israel, the date of 13 June marked the reformulation of its original war aims. Having destroyed the PLO's infrastructure in the South, Begin redefined the initial goals

of the invasion to include: (1) the expulsion of the PLO's units and the removal of the Syrian army from Lebanon; (2) the establishment of a strong Lebanese government; and (3) the conclusion of a peace treaty between Tel Aviv and Beirut.<sup>45</sup>

As expected, Arafat promptly rejected the Israeli demand to leave Beirut on the grounds that this would mean the "end of the revolution", and the loss of a territorial base contiguous with Israel.<sup>46</sup> Perhaps it was for this last strategic reason that Habash, leader of the PFLP, preferred "martyrdom", and even talked of turning Beirut into a "second Stalingrad".<sup>47</sup> Part of the PLO's predicament was the fact that Arafat did not have much of an alternative on where to go should he decide to leave Beirut. If he chose to go to Syria, the PLO would have to operate in a "gilded cage", while going to Egypt would require him to accept the Camp David Accord.<sup>48</sup> On the other hand, the PLO had more to gain in rejecting the Israeli conditions for a ceasefire. First, the continuation of the war around West Beirut would increase the PLO's credibility with the Palestinians as a force determined to represent them. Second, in defending West Beirut, Arafat hoped to increase US pressure on Begin for a negotiated settlement. Finally, in holding out in Beirut, Arafat could hope to increase international pressure on Tel Aviv to retreat from the outskirts of the city, leaving the PLO there.<sup>49</sup>

By imposing a siege on Beirut, Israel had committed itself to defeat its enemy; for any other outcome would have

meant a political fiasco. If the PLO was not driven out of Beirut, the war would appear in the eyes of many Israelis to have been pointless. This prospect could have led to either resignation of the Likud Cabinet, or to the dismissal of Sharon as a defense minister.<sup>50</sup> To avoid such a scenario, on 20 June 1982 Sharon declared that "we have not returned the sword to the sheath, and will not until the last terrorist has left."<sup>51</sup> Moreover, an all-out war against the PLO would certainly enrage domestic and world opinion, because such a massive operation would involve the risk of high civilian casualties. Thus, the decision was made to remove the PLO from Beirut without engaging in a direct battle.<sup>52</sup> The IDF was ordered to impose a siege on Beirut to force the PLO to evacuate the city or face total destruction in its bunkers. For Arafat, the PLO at least had to survive the war as a political force in the Middle East, while the Likud government was determined to expel the PLO from Beirut in order to avoid political upheaval at home. It opted, finally, for a siege strategy in the hope that the diplomatic efforts launched by Washington would succeed in obtaining the withdrawal of Palestinian fighters from the Lebanese capital.

Habib's mission during the siege of Beirut embodied three goals: to bring an end to the war; to arrange for a safe evacuation of the PLO from the capital; and to organize a multinational peacekeeping force to supervise the Palestinian withdrawal and to protect the inhabitants of West Beirut,

especially Palestinian civilians, from the Maronite militia.<sup>53</sup> Upon his arrival in Lebanon on 14 June, Habib submitted to President Sarkis a nine-point plan to be used as a framework for negotiations. This envisaged: the departure of Palestinian leaders and fighters from Beirut; a ban on the redeployment of any PLO unit in other parts of Lebanon; an agreement to allow a symbolic presence of the PLO's political bureau, preferably outside Beirut; the control of the capital by the Lebanese army; and the withdrawal of the Syrian forces. The plan also stipulated its basic aim of bringing to an end the presence of all foreign forces in Lebanon, be it Palestinian, Syrian or Israeli.<sup>54</sup>

The pursuit of Habib's plan involved arduous negotiations with Palestinian leaderships. Arafat was concerned about the fate of the Palestinian community in Beirut once PLO fighters had left the city. He was convinced that in the aftermath of the PLO's departure, the Maronite militia might seek to exact revenge against Palestinian refugees remaining behind.<sup>55</sup> Still more difficult to resolve was the question of where Palestinian guerrillas would go when they left Lebanon. Given the PLO's past experiences with Jordan in the late 1960's and Lebanon in the mid-1970's, no Arab state was willing to host any Palestinian military presence on its soil.<sup>56</sup> In addition, Arafat's duplicity had also complicated the evacuation process and prolonged the siege. Although he let it be known on 1 July that he was prepared to leave Beirut,



Arafat sought appropriate political terms as the price for doing so. At first, he insisted on leaving behind 300 fighters as a symbolic military presence inside Palestinian camps, then on attaching PLO units to the regular Lebanese army, and finally on retaining an office in Beirut.<sup>57</sup> Israel rejected all of Arafat's terms, insisting that the PLO's departure from Beirut must be total and unconditional. Arafat then tried to gain a recognition from Washington by calling upon Habib to negotiate with him "face to face." Habib declined to do so because of Washington's often stated policy of not recognizing the PLO unless the latter recognized the right of Israel to exist.<sup>58</sup> Above all, Arafat was not about to walk out of Beirut in disgrace. To him the siege was a question of "saving face", because the "dignity and honour of the PLO were at stake."<sup>59</sup> In essence, Arafat was playing for time to let the Israelis bear the onus of the siege. According to Bashir Gemayel, he thought he "could wear down the Israeli army just as he wore down the Syrian army and the Lebanese army before it."<sup>60</sup>

This time, however, Arafat had no chance of forcing the IDF to retreat from the outskirts of Beirut. Throughout the summer of 1982, Israeli military pressure continued to mount. The IDF employed a classical three-pronged siege strategy involving heavy bombardment, tied blockade, and psychological warfare. First, West Beirut underwent artillery bombardment from the air, the sea, and the ground. In most instances, the

bombardment was a one-sided affair, indiscriminate and massive. Virtually all districts of the city were attacked, many buildings were destroyed, and a large number of civilians were killed or wounded.<sup>61</sup> On 12 August, Beirut suffered its most concentrated bombardment. According to Schiff and Ya'ari, "Black Thursday ... was a nightmare in which the saturation bombing came on top of a massive artillery barrage that began at dawn and continued throughout the eleven hours of the air raid."<sup>62</sup> Throughout that day, another eyewitness observed, it was even impossible to hold a conversation: "The scream of planes going into their steep, attacking dives drowned all attempts to speak, and the non-stop crunch of exploding bombs and shells punctuated every sentence."<sup>63</sup> Unofficial statistics counted 500 people killed or wounded and about 6,000 houses destroyed or damaged.<sup>64</sup>

The blockade of West Beirut was another tactic in the siege strategy. It involved the "hindering of the movement of the people; restrictions on the transport of goods; and the interruption in the supply of water and electricity."<sup>65</sup> This measure inflicted more widespread hardship on civilians than did the Israeli bombardment. During the blockade, wrote Time's correspondent, "Most of West Beirut's people have slipped into a sullen lethargy. There is nowhere to go and nothing to do. Rather than risk going out while the shelling continues, people are staying at home .... For most people, the big chore is getting water. Then they sit back and wonder

when this will all end, and whether it can get any worse."<sup>66</sup>

Finally, the IDF employed psychological warfare in efforts to force the PLO out of Beirut. This campaign involved the use of leaflets, car bombs, and the so-called "salami measure."<sup>67</sup> It started on 28 June when Israeli jets dropped leaflets advising the people of West Beirut to flee the city because of an imminent air raid. Written in Arabic, the leaflets read: "To the residents: The Israeli Defence Force is continuing its war against the terrorists and has not yet used its full force. It is concerned not to hurt innocent civilians or anyone who does not fight against it. Residents of Beirut, make use of the ceasefire and save your lives .... Save your life and those of your beloved ones."<sup>68</sup> Also, within one week in June, a series of eight cars blew up, killing hundreds of civilians. PLO fighters started to fear that Israeli informers were operating in their midst.<sup>69</sup> Finally, the "salami measure" helped the IDF to advance a few yards inside the city on 2 August. On that day, the IDF began maximizing point-blank fire with tanks, and at the same time minimizing their own casualties by advancing firmly and slowly.<sup>70</sup>

The pressure was unrelenting. The IDF employed all military tactics to induce the defenders to surrender, to bring about the capture of the PLO's leadership, and to influence the outcome of the negotiations. To this end, civilians of West Beirut had to be severely punished for

hosting the PLO. It was assumed correctly, by the IDF that the siege strategy would create a rift between the Lebanese population and the Palestinians. The continuation of the siege had convinced many Lebanese that, in the final analysis, it was the PLO and not the Israeli attackers who were holding them hostage. During the previous seven years many Muslim Lebanese had resented, although quietly, the fact that the PLO was behaving as if it owned West Beirut. In a sense the siege provided them the opportunity to be "liberated" from the Palestinian yoke. Thus, in order to "save" the city from total annihilation, Saeb Salam, a former Lebanese Prime Minister, called upon the PLO to transform itself into a purely political organization. "It is better for you, and for us," Salam told Arafat, "that you go ... with your honour."<sup>71</sup>

Being on the defensive militarily and politically, Arafat announced his acceptance of Habib's plan on 6 August. The plan was also approved by Lebanon on 17 August and by the Israeli Cabinet the next day. It called for: the departure of all PLO leadership officers, and combatants from Beirut; the deployment of a Multi-National Force, consisting of French, Italian, and American contingents, to safeguard the evacuation process and to ensure the safety of Palestinian civilians left behind in the Lebanese capital; and for the evacuation to be completed by 3 September 1982.<sup>72</sup> As planned, on 21 August, advance elements of the MNF arrived in Beirut. On the same day, the first contingent of PLO fighters left the city by

ship for prearranged destinations in Tunisia, Jordan, Syria, Iraq, Southern Yemen, Northern Yemen, and Sudan. Over the next ten days more than 12,000 PLO guerrillas and Syrian soldiers were evacuated from Beirut by sea and over land.<sup>73</sup> Arafat himself left the city on 30 August for Tunisia via Greece. The siege of Beirut was finally over on 1 September.<sup>74</sup>

That day marked a clear-cut victory for Israel and a major defeat for the PLO. It seemed that Operation Peace for Galilee had achieved its military objectives.

First, the PLO's status of a "state-within-a-state" in Lebanon was dismantled. Even its health, educational, and social services were utterly destroyed. Palestinian refugees had once again become a faceless mass of people torn away from any form of collective life.<sup>75</sup> Second, PLO forces were scattered in remote areas of those Arab states that had agreed to accept them. In Jordan and Syria, PLO guerrillas were even guarded by those states' military forces. The two countries were aware of the PLO's contribution to destroying the Lebanese government in 1976, and were not willing to allow it to become a domestic force within their borders. Thus, when some Palestinian guerrillas arrived in Syria, they were taken to a fully manned camp located near Damascus.<sup>76</sup> Third, the military defeat of the PLO had also forced Arafat to modify his position on Israel. In November 1981, Arafat had rejected the Fahd Plan because it contained a clause, "that all states

in the region should be able to live in peace," which was widely understood as implying some kind of recognition of Israel's right to exist.<sup>77</sup> However, at the Arab Summit meeting in Fez on 9 September 1982, Arafat announced the PLO's acceptance of the plan.<sup>78</sup> This suggests that the PLO's endorsement of the Fahd Plan was an indirect result of its retreat in Lebanon. It also marked the end of an era in Arab politics.

Mikdadi, who witnessed the heyday of the Che Guevara-style of Arab nationalism, described her reaction to Arafat's departure from Beirut as follows: "Arafat stood up to leave, and I sobbed my heart out as the women threw rice in a last gesture of farewell. I cried for our lost Arab nationalism...."<sup>79</sup> In short, the PLO was profoundly weakened, militarily and politically, by the Israeli invasion. Throughout the rest of 1982 and into 1983, Arafat struggled to retain control of the PLO by "weaving a myth of valour around the chapter of the siege."<sup>80</sup> During the PNC's meeting in Algiers in February 1983, Issam Sartawi, a moderate Palestinian intellectual, was outraged by Arafat's depiction of the siege as a glowing victory. He argued that "if Beirut was such a great victory, then all we need is a series of such victories and we will be holding our next national council meeting in Fiji."<sup>81</sup>

Israel's military victory also helped to transform the political balance in Lebanon in favour of the Maronites. On

23 August 1982, as PLO forces sailed from Beirut, the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies met and elected Bashir Gemayel President of the Republic.<sup>82</sup> Although he was the only candidate, in the Lebanese style of democracy, in order to be elected Bashir needed a quorum of two-thirds (66 deputies) of the surviving 92 deputies. How to ensure a quorum of the Chamber of Deputies was Bashir's real problem. On 18 August, Muslim leaders decided to boycott the vote to prevent the election of Bashir.<sup>83</sup> They argued that the presidential election must not be convened in the shadow of Israeli guns, that the president-elect should be approved by a compromise between Christians and Muslims, and that the election must be postponed until a candidate of national union could be found. "It was not a question of boycotting Parliament", argues Saeb Salam, "but merely of forcing a delay in which a compromise in keeping with the National Covenant could be worked out."<sup>84</sup> This stand proved to be effective. On 18 August, the day of the scheduled election, the Speaker postponed the election until 23 August 1982, not for "security reasons" but because the latest calculation had shown that only 58 or 59 deputies would turn up.<sup>85</sup> Thus, when the quorum was achieved on 23 August, it was seen as a consequence of the IDF's assistance. According to Raymond Edde, a Deputy who lives in self-exile in Paris, some deputies had been threatened to "attend or else".<sup>86</sup> Mikhael Daher, a deputy from the north, argues that Bashir Gemayel was the only candidate because "no other

contender dared to challenge Israel's Chief in Lebanon while the IDF was still occupying Beirut at the time of the election."<sup>87</sup> Even Joseph Abu-Khalil, the former editor of the Phalangist newspaper, *Al-Naba*, admits that "had Israel not invaded Lebanon in 1982, Bashir would have remained a militia leader with a limited role."<sup>88</sup>

In short, it was Israeli tanks which determined the outcome. First, the election was held, not in the traditional chamber located between East and West Beirut, but in army barracks well protected by Israeli forces in East Beirut. Second, the IDF cut all communications in and out of West Beirut to prevent further consultations between those deputies who had decided to boycott the election and those who lived in East Beirut and were not sure of attending.<sup>89</sup> Third, the Israelis busied themselves in bringing as many deputies as possible to the election site, "advised" the Shiite deputies who resided in the South to attend the electoral session, and even provided a helicopter to pluck one elderly deputy out of an isolated village in the Beqaa Valley.<sup>90</sup> In cases when persuasion failed, deputies were subject to "menaces and constraints." The Phalangist militia tracked down some deputies and hustled them unceremoniously into the Chamber.<sup>91</sup> Hassan Rifai, a Sunni deputy from the Beqaa who was shot in the chest, accused the Phalangists of being behind the assassination attempt on his life.<sup>92</sup> Finally, some votes were even bought at a going rate of about half a million dollars



apiece. According to Najah Wakim, a deputy from West Beirut, millions of dollars had been received by some deputies as the price for attending the session.<sup>93</sup>

There is no doubt that the Israelis and the Phalangists were determined to win the Lebanese phase of the war. Had the necessary quorum not been achieved, the Phalange Party would have taken steps to wrest control of Lebanon by force. "If we lose", argued the chairman of Bashir's presidential campaign, "we will go to Baabda and get Sarkis to sign on the dotted line," meaning that the Phalangists would simply "force Sarkis to sign a document appointing Bashir prime minister so that, in line with the procedure dictated by the constitution, he would automatically acquire presidential powers, though not the title of president, when Sarkis' term expired."<sup>94</sup> For Israel, Bashir's election was the key for Lebanon to follow Egypt to the peace table. "Warmest wishes from the heart on the occasion of your election", read the telegram from Begin to Bashir Gemayel. "May God be with you, dear friend, in the fulfilment of your great historic mission, for the liberty of Lebanon and its independence."<sup>95</sup> Although he made no reference to Israel's future relations with Lebanon, on 25 August Begin predicted that eventually Tel Aviv would sign a peace treaty with Beirut.<sup>96</sup> Thus with Bashir's election as President, Israel's goal of establishing a new political order in Lebanon seemed to be within reach.

The newly-elected President hastened to put his own

regime in order. The security situation in and around Beirut improved. The Lebanese Army was deployed into West Beirut for the first time since 1974; crossing points between East and West Beirut were reopened; electricity and telephone service was resumed; and civil servants trickled back to work.<sup>97</sup> On the political front, Bashir continued to reach an understanding with other Lebanese communities. Besides, "power conferred respectability," and the Lebanese took this formula to their hearts.<sup>98</sup> Bashir's picture appeared in the streets of West Beirut, while the leaders of the National Movement hid themselves or yielded to him. Even Saeb Salam, who boycotted the presidential election, was ready to cooperate with the new president. He met with Bashir on 11 September, an encounter which was considered as another symbol of reunification of the long-divided country. Salam promised to attend the swearing-in-ceremony, and Bashir assured the Muslim leader that he was committed to Lebanon's freedom, sovereignty and independence -- a goal in keeping with the official version of Israel's policy during its invasion of Lebanon.

Major Haddad, the leader of the security belt zone and a friend of Israel, had also reaped gains from the Israeli invasion. On 7 June, Haddad was transported to join Begin and Sharon at the Beaufort after the castle was captured by the IDF. There, in a short ceremony, Begin turned the fortress over to him: "Now Beaufort is yours", Begin told Haddad.<sup>99</sup>

Moreover, as the Israeli army continued its advance into Lebanon, Haddad's militia extended its influence from the small strip of land along the Israeli-Lebanese border up the coastline to Beirut. Throughout, Haddad revealed his hatred of Palestinians. His militia was responsible for killing, torturing, and making thousands of Palestinians homeless.<sup>100</sup> And all these violent acts were committed, in Haddad's words, "with the coordination of the Israeli army."<sup>101</sup> On 8 September, Haddad urged Bashir to sign a peace treaty with Israel even if it meant some economic setbacks for Lebanon: "We must sacrifice our economic prosperity for the sake of our principles. Without Israel we could have lost our Lebanese identity."<sup>102</sup>

Moreover, it was through Haddad's enclave that Israel attempted to integrate South Lebanon into its economy. In most cases, the flow of economic advantage was only one way. During the invasion, Lebanese farmers operating in the South found it extremely difficult to export their products of vegetables, fruit, and tobacco to other parts of Lebanon and to Arab states. For "security reasons", Israeli tanks had destroyed much of the agricultural lands along the southern coastal road. Worse still, in March 1983, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states started imposing bans on Lebanese produce for fear of importing Israeli goods.<sup>103</sup> Consequently, Lebanese exports were ruined and, eventually, were supplemented by Israeli imports. Immediately following the

invasion, contends Chamsy Sarraf, a senior Lebanese bureaucrat, Lebanese markets were flooded with Israeli goods.<sup>104</sup> Even during the siege of West Beirut, fresh Israeli fruit was on sale there.<sup>105</sup> Fisk describes the state of the economy in South Lebanon as follows: "Sidon was a market centre for Lebanon's orange grove country, but I could not buy a Lebanese orange there. In the cold, windswept market beside the south, I could not find a Lebanese lemon or a Lebanese avocado. I could not find any Lebanese fruit at all. Every box of oranges, every crate of fruit had come from Israel."<sup>106</sup> In addition, Israelis were making enormous profits through the travelling branches of the Israeli Bank Leumi which opened for business in East Beirut.<sup>107</sup>

Finally, tourism was also an indication of Israel's extraordinary self-confidence in the Lebanese market. Some Lebanese were induced to act as official travel agents for EL-AL, the Israeli airline, which organized many trips for thousands of Israelis who wanted to discover Lebanon's historic sites.<sup>108</sup> It should be noted that the aim behind the free movements of goods and individuals between the two countries was not merely economic advantage, but to help bring about a de facto normalization of relations between Beirut and Jerusalem.

This aspiration came nearer to being realized on 17 May 1983 when Antoine Fattal, the Acting Director of the Lebanese Foreign Ministry, and David Kimche, Israel's Foreign Ministry

Director, signed the Lebanese-Israeli Troop Withdrawal Agreement. The agreement had been approved by the Lebanese Cabinet on 14 May, and by the Israeli Cabinet on 16 May. On 14 June 1983, the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies decided by a vast majority (65 to 2) to license the President of the Republic to ratify the agreement.<sup>109</sup>

The 17 May Accord called for the termination of the "technical state of war" between Beirut and Tel Aviv, a complete Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon, and the establishment of a Security Arrangements Committee to inspect security measures along the Israeli-Lebanese Frontiers.<sup>110</sup> The crux of the agreement can be found in the chapter dealing with security. The document restricted the amount of military hardware the Lebanese government could bring into the area which extends about forty miles north of the Israeli border; obliged Lebanon to prohibit any manifestation on its territory of hostility to Israel ranging from guerrilla activity to mere propaganda; and forbade Lebanon from allowing the passage of arms and equipment destined for any state not having diplomatic relations with Israel.<sup>111</sup> In addition, the agreement included a mandate for negotiating trade arrangements between the two countries, and provided for the establishment of liaison offices in each other's capital.<sup>112</sup>

In essence, the agreement met Israel's overriding demand for the security of its northern settlements. According to Hof, Tel Aviv would have refused to withdraw from Lebanese

territory had the Lebanese government "declined to make certain commitments with regard to the security of northern Israel. The invasion was, after all, called Operation: Peace for Galilee".<sup>113</sup> Within the regional context, the agreement provided additional Arab recognition of the legitimacy of Israel's existence, and so in effect secured the disengagement of Lebanon from the Arab-Israeli conflict. Lebanon was willing to make these concessions, argues Deputy Mikhael Daher, in order to get the Israeli troops out.<sup>114</sup> This feeling was summed up well by Fattal, when he told Kimche after signing the pact: "If we sign this agreement with you, it is because Lebanon has an urgent need for tranquility and order."<sup>115</sup> It should be noted that the agreement was not a peace treaty providing for the normalization of relations between Israel and Lebanon, but, with it, argues Seale, "it looked as if Israel had won not only the war but also the peace .... Pax Hebraica seemed the new reality."<sup>116</sup>

Israel's military and political successes in Lebanon were also reinforced by American diplomatic support, by the Soviet Union's passive response, and by the overwhelming sense of helplessness within the Arab world. First, the Israeli invasion was accompanied by passive American acquiescence. During the first three weeks of the military operation, Israel found in Secretary Haig the best spokesman for its cause. His daily briefings, argue Schiff and Ya'ari, were unmistakable testimony that the Secretary of State "stood squarely" behind

the Israeli action.<sup>117</sup> For instance, on 4 June, Haig urged the international community to see Israel's invasion of Lebanon in light of the previous night's attempt on the life of Ambassador Argov.<sup>118</sup> He saw in the invasion a "great strategic opportunity" for Washington to reconstitute the internal situation in Lebanon without the presence of "an international terrorist organization" in Beirut.<sup>119</sup> On 9 June, Haig instructed Ambassador Kirkpatrick to veto a UN Security Council resolution on the grounds that it "would not be reasonable or balanced or fair simply to point a finger of blame" at Israel alone.<sup>120</sup>

Even after Haig's surprise resignation on 25 June 1982 and the appointment of George Shultz as the new Secretary of State, Washington vetoed another Security Council draft resolution because, in Kirkpatrick's words, "the draft was not sufficiently balanced to accomplish the objective of ending the cycle of violence."<sup>121</sup> In essence, throughout the summer of 1982, Washington's policy regarding the crisis in Lebanon appeared to serve Tel Aviv's objectives. President Reagan received the news of Bashir Gemayel's election as President of Lebanon with "great satisfaction". Moreover, Habib negotiated the evacuation of the PLO from West Beirut according to Israeli conditions. In this way, "whenever the Palestinians put forward conditions that were unacceptable to Washington [Habib] recommended to his government that it give more rein to Sharon."<sup>122</sup> In short, by its actions, the US

appeared to reinforce the impression that it had given Begin and Sharon the "green light" to invade Lebanon.

By contrast, the Soviet Union reacted with almost complete indifference. Aside from its early condemnation of Tel Aviv's military operation, Moscow did its utmost not to become involved in the crisis. It did not provide the PLO with any military aid during the course of the fighting; it did not apply the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with Damascus to protect the Syrian army in Lebanon; and it relegated the news of the invasion to second place on the English language broadcast of Radio Moscow.<sup>123</sup> In fact, it was not until 20 June that the Soviet Union "vigorously protested", and then only against the bombing of its embassy in Beirut.<sup>124</sup> Even when Nayef Hawatmeh, the leader of the DFLP, sent a personal message to Brezhnev asking for military support, the Soviet leader responded only by sending the Palestinian people "his fraternal greetings and support in their heroic struggle."<sup>125</sup> In return, Arafat stopped meeting with the Soviet ambassador, and PLO lieutenants began denouncing the Soviets for their policy of neglect. "Perhaps the Soviets feel they have not lost much in Lebanon," concludes a PLO official, "but I assure you they have lost something all over the world. Every liberation movement now knows that they do not keep their promises."<sup>126</sup> Presumably, it was because of the Soviet Union's lack of response to his plight that Arafat accepted Habib's proposal to leave Beirut.



Indeed, during the siege of Beirut Moscow exercised no influence on events and eventually was forced into "reluctant support of American management of the Beirut crisis."<sup>127</sup> Moscow's reticence during the war led one expert to conclude that the Soviet Union had become "a superpower in eclipse."<sup>128</sup>

Soviet passivity in part reflected the meekness of the Arab response to the Israeli operation. Israeli decisionmakers had correctly counted on inter-Arab divisions when they launched the invasion of Lebanon. During the siege of Beirut, notes O'Brien,

the Arab states gave themselves to a particularly bitter bout of mutual recrimination. Syria blamed the disaster on Egypt's defection. Mubarak spoke of Syria's secret deal with Israel. The Jordanian press wrote of Syria and its partners as the steadfastness pretenders. Syria retorted by calling Hussein the spy king."<sup>129</sup>

Beside bickering among themselves, the Arabs largely limited themselves to rhetorical support. Colonel Muammar Gaddafi of Libya, for instance, sent a message to Arafat suggesting that the PLO leaders commit suicide rather than surrender to the Israelis. Arafat replied with a sharp note arguing that if the Colonel "had fulfilled all the pledges of support he had made to the PLO, then the Palestinians might not be in their present predicament."<sup>130</sup> President Mubarak of Egypt was quick to condemn the invasion, yet he made it clear that he had no intention of abrogating the Camp David Accord.<sup>131</sup> In short,

almost every Arab country had an ambivalent attitude to what was going on in Lebanon. No Arab army showed any inclination to come to the aid of the Palestinians in Beirut. The invasion provoked no demonstrations in Arab capitals. This led Salah Khalaph to accuse Arab leaders of conspiring with Tel Aviv against the Palestinian cause.<sup>132</sup> So disgusted was he with Arab inaction that, on his departure, Arafat boarded a Greek cruise liner and sailed for Athens, refusing to make an Arab country his first stop.<sup>133</sup> This gesture was a clear indication of the general deterioration in relations between the PLO and its so-called Arab backers.

Israeli decisionmakers were also shrewd in launching the invasion of Lebanon when it and its national army were divided along sectarian lines. Faced with this situation, President Sarkis had nothing to depend on but limited means and a "classical" response. He strongly denounced the Israeli aggression; summoned the ambassadors of the countries which are permanent members of the Security Council; and obtained, in resolution 509, a demand for Israel to "withdraw all its military forces forthwith and unconditionally to the internationally recognized boundaries of Lebanon."<sup>134</sup> Even so, Sarkis seemed to appreciate the outcome of the Israeli military operation. In August he told Karim Pakradouni, a member of the Phalange party's politbureau, that "all my sufferings for the past six years at last mean something. Who would have believed it? Bashir Gemaye' President of the

Republic and Yasser Arafat about to evacuate Beirut. God is great. Lebanon is saved."<sup>135</sup>

Prominent Lebanese communities yielded to the Israeli invasion in order to protect their parochial interests. The Maronites in East Beirut welcomed the Israelis with rice and rose water, and the Phalangists saw in the invasion an opportunity to ensure their dominance of Lebanese politics. For them, argues Gilmour, the invasion would be "the last, decisive act in the civil war which, by disposing of the Syrians and the PLO, would leave them in control of post-war Lebanon."<sup>136</sup> Thus, instead of protesting Israel's military actions, the Maronite leaderships blamed Assad and Arafat for the whole disaster, and echoed the Israeli demand that PLO and Syrian forces should be expelled from Lebanon.<sup>137</sup> In South Lebanon, the Shiites received the IDF with complete equanimity; the Amal leader, Nabih Berri, ordered his militiamen not to resist the entry of the Israeli army, and even to surrender their weapons if necessary. All the Shiites asked was that the IDF not confiscate their weapons.<sup>138</sup> Obviously, the Shiites needed arms to challenge Maronite political hegemony, protect their interests, and struggle for more power. These aims were similar to those of Walid Jumblatt, the leader of the Druze community. Soon after the IDF occupied the Shouf region, Jumblatt broke his alliance with the PLO, met with Shimon Peres on 19 June, and called upon his Druze followers to limit their opposition of the

invasion to "passive resistance."<sup>139</sup> Moreover, on 1 July, a delegation of Lebanese Druze visited their religious leader in Israel, Sheikh Amin Tarif, and asked him to intervene with Prime Minister Begin to protect them from the Maronite Militia which, with the help of the IDF, had moved into the Shouf region.<sup>140</sup>

In short, most Lebanese communities were happy to see the PLO leave Beirut, provided that this would not change the delicate balance within the country. As in 1860 and 1920, they were willing to collaborate with the invaders in order to protect or enhance their interests within the Lebanese polity. "Once it was clear that the Israeli invasion of Lebanon was something more than a punitive raid, or an occupation of South Lebanon....," contends Bulloch, "then all the various parties involved began trying to work out their own strategy and war aims, and what they hoped to get out of the peace which was bound to follow."<sup>141</sup> To this end, each Lebanese community wanted to establish friendly relations with Tel Aviv as a necessary measure to ensure its position in the political game which had governed Lebanon since the mid-1860s.

By the end of August 1982, Israel began to claim that it had finally won the war in Lebanon. Military victory was symbolized by the destruction of the PLO's military infrastructure in South Lebanon; the evacuation of Palestinian forces from West Beirut; the destruction of the Syrian SAM batteries in the Begaa Valley; and the shooting down of about

80 Syrian aircraft. Israel had achieved unchallenged mastery of Lebanon's airspace and effectively occupied almost half of the country's territory.

Politically, too, it appeared that Israel had achieved all objectives of its military campaign. First, after leaving Beirut, Arafat accepted the Fahd Plan, which implicitly recognized the right of Israel to exist. Second, the Israeli invasion jeopardized Syria's security and regional standing as the IDF started imposing a "new order" on Lebanon. Finally, the election of Bashir Gemayel as President of Lebanon raised the Israeli expectation that a Lebanon freed from Palestinian and Syrian occupations would sign a peace treaty with them. Lebanon did sign the Lebanese-Israeli Troop Withdrawal Agreement on 17 May 1983. However, this agreement was negotiated between Israel and Amin Gemayel, who succeeded his brother after the latter was assassinated on 14 September 1982. Bashir's death was of great political consequence: it marked the demise of the Israeli policy in Lebanon.

### 6.3: Israel's Failure in Lebanon

In late August 1982, the Likud government had good reasons to feel satisfied with its military and political achievements. But the euphoria was not to last long. Events in September were so traumatic that they made Operation Peace for Galilee politically fruitless. In the final analysis, Israel failed to impose a new political order on Lebanon. Nor

was it successful in its efforts to bring about the withdrawal of the Syrian army from the Beqaa Valley or to destroy Palestinian nationalism in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Worse still, the invasion produced unprecedented frictions within Israeli society itself; it had created difficulties in the American-Israeli relationship; and it tarnished Israel's international image as a moral society. In October 1982, only four months after its invasion of Lebanon, Israel was described by Time as "a shaken nation."<sup>142</sup> In short, the invasion which had been conceived as an instrument to achieve political goals simply wound up "as no more than a gruelling and corrosive military action."<sup>143</sup>

#### 6.3.1: The Lebanese Context

Israel's sense of achievement was marred first by the assassination of President-elect Bashir Gemayel on 14 September 1982. On that day, an explosion demolished the local headquarters of the Phalange party in East Beirut where Gemayel and his associates were holding their regular weekly meeting.<sup>144</sup> Gemayel was identified only by his hexagonal wedding ring and by a letter of congratulation on his election from a village mayor found in the pocket of his suit.<sup>145</sup> Bashir's death came as a major shock to the Israeli leadership. For them, Bashir had been the keystone on which the entire invasion had been built. Moreover, since the outbreak of Lebanon's civil war in 1975, the Israelis had

courted Bashir heavily, encouraged his political ambitions, and considered him to be their closest ally among Lebanese leaders.<sup>146</sup> Two days before his death, it was reported that Bashir had reached an understanding with Sharon to send Maronite forces into West Beirut to destroy all trace of Palestinian camps there and flatten them into tennis courts. He even promised Sharon that by 15 October 1982 "there won't be a single terrorist in Beirut."<sup>147</sup> Now that Bashir was gone, so too were Israel's prospects of establishing a friendly regime in Lebanon. Israel feared that the assassination of Bashir had created a situation of uncertainty, through which Tel Aviv could not retain its position of influence over the next presidential election. With Bashir's death, it seemed that the real issue concerning many Israelis at the time was "the troubling thought that after all the sacrifices made by Israel in Lebanon, the possibility of accomplishing its objectives was liable to vanish completely."<sup>148</sup> To reverse the situation to its advantage, it remained for Begin and Sharon to employ Israel's preponderant military power and occupy West Beirut.

Thus, within 24 hours of Gemayel's death, the IDF was holding all strategic points in West Beirut and sealing off Palestinian refugee camps in the area. This time, especially after the PLO's departure from the city, the IDF met only small and insignificant armed resistance. The Lebanese leftist militias were no match for the Israelis. In the

preceding two weeks, those militias had handed over their defensive positions to the Lebanese army, which took no action as the Israelis moved into the city.<sup>149</sup> The Israeli rationale for occupying West Beirut was to prevent "the danger of violence, bloodshed and anarchy."<sup>150</sup> However, on 16 September 1982 the IDF radio reported that Palestinian camps, which had been harbouring terrorists, had been encircled by Israeli forces, and it had been decided to send Phalangist militiamen into the camps to "mop them" of Palestinian fighters."<sup>151</sup> Sharon, who had "authoritative information" that about 2,000 Palestinian guerrillas were still concentrated in the area, held a meeting with Phalangist officers on 16 September and urged them to destroy whatever was left of the PLO's infrastructure in West Beirut.<sup>152</sup> That evening, with Israeli tanks standing guard outside, Israeli-backed Phalangists led by Elie Hobeika, the Phalange chief intelligence officer, moved by foot and jeep into the battered Sabra and Shatilla camp (See Map #16). Then the militiamen rampaged round the two camps for almost three days killing defenceless civilians indiscriminately.

The victims were men, women and children of all ages. When an Israeli tank crew asked a Phalangist why they were killing pregnant women, the Phalangist replied: "Pregnant women will give birth to terrorists, the children when they grow up will be terrorists."<sup>153</sup> In all, it was estimated that about 800 people were killed, and hundreds of others were



listed as missing. Indeed, because many of the victims were buried in hastily dug mass graves by the killers, and because others were taken away and never seen again, it may never be known how many people were butchered.<sup>154</sup> Perhaps as many as 2,000 people were killed -- the same number of terrorists Sharon was allegedly looking for.

By Lebanese standards, the massacre could perhaps be seen as an "ordinary incident" -- one of a series of vendetta butcheries which had been going on sporadically since the outbreak of the civil war in the mid-1970s. What was not ordinary this time was that the IDF were deeply implicated in the events that led to the mass murders. The Phalangists, who actually carried out the massacre, did so with the full knowledge and approval of the Israeli army, which provided them with flares during the nighttime killing, allowed them to use two bulldozers to dig mass graves, and failed to intervene as soon as information became available as to the actual nature of the operation.<sup>155</sup>

Critics of Israel's handling of the events at Sabra and Shatilla argue that for Sharon to claim that "no one imagined what would happen" when the Phalangists stormed the camps was "an affront to common sense and to the consistently high quality of Israeli military intelligence."<sup>156</sup> Anyone recognizing the realities of life in Lebanon, including the deep animosity between the different ethnic groups and the blood feuds between families and clans, might have expected

the Phalangists to avenge the murder of their leader (See Chapter #4). During the course of the Lebanese civil war, the Phalange militia had established a reputation of brutality and revenge killing. In the summer 1976, for example, Bashir Gemayel himself led one of the war's most savage battles over a Palestinian camp, Tel Azatar, including the massacre of the camp survivors. In response, the PLO attacked the town of Damour, twelve miles south of Beirut, displacing its inhabitants to make room for Palestinian refugees. During the Israeli invasion, Palestinians were driven from Damour, and the town was returned to Phalange control. The Damour battalion, one of the Phalangist units which had been trained by the Israelis to "clear out terrorist nests" in West Beirut, and whose ranks included members of the displaced families, was anxious to take revenge against Palestinians and was believed to have been the first to enter the camps.<sup>157</sup> The Israelis also knew that Hobeika, who led the forces into Sabra and Shatilla, was the most feared Phalangist in Lebanon, and that his followers were ruthless, brutal and undisciplined.<sup>158</sup> Even before Bashir's death, top Israeli officers had planned to enlist Maronite forces to enter the camps in order to minimize Israeli casualties and, most importantly, to keep Israeli hands unsoiled.<sup>159</sup>

In a way, it was unfortunate for Sharon's plan that the 2,000 Palestinian fighters never materialized. The Israeli defense minister fell victim to his own obsession with the

supposed presence of the PLO in West Beirut. As one Western diplomat states: "The Israelis terrorized themselves by thinking the camps were a great fortress manned by hundreds of determined fighters."<sup>160</sup> But the Palestinians there were hardly warlike. What, then, could have possessed the Israelis to allow the killing of unarmed civilians? Perhaps Begin's dehumanization of Palestinians as "two-legged animals" was virtually a mandate for Israeli soldier to permit such horrors to take place.<sup>161</sup>

As the story of the camps started to unfold, international criticism reflected a change in the perception of Israel from the "David" to the "Goliath" of the Middle East. It also demonstrated that the Jewish state was expected to operate under different moral principles from other Third World countries.<sup>162</sup> It was soon established that the IDF not only facilitated the killings, but also had watched the murders in the camps and did little or nothing to stop them. Besides, Israeli officers knew that the camps were undefended and so were willing to send in only 150 Phalangists known for their rare engagement in any armed conflict.<sup>163</sup> In Washington, President Reagan was particularly angry because the IDF had moved into West Beirut in violation of the Habib agreement, which guaranteed the safety of Palestinians after the departure of the PLO from the city (See Chapter #5). Eventually, the US joined with other members of the UN Security Council in unanimous condemnation of the Israeli

advance into West Beirut. The resolution gave Tel Aviv 24 hours to withdraw its troops from the area or at least to agree to do so.<sup>164</sup> In a televised address to the nation, Reagan restated his determination to get the Israelis out of Lebanon, and announced that he was sending the Marines back to Beirut as part of the Multi-National Force to try for the second time to maintain peace and preserve order there.<sup>165</sup>

The massacre had left Lebanon, once again, in turmoil and made negotiations for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from that country more difficult. Arafat felt that he was "tricked" by the events at Sabra and Shatilla. King Fahd vowed that the massacre would somehow be avenged: "We, as Muslims, are for peace, but when honour is undermined there must be retaliation. I cannot say when, but there will be."<sup>166</sup> It was ironic that until the very moment of the explosion that killed Gemayel and precipitated the massacre, Lebanon had appeared to be emerging not only from years of domination by the PLO but also from its own civil war. The pacification of West Beirut was proceeding briskly as Lebanese leftist militias surrendered their weapons to the Lebanese army and removed their forces from the streets. "For the first time since the civil war began in 1975," reported Smith, "a semblance of legal authority and security was returning to the city."<sup>167</sup> But now, with the revelations of the massacre, Lebanon's fleeting moment of peace was over. Operation Peace for Galilee and its mishaps, argues Seale, "demonstrated the

inherent limits to the ability of a small country, however wilful and well armed, to force its writ on a whole region."<sup>168</sup>

Finally, and most significantly, the massacre had not crowned Israel with a great political and military victory but had "stained its honour indelibly."<sup>169</sup> Many Israelis began to wonder if their country had lost the sense of righteousness that Ben-Gurion had said must distinguish its actions and its role in the world. They rejected Begin's portrayal of the massacre as a particularly Lebanese perversion. As many as 400,000 took part in the largest protest demonstration ever held in Israel to call for the appointment of a full independent judicial inquiry to investigate the role of the IDF in the events which led to the mass murders. On 28 September, Begin agreed to such an inquiry, to be headed by Israel's Supreme Court Chief Justice Yitzhak Kahan. The commission published its report on 8 February 1983. While acquitting the IDF for "deeds perpetrated outside Israel's borders," it charged the Chief of Staff and the Minister of Defense with indirect responsibility for the killing and it called for the resignation or dismissal of Sharon. The commissioners found that the Minister of Defense bore personal responsibility for "having disregarded the prospect of acts of vengeance and bloodshed by the Phalangists against the population of the refugee camps and for having failed to take this danger into account when he decided to have the

Phalangists enter the camps."<sup>170</sup> After weeks of speculation, Sharon agreed to forfeit the post of defense but remained in the Cabinet as minister without portfolio. Begin went into a semi-seclusion and decided to retire on 15 September 1983. In accepting the Kahan Commission's report, concludes O'Brien, Begin "implicitly recognized his own ultimate responsibility for bringing about actions which not only dismayed Israel's friends throughout the world, but also divided the people of Israel, internally, as they had never before been divided in time of war."<sup>171</sup>

Finally, on 21 September 1982, Israel withdrew its forces from West Beirut. The IDF was replaced by the MNF, mainly symbolized by the presence of US Marines. The returning Marines had different aims from those of their first mission. Reagan saw the intervention as serving two objectives. First, it would ensure that the newly elected President, Amin Gemayel, had time to form a government of national unity. Secondly, it would reinforce the United States' position in negotiating the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon.<sup>172</sup> Once elected, Amin appeared less interested in either Syria or Israel, and was anxious to show himself as America's faithful friend. In his inaugural address on 23 September 1982, he called for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all "non-Lebanese forces from Lebanon."<sup>173</sup> His goal, argues Haddad, illustrates a convergence of both American and Lebanese policies. Thus, when President Gemayel

met with President Reagan at the Oval Office in October 1982, the latter reaffirmed that "President Gemayel deserves our full support at time when he and his people are working for the reconstruction of Lebanon."<sup>174</sup>

Following Bashir's assassination, the Reagan Administration had backed the election of his brother Amin as president because he was a moderate and perhaps "the most reasonable and conciliatory of all the Maronite leaders involved in the fighting."<sup>175</sup> Unlike his brother, Amin was flexible, aloof, and a conciliator. In contrast to Bashir's propensity to crush his opponents, Amin advocated the restoration of Lebanon's pluralism. In Foreign Affairs, Amin wrote: "There is no majority in modern Lebanon: we are a country of minorities.... There is no Christian Lebanon, no Muslim Lebanon; there is no Maronite, Shiite, Sunni or Druze Lebanon. There is but one Lebanon, which unites us all, and Lebanon is precisely the expression of our common bond."<sup>176</sup> Most importantly, regarding the regional dimension of the Lebanese crisis, Amin preferred the Syrians to the Israelis. In his book, The Greatest Bet, he argues that "Lebanon is an Arab country. It lives in and depends upon the Arab world and, therefore, it must not be the second Arab country after Egypt to normalize its relations with Israel."<sup>177</sup> On the other hand, Gemayel thought Lebanon's stability depended to a larger degree on Syria. As he argued: "Lebanon needs direct Syrian support to consolidate its internal front, to cultivate

the new coalition represented in the government of national unity, and to contain the many militias that emerged in the ten-year war."<sup>178</sup> Although Gemayel did not preach the establishment of a special relationship between Damascus and Beirut, he nonetheless concluded that both countries' similar historical experience and wide-ranging interests necessitated "close cooperation and coordination."<sup>179</sup> On 6 June 1982, Gemayel had condemned the Israeli invasion and implicitly criticized his brother's connection with Tel Aviv by declaring that the "restoration of Lebanon's sovereignty is more important than winning the presidency."<sup>180</sup>

On 21 September 1982, the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies elected Amin Gemayel President of the Republic by a majority of 77 votes, including many Muslim deputies who had boycotted Bashir's election and only three abstentions. In general, the Muslim communities supported him because they sensed that he was not "Israel's man" in Lebanon. Not even the Sabra and Shatilla massacres could reverse the unification trend, as the Muslim leadership refused to lay blame on Maronite forces, and placed the entire responsibility on the Israeli soldiers, who were assisted by "a handful of guides" from the Phalange militia.<sup>181</sup> In short, Gemayel appeared so conciliatory towards the Muslims that he was dubbed by some Maronite extremists as "Muhammad Amin."<sup>182</sup>

Gemayel authorized the commencement of Lebanese-Israeli negotiations as the "only available way" to secure Lebanon's



liberation.<sup>183</sup> At best, he sought not a peace treaty with Israel, but some kind of a security arrangement similar to the 1949 Armistice Agreement between the two countries. In March 1983, he articulated the limits for negotiations with Israel by insisting they must not in any way endanger Lebanon's credibility in the Arab world.<sup>184</sup> "If this self-imposed constraint had not existed", asserts Haddad, "the negotiations could have been concluded in 10 days."<sup>185</sup> His approach to the Lebanese crisis was based on the assumption that a deep US commitment would enable him to survive the pressures from both within and without Lebanon.

However, instead of using the Marines as a crutch to effect a national reconciliation, he began to use them as a "club" to beat his opponents. According to Friedman, as soon as Amin became President, he began to display all of Bashir's contempt for the Muslims: he imposed martial law on the Sunni West Beirut, ordered the army to bulldoze illegally built shanties that had encroached on roads in the Shiite southern suburbs of the capital, and ignored Jumblatt and treated him as a peasant unworthy of even being invited to the presidential palace.<sup>186</sup> On the other hand, Gemayel refrained from deploying the army in predominantly Maronite East Beirut, where the Phalangists continued their armed checkpoints and private ports outside governmental control. Gradually, the Muslims came to believe that Amin was trying to reconstruct Lebanon in the same fashion that his brother Bashir had hoped.

They denounced Amin as a "brutal little dictator", accused the Phalangists of hijacking the state and the army for their own purposes, and allied themselves with the Syrians, who vehemently opposed the Lebanese-Israeli negotiations.<sup>187</sup> Fearing for his own regime, Gemayel authorized the conclusion of the 17 May Accord between Tel Aviv and Beirut in the hope that the US, and perhaps Israel, would intervene to secure its implementation and, hence, protect the presidency.

On 17 May 1983, the day that Lebanese and Israeli negotiators signed the Troop Withdrawal Agreement, Shafiq Wazzan, then Lebanon's Sunni Prime Minister, declared that "This is the saddest day in my life. This is not an honourable agreement. I do not believe America has done its best in limiting Israel's demands. I am a very unhappy man."<sup>188</sup> This statement also reflected the mood of the Sunni community in West Beirut, which was becoming increasingly opposed to the Accord. In East Beirut, however, the Phalangists were behaving as if they had won the civil war, and pressed Gemayel to ratify the Accord. Such a polarization of forces left Gemayel in an untenable position. He could not ratify the agreement and expect Lebanon to remain united, set he could not reject it and expect full support from the Israelis and Maronite forces. To end this stalemate, in September 1983 Israel decided to withdraw its army from the Shouf Mountains in a unilateral effort to pressure Gemayel into signing the 17 May Accord.

This move by the IDF left a vacuum which several groups rushed to fill. For Jumblatt, the Israeli departure provided a chance to liberate the Druzes' ancestral homeland from occupying Maronite forces. For Gemayel, it offered an opportunity finally to extend Maronite and government control over this strategic territory.<sup>189</sup> Consequently, a communal war erupted. The Marines became directly involved in the fighting in support of "the right of a government to extend sovereignty over its national territory."<sup>190</sup> In effect, Washington had made itself the guarantor of a regime that had come to represent no more than the Maronites' interests. For their part, the Israelis were reluctant to let the Phalangists maltreat the Druze population. Because Israel had its own Druze community, which was well represented in the army, it was in no position to keep supporting the Phalangists and alienate its own Druze citizens who had a strong feeling of kinship with their Lebanese co-religionists. The question for Jumblatt was one of survival. He welcomed the IDF's offer to help him on condition that PLO units would not be readmitted into the Shouf. Finally, with Syrian artillery assistance, Jumblatt was able to achieve a clear victory against Maronite forces and liberate the Druze heartland;<sup>191</sup> and on 6 February 1984, the Shiite militia, Amal, revolted against Gemayel's regime and successfully drove the Lebanese army out of West Beirut.<sup>192</sup>

Meanwhile, the pressure on the Marines to withdraw from

Lebanon was mounting. In fact, the employment of the battleship New Jersey in attacking Druze positions had convinced many Muslims that the "United States was not in Lebanon to promote a just peace, but to turn the country into an ally of the West and to achieve a settlement acceptable to Israel."<sup>193</sup> Worse still, a suicide attack on the Marines' barracks carried out by the Islamic Jihad, a pro-Iranian militia, took the lives of 242 Marines on 23 October 1983.<sup>194</sup> This was the straw that broke the camel's back. As news of the explosion reached Washington, President Reagan took the difficult decision to terminate the Marines' mission. This move led President Gemayel to abandon the Accord on 23 February 1984. His rationale was as follows: "When negotiating with Israel was the only imperative option to regain the land, we did not hesitate before this option, and when the abrogation of the 17 May Agreement became the only imperative option to unite the people, we did not hesitate to abrogate."<sup>195</sup> Implicit in this explanation seemed a recognition of the fact that the "Israelization" of Lebanon had simply failed, and that it was Syria that had the key role in shaping the country's future.

#### 6.3.2: The Syrian Context

The Syrians naturally denounced the 17 May Accord, on the grounds that it infringed Lebanese sovereignty, turned the country into an Israeli protectorate, and rewarded Israel for

its invasion. First, from an ideological perspective, Assad considered the Accord as a "Zionist hegemonistic plan" designed, like the Camp David Accord, to take Lebanon out of the Arab-Israeli conflict in violation of Arab solidarity and commitment.<sup>196</sup> Assad, who supported a comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict, could not accept a plan that paved the way for any peace settlement, especially if it meant diminishing Syria's chance of recovering the Golan Heights.

Secondly, Syria opposed the pact because it was anathema to its national security. The Accord allowed the incorporation of Haddad's militia into Lebanese army units, which would patrol most of southern Lebanon in the company of Israeli soldiers. In addition, under the terms of the Accord, Israeli forces would be based in two "Security Arrangements Supervision Centres" in southern Lebanon, and acquired a surveillance base on the Shouf Mountains high over the Beqaa Valley from which Israeli radar could penetrate into central Syria. All this gave reality to Assad's nightmare of a future Israeli attack against Syria through Lebanon. If the Lebanese government objected, through the newly envisaged Lebanese-Israeli Joint Liaison Committee, the United States, Assad claimed, would have the casting vote and could therefore permit Israel to go ahead. For Assad, this was precisely the strategy that the Israelis had contemplated while conniving with Bashir Gemayel.<sup>197</sup>

Thirdly, Assad was annoyed because the US had brokered an

agreement between Tel Aviv and Beirut without consulting him. This only reinforced his belief that in future Middle East peace negotiations, Syria's interest in regaining the Golan Heights would simply be ignored.<sup>198</sup>

Finally, Assad's deepest grievance was against the Gemayel government for signing an agreement with Israel in total defiance of Syria's explicit warning. In other words, the accord illustrated the Lebanese government's assertion of its independence vis-à-vis Damascus, and that, from Assad's viewpoint, could not be tolerated.<sup>199</sup> In addition, the 17 May Accord constituted a grave danger to Lebanon's internal balance because it was inspired by Phalangist elements known for their collaboration with Tel Aviv. In this context, the Accord had violated Assad's basic strategy not to allow any Lebanese faction to acquire a decisive victory over others so that nothing could be settled there without his consent.<sup>200</sup>

In essence, the 17 May Accord confirmed Assad's belief that Syria must retain its influence over Lebanon and prevent Israel from establishing any form of hold there. He eventually succeeded in forcing Gemayel to repudiate the Accord. A number of circumstances helped him in attaining this objective. Chief among them was the Reagan Administration's failure to recognize Damascus as a key player in any plan that sought to achieve stability and peace in Lebanon. During the Israeli-Lebanese negotiations, Shultz decided to ignore Syria's political and security requirements.

This was part of President Reagan's strategy of "leav[ing] the Syrians on the outside looking in."<sup>201</sup> However, in an imprudent move, Shultz handed Assad a veto over the accord when Tel Aviv and Washington, in a side letter, expressed their understanding that the Accord would not be enforced unless Syria pulled its troops out as well -- a measure that the Syrians did not regard themselves as obliged to fulfil.<sup>202</sup>

However, the situation in Lebanon had changed since June 1982. American officials had failed to appreciate Syria's added military strength.<sup>203</sup> Indeed, with Soviet military assistance, Syria no longer was a second-rate power, nor was Israel the unchallenged state in the Middle East. By May 1983, Assad was able to obtain a massive shipment of modern Soviet armament to replace the equipment lost during the Israeli invasion. Besides, Moscow had provided Syria with sophisticated SAM-5 surface-to-air missiles and SS-21 surface-to-surface missiles, replenished its military arsenal, and sent about 5,000 experts to train Syrians to use the first new Soviet systems ever deployed outside Eastern Europe.<sup>204</sup>

These deliveries were in line with Soviet policy "not to allow any power in the world to threaten Syria."<sup>205</sup> After Egypt had moved to the Western camp in 1978, Moscow could not afford to watch Syria, its only ally, lose influence. For the Soviets, Israel's victory in the summer of 1982 had sharply increased Washington's credibility and influence in the region at the expense of their own prestige and status. Above all,

Moscow did not wish to see a Pax Americana in the Middle East and wanted to use the Syrians to present itself as an indispensable player in any future Arab-Israeli settlement. Thus, it was for regional and international considerations that Assad refused to comply with the provisions of the Israeli-Lebanese accord.

The context of East-West relations in the early 1980's had thus helped Assad to achieve strategic parity with Israel. The infusion of Soviet arms into Syria had made it, in the words of Yizhak Rabin, "the only Arab nation that poses an immediate potential threat to the Jewish state."<sup>206</sup> This led Israel, despite its ailing economy, to enter into a new arms race to deter Assad from contemplating an attack on Israel. However, Israel's military campaign against Syria in 1982 failed to elevate the Israeli-Syrian deterrence equilibrium to the perceptual level. To the contrary, the extensive deployment of Soviet arms into Syria increased its general deterrent capabilities. In March 1986, Assad warned that "after the next war, the Golan Heights will lie in the centre of Syria and not on its border."<sup>207</sup> In response, Israel redefined its casus belli to be only the movement of the Syrian army in South Lebanon. A future Israeli strike against Syrian forces in Lebanon would be unrelated to any Syrian violation of the 17 May Accord.<sup>208</sup> Thus Israel's stunning victory over the Syrian surface-to-air missiles in 1982 "came at the cost of disclosing the possession of technology that



would have been better saved for the contingency of a genuine war of survival."<sup>209</sup> Ironically, therefore, Schiff and Ya'ari conclude, "the Lebanese war, undertaken at least in part to enhance the credibility of Israel's deterrent power, may well have contributed to destroying it."<sup>210</sup>

Assad's strength during the battle over the Accord also stemmed from the weakness of his opponents. Gemayel was a hesitant and indecisive president who thought that only the US military presence would secure the withdrawal of Syrian and Israeli troops from the country. In the process, he delayed any move towards national reconciliation, refused to reform the formal political structure, and in effect pushed his internal enemies, namely the Druze and the Shiites, to seek help from Damascus. Jumblatt and Berri decried the 17 May Accord, not just because of their animosity towards Tel Aviv, but because they viewed it as a Phalanges-Israeli agreement designed to give supremacy to the Maronites over every other community in Lebanon. In other words, Gemayel's failure to win a wide internal support for the Accord had made it easy for Assad to gather his Lebanese proxies into the so-called National Salvation Front. This encompassed Jumblatt (A Druze), Berri (a Shiite), Karami (a Sunni), Franjieh (a Maronite), and other leaders from the Lebanese left. This body, which Damascus claimed to be more "representative of the real Lebanon than Gemayel's treacherous government" sought to force Gemayel to drop the Accord, overturn Maronite hegemony,

confront Israel's occupation, and rebuild a new Lebanon.<sup>211</sup> Moreover, while the war in the Shouf had polarized the Lebanese communities and regional powers regarding Gemayel's government, its outcome had made Assad "the unquestioned arbiter" of Lebanon's future.<sup>212</sup> Even the very survival of Gemayel's presidency came to be dependent upon the degree and kind of support provided by Syria.

The repudiation of the 17 May Accord was also seen as a defeat for American policy in Lebanon. Once the Marines had departed, Gemayel announced his readiness to drop the Accord. This development had led former President Carter to conclude: "It was the first time since the Vietnam war that the Soviet Union and its allies had been able to block a major strategic move by the United States."<sup>213</sup>

Assad was not alone in his struggle to prevent Gemayel from becoming "a friend of Israel".<sup>214</sup> He had exploited his alliance with Iran for economic sustenance as the Khomeini regime tried to use the same alliance for political expansion. And in Lebanon, Assad allowed the deployment of about 1,500 Revolutionary Guards into the Beqaa Valley and "tacitly" approved their suicidal attacks against the Marines and Israeli headquarters.<sup>215</sup> Second, Assad encouraged and supported a rebellion against Arafat within the Fatah, the paramilitary group which represented about 80 percent of the PLO's military strength. The Syrian President, who had long been looking for ways to control Palestinian affairs, was

particularly frustrated by Arafat's decision to begin a dialogue with King Hussein of Jordan over a formula for peace talks with Israel. Arafat's move threatened Assad's regional strategy, which vigorously opposed any peace initiative that would exclude Damascus. Thus, if Syria was to hold the key to the Palestinian problem, Arafat had to be undermined. The opportunity for Assad came in May 1983 when the PLO Chairman unwisely elevated several unpopular commanders within Fatah. Outraged by Arafat's decision and his growing preference for negotiation over combat, some Palestinian fighters rose in revolt. Backed by Syrian artillery, the rebels gained strength throughout the summer of 1983 and eventually forced Arafat's loyalists to evacuate Tripoli -- Lebanon's second largest city -- in December 1983. Their departure represented another victory for Assad. Fatah was weakened, the Hussein-Arafat formula for peace without Syria vanished as a workable scheme, and Syrian domination of "the independent Palestinian decision" seemed to be in sight.<sup>216</sup> The expulsion of Arafat from Tripoli indicated that Assad, who was wholly committed to the struggle for Lebanon, was willing to "ride roughshod over the narrower ... interests of those Lebanese, Palestinians and Jordanians who wished to pursue their own salvation from the dictates of Damascus."<sup>217</sup>

Assad sensed correctly that the Israeli government had no will to fight another round against his troops in Lebanon. The June war had become increasingly controversial in Israel.

By December 1982, the IDF had lost about 469 soldiers killed and some 2,200 wounded. An opinion poll showed that 41 percent of Israelis considered the war in Lebanon to be a mistake.<sup>218</sup> Most significantly, Moshe Arens, the new Israeli defense minister who replaced Sharon, and who had no responsibility for launching the invasion, was not interested in propping up Gemayel's regime without making any political advances, and favoured a unilateral withdrawal to the South, where Israeli forces would be less vulnerable.<sup>219</sup> This move greatly diminished Israel's close relationship with the Phalange militia, minimized Israeli casualties, and marked a definitive abandonment of Sharon's grand design for Lebanon. By not insisting on a reciprocal withdrawal of Syrian forces, Arens had revived Israel's deterrence vis-à-vis Damascus: the IDF was once again called upon to defend the national territory rather than a controversial policy in Lebanon.<sup>220</sup>

In the words of Rabin:

We are not going to stay in Lebanon because our presence might prevent clashes between various factions. I do not want to be the policeman of Lebanon. It is not the business of Israel. Israel was not created to serve as a policeman of the region. We made it clear we do not link our unilateral decision to anything the Syrians do. They want to stay in Lebanon, let them stay .... I know that whoever sets his foot in Lebanon has sunk into the Lebanese swamp. They want it, let them enjoy it. We want one thing that they do not move closer to our borders. That's all.<sup>221</sup>

According to Rabinovich, Assad had perceived this change at a relatively early stage and assumed correctly that "as long as he acted through proxies and avoided crossing a certain line, he could afford to thwart the diminishing aims of Israeli policy without seriously risking a still unwanted war."<sup>222</sup> But Assad's success was not guaranteed, for Lebanon, as Tel Aviv had come to realize, had proven to be a slippery ground for all those who entered it intending to remain. His duel with the Gemayel's regime was not yet over.

In fact, the repudiation of the Lebanese-Israeli Accord neither enhanced national unity nor convinced Syria to withdraw its troops. During two rounds of national dialogue in October 1983 and in March 1984, Syria failed to reconcile differences among various Lebanese factions. Lebanese leaders agreed to a resolution describing Lebanon as an Arab country, but were unable to reach a consensus on a new power-sharing formula.<sup>223</sup> Some suspected that Assad, who claimed that he would not use force to impose a solution, had no plan to end the civil war and preferred an uneasy equilibrium over which Syria would be dominant. By maintaining the fragility of the intra-Lebanese balance, Assad hoped to become a crucial factor in Lebanese affairs.

This became clear on 28 December 1985, when Maronite forces (headed by Hobeika), the Druzes (represented by Jumblatt), and the Shiites (led by Berri) signed the Tripartite Agreement in Damascus. Inter alia, this agreement

represented a trade-off between Syrian hegemony and Lebanon's internal peace. It stipulated the "Syrianization" of Lebanon in military, economic, and educational matters as well as in foreign affairs. But this accord, too, was never ratified. Gemayel rejected it, and on 15 January 1986 Hobeika was replaced by Samir Geagea -- an enemy of Syria -- as the head of the Maronite militia.<sup>224</sup> Afterwards, sporadic fighting, car bombs, kidnapping, and the shelling of residential areas became daily rituals.

Politically, Assad refused to meet again with Gemayel; and in a move designed to bring the final paralysis of Lebanon's central government, Damascus deployed 7,000 of its troops into West Beirut on 22 February 1987. The presence of Syrian forces in the Lebanese capital aimed at providing military assistance to Amal in its efforts to prevent Arafat from re-establishing the power base he enjoyed before June 1982. Assad feared that the PLO's agenda included toying with the Lebanese sectarian game in order to weaken Amal and to undermine Syrian policy in Lebanon.<sup>225</sup> Finally, after three years of "the war of the camps" between Amal and the PLO, Arafat loyalists were expelled from West Beirut in May 1988.<sup>226</sup>

Significantly, this development occurred at a time when Assad was determined to improve his country's image in the West. That image had been tarnished by the so-called "Handawi affair" in which Nezar Handawi, a Jordanian carrying a Syrian

passport, was convicted in London of trying to blow up an EL-AL aircraft on a flight from Heathrow to Tel Aviv on 17 April 1986.<sup>227</sup> As order was restored to the streets of West Beirut, the presence of the Syrian army there came to be seen as a "stabilizing factor" capable of maintaining peace in Lebanon. Besides, the kidnapping of American and other Western citizens by pro-Iranian groups in West Beirut provided Assad with an opportunity to resume the Syrian-American dialogue. Even before the deployment of his troops in the Lebanese capital, Assad, through his good offices in Tehran, secured the release of David Dodge, the acting President of the American University in Beirut, and Jeremy Levin, the American television correspondent.<sup>228</sup> Now, with his army virtually occupying West Beirut, many believed that Assad could release other Western hostages if he cared to. But for this to happen, Washington had to recognize Assad as a key player in determining the outcome of the upcoming Lebanese presidential election.<sup>229</sup>

Throughout the summer of 1988, Richard Murphy, the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, mediated between Assad and Gemayel in the hope that a compromise could be reached on the presidency. Washington was concerned that if both sides failed to agree in choosing a successor to Gemayel (whose term of office expired on 23 September 1988), Lebanon might well find itself with two rival governments and new centrifugal pressures on the last vestiges of a central state in that

country.<sup>230</sup>

The immediate cause of the crisis was the role played by the Lebanese army and the Maronite forces in preventing Christian deputies living in East Beirut from attending the electoral session on 18 August 1988, in which former President Franjieh, was supported by Syria, was the only candidate. On 18 September 1988, Assad and Murphy agreed on deputy Mikhael Daher as a consensus presidential candidate. But General Michel Aoun, the Commander of the Lebanese army, refused to provide the security needed to hold an electoral session, rejected the "appointment" of Daher, and blamed Washington for "giving Lebanon to the Syrians."<sup>231</sup> Finally, on 22 September 1988, just five minutes before his presidential term expired, Gemayel appointed General Aoun to be Prime Minister of a six-man military cabinet until a president was elected.<sup>232</sup> As expected, the Muslim community rejected Aoun's interim cabinet and continued to recognize Salim El-Hoss, who was appointed by Gemayel as acting Prime Minister following the assassination of Prime Minister Karami on 1 June 1987, as the legal prime minister of Lebanon until the election of a new president. In practice, Lebanon ended up having two rival authorities that confirmed the de facto partition of the country.<sup>233</sup>

Upon assuming office, Aoun started to behave as if he was President. On 14 March 1989, Aoun declared a "war of liberation" to drive Syrian forces out of Lebanon. Damascus was surprised and alarmed by Aoun's move, especially after the



General received arms from Iraq. Since the end of Iran-Iraq war in September 1988, President Saddam Hussein returned to his intention to punish Syria for having backed Iran. He choose Lebanon as the theatre of confrontation by sending arms to the Maronites -- Assad's main Lebanese adversary.<sup>234</sup> Between March and September 1989, Syria responded vigorously, matching Aoun shell for shell, while its navy blockaded Maronite ports. Throughout the intense fighting, hundreds of civilians were killed, and Beirut was reduced to a moonscape, but Aoun was stopped. On 22 September 1989, the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies convened in Taif, Saudi Arabi, and agreed to a new political formula for Lebanon. The Taif Agreement, as the new constitutional reform came to be known, stipulated the transformation of certain powers from the Maronite president to the Council of Ministers led by the Sunni prime minister, the equal representation between Muslim and Christian communities in the Chamber of Deputies, and the recognition of the "special relationships" between Lebanon and Syria.<sup>235</sup> However, General Aoun rejected the new pact on the basis that it failed to determine the timing for the withdrawal of Syrian forces from Lebanon.<sup>236</sup>

On 4 November 1989, General Aoun dissolved the Chamber of Deputies. The following day, however, the deputies defied his decree, met in military airbase in a remote corner of Syrian-controlled northern Lebanon, and elected Rene Muawad as President. Muawad was sworn in immediately to end an

interregnum of more than a year; he called for a national reconciliation "which does not exclude anyone -- even those who are excluding themselves."<sup>237</sup> But on 22 November, he was assassinated in West Beirut after only 17 days in office. Aoun denounced the killing as a "loathsome crime"; and on 25 November he rejected the election of Elias Hrawi as unconstitutional. Hrawi quickly dismissed "Aoun's rebellious cabinet", appointed El-Hoss to form a national unity cabinet, and pledged to implement the Taif Agreement.<sup>238</sup> Over the next few months, Aoun's status was reduced to that of a militia leader after his failure to destroy the Maronite forces led by Geagea, his main rival in East Beirut. Geagea supported the Taif Agreement, recognized Hrawi's presidency, and denounced Aoun's "war of liberation" against Syria as a "suicidal mission."<sup>239</sup> On 13 October 1990, Syria, on a request from Lebanon's national unity cabinet, attacked Aoun's headquarters and forced him to seek political asylum in the French Embassy.

Aoun's removal marked, in the words of President Hrawi, the end of the Lebanese civil war. On 20 May 1991, Hrawi and Assad signed a Treaty of Brotherhood, Cooperation and Coordination. In it, Syria's economic, political, and security interests in Lebanon were recognized in return for Syria's recognition of Lebanon's independence.<sup>240</sup> The treaty fulfilled Assad's objective of making Lebanon a virtual protectorate of Syria, and Assad had also managed to frustrate Israel's bid for hegemony. His achievement had made it clear

to the Arabs that there was "no preordained fatality about an Israeli victory or Syria's defeat."<sup>241</sup> Above all, it was a mistake on part of Sharon to think that a military defeat of the Syrian army in Lebanon could eliminate Syria's role there. At least in Assad's view, Lebanon and Syria were one people, one nation, one geography, and Damascus' influence there had to prevail.<sup>242</sup>

### 6.3.3: The Palestinian Context

As we saw in Chapter 5, among the numerous motives for Israel's invasion of Lebanon was to pacify Palestinian nationalism in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Sharon and Begin assumed that if the PLO's military and political bases in Lebanon were eliminated, Israel could implement its plans for the occupied territories according to the framework of the Camp David Accord. They also hoped that the defeat of the PLO would pave the way for the emergence of an alternative Palestinian leadership in Judea and Samaria willing to negotiate with Tel Aviv for a limited civil administrative autonomy. As our earlier evidence suggests, Israel's military campaign against the PLO was not without its short-term advantages. It appeared for while to have removed the PLO's artillery from range of the Galilee settlements, destroyed its state-within-a-state in Lebanon, and undercut its day-to-day guidance to its substantial following on the West Bank. "Stunned by the maceration of PLO forces in Lebanon", contends

Sachar, "the West Bankers all but closed themselves in their homes, leaving their towns and villages in eerie silence."<sup>243</sup>

But Palestinian acquiescence in the occupied territories proved to be short-lived. The removal of the PLO from Beirut neither diminished civil resistance nor made the population more compliant. Rather, the Israeli invasion which was correctly perceived by Palestinians in the territories as an attempt to liquidate their own nationalism, led them to conclude that only they could achieve their liberation. The boiling point came on 8 December 1987, when an IDF tank-transport crashed into a truck carrying Gazan workers back from Israel, killing four and wounding eight. The accident was interpreted by Palestinian groups as revenge for the slaying of an Israeli businessman in Gaza City two days earlier. They quickly organized massive demonstrations against the Israeli occupation. Unlike on previous occasions, this time the anger of the demonstrators seemed more determined. The Israeli soldiers who were sent to quell the protest met a hail of stones and iron bars thrown by hundreds of teenage youths. The unrest, instead of ending after an initial burst, continued daily, and spread throughout the major cities of the occupied territories in what was recognized as the "Palestinian uprising" - "for it was the first time that the people of the territories had acted with cohesion and as a nation."<sup>244</sup>

The word "Intifada" means to "shake off, to have reached

the end of, to refuse to have anything to do with something, to break with someone."<sup>245</sup> The aim of the uprising was to "shake off" Israeli occupation and to establish a Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza. To this end, Palestinians adopted a strategy of civil disobedience which included commercial strikes, non-payment of taxes, the boycott of Israeli products, and stone-throwing at Israeli soldiers.<sup>246</sup> In response, the Israeli government employed an "iron-fist policy". This included systematic mass beatings, firing tear gas, demolishing houses, imposing curfews, closing all Palestinian universities and labour union offices, administrative detention (i.e., detention without charges or trials), and the expulsion of those suspected to be leaders of the Intifada. A January 1988 report in The Globe and Mail describes the "undistinguished brutality" of Israeli actions as young Palestinians were assaulted, tear-gassed, shot at, tied with wire and beaten on the groin, or lashed to Israeli army jeeps and driven around refugee camps.<sup>247</sup> By December 1990, it was estimated that about 782 Palestinians had been killed, 40,000 had been hospitalized for Intifada-related injuries, and 59 had been expelled. During the same period, about 55 Israeli soldiers and civilians died at the hands of Palestinians, and some 2,000 were injured.<sup>248</sup>

The Intifada also dealt a serious blow to Israeli economic interests. Before 1987, economic ties between occupier and occupied were significant. Over 100,000

Palestinians from the territories worked in Israel, but the majority of them stopped after the uprising began. Hardest hit were Israeli industries dependent on Palestinian cheap labour, mostly in textiles, footwear, agriculture, restaurant and sanitation jobs. The construction industry, for instance, which employed 50,000 Palestinians, registered a 30 percent loss between January and April 1988. In addition, Israel used to sell about \$800 million in goods annually to its captive market in the West Bank and Gaza. Purchases were down by \$300 million in 1988 as a result of boycotts and the steep decline in Palestinian income. Import-tax receipts for the first quarter of 1988 stood at \$112 million, a 33 percent drop from the same period in 1987. In short, the Intifada accounted for a half-billion dollar loss in Israel's GNP for the first three months of 1988; and by the end of the same year, Israel's projected 3.7 percent growth rate was cut almost in half.<sup>249</sup>

As the Intifada continued, so did the daily confrontations between Palestinians and Israeli soldiers. If anything, Israel's policy reinforced Palestinian determination. Palestinians used the "martyrs" to reaffirm the rightness of their cause and to justify revenge against the Israelis.<sup>250</sup> Here other observers were surprised by the fact that it took Palestinians in the occupied territories almost 20 years to revolt. Between 1967 and 1987, the inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza had done very little to

undermine the system of occupation. First, they had no economic base to fall back on once they resorted to mass civil disobedience on a scale required to bring pressure on Israel. Second, they had no confidence in their ability to do what some Arab armies had failed to achieve -- to force Israel to withdraw from territories occupied in 1967. Finally, it was convenient for Palestinians to accommodate themselves to the Israeli system while the PLO was assuming responsibility for liberating Palestine.<sup>251</sup> Above all, a concerted uprising requires a well developed infrastructure of local organizations, and an underground leadership capable of directing it and carrying it out.

Although in the beginning the Intifada was a spontaneous reaction to Israeli occupation, it soon took the form of a disciplined popular uprising with clear objectives and a well-defined strategy. By early January 1988, it had become clear that a group calling itself the United National Leadership of the Uprising (UNLU) had taken responsibility for directing the Palestinian political movement in the occupied territories. This body was composed of 15 local members representing the main Palestinian factions operating in the territories, including Fatah, the PFLP, the DFLP, the Palestine Communist Party, and Islamic revivalists.<sup>252</sup> Its main achievement was the formulation of subcommittees coordinated through a regional command office, which served as liaison between UNLU and the populace. Each committee was assigned specific tasks

like organizing food and medical supplies during curfews, and supplying money to poor families. The most important committee was the one responsible for "struggle operations" which decided what specific action to take, from stone-throwing at Israelis soldiers to striking against collaborators.<sup>253</sup> Thus, it would be an exaggeration to assert that the event of 8 December 1987 was the only factor which led to the disruption of the Israeli plan to integrate the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

In fact, several factors had set the stage for the uprising. Chief among these was the occupation itself. For 20 years, Israel had banned all political activities in the territories, subjected Palestinian press to military censorship, confiscated uncultivated Arab lands, and imposed restrictions on those wishing to travel abroad.<sup>254</sup> Throughout, Israeli officials maintained that these measures were necessary to protect the country's security. But Israel was not concerned about security among Palestinians. The security apparatus in the territories was devoted primarily to protecting Israelis from Palestinians, not Palestinians from criminals.<sup>255</sup>

Another major cause of Palestinian alienation was the steady deterioration of their living conditions. Abba Eban describes Gaza as "a small squalid enclave of gloom," while Mandell calls it "Israel's Soweto."<sup>256</sup> "The township becomes here the refugee camp. Military occupation, like apartheid,



means segregation in residence, employment, politics, education and law."<sup>257</sup> Israel allowed Palestinians to work only as labourers, so they would prosper as individuals but remain impoverished as a community. And Palestinians chose to play the game by Israel's rules, while at the same time denouncing the occupation. This was "their version of moral double bookkeeping and it enabled them to survive, and in some cases thrive, without feeling they had abandoned their claims to independence."<sup>258</sup>

Further, the 20-year occupation had signalled the coming-of-age of a new generation of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In 1987, the children of the occupation represented about 60 percent of Palestinians living under Israeli rule. Their identity was shaped in an entirely different atmosphere than that of their parents, who had had the option of becoming either Jordanians or Egyptians. Once the Israeli occupation began, the youths in the territories had only one option -- to be Palestinians. In a way, the 1967 war brought the Arab-Israeli conflict back to its roots. The Intifada can be seen as an attempt by Palestinians to reaffirm their national claim to the land. According to Friedman, the most important message the West Bankers and Gazans wanted to tell Israelis with their stones was that "I am telling you here and now that I am not part of you, and I have no intention of becoming part of you."<sup>259</sup>

External events affected the timing of the uprising. One

was the Arab Summit Conference in Amman in November 1987. At this summit, Arab leaders concentrated on the mounting danger from the escalating Iran-Iraq conflict. For the first time since 1948, the Palestinian question disappeared from the Arab agenda. And while the Israeli press took considerable satisfaction from this, Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza became more disenchanted with the commitment of Arab regimes to their cause. The Intifada was thus an expression of anger against the "Arab conspiracy of silence." It was the Palestinian way of telling the world that the unrest in the territories was a direct consequence of the current stalemate in the Middle East peace process; of persuading Israel that it would be too costly to hang on to the territories much longer; and of indicating to other Arabs that their grievances could no longer be ignored.<sup>260</sup> The children of the occupation had also witnessed how successful the Shiites were in harassing the Israeli army and driving it out of Lebanon. According to Hassan Uz al-Din, a senior member of the Syrian Socialist Party, "Israel's failure in controlling Lebanon had demonstrated for Palestinians in the territories that the Israelis were not invincible anymore."<sup>261</sup> Of more immediate significance was the suicidal attack carried out by a Palestinian who flew a hang-glider across Israel's border with Lebanon and killed six Israeli soldiers near Kiryat Shimona on 25 November 1987. In the territories, the incident caused "widespread satisfaction", and was celebrated by Palestinians

as a "heroic operation" which destroyed the myth of Israel's defenses.<sup>262</sup>

Many factors contributed to the change of psychological outlook among Palestinian youths in the territories. First, "the stone throwers" were raised in an environment rich in the symbolism and slogans of Palestinian nationalism. From infancy they learned about Palestinian history and defeats even before their enrolment in school. By 1987, their inclination to disparage parental authority took on a political dimension in the camps, where the powerlessness of parents and traditional leaders was an ever-present fact of life.<sup>263</sup> As their daily lives were disrupted by Israeli curfews, the sound of rubber bullets, and rumours of possible settler attacks, teenagers became even more restive, less controlled by their elders, and no longer cowed by Israel's power. To throw a stone at an Israeli soldier was to be "one of the guys;" to be arrested and not confess to having done anything was to be a man; and to die was to be a martyr in the struggle against the occupation.<sup>264</sup> In short, the general attitude among youths in the camps was that Israelis "can do no more than kill us."<sup>265</sup>

As the uprising gained momentum, Israel's "iron fist policy" became the target of increasing international criticism. Pictures of unarmed civilians being hit with clubs and rifle-butts created deep sympathy for Palestinians, especially in the Western world. In the US, this was evident

in the time and space that the media devoted to criticism of Israel's occupation policy. According to a survey of 375 stories about the uprising aired on the ABC, CBC and NBC evening newscasts between December 1987 and April 1988, Tel Aviv was the target of twice as much negative judgemental reporting as the demonstrators.<sup>266</sup> Moreover, at the official diplomatic level, on 22 December 1987 the US abstained on a Security Council Resolution deploring Tel Aviv's violations of human rights in the territories. In subsequent weeks, the European Parliament, Canada, and the Vatican joined the chorus of criticism and called on Israel to halt reprisals against Palestinian protestors.<sup>267</sup>

Even some Jewish leaders abroad raised their concerns. Gahor Mate, a former Zionist youth activist, urged Jewish leaders to speak up against Israel's repression of Palestinians. "It is a narrow conception of justice that denounces only wrongs done to us," argued Mate, "but fails to recognize the ills we perpetrate."<sup>268</sup> Rabbi Alexander Schindler, a leader of the Reform Jewish community, sent a telegram to Israel's President Haim Herzog calling the policy of beating demonstrators "an offence to the Jewish spirit that violates every principle of human decency."<sup>269</sup> Actor and writer Woody Allen urged Jewish communities to "speak out and use every measure of pressure -- moral, financial, and political -- to bring this wrongheaded approach to a halt."<sup>270</sup>

Thus the issue was transformed from Israel's employment

of military means against Palestinian terrorists, into Israel's violation of the basic human rights of a people dispossessed of its land, its identity, and its dignity. Before 1987, the PLO's association with terrorism had given Israel the opportunity to brand the entire Palestinian national movement as a criminal terrorist phenomenon. This was all dramatically changed by the Intifada. Instead of adopting PLO tactics, Palestinians in the occupied territories resorted to stones as their only weapons against well-equipped Israeli soldiers. In so doing, they were able to show the world that Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip was "the highest form of terrorism".<sup>271</sup> In the words of PLO spokesman Ahmed Abdel Rahman, "the Intifada changed the world. Now the world understands that there is a Palestinian people under Israeli occupation, there is Israeli oppression and Israeli killing day after day and that should stop immediately."<sup>272</sup>

The Intifada also heightened the growing policy debate within Israel regarding the future of the occupied territories. While Prime Minister Shamir vowed continued Israeli control or annexation of Judea and Samaria, opposition leader Peres showed a readiness to surrender some portions of the West Bank and Gaza in exchange for peace. In a CBS interview, Peres stated that he was "prepared to hold peace talks with any Palestinians who truly renounce violence as a means of attaining their goals."<sup>273</sup> Further, the Intifada

raised the issue of whether the indefinite denial of Palestinian civil and political rights truly served Israel's long-term interests. On 7 January 1989, almost two years after the Intifada began, a survey showed that 55 percent of Israel's Jewish population support a withdrawal from the territories as the only solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict.<sup>274</sup> This shift was necessitated by the fact that before the Six-Day War there was a physical partition between Palestinians and Israelis; but after Israel occupied the West Bank and Gaza Strip the artificial line was erased, and theirs became a "war-without-a-front" in areas where Jews did not represent the majority of the population. For many Jews, home was where one's own people were in a majority, and where one could live a free and democratic Jewish life, without feeling that one was suppressing another people. Perhaps because of the Intifada, many Israelis had finally come to realize that home would be "pre-1967 Israel -- without the West Bank and Gaza."<sup>275</sup> This belief was epitomized by Abba Eban, who argued that Israel had nothing to worry about the emergence of a Palestinian state in the occupied territories because such an entity would be the world's weakest.<sup>276</sup>

Above all, the Intifada forced the PLO to modify its main objective of "liquidating the state of Israel". This process of change began on 14 January 1988, when a group of notable Palestinians in the occupied territories presented a "fourteen demands document" in the name of "Palestinian nationalist

institutions and personalities" from the West Bank and Gaza. In essence, the document incorporated the Intifada's basic objectives by calling on Israel to negotiate with the PLO and to recognize Palestinian national rights, including the right of self-determination and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state.<sup>277</sup> This implied recognition of the right of Israel to exist, and was a reflection of Palestinian realism. In practice, by throwing stones at Israeli soldiers, Palestinians were trying to tell Israelis that "they were not out there to murder them but were ready to live next door to them, if they only vacate the territories and allow a Palestinian state there."<sup>278</sup>

The document also represented a denial by Jordan of any claim to the West Bank, which King Abdullah had annexed in 1951. As clashes between the Israeli army and Palestinians intensified, King Hussein decided to sever Jordan's legal and administrative links with the West Bank and turn it over to the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. In a televised address on 31 July 1988, he proclaimed that "Jordan is not Palestine .... The independent Palestinian state will be established on the occupied Palestinian land, after it is liberated."<sup>279</sup> This move was welcomed by the Intifada's leadership as a tremendous victory because it strengthened the PLO's position, undermined the "Jordan option", and countered Sharon's objective of forcing Palestinians in the occupied territories to find their

political expression through Amman (See Chapter Five).

Most significantly, the Intifada gave Arafat the opportunity to seize the diplomatic initiative. On 15 November 1988, the PNC accepted the concept of a "two-state solution" by endorsing UN General Assembly Resolution 181 of 1947, which called for the partition of Palestine into a Jewish state and an Arab one.<sup>280</sup> This represents a fundamental change in the PLO's strategy. By limiting its call to independence for the territories that Israel captured in 1967, the PLO had abandoned its policy of armed struggle, adopted diplomacy as the sole means of establishing a state on the West Bank and Gaza, and showed a willingness to coexist with Israel. "For the first time in a century", argues Mattar, "the struggle is no longer primarily over the same piece of territory."<sup>281</sup> The real breakthrough, however, came on 14 December, when Arafat explicitly recognized Israel's right to exist in peace and security, accepted UN Resolutions 242 and 338 as the basis for negotiation, and renounced terrorism in all its forms.<sup>282</sup> "As a result," declared Secretary of State Shultz, "the United States is prepared for a substantive dialogue with PLO's representatives."<sup>283</sup> With that, the Reagan Administration in effect recognized the PLO as a key player in the Middle East peace process. Moreover, the attendance of a Palestinian delegation from the occupied territories at the Middle East Peace Conference which convened in Madrid on 30 October 1991 confirmed that a final solution



to the Arab-Israeli conflict could not be attained without addressing the issue of Palestinian nationalism.

Clearly, all this was not what Israel's invasion of Lebanon was intended to achieve. Instead of destroying Palestinian nationalism, Operation Peace for Galilee had simply revived it. For the Likud government, the error was to view the Palestinians as two groups, not one: the PLO formerly concentrated in Lebanon, and those Palestinians still concentrated in the occupied territories. "That is to say", concludes Brym, "there is every reason to believe that the overwhelming majority of Palestinian Arabs support the PLO and that the conditions generating Palestinian nationalism are operating at full force in the occupied territories and are not merely imposed from the outside. It follows that no military effort can do away with Palestinian nationalism."<sup>284</sup>

#### 6.3.4.: Other Indications of Failure

Thus far, this chapter has shown how the assumptions underlying Israel's war in Lebanon collapsed. The 17 May Accord between Tel Aviv and Beirut was not implemented thanks to the IDF's failure to force the Syrian army out of that country; at the same time, the Intifada made clear that Palestinian nationalism was not synonymous with the destruction of the PLO's military infrastructure. It was out of such realities that Israel had to face a string of other unanticipated setbacks, including an unprecedented division

within the Israeli society, cooling of relations with Washington, and a tarnished image abroad.

The expansion of Operation Peace for Galilee beyond its stated goals, and the growing number of Israeli casualties, lessened the initial national consensus in favour of the war.<sup>285</sup> On 27 December 1982, an opinion poll revealed that 53.5 percent of Israelis supported a total withdrawal of the IDF from Lebanon, while only 23.6 percent opposed it. A year later, another poll showed that support for the war had reached its lowest ebb, with only 10 percent of Israelis opposed to the withdrawal of forces from Lebanon.<sup>286</sup> Even when the guns of war were still roaring on the outskirts of Beirut in July and August 1982, many demonstrations took place in front of the Prime Minister's residence in Jerusalem. These were organized by the Peace Now Movement, and other ad hoc groups such as "Pathway to Peace" and "Parents Against Silence."<sup>287</sup> These groups questioned the "no choice" view of the war, its goals, and tactics. They argued that Israel's previous wars were defensive in nature, while the invasion of Lebanon was initiated for reasons that had little or nothing to do with the state's survival. For them, putting an end to misery and pain were priorities overriding strategic imperatives. "For the first time", argues Timerman, "the Israelis were thinking about what they had done to another people. They were feeling guilt, even shame.... Perhaps it can even be said that never before had the Jew had occasion to

feel guilty and ashamed for collective damage inflicted on others."<sup>288</sup>

Discontent with the invasion was also visible among politicians of the opposition parties, at Cabinet level, and even in high echelons of the army. Labour's opposition to the war became unequivocal only after the IDF had failed to prevent the massacres in the refugee camps. Perhaps it was Peres's way of catering to the public mood when he questioned whether the military gains in Lebanon were worth the price they had cost Israel in lost prestige.<sup>289</sup> Even so, his criticism of Begin for not knowing when to stop the war represents an unusual breakdown in Israel's traditional politics, which commit parties to unite behind the flag in times of national crisis. The same can be said of Yizhak Barman, the Energy Minister, who resigned from the Cabinet because Begin was reluctant to appoint a full-scale commission to investigate the army's role in Sabra and Shatilla massacres. Similar views were expressed by Yoav Gelber, a historian who had been serving on a commission to investigate the 1933 murder of a Zionist leader in Palestine. "I feel it is impossible", argued Gelber, "to investigate a murder that happened 49 years ago at a time when an investigation into the horrors of the present in Beirut is being refused."<sup>290</sup> Some IDF officers demonstrated their anger over Begin's war policies by evading their military duties in Lebanon. Among them was Colonel Eli Geva, a high-ranking combat officer, who

refused to take part in any assault on West Beirut. His resignation from the army was hailed by the anti-war camp as a symbol of the country's moral strength, as a function of the intolerable situation in which the army had been placed, and as an indication of how sharply divided opinions within the army command were about the conduct of the war.<sup>291</sup>

Israel's war in Lebanon ignited a deep controversy which shook the very foundation of the Israeli society. The mushrooming of demonstrations, and the spread of dissension at the political, social, and military levels lend credence to the description of Operation Peace for Galilee as Israel's Vietnam. We will return to this theme in the next chapter. When the IDF sent a column of armoured vehicles beyond the security zone in South Lebanon to destroy positions held by Hezbollah guerrillas in February 1992, Defense Minister Arens was quick to assure Israelis that the attacking forces were limited in number and that their mission, unlike the 1982 invasion, would be short -- a cogent reminder that, ten years later, the Lebanon syndrome still had influence on the body politic and psyche of Israel.<sup>292</sup>

The invasion also altered Washington's sympathetic attitudes toward the Jewish State. Israel had misled the US by sending its army all the way to Beirut, by attacking Syrian forces stationed in East Lebanon, and by the allowing Sabra and Shatilla massacres.<sup>293</sup> In the light of Israel's bombing and shelling of West Beirut, Reagan became "disillusioned"

with the Likud government's repeated violations of the ceasefire. He called the IDF's assault on the city on 12 August 1982 "unfortunate and senseless", reminded Tel Aviv that American weapons could not be used for offensive purposes, and warned Begin to observe the truce negotiated by Habib or expect "a drastic change" in Israel's relationship with the United States.<sup>294</sup> It seems that Haig's support for Operation Peace for Galilee did not accurately reflect Reagan's views. Indeed, the President's call on Israel to withdraw from Lebanon was a clear indication of the fact that Tel Aviv had acted without regard for the interests of the US in the region. The lack of coordination between the two countries was exemplified on 1 September 1982, when Begin rejected President Reagan's peace initiative aimed at self-government for Palestinians in the West Bank in association with Jordan, as well as a freeze on further Israeli settlements on the occupied West Bank.<sup>295</sup>

By not consulting the US, Sharon and Begin had violated a basic alliance principle. The war in Lebanon forced the Reagan Administration and Congress to question whether Israel's behaviour had served their country's interests in the Middle East. In practice, this led the United States to adopt a more balanced approach towards the Arab-Israeli conflict. Ironically, all of this perhaps could have been avoided had Sharon and Begin realized that a Secretary of State could be removed from office by a president who, like his predecessors,

was also concerned about his country's standing in the Arab world. Sisco states: "The Israeli military action in Lebanon had had a profound impact on the President, whose full and direct involvement was crucial, for under the American system, as strong as any Secretary of State may be, only the President can wield the kind of influence and power over Congress and the American people required to produce constructive results."<sup>296</sup> Thus, instead of reinforcing the special relationship between Washington and Tel Aviv, the 1982 invasion opened up the possibility of the US modifying its traditional policy of support for Israel.

At one point, President Reagan even drafted a letter to Begin warning him that the United States could be forced to deal directly with the PLO if he did not stop the "disproportionate bombing" of West Beirut.<sup>297</sup> This would have meant a dramatic departure from the norms which had governed the external environment of Israel's foreign policy.

Unprecedented also in the history of American-Israeli relations was the shift of attitudes within the American public toward Israel. A public opinion poll conducted in December 1982 revealed that 69 percent of Americans disapproved of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, while 65 percent felt that there would be no peace in the Middle East unless a Palestinian state was established.<sup>298</sup> Of course, these results could not have been obtained without the influential role played by the American visual and print

media, which had historically based its coverage of the Middle East on the Israeli perspective, but which now began to exhibit a tone of moral indignation over Israel's actions in Lebanon. Television hurt Israel's image the most. The vivid coverage of the siege of Beirut by American networks allowed millions of viewers worldwide to witness the suffering of civilians under indiscriminate bombardment. Begin's justification of the invasion as a "pre-emptive strike" against terrorists was no longer accepted by reporters who, while travelling with Israeli troops, came to see the IDF's brutality in destroying hospitals and orphanages, mistreating prisoners, and, finally, safeguarding the entry of Maronite forces into refugee camps. A poll conducted by Simon on major columns which appeared in American print media showed that 55 percent of them were anti-Israel in tone. They criticized Israel's attack on Lebanon as unprovoked or ill-motivated (Harsch), urged the US to impose sanctions against Israel (Evans and Novak), and accused Begin of committing atrocities.<sup>299</sup> Other columnists like Hoffman, Jarrett and Lewis went as far as to draw analogies between the "genocide" of Beirut and the Holocaust.<sup>300</sup> In the words of Le Carie, "the Israelis were imposing upon another people the disgraceful criteria once inflicted upon themselves."<sup>301</sup>

Similar analogies were employed by the print media in other western countries. In France, Le Monde characterized Israeli forces in Lebanon as "Le fascisme aujourd'hui aux

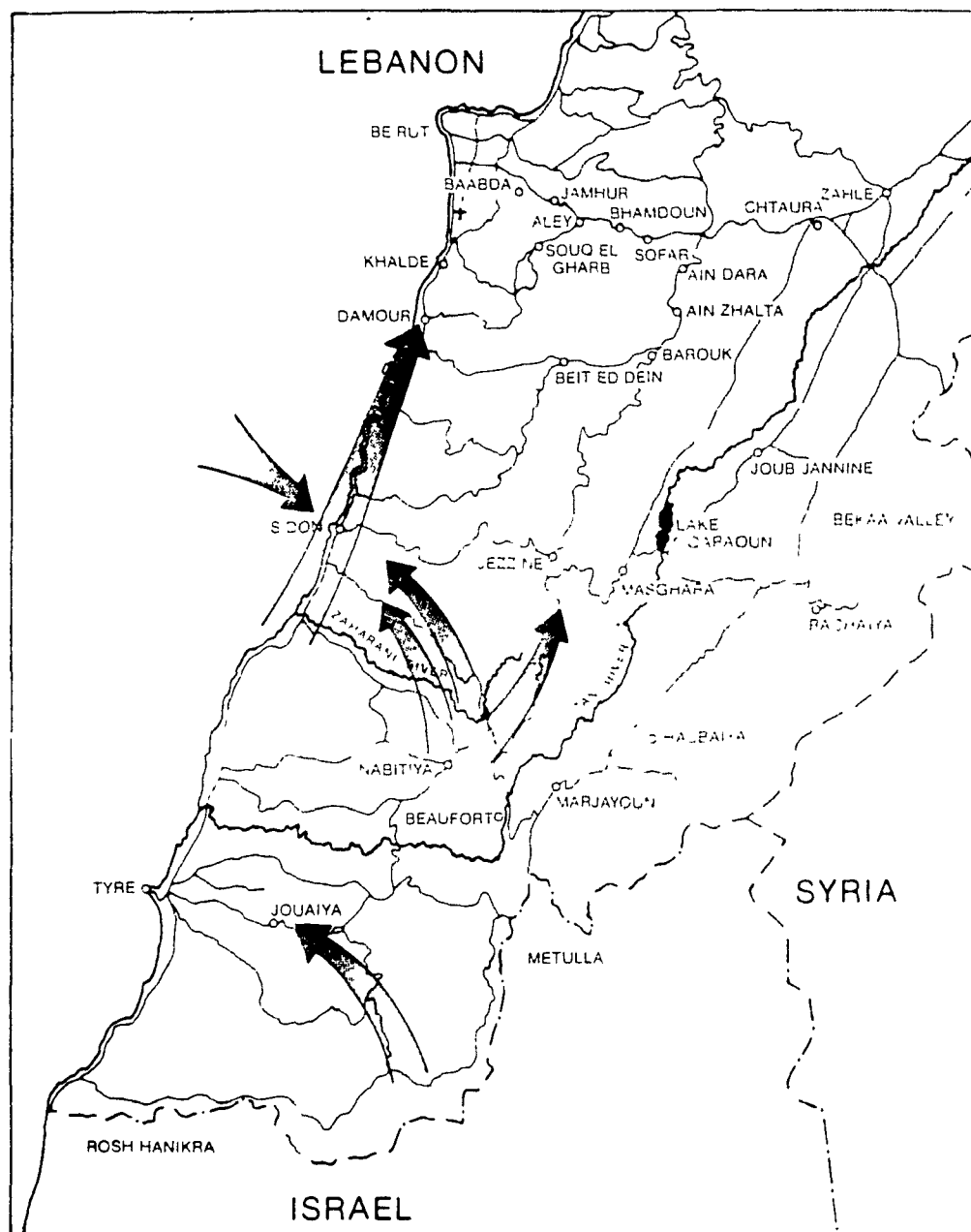
couleurs d'Israël." In West Germany, Der Spiegel paralleled the Nazi victimization of Jews with the Jewish victimization of Arabs.<sup>302</sup> In Britain, Canada, Norway, and the Netherlands there was broad media condemnation of the Israeli invasion -- an attitude Begin did not hesitate to characterize as antisemitism.<sup>303</sup> The Holocaust analogy nonetheless served to delegitimize not only Israel's invasion of Lebanon, but also Israel's image as a guardian of moral values in an anarchic region. And Israel, which throughout its history had depended much on external sympathy and help, simply could not afford such a loss.

#### 6.4: Conclusion

Israel's invasion of Lebanon was politically fruitless. Tel Aviv was not able to transform its military victory against Syrian and Palestinian forces into a political success. The emergence of the Intifada confirmed that the Palestinian question could not be solved by military means. The same can be said about political arrangements within Lebanon, which defied all of Israel's expectations. Finally, as one defeat bred another, the invasion divided Israeli society against itself, created unnecessary tensions with Washington, and undermined Israel's self-declared image as a country with a humane mission. Perhaps for Israel there would be no consolation but to re-consider the circumstances under which the whole tragedy came to pass.

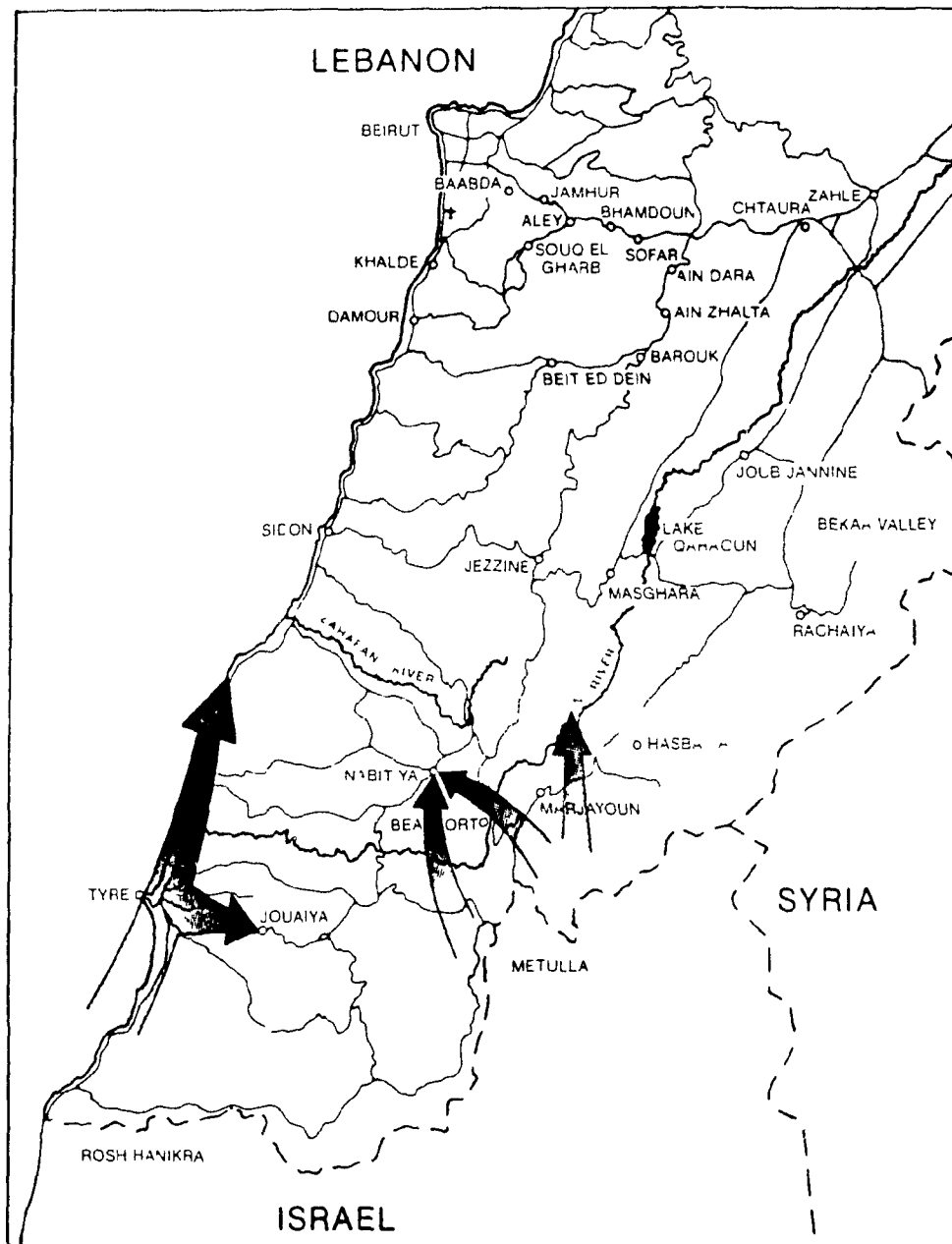


MAP #11: ISRAELI ADVANCE ON 7 JUNE 1982



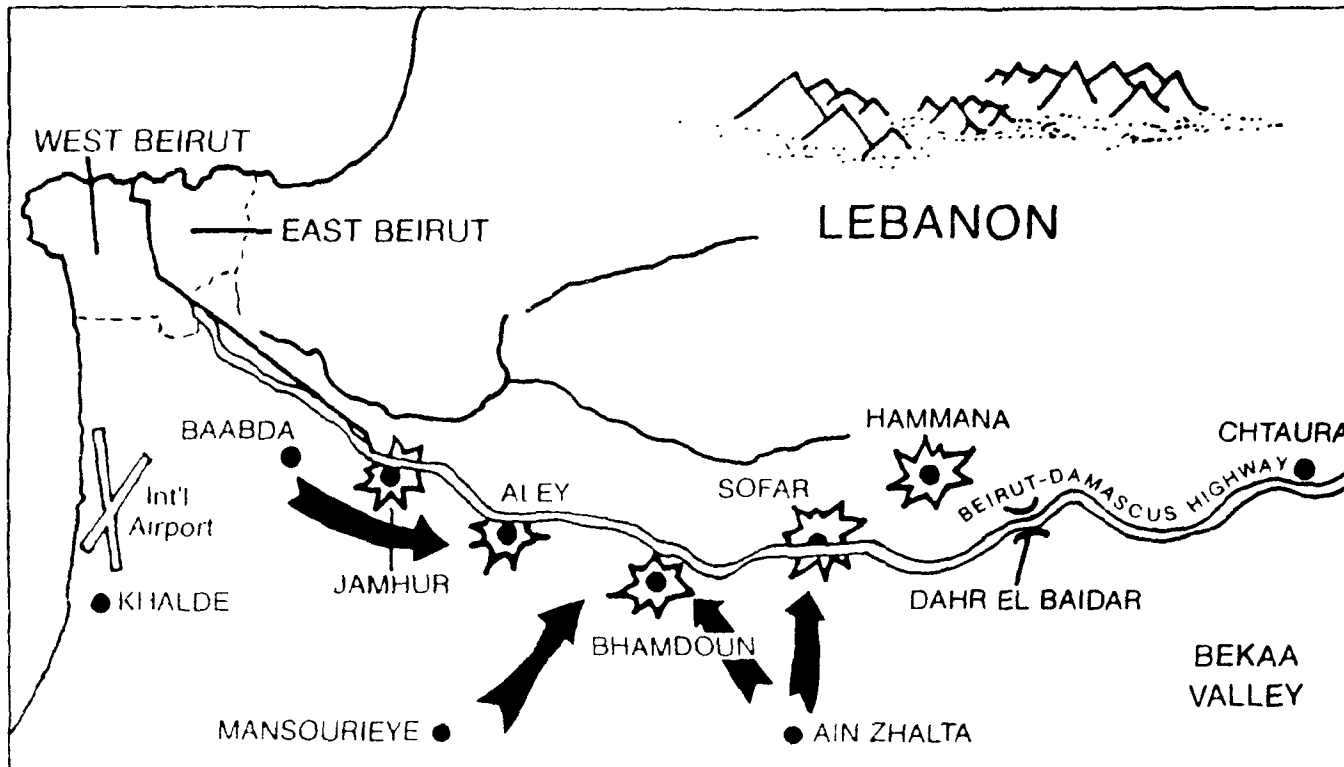
SOURCE: R. Gabriel, Operation Peace for Galilee, p. 88.

MAP #12: THE IDF's MAJOR ROUTES OF ADVANCE



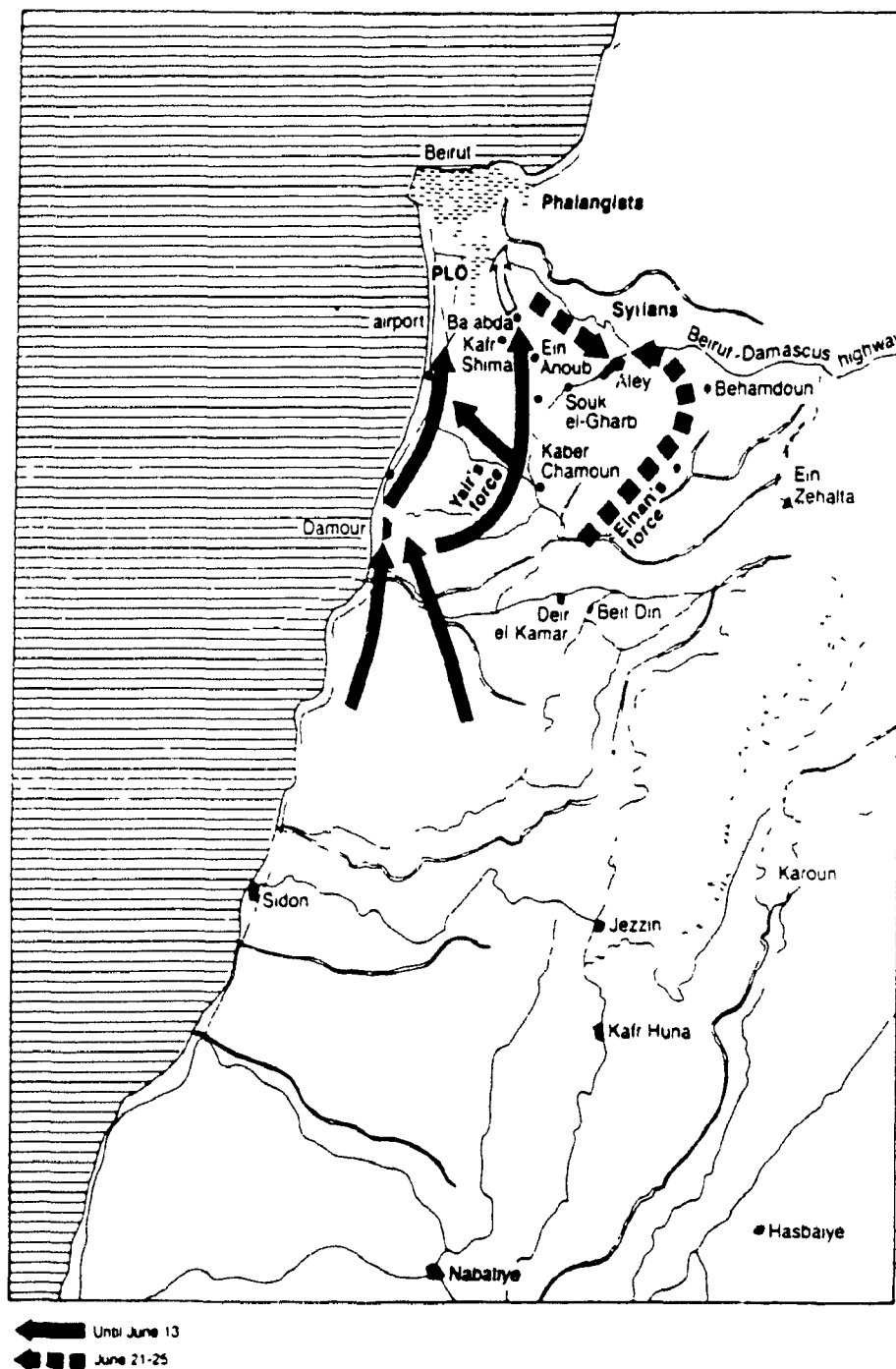
SOURCE: R. Gabriel, Operation Peace for Galilee, p. 86.

MAP #13: THE WAR AGAINST THE SYRIAN FORCES



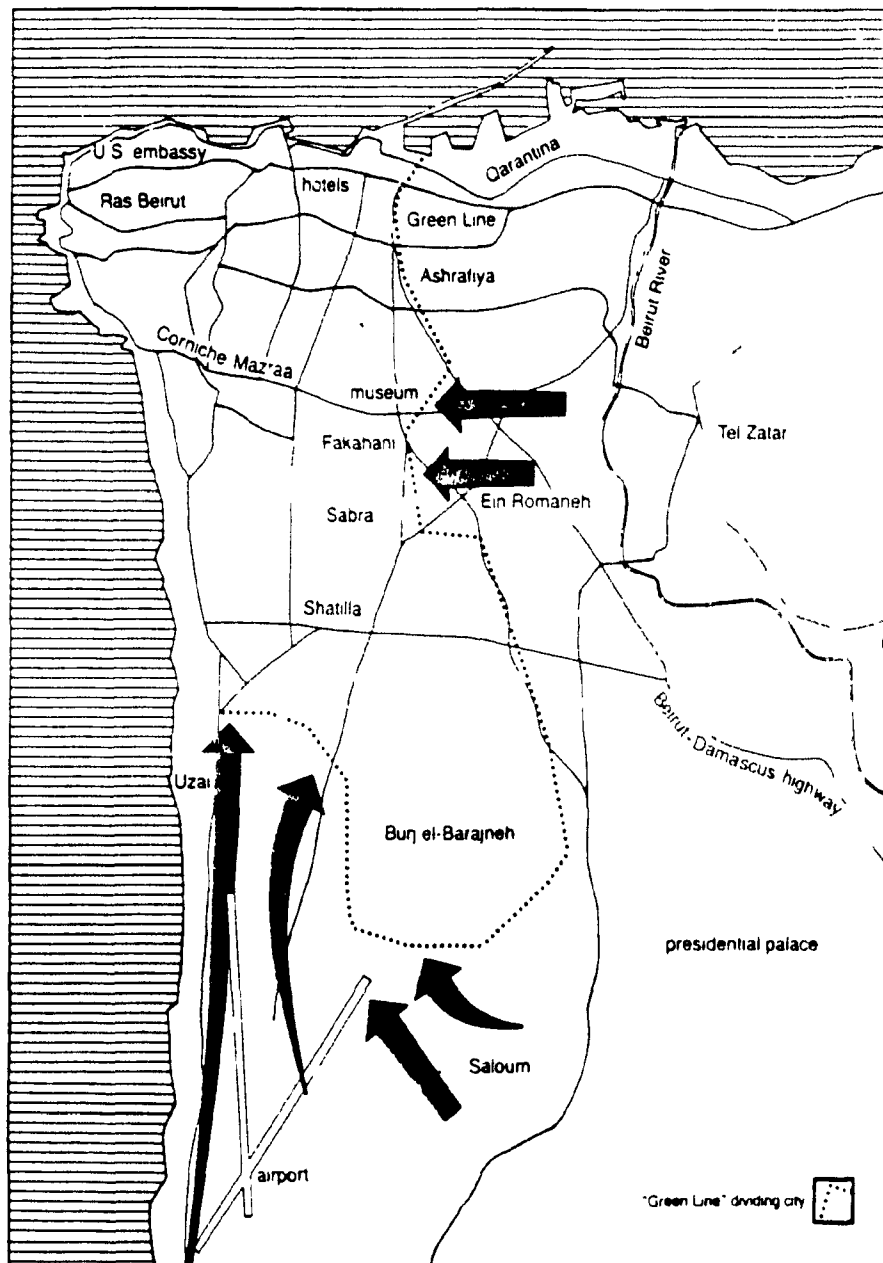
SOURCE: R. Gabriel, Operation Peace for Galilee, 110

MAP #14: THE LINK-UP BETWEEN THE IDF AND THE MARONITE MILITIA



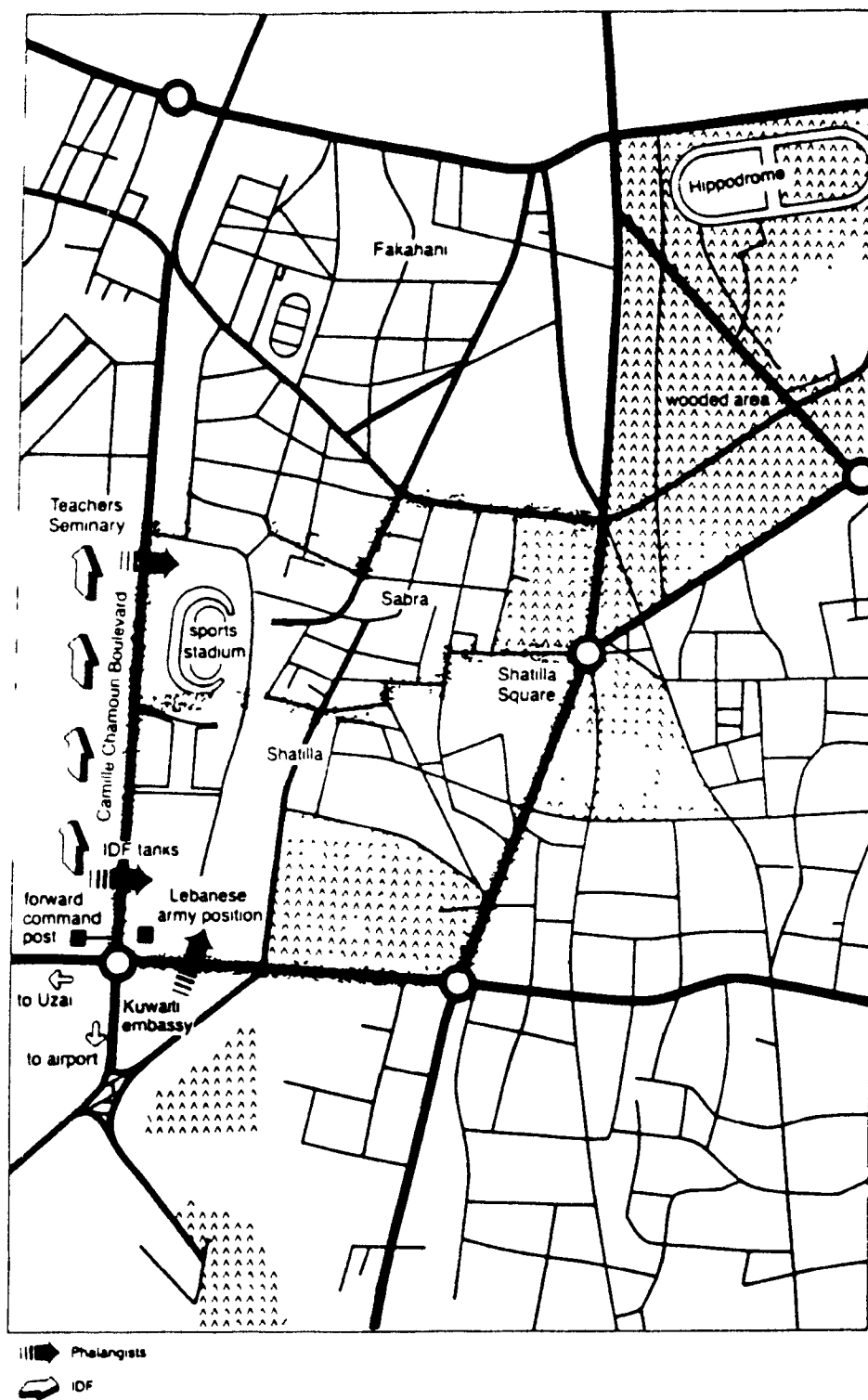
SOURCE: Z. Schiff and E. Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 183.

MAPT #15: THE SIEGE OF BEIRUT



SOURCE: Z. Schiff and E. Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 197.

MAP #16: SABRA AND SHATILLA



SOURCE: Z. Schiff and E. Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 197

**ENDNOTES**

1. It was reported that Palestinian and Lebanese casualties from Israel's air raids numbered about 110 killed and 200 wounded. Al-Anwar, 5 June 1982, p. 1 (Arabic).
2. Ibid., p. 15.
3. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 99; See also Ball, Error and Betrayal in Lebanon, p. 36.
4. Evron, War and Intervention In Lebanon, pp. 123-124. See also Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 99.
5. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 98. See also Ball, Error and Betrayal In Lebanon, p. 36.
6. Ball, Error and Betrayal In Lebanon, p. 36.
7. Washington Post, 7 June 1982, cited in Chomsky, The Fateful Triangle, p. 197.
8. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 51.
9. R. Gabriel, Operation Peace for Galilee: The Israeli-PLO War in Lebanon, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1984), pp. 60-61. See also M. Davis, 40 km Into Lebanon, (Washington, D.C.: National Defence University Press, 1987), p. 76.
10. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 62.
11. Al-Anwar, 9 June 1982, pp. 1 and 12.
12. Davis, 40 Km Into Lebanon, p. 71.
13. Jansen, The Battle of Beirut, p. 12. Thus Israel's revealed objectives to invade Lebanon (See Chapter Five) could not be attained by a limited military operation. Perhaps, it was for political considerations that the Israeli Cabinet declared that the war would not be expanded beyond the 40-kilometer zone. This discussion, however, illustrates the prominent role played by Sharon in executing the Cabinet decision to invade Lebanon -- a role that permits Schiff and Ya'ari to place the blame for Israel's political failure in Lebanon entirely on the Defense Minister. These questions will be discussed in Chapter 7.
14. Gabriel, Operation Peace for Galilee, p. 81.
15. Ibid., p. 76.

16. The Beaufort Castle is an old Crusader fort which had been used as an firing platform by the Palestinians for years and which was a constant menace of the positions of Major Haddad. (Ibid., p. 77). See also Davis, 40 Km Into Lebanon, p. 79.
17. Ibid., pp. 78-79; see also Davis, 40 Km Into Lebanon, p. 77.
18. Ibid., p. 79.
19. Document S/15194, 11 June 1982, paragraph 12. See also Skogmo, UNIFIL: International Peacekeeping In Lebanon, 1978-1988, p. 96; A James, "Painful Peacekeeping: The United Nations In Lebanon 1978-1982", International Journal, Vol. 38, No. 4, 1983 p. 625.
20. S/15194, paragraph 13.
21. Skogmo, UNIFIL: International Peacekeeping In Lebanon, 1978-1988, p. 99.
22. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 119.
23. Gabriel, Operation Peace for Galilee, p. 64. See also Schiff, A History of the Israeli Army, p. 247.
24. Ibid., p. 70.
25. Al-Anwar, 10 June 1982, pp. 1 and 15.
26. Ibid., p. 1.
27. Gabriel, Operation Peace for Galilee, p. 66.
28. Ibid., pp. 66-67. See also Sachar, A History of Israel, Vol. II., p. 178.
29. For a day-to-day account of the war see Davis, 40 Km Into Lebanon, pp. 78-104. See also Gabriel, Operation Peace for Galilee, pp. 82-158, S. MacBride, Israel In Lebanon: The Report of the International Commission to Enquire into Reported Violations of International Law by Israel during its Invasion of the Lebanon, (London: Ithaca Press, 1983), pp. 263-212.
30. P. Carter, "EW Won the Beqaa Valley Air Battle," Military Science and Technology, January, 1983, p. 106. See also Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 167, Seale, Assad, pp. 381-382, Rabinovitch, The War for Lebanon 1970-1983, p. 137.



31. Al-Anwar, 10 June 1982, p. 15.
32. Gabriel, Operation Peace for Galilee, p. 121. See also Seale, Asad, p. 394.
33. Seale, Asad, p. 386. See also Al-Anwar, 19 June 1982, p. 13, AL-Anwar, 22 June 1982, p. 1.
34. Al-Anwar, 11 June 1982, p. 1.
35. Chomsky, Final Conflict, p. 29.
36. Ibid., p. 219. See also Bulloch, Final Conflict, p. 60.
37. Bulloch, Final Conflict, p. 29.
38. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 108.
39. According to Israeli sources, the IDF had captured vast quantities of PLO equipment. This included 4,670 tons of artillery, 1,077 combat vehicles, 28,304 small-arms weapons, 1352 antitank weapons, 202 mortars of various calibers, 56 Katyusha rocket launchers, 70 heavy-artillery pieces, 158 anti aircraft weapons, and 1916 field communications pieces. See Al-Anwar, 26 June 1982, pp. 1 and 11. See also Gabriel, Operation Peace for Galilee, p. 133, Sachar, A History of Israel, Vol. II, p. 182.
40. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 253. See also Al-Anwar, 20 June 1982, p. 7.
41. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, pp. 135-136. See also Schiff, A History of the Israeli Army.
42. Ibid., p. 195.
43. This was an understandable mistake on the part of Arafat considering the similarity between the IDF and the Maronite militia in terms of uniforms and vehicles. Ibid., p. 195.
44. Ibid., p. 195.
45. Al-Anwar, 16 June 1982, pp. 1 and 11. See also Evron, War and Intervention, p. 138, Fisk, Pity the Nation, p. 214.
46. Al-Anwar, 19 June 1982, pp. 1 and 12. See also Gabriel, Operation Peace for Galilee, p. 129, Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 214.
47. Al-Anwar, 26 June 1982, p. 3. See also Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 9, Haddad, Lebanon: The Politics of Revolving Doors, p. 77.

48. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 214.
49. Gabriel, Operation Peace for Galilee, pp. 133-139.
50. Ibid., p. 131.
51. Al-Anwar, 21 June 1982, p. 10. See also Time, 27 December 1982, p. 19.
52. Gabriel, Operation Peace for Galilee, p. 132.
53. J. Sisco, "Middle East: Progress or Lost Opportunity", Foreign Affairs, Vol. 61, No. 3, 1983, p. 623.
54. Haddad, Lebanon: The Politics of Revolving Doors, p. 78. See also Pakradouni, Stillborn Peace, pp. 246-247.
55. Time, 12 July 1982, p. 29. See also Time, 19 July 1982, p. 11, Evron, War and Intervention, pp. 143-147.
56. Evron, War and Intervention, p. 149. See Al-Anwar, 27 July 1982, pp. 1 and 11.
57. Al-Anwar, 22 June 1982, p. 1. See also Sachar, A History of Israel, Vol. II, pp. 185-186.
58. Habib conducted the negotiation process with Arafat through Shafiq Wazzan, then Lebanon's Prime Minister. Schiff and E. Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 201.
59. Friedman, From Beirut to Jerusalem, p. 147.
60. Pakradouni, Stillborn Peace, p. 248.
61. There is no precise figure on how many people were killed in Beirut in the summer of 1982. An-nahar, an independent Lebanese daily, gave a figure of 5,500 killed during the siege, a Lebanese government investigation estimated that 6,775 killed in Beirut. An'nahar, 6 September 1982, p. 1.
62. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 225.
63. Bulloch, Final Conflict, p. 135.
64. Al-Anwar, 13 August 1982, p. 1.
65. MacBride, Israel In Lebanon, p. 155. See also Jansen, The Battle of Beirut, p. 54, Al-Anwar, 4 and 5 July 1982.
66. Time, 12 July 1982, pp. 12-14.

67. Jansen, The Battle of Beirut, pp. 60-62. See also Gabriel, Operation Peace for Galilee, pp. 143-145.
68. Al-Anwar, 29 June 1982, p. 1.
69. Bulloch, Final Conflict, p. 101.
70. Gabriel, Operation Peace for Galilee, p. 143.
71. Al-Anwar, 28 June 1982, p. 11. See also Friedman, From Beirut to Jerusalem, p. 147.
72. Al-Anwar, 10 August 1982, pp. 1 and 12. See also Haddad, Lebanon: The Politics of Revolving Doors, p. 78, Cobban, The Making of Modern Lebanon, p. 185.
73. Precise statistics on the exact total of Palestinian and Syrian forces which evacuated Beirut between 21 August 1982 and 3 September 1982 is difficult to obtain because some PLO fighters took wives and friends with them on the boats, others delayed their scheduled departure, and the MNF refused to give the daily figures for evacuees. See Fisk, Pity the Nation, p. 350.
74. Al-Anwar, 21 August-1 September 1982.
75. Chomsky, The Fateful Triangle, p. 256. See also Haddad, Lebanon: The Politics of Revolving Doors, p. 79.
76. Gabriel, Operation Peace for Galilee, p. 169. See also Bulloch, Final Conflict, p. 213.
77. O'Brien, The Siege, p. 617.
78. Al-Anwar, 10 September 1982, pp. 1 and 12.
79. L. Mikdadi, Surviving the Siege of Beirut: A Personal Account, p. 138.
80. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 229.
81. Friedman, From Beirut to Jerusalem, p. 168.
82. He was elected on the second ballot by a vote of 57 out of 62 deputies present. Article 49 of the Lebanese Constitution states: The President of the Republic is elected by secret ballot of a two-thirds majority of all the members of the Chambers of Deputies. After the first round of voting a simple majority is all that is required. See The Lebanese Constitution, (Beirut: The Chamber of Deputies Publications, 1990), p. 37.

83. Al-Anwar, 19 August 1982, p. 3.
84. Ibid., p. 12.
85. Pakradouni, Stillborn Peace, p. 250.
86. Mikdadi, Surviving the Siege of Beirut, p. 134.
87. Interview conducted with Deputy Mikhael Daher on 9 October 1990.
88. J. Abou-Khalil, The Story of the Maronites In The War, (Beirut: Publication and Distribution Company, 1990), p. 210 (Arabic).
89. Cobban, The Making of Modern Lebanon, p. 186.
90. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 231. See also Sachar, A History of Israel, Vol: II, p. 189.
91. Fisk, Pity the Nation, p. 379.
92. Al-Anwar, 22 August 1982, pp. 3 and 11. See also Mikdadi, Surviving the Siege of Beirut, p. 135, Bulloch, Final Conflict, p. 220.
93. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 231. See also Bulloch, Final Conflict, p. 220.
94. Ibid., p. 232.
95. Al-Anwar, 24 August 1982, p. 14.
96. Al-Anwar, 26 August 1982, p. 1.
97. Pakradouni, Stillborn Peace, p. 259. See also Randal, Going All the Way, p. 271, Haddad, Lebanon: The Politics of Revolving Doors, p. 79.
98. Al-Anwar, 8 June 1982, p. 1. See also Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 131, Bulloch, Final Conflict, p. 27.
99. A-Anwar, 8 June 1982, p. 1. See also Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 131, Bulloch, Final Conflict, p. 27.
100. Fisk, Pity the Nation, pp. 383, 418 and 435.
101. Ibid., p. 378. See also The Globe and Mail, 20 July 1982, p. A6.
102. Al-Anwar, 9 September 1982, p. 4.

103. Z. Hawari, The Israeli Economic Invasion of Lebanon, (Beirut: The Arab Institute for Studies and Publications, 1985), pp. 46-48 and 72.
104. An interview conducted with Chamsy Sarraf, a political scientist and a Lebanese bureaucrat, on 21 September 1990.
105. Fisk, Pity the Nation, p. 296.
106. Ibid., pp. 543-544.
107. Ibid., p. 457.
108. Hawari, The Israeli Economic Invasion of Lebanon, p. 31.
109. The Globe and Mail, 17 May 1983, p. 3. See also Pakradouni, Curse of a Nation, p. 55, Jabbra and Jabbra, "Lebanon: Gateway to Peace in the Middle East", p. 606.
110. Texts of the Lebanese-Israeli Troop Withdrawal Agreement: The White Paper, (Beirut: Foreign and Information Ministries, 1983), pp. 21-23.
111. Ibid., pp. 21-22.
112. Ibid., p. 23.
113. Hof, Galilee Divided, p. 105.
114. Interview conducted with Deputy Mikhael Daher on 9 October 1990.
115. Text of the Lebanese-Israeli Troop Withdrawal Agreement: The White Paper, p. 126. See also The Globe and Mail, 18 May 1983, p. 1.
116. Seale, Asad, pp. 409-410.
117. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 151.
118. Ibid., p. 151. See also Al-Anwar, 5 June 1982, pp. 1 and 15.
119. Al-Anwar, 19 June 1982, pp. 1 and 13.
120. Ibid., 9 June 1982, p. 1. See also Ball, Error and Betrayal in Lebanon, p. 37; Jansen, The Battle of Beirut, p. 76; Chomsky, The Fateful Triangle, p. 247.
121. Al-Anwar, 27 June 1982, pp. 1 and 14. See also M. Jansen, The Battle of Beirut, p. 78.

122. Pakradouni, Stillborn Peace, p. 259.
123. Bulloch, Final Conflict, p. 195.
124. Al-Anwar, 21 June 1982, p. 10. See also Pakradouni, Stillborn Peace, p. 239.
125. Fisk, Pity the Nation, p. 292.
126. Time, 19 July 1982, p. 15.
127. Jansen, The Battle of Beirut, p. 89.
128. K. Dawisha, "The USSR in the Middle East: Superpower In Eclipse", Foreign Affairs, Vol. 61, No. 2, Winter 1982-83, p. 438.
129. O'Brien, The Siege, p. 626.
130. Al-Anwar, 6 July 1982, p. 1. See also Bulloch, Final Conflict, p. 159, Jansen, The Battle of Beirut, p. 88.
131. The presumption was that the Camp David Accord had contributed, in a marginal way, to Israel's decision to launch the invasion, since the agreement had neutralized Cairo and thus reduced Israel's need to worry about its southern border. Al-Anwar, 18 June 1982, pp. 1 and 11. See also Bulloch, Final Conflict, p. 158.
132. Al-Anwar, 19 June 1982, p. 13.
133. Friedman, From Beirut to Jerusalem, p. 152.
134. Skogmo, UNIFIL: International Peacekeeping in Lebanon, 1978-1988, p. 29. See also Al-Anwar, 8 June 1982, p. 1.
135. Pakradouni, Stillborn Peace, p. 251.
136. Gilmour, Lebanon: The Fractured Country.
137. Al-Anwar, 10 June 1982, p. 3.
138. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, pp. 134 and 206.
139. Al-Anwar, 20 June 1982, p. 3. See also Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 134.
140. Al-Anwar, 2 July 1982, p. 11.
141. Bulloch, Final Conflict, p. 66.
142. Time, 4 October 1982.

143. Schiff, A History of the Israeli Army, p. 260.
144. Time, 27 September 1982, p. 16.
145. Pakradouni, Stillborn Peace, p. 11. See also Randal, Going All the Way, p. 1, Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 248.
146. Cobban, The Making of Modern Lebanon, p. 187.
147. Time, 4 October 1982, p. 16. See also Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 246.
148. Evron, War and Intervention in Lebanon, p. 152.
149. Jansen, The Battle of Beirut, p. 96. See also Bulloch, Final Conflict, pp. 228-229.
150. MacBride, Israel in Lebanon, p. 167.
151. Bulloch, Final Conflict, p. 231. See also Jansen, The Battle of Beirut, p. 163.
152. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 255. See also Gilmour, Lebanon: The Fractured Country, p. 173, Chomsky, The Fateful Triangle, p. 367.
153. Fisk, Pity the Nation, p. 382.
154. Time, 4 October 1982, p. 26. See also Gilmour, Lebanon: The Fractured Country, pp. 174-175.
155. MacBride, Israel In Lebanon, p. 181. See also Bulloch, Final Conflict, p. 232, Gilmour, Lebanon: The Fractured Country, p. 174.
156. Time, 4 October 1982, p. 16.
157. Ibid., p. 17. See also MacBride, Israel in Lebanon, p. 180.
158. Ibid., p. 17.
159. Ibid., p. 16.
160. Ibid., p. 17.
161. MacBride, Israel in Lebanon, p. 181. See also Chomsky, The Fateful Triangle, p. 393.
162. Evron, War and Intervention, p. 154.

163. Chomsky, The Fateful Triangle, p. 404.
164. B. Gwertzman, The New York Times, 17 September 1982, p. 1.
165. The MNF units which had deployed in West Beirut to oversee the PLO evacuation had seen the last evacuees leave on 1 September 1982. The MNF then declared mission accomplished, and on 10 September it left Beirut -- twelve days before the MNF's original mandate had been due to expire. Cobban, The Making of Modern Lebanon, p. 188.
166. Time, 4 October 1982, p. 18.
167. Ibid., p. 17.
168. Seale, Asad, p. 393.
169. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 280.
170. In an interview with an American journalist, Begin made a characteristic statement: "Goyim kill Goyim, and they immediately come to hang the Jews" (O'Brien, The Siege, p. 630). Excerpts from the Kahan Commission's report were taken from Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, pp. 282-284. See also Chomsky, The Fateful Triangle, pp. 397-409; Fisk, Pity the Nation, p. 384.
171. O'Brien, The Siege, p. 632.
172. Haddad, Lebanon: The Politics of Revolving Doors, p. 85.
173. Ibid., p. 85. See also Chomsky, The Fateful Triangle, p. 425, Time, 4 October 1982, p. 28.
174. Ibid., p. 86.
175. Gilmour, Lebanon: The Fractured Country, p. 183.
176. Gemayel, "The Price and the Promise", p. 760.
177. A. Gemayel, The Greatest Bet, (Beirut: Dar Annahar, 1988), p. 103 (Arabic).
178. Gemayel, "The Price and the Promise", p. 765.
179. Ibid., p. 766.
180. Al-Anwar, 7 June 1982, p. 12.



181. Haddad, Lebanon: The Politics of Revolving Doors, p. 87. See also Gilmour, Lebanon: The Fractured Country, p. 184, Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 278.
182. This terminology was employed by Dr. Salim Daher in his description of the Muslims's support of Amin Gemayel at the beginning of his presidency (An interview conducted with Dr. Salim Daher on 5 October 1990).
183. Haddad, Lebanon: The Politics of Revolving Doors, p. 87.
184. Ibid., p. 88.
185. Ibid., p. 88.
186. Friedman, From Beirut to Jerusalem, pp. 194-195. See also Chomsky, The Fateful Triangle, p. 421.
187. Chomsky, The Fateful Triangle, p. 421.
188. Friedman, From Beirut to Jerusalem, p. 199.
189. Ibid., p. 199.
190. Ibid., p. 200. See also Gilmour, Lebanon: The Fractured Country, p. 195.
191. During the Shouf War, which lasted for a few days in September 1983, the Maronites lost sixty villages, 1,000 dead, and 50,000 homeless who sought refuge in East Beirut. For a detailed account on this war, see P. Endary, The Mountain, (Beirut: 1985) (Arabic). See also Gilmour, Lebanon: The Fateful Triangle, pp. 418-420, Fisk, Pity The Nation, Chapter 13.
192. Cobban, The Making of Modern Lebanon, p. 205. See also Al-Massina, 3 January 1987, pp. 10-14 (Arabic).
193. Gilmour, Lebanon: The Fractured Country, p. 185.
194. Islamic Jihad had also claimed responsibility for an earlier suicide attack on the American Embassy in Lebanon on 19 April 1983 which killed 52 people and wounded almost one hundred. See F. Ajami, The Vanished Imam, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1986), p. 206.
195. Haddad, Lebanon: The Politics of Revolving Doors, pp. 92-93.
196. R. Newmann, "Assad and the Future of the Middle East", Foreign Affairs, Vol. 62, No. 2, 1983, p. 240.

197. Ball, Error and Betrayal In Lebanon, p. 69. See also Fisk, Pity the Nation, p. 482.
198. Time, 19 December 1983, p. 20.
199. Rabinovich, The War For Lebanon: 1970-1983, pp. 177-178.
200. E. Mortimer, "Lebanon: A History of External Meddling", The Chronicle Herald, 20 April 1989, p. 7.
201. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 293.
202. Time, 19 December 1983, p. 20. See also C. Weinberger, Fighting For Peace, (New York: Warner Books, 1990), p. 155.
203. Philip Habib, President Reagan's special envoy to the Middle East, told a British journalist at the time, "we know Syria won't willingly accept the terms of the accord. It must now accept them unwillingly" (Gilmour, Lebanon: The Fractured Country, p. 187).
204. Time, 19 December 1983, p. 23. See also Seale, Asad, pp. 398-399.
205. Seale, Asad, p. 398.
206. The Globe and Mail, 15 May 1986, p. A7.
207. Ibid., p. A7.
208. Evron, War and Intervention In Lebanon, p. 191.
209. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 307.
210. Ibid., p. 307.
211. Seale, Asad, p. 411.
212. MacLean's, 5 March 1984, p. 28.
213. Carter, The Blood of Abraham, p. 101.
214. Newsweek, 10 June 1985, p. 54.
215. Time, 19 December 1983, p. 23.
216. J. Kent, "The Assad Factor", The Middle East, January, 1986, p. 49.
217. Seale, Asad, p. 419.
218. Sachar, A History of Israel, Vol. II, p. 205.

219. I. Rabinovich, "Controlled Conflict In the Middle East: The Syrian-Israeli Rivalry In Lebanon", in G. Ben-Dor and D. Dewitt, (eds.), Conflict Management In the Middle East, (Toronto: Lexington Books, 1987), p. 106.

220. Ibid., p. 107.

221. Time, 11 February 1985, p. 30.

222. I. Rabinovich, "Controlled Conflict in the Middle East: p. 106.

223. Haddad, Lebanon: The Politics of Revolving Doors, pp. 108-137.

224. Kent, "The Assad Factor," The Middle East, p. 48. See also Gemayel, The Greatest Bet, pp. 133-151, W. Herris, "Syria In Lebanon", Third World Affairs 1988, (Plymouth: Latimer Trend, 1988), pp. 91-92; Abou-Khalil, The Story of the Maronites in the War, p. 381.

225. On 8 January 1987, The New York Times reported that the Phalangist militia had forged an alliance with the PLO. At the time, several key Phalangists leaders, notably Geagea and Pakradouni, perceived the Shiites as the main threat to the historical Maronite hegemony of the legal Lebanese political structure. Thus, to undermine this threat, the Phalangists sold Lebanese passports to Palestinians to help them pass through Amal's roadblocks, and also provided them with weapons and a route in Lebanon from Cyprus via the port at Junieh. From Junieh the Phalangists smuggled PLO's fighters across the Green Line which divided Beirut into Muslim and Christian sectors. Once across the Green Line, Palestinian guerrillas were able to join up with their compatriots in the West Beirut refugee districts where they had been fighting daily battles with the Amal militia. As for Arafat, his alliance with the "butchers of Sabra and Shatilla" was the only alternative to regain his independent base of operation in Lebanon. See The New York Times, 8 January 1987, pp. 1 and 6.

226. For a detailed account on "the war of the camps" see C. Giannu, Besieged: A Doctor's Story of Life and Death in Beirut, (Toronto: Key Porter-Books, 1990).

227. Time, 20 October 1986, pp. 59-60. See also Newsweek, 8 November 1986, pp. 40-42; The Globe and Mail, 19 March 1987, p. 5.

228. Dickey, "Assad and His Allies", pp. 68-69.

229. Between 1982 and 1988 Hezbollah and Islamic Jihad had kidnapped many American citizens and held them hostages in West Beirut, including: William Buckley, the CIA's station chief in Beirut; Father Lawrence Jenco, the head of Catholic Relief Services in Lebanon; David Jacobson, an administrator at the American University in Beirut; Terry Anderson, the bureau chief of the Associated Press in Beirut; Thomas Sutherland, the acting dean of agriculture at the American University in Beirut; Joseph Cicippio, the American University financial controller; and Frank Reed of the International School.

230. The Christian Science Monitor, 19-25 September 1988, p. 1.

231. Al-Deyar, 21 September 1990, p. 12. See also Pakradouni, Curse of a Nation, p. 17.

232. Articles 53, 74 and 75 of the Lebanese Constitution permit the president to appoint a prime minister and ministers to govern the country if the president's term expires without electing a successor. During this period, the Chamber of Deputies assumes the role of an electoral college, and not of a legislator, to elect a new president. See The Lebanese Constitution, pp. 41 and 58.

233. The Globe and Mail, 23 September 1988, p. 2.

234. The New York Times, 17 August 1989, p. 4. See also I. Rabinovich, "Syria and Lebanon", Current History, Vol. 88, No. 535, February 1989, p. 77.

235. The Charter of National Entente Document, (Beirut: The Chamber of Deputies Publications, 1990). See also A. Norton, "Lebanon After Ta'if: Is the Civil War Over?", The Middle East Journal, Vol. 45, No. 3, 1991.

236. The Globe and Mail, 25 November 1989, p. A5. See also Pakradouni, Curse of a Nation, p. 209.

237. The Globe and Mail, 6 November 1989, pp. 1 and 2.

238. The Globe and Mail, 25 November 1989, p. A5.

239. For more information on General Aoun's "War of liberation" against Syria and his rivalry with the Maronite forces led by Geagea see D. Rondeau, Chronique Du Liban Rebelle: 1988-1990, (Paris: Grasset, 1991), See also, Al-Deyar, 1 November, 1990, p. 12.

240. Al-Bena, No. 787, 1 June 1991, p. 6.

241. Seale, Asad, p. 419.
242. Ibid., p. 417.
243. Sachar, A History of Israel: Vol. II, p. 207.
244. McDowall, Palestine and Israel, p. 2. See also D. Peretz, Intifada: The Palestinian Uprising, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990), p. 39.
245. Friedman, From Beirut to Jerusalem, p. 375.
246. The Globe and Mail, 7 May 1988, p. A5. See also Peretz, Intifada, pp. 52-58.
247. The Globe and Mail, 8 January 1988, p. A7. See also J. Graff and F. Ohan, "The Intifada", Palestine and the Palestinians: A Handbook, pp. 59-61.
248. Al-Deyar, 11 December 1991, p. 11.
249. The Gazette, 10 May 1988, pp. A1 and A6.
250. T. Friedman, "My Neighbour, My Enemy", The New York Times Magazine, 5 July 1987, p. 31.
251. Friedman, From Beirut to Jerusalem, pp. 328-330.
252. Time, 9 May 1988, p. 38. See also McDowall, Palestine and Israel, pp. 3 and 4.
253. Ibid., p. 39. See also Peretz, Intifada, pp. 90-94.
254. The Christian Science Monitor, 28 December-3 January 1988, p. 5.
255. Friedman, "My Neighbor, My Enemy," p. 35.
256. The Globe and Mail, 28 May 1988, p. 1. See also J. Mandell, "Gaza: Israel's Soweto", Merip Reports, October-December, 1985, p. 7.
257. Mandell, "Gaza: Israel's Soweto", p. 7.
258. Friedman, From Beirut to Jerusalem, p. 325.
259. Ibid., p. 375. See also The Globe and Mail, 9 February 1988, p. A7.
260. J. Sigler, "The Palestinian Uprising", International Perspectives, July-August, 1988, p. 15. See also Y. Umar and R. Brynen, "The Revolution Called Intifadah", International

Perspectives, September-October, 1988, p. 6, R. Satloff, "Jordan and Reverberation of the Uprising", Current History, Vol. 88, No. 535, 1989, p. 87.

261. Interview conducted with Hassan Uz al-Din on 1 October 1990.

262. Maclean's, 18 April 1988, p. 23.

263. The Globe and Mail, 9 February 1988, p. A7.

264. Peretz, Intifada, pp. 83-84.

265. J. Graff and F. Ohan, "The Intifada", Palestine and the Palestinians: A Handbook, p. 56.

266. E. Gilboa, "The Palestinian Uprising: Has it Turned American Public Opinion?", Orbis, Vol. 33, No. 1, 1989, p. 22.

267. Peretz, Intifada, pp. 163-167.

268. G. Mate, "Israel's Time Bomb Ticks Again", The Globe and Mail, 8 January 1988, p. A7.

269. Peretz, Intifada, p. 174.

270. Ibid., p. 175.

271. The Globe and Mail, 28 May 1988, p. A3.

272. The Mail Star, 15 December 1988, p. 2.

273. The Globe and Mail, 19 December 1988, p. A9.

274. Ibid., 7 January 1989, p. D3.

275. Friedman, "My Neighbor, My Enemy", pp. 16 and 31.

276. A. Eban, "What Is Israel So Worried About?", The Globe and Mail, 7 January 1989, p. D3.

277. Journal of Palestine Studies, No. 67, Spring, 1988, pp. 63-65.

278. Friedman, From Beirut to Jerusalem, p. 387.

279. The Globe and Mail, 4 August 1988, p. 1. See also Peretz, Intifada, p. 109.

280. The Globe and Mail, 16 November 1988, pp. A1 and A5. See also P. Mattar, "The Critical Moment for Peace", Foreign Policy, No. 76, Fall 1989, p. 142.

281. Ibid., p. 42.

282. Time, 26 December 1988, p. 10.

283. The Shultz decision to begin dialogue with the PLO opened a door securely locked in 1975 when former Secretary of State Kissinger promised Tel Aviv that the United States would not deal with the PLO unless the organization first recognize the right of Israel to exist. Ibid., p. 11. See also Chapter Three.

284. R. Brym, "Israel in Lebanon: A View From the Zionist Left", Middle East Focus, Vol. 6, No. 1, 1983, p. 16.

285. After one year of occupation, Israel lost 516 dead soldiers and 2800 wounded. See Gabriel, Operation Peace for Galilee, p. 176.

286. Salman, Charara, and Batal, (eds.), Israel and the Experience of Lebanon War, pp. 214 and 217.

287. The Peace Now Movement was established in March 1978 to advance the peace process initiated by President Sadat's visit to Jerusalem. After the Camp David Accord was signed in September 1978, the movement had remained dormant until September 1982 when it staged a rally in Tel Aviv's Square of the Kings to protest the IDF's involvement in Sabra and Shatilla massacres. See Y. Yishai, "Dissent In Israel", Middle East Review, Vol. 16, No. 2, 1983-84, pp. 40-41.

288. J. Timerman, The Longest War: Israel in Lebanon, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1982), pp. 10-11.

289. Time, 16 August 1982, p. 21.

290. Time, 4 October, 1982, p. 16.

291. For more information on the dissent within the IDF during the invasion of Lebanon see D. Yarmiya, My War Diary, (Tel Aviv: Privately printed, 1983).

292. Time, 2 March 1992, p. 25.

293. Ball, Error and Betrayal In Lebanon, p. 135.

294. R. Reagan, An American Life, (London: Hutchinson, 1990), pp. 425-426.

295. J. Sisco, "Middle East: Progress or Lost Opportunity", Foreign Affairs, Vol. 61, No. 3, 1983, p. 624.

296. Ibid., p. 624.

297. Reagan, An American Life, p. 426. See also Time, 19 July 1988, p. 9.
298. Chomsky, The Fateful Triangle, p. 279.
299. R. Simon, "The Print Media's Coverage of War In Lebanon", Middle East Review, Vol. 16, No. 2, 1983, pp. 7 and 11.
300. F. Krantz, "Media Coverage of the 1982 War in Lebanon: A Case Study In the Limits of Journalism", Middle East Focus, Vol. 9, No. 3, 1987, p. 27.
301. Ibid., p. 29.
302. Ibid., p. 29.
303. D. Taras and D. Taras, "Media Imperatives and Middle East Reporting", Middle East Focus, Vol. 9, No. 3, 1987, p. 9. See also Sachar, A History of Israel, Vol. II, p. 187.



## CHAPTER SEVEN

### EXPLAINING THE FAILURE: THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL LESSONS

#### 7.1: Introduction

This concluding chapter investigates the factors which led to the demise of Israel's policy in Lebanon. It will be argued that had Israel understood the nature of Lebanese society and its actors, the invasion of Lebanon would probably not have occurred. In 1982, the IDF entered the battlefield armed with myths about Lebanon, about Israel's alliance with the Phalange Party, and about its own power to reshape the region's political map. In short, Israel's setbacks in Lebanon were of its own making, and this is precisely what makes it worth reexamining. Above all, Operation Peace for Galilee is a classic case-study illustrating how counter-productive can be the use of military force as an instrument of foreign policy. As such, it reveals intriguing parallels with the Vietnam experience for the United States.

#### 7.2.1: Explaining the Failure

How can we explain Israel's ultimate failure in Lebanon despite the IDF's victory against Palestinian and Syrian forces there?

The first theory is that the blame can be placed entirely on Defense Minister Sharon, who transformed Operation Peace

for Galilee into a personal campaign. He was able to do so even though the Cabinet had never approved his adventurist approach, the country's intelligence community had cautioned against it, and the senior ranks of the army had forthrightly opposed it.<sup>1</sup> On the eve of the war, Sharon and Eitan explicitly requested Cabinet approval of a plan to push the PLO's rockets and artillery out of the range of Israeli settlements. But what most ministers did not realize at the time was that Sharon had already instructed his field commanders (who, in line with Israeli military culture, had day-to-day control of operations) that the objective was to capture Beirut. According to Schiff and Ya'ari, Sharon deliberately postponed an attack against the Syrian army stationed in the eastern sector until the fourth day of the war, in order to give the impression that the IDF's advance would not go beyond the Cabinet's initial war aims. The fact was that on the very first day of the war Sharon had ordered the amphibious landing to take place north of Sidon, way beyond the 40-kilometre limit.<sup>2</sup>

It was not until the sixth day of the war, when the air force dropped leaflets on Beirut calling on Syrian units to flee while they still could, that the Cabinet got a grip on events. Throughout the process of creeping from one objective to the next, the Cabinet was kept in ignorance of what was happening in the battlefield until it had happened. For example, at one Cabinet meeting, Energy Minister Yitzhak

Berman requested Sharon to "tell us what you are going to ask us to approve the day after tomorrow so that you can secure what you are going to ask us to approve tomorrow morning."<sup>3</sup> For Sharon, however, this was all a question of the momentum of battle. The IDF's arrival at the gates of Beirut was a part of his original grand design.

The expansion of the war beyond its initial aims into a runaway war to capture an Arab capital demonstrates how well Sharon had arrogated the political authority to conduct a major military operation against the government's intentions, yet without being seen to challenge the country's democratic structure. Schiff and Ya'ari consider what happened as a "very subtle one-man coup," or a kind of a "covert putsch." Instead of trying to take over governmental institutions, Sharon devised a formula for evading the supervisory prerogatives of the country's parliamentary system.<sup>4</sup> By simply blocking the flow of information from the General Staff to the Cabinet, Sharon was able to impose his own view on the former and managed to present the latter with a series of selective reports tailored to secure its approval. For example, he exaggerated the terrorist acts conducted from Lebanon, and repeatedly assured his colleagues that Operation Peace for Galilee was "designed not to capture Beirut but to drive the PLO's rockets and artillery out of the range of our settlements."<sup>5</sup> When the link-up with the Phalangists was established on 13 June 1982, he portrayed this as a

spontaneous outcome of developments in the field.<sup>6</sup> The Israeli Cabinet was thus reduced to a "genteel debating society that received regular but carefully censored reports and was never advised of what was likely to result from the IDF's anticipated moves."<sup>7</sup> In other words, Israel's Lebanon war, conclude Schiff and Ya'ari, was "Arik's war."<sup>8</sup>

What is problematic about this theory is the fact that the invasion could not have been launched by one person. The war against the PLO had wide support from the majority of Israelis. To them, this was the latest round in their long struggle for survival against the PLO -- Israel's principal enemy. Even Rabin, the leader of the Labour bloc, stood with Sharon on the outskirts of West Beirut and urged him to "tighten" the siege on the city and cut off the water supply.<sup>9</sup> It was not until the war started to turn sour that the Labour leader vociferously protested that he favoured only a limited military operation 25 miles deep. It is conceivable that had Sharon's grand designed worked, Rabin might have claimed that he would have done the same. Sharon had after all implemented a war plan that had been articulated by previous Labour leaders, namely Ben-Gurion, Sharett and Dayan.

In 1937, long before Israel and Lebanon were created, Ben-Gurion told the Zionist World Workers Party meeting in Zurich that "Lebanon is the neutral ally of the Jews of the land of Israel .... The proximity of Lebanon will furnish a loyal ally for the Jewish state as soon as it is created."<sup>10</sup>

But this could not have happened, warned Sharett on 18 March 1954, without a "series of shock waves that will strike the Middle East, cause radical reshuffles and hurl the existing patterns into a crucible so that other formations will emerge."<sup>11</sup> Perhaps the presence of the PLO in Lebanon was the kind of justification for Israel's deep involvement in that country which Sharett was seeking. Moreover, the delay in withdrawing the IDF from Lebanon for more than two years even after Sharon was removed from the ministry of defense conformed with Dayan's objective to establish some kind of security arrangements along the Israeli-Lebanese border. We come back to the interpretation that if the Labour bloc had been in power in 1982, it most likely would have launched an invasion against Lebanon similar in kind to that of Sharon.

The assertion of the invasion as "Arik's war" also implies the accusation that Sharon misled Begin and the Cabinet. This argument can be dismissed on the ground that Begin was fully aware of the intention of his defense minister. The plan that underlay the war was presented to him on 20 September 1981, and he himself asked ministers to approve it. The only reason why Begin was hesitant to reveal his endorsement of Sharon's "Big Pines" plan in the first week of the war derived from his concern over possible negative external reactions. Besides, his reference to the idea of the creation of a Cairo-Jerusalem-Beirut axis indicates the broad framework in which he viewed the war. Sharon devoted himself

to kindling Begin's personal zeal to penetrate right down to "Arafat's bunker." On the other hand, if Begin had established that the Defense Minister was the cause of the disaster, why then did he not remove him from office? "To me", contends Harkabi, "it seems that Sharon simply knew what Begin wanted in his heart of hearts."<sup>12</sup> Perhaps it was the prominent position of the defense ministry within the Israeli political system that allowed Sharon to lead Begin and the Cabinet astray (See Chapter 3). This in turn suggests that had there been a national security staff or even a high-level national security advisor functioning as an independent check on the Defense Minister, the whole Lebanon problem could have evolved differently. In any case, the Prime Minister's responsibility for the war is beyond question. In short, the invasion of Lebanon was not "Arik's war," but Israel's war. To put it simply, in 1982 Israel proceeded on the path it wished to be led.

A second theory is that Israel lost in Lebanon because its military campaign ran contrary to Clausewitzian principles on war (see Chapter 2). The evidence to support this can be found in several places.

First, the Israeli invasion lacked clearly defined political goals. The first claim by the Cabinet after the IDF crossed the border with Lebanon was that Israel was only seeking to establish a zone 40 kilometres deep that would put the Galilee settlements beyond the reach of PLO artillery.

This goal was achieved easily within the first four days of the war. However, the fact that Jerusalem did not end the fighting at this stage suggests one of two things. Either the political goals of the war were not confined only to South Lebanon, or if, the objective to establish a new political order in Lebanon was determined by the military situation on the ground, then the planners of the invasion had simply violated the Clausewitzian precept of the necessity for the political echelons to guide war. Instead of articulating the political goals to be attained by the invasion, the Cabinet allowed the military establishment to fight the war in its own way. In effect, the way the objectives of the invasion changed following what was happening on the battlefield indicates that a structural divergence of political will from military means had governed the war and determined its outcome. This situation, argues Davis, had also created "a military scheme that promised itself political results, rather than a political strategy incorporating the use of military power."<sup>13</sup>

Moreover, the military means and the political objectives were incompatible. The prevailing Israeli attitude was that a decisive military stroke would destroy the PLO and Palestinian nationalism, defeat the Syrians, and dictate a new order in Lebanon, thus reshaping the political structure in the Middle East and changing the conditions of the Arab-Israeli conflict. It is true that the destruction of the PLO

in Lebanon was the major achievement of the war. However, in the long run, the political goals of the invasion were detached from reality. The establishment of a new order in Lebanon would have required the conquest of every inch of Lebanese territory and the retention of it until the Phalangist regime took root. In other words, occupying one-third of Lebanon was not sufficient to produce a strategic gain for Israel or a strategic loss for Syria, whose forces remained the main occupants in that country. Ultimately, argues Harkabi, nothing would have been different even if the IDF had forced the Syrian army to withdraw completely from Lebanon. At best, for Israel, this would have been a "pyrrhic victory", since the IDF would have had to remain entrenched along the Syrian-Lebanese border indefinitely to keep the Syrian army from returning to its former positions within Lebanon.<sup>14</sup> Eventually, Israel would have suffered heavy losses, and would have had to withdraw without achieving anything.

Finally, again following from Clausewitzian principles, Israel failed in Lebanon because it mistakenly assumed that the military component of the PLO was its centre of gravity, and that against this infrastructure a concentrated blow must be directed. But the PLO's greatest advantage was that it had no infrastructure. It was primarily a political organization which on occasion used terror as one of its tools. This was exemplified by the fact that the PLO did not fight as a unit



to stop the Israeli advance in South Lebanon. The truth is that the PLO lacked a "centre of gravity". It could only be dealt with effectively through political means. Perhaps the greatest tragedy of the war, argue Schiff and Ya'ari, "is that when it was over and the PLO had been whipped, Israel lacked the wisdom to choose a path to political compromise with the Palestinians, or at least with Jordan."<sup>15</sup>

Perhaps for Begin it was easier to harp on motifs like "the right of Israelis to live in peace", or "we must use strong-arms tactics against terrorism," or "we had no choice but to go to war."<sup>16</sup> What he seemed to ignore was that a war should not be waged for emotional reasons such as anger, ambition, national pride, or as a show of decisiveness, but only for instrumental reasons -- that is, if there is a reasonable chance of a favourable outcome. Harkabi asks: "What is the point of waging a war for even a just cause if one will be worse off as a result?" To him, "sometimes it is better to live with an injury than to take too drastic measures to remedy it."<sup>17</sup> Ben-Gurion understood this when he warned that Israel could not solve its problems once and for all by war. But Begin, who adhered to Jabotinsky's doctrine, could not comprehend that a solution to the Palestinian question had to be found at the political level, and that no matter how complete the Israeli military triumph, the political results would prove to be limited.

In particular, what the Likud government failed to

comprehend was that the very objectives of the invasion subjected the military operation to a fateful triangle: "To ensure that the PLO could not return to its bases in southern Lebanon, it was necessary to set up a new regime in Lebanon, and this was possible only if the Syrians were defeated."<sup>18</sup> During the entire fighting, however, the PLO suffered very few casualties while its senior ranks remained intact. Above all, the invasion did not change the demographic reality of South Lebanon as the centre of concentrated Palestinian refugees from which a new wave of terrorism against Israeli soldiers later emerged. Gabriel attributes this to the fact that the conditions of the Lebanese theatre of operations forced the IDF to develop a tactical solution to problems in mountainous terrain or in urban areas.<sup>19</sup> In past wars, all the IDF's theatre of operations was characterized by terrain on which large tank formations could manoeuvre and strike rapidly into the enemy's rear. Israeli forces were deployed in Lebanon in a manner that reflected the IDF's previous experiences. It was heavily equipped with tanks and armour as a spearhead, followed by armed personnel carriers transporting the infantry. As a result, the IDF suffered heavy casualties as it was forced to relinquish surprise, movement, speed, and initiative; to give away the first shot in ambush to the enemy; and to fail in protecting its soldiers in any significant way in coping with the mountainous terrain where most of the fighting took place.<sup>20</sup>

At the tactical level, the deployment of the IDF during the war was marked by a frequent switching of units from one command to another, and by the moving of field commanders in and out of their positions. On the thrust to Beirut, for example, the command of coastal road operation, switched about four times in less than 30 kilometres. This situation resulted in the presence of more than one commander of equal rank in directing the same operation -- a clear violation of Israel's pattern of maintaining integrity of leadership for the duration of the battle.<sup>21</sup> Besides, and most significantly, the IDF adopted a conventional military approach, including the use of systematic air bombardment, which bore little fruit in dealing with Palestinian guerrillas. Perhaps the way in which the air force was employed against PLO's forces, integrated as these were within an urban population, gives the impression that "the missions were intended to display the government's will to the Israeli public rather than to achieve some real goal."<sup>22</sup>

In sum, the tendency to "tacticize" strategy was typified by the way Israel conducted its invasion of Lebanon as if it were a battle and not a process. In the 1973 war, Sharon had successfully led the counter-crossing of the Suez Canal -- a move that changed the course of the entire war to Israel's favour. In Lebanon, Sharon's tactical perception of the war led him to commit the simplistic error of thinking that a defeat of the PLO and the Syrian army would guarantee Israel

a victory at the strategic level -- namely, the ability to dictate a new order in Lebanon. Israel's failure to achieve this indicates that the tactical approach of the battlefield does not work at the political level; that at the strategic level, a single battle is not conclusive, even if the enemy is defeated; and that at the tactical level, an unprecedented concentration of forces does not necessarily ensure victory. Regarding this last, colonial states which had at their disposal immeasurably larger power than that available to colonized countries were compelled to withdraw eventually. In 1982, Sharon seemed not to understand the limitations of the military instrument in a fragmented, unpredictable place like Lebanon. His approach can be considered a realist one, but at the tactical level he "behaved with a decisiveness and unwavering sense of direction, as though he knew exactly where he was going strategically, when in reality he did not have a clue about the world he was charging into."<sup>23</sup> As a result, when the fighting was over, notes Bundy, "an Israel deeply disillusioned by the outcome of the 1982 war and the casualties from it, and under heavy economic strains, was simply a lot less powerful, or at least less willing to use its power, than it had seemed up to 1982."<sup>24</sup> This is an outcome that both Clausewitz and Luttwak would have understood, and perhaps even predicted (see Chapter 2).

However, the Clausewitzian explanation of Israel's failure in Lebanon is not without its shortcomings. The IDF

was able to expel the PLO from Beirut, to force the Syrian forces to retreat to undefensible positions, and to orchestrate the election of Bashir Gemayel as President of Lebanon. It was perhaps sheer bad luck that unforeseeable occurrences, such as the assassination of Bashir Gemayel, then crippled Israel's efforts to fulfil its declared objectives. In 1982, everyone in Lebanon was talking about the "Israeli century."<sup>25</sup> It was not until after the abrogation of the 17 May Accord in 1983 that many realized that Pax Hebraica was no more viable. This is not to suggest that had it not been for Gemayel's murder the goals of the war could have been achieved. Above all, the course of events in Lebanon was not inevitable. Tel Aviv should have given more consideration to the problem of how war aims get out of control. Besides, it is almost certain, given the historical circumstances, that Bashir Gemayel would have had to take the same pro-Syrian line that his successor came to.

This means that the issue is not a matter of Israel trying to achieve political objectives beyond the reach of its military power. Military actions do not require great political knowledge, just a simple common-sense understanding of the context in which the war takes place. The Lebanon war, argues Harkabi, "was guided by a more grandiose political conception than any other Israeli war, but historical factors ignored by Israel's leaders frustrated its military gains."<sup>26</sup> In other words, a comprehensive understanding of Israel's

failure in 1982 must be found at the Lebanese level itself.

#### 7.2.2: The Thesis Revisited

As stated at the outset of this study, Israel's failure in Lebanon was due mainly to its miscalculation of the nature of Lebanese political affairs and social realities. What the Israelis failed to realize was that Bashir Gemayel was a Lebanese nationalist who intended to liberate Lebanon from all foreign forces, including the IDF. On 27 May 1982, almost one week before Operation Peace for Galilee was launched, he attributed the expected Israeli attack against the PLO simply to Israel's national security interests, and not in any way to a desire to "save" Lebanon.<sup>27</sup> Later, his public response to the invasion was to call for the liberation of Lebanon from all occupying forces: "As far as we are concerned, we are looking for the liberation of our country. We are looking for all the foreigners to leave -- Syrians, Palestinians, Israelis, and even UNIFIL -- we do not need any foreign armed presence in this country."<sup>28</sup>

Most significantly, Bashir Gemayel held back on his promise to fight alongside the IDF in a "cleansing operation" against the besieged Palestinians in West Beirut. His dilemma was that he needed the support of the Muslim Lebanese in order to become President of a united country. Besides, it was much more convenient for him to let the Israeli "mercenaries", to use Schiff and Ya'ari's phrase, do the dirty work with their

overwhelming firepower rather than to face the Palestinian fighters directly. Thus, when Begin and Sharon urged him to liberate his capital, Bashir remarked bitterly that "you are better off having me as president of a united Lebanon friendly to Israel than compelling me to make a military contribution - - which you do not really need anyway -- and then have me be a burden on you."<sup>29</sup> The truth was that Bashir was in no position to "dirty" his hands with Palestinian blood by fighting alongside the IDF, as a national reconciliation between Christian and Muslim Lebanese would then become impossible under his leadership. It follows that his old pledge to General Eitan - "leave Beirut to me" - finally came to mean not that the Maronite forces would capture West Beirut, but that the political aftermath of the war should be left to him. In Bashir Gemayel's scenario, the Israelis were to be a purely military instrument in the rehabilitation of Lebanon.<sup>30</sup> In short, Bashir Gemayel was not Israel's chief in Lebanon. At best, he was a political opportunist who tried to have it both ways: "He lured the Israelis into Lebanon, left them in the lurch on the battlefield, and then made short shrift of his promise to reward them for their pains by concluding a peace treaty."<sup>31</sup>

Even after he was elected President, Bashir continued to adhere to the Israeli invasion with "mock neutrality."<sup>32</sup> In secret, however, he resisted Begin's demand to establish formal diplomatic relations between Beirut and Tel Aviv on the

ground that a genuine peace between the two countries could not be achieved "without the agreement of all the Lebanese" -- by which Gemayel was referring to the Muslims.<sup>33</sup> Begin had little appreciation of intra-Lebanese politics. The consociational nature of the Lebanese polity had precluded Bashir Gemayel from deciding on such a sensitive matter alone. His priorities had to be different from those of Israel's. For Begin, a peace treaty was the only measure that would compensate for his country's sacrifice in Lebanon. But as for Bashir Gemayel, his basic aims included the removal of all foreign forces from Lebanon, the achievement of a national reconciliation under his leadership, and the building of a strong national army. Thus, a peace treaty at an early stage would have only destabilized his precarious regime, alienated Arab benefactors whose financial assistance would be needed to rebuild the country, and exacerbated the hostility among the various Lebanese communities - exactly as happened one year later, when Lebanon and Israel signed the 17 May Accord. In this context, his tactic of distancing himself from Israel seemed a well calculated political move aimed at persuading his Lebanese rivals to accept his presidency.

Worse still for Israel's design in Lebanon was that Bashir, upon visiting Saudi Arabia on 1 July 1982, accepted the Arab initiative to find a solution to the Lebanese crisis.<sup>34</sup> He resigned from the Phalange Party on 30 August 1982, urged his militiamen not to behave as though they had



won the civil war, and promised to bring Major Haddad to trial for dereliction of duty and treasonable trafficking with Israel.<sup>35</sup> This last was a hint for Begin that Bashir Gemayel would not accept anything less than the complete restoration of Lebanon's sovereignty. Thus, even before Bashir's assassination, Israel's policy in Lebanon had undergone a complete turnabout. It now concentrated on the creation of a "security belt" in the South by strengthening Haddad's militia.<sup>36</sup> Needless to say, this represented a sharp departure from Sharon's grand design, which envisioned a peace treaty with Lebanon after the expulsion of Syrian and Palestinian forces from that country.

If, on the other hand, Israel initially had the intention only of establishing a security zone along its border with Lebanon, then the invasion should not have occurred. The security zone had already been in place since 1976, when Rabin was Israel's Prime Minister. Unlike Begin, Rabin was reluctant to become too deeply involved in Lebanon's domestic affairs because he feared that deeper commitment would lead to military entanglement, and that might cause Israel unacceptable political and strategic costs. Above all, it seems that Rabin was aware of the Maronites' complex interests, which included contacts with Damascus. What happened under the Likud government, contends Friedman, was that Bashir Gemayel "whispered" the idea that with Israel's help, the Maronites would reshape Lebanon and forge a peace

treaty with Tel Aviv.<sup>37</sup> The Likud's mistake was to base its plan in Lebanon on Bashir Gemayel personally.

The dilemma was that even if Bashir Gemayel accepted Begin's demand to sign a peace treaty, there was no guarantee that such a decision would be supported by the majority of Phalangists. For in the summer of 1982, at a time when the IDF seemed to have the upper hand in Lebanon, a Phalangist delegation visited Syria to ensure its foreign minister, Abdul Halim Khaddam, that they still believed in Lebanon's Arabism, and that they would not allow it to become a threat to Syria's security under any circumstances.<sup>38</sup> This encounter should not have come as a surprise to Israel had its leaders understood the role played by the Phalange Party in contemporary Lebanon (see Appendix 2). Pierre Gemayel, the founder of the Phalanges Libanaises and Bashir's father, repeatedly emphasized the uniqueness of Lebanon within the Arab world, preached the gospel of coexistence between Christian and Muslim Lebanese, and stressed the necessity of liberalism as the only guarantee of all freedoms, especially freedom of worship.<sup>39</sup> With regard to the Arab-Israeli conflict, he supported the admission of Lebanon into the Arab League in 1945, denounced the partition of Palestine in 1947, and accepted the 1969 Cairo Agreement, which allowed the PLO to use Lebanese territory for commando activities against Israel.<sup>40</sup>

It is in direct relation to intra-Lebanese politics that

one may appreciate Pierre Gemayel's motivation in seeking Israel's assistance. His prime objective when the Lebanese civil war broke out in 1975 was to keep Maronite political supremacy intact. To this end, he welcomed the Syrian army in 1976, and also collaborated with the Israelis, because he feared that the PLO's presence in Lebanon would tilt the delicate political balance in favour of the Muslim Lebanese. As pragmatists, the Phalangists wanted the IDF to "liberate" Lebanon from Palestinian and Syrian occupations, but were not willing to cut off Lebanon's relations with the Arab world. In Friedman's terminology, the Phalangists wanted "the egg and its shell. The Israelis were the pigeons they thought would bring them both."<sup>41</sup> In this context, the Phalangists were not a tool of the Israeli policy. Their connection with Tel Aviv was something they were compelled, but did not prefer, to pursue.

According to Bishop George Khodr, the Phalangists never really thought of their Israeli connection in strategic terms, nor were they proud of it. For them, the IDF was no more than an instrument to help them retain their supremacy over the Muslim majority of the population.<sup>42</sup> This was apparent during Pierre Gemayel's first encounter with Rabin on 11 August 1976. In that meeting, Gemayel made no effort to hide his anti-Israeli sentiment: "I want to walk in Lebanon with my head held high as a Christian and as an Arab. I have been forced to turn to you, but I am filled with shame and dismay."<sup>43</sup>



Later, in June 1982, he expressed his reservation concerning the "liberation" by describing the Israeli invasion as a "catastrophe" for Lebanon, and by warning that the "Israeli presence is going to ruin the Lebanese formula which is based on the association between Christians and Muslims."<sup>44</sup> For him, a divided Lebanon along religious lines would, in the final analysis, add legitimacy to the existence of Israel as a Jewish state in the region. On the other hand, he opposed the establishment of a Maronite mini-state because it would not be economically viable. As well, he rejected a peace treaty with Israel because Lebanon's economic development is closely tied with the Arab world. As he stated: "If we open one gate to Israel, we will lose twenty gates to the Arab world because of it."<sup>45</sup> Pierre Gemayel even went as far as to deny that his militia had anything to do with the Sabra and Shatilla massacres, characterizing those "few" Phalangists who participated in the mass killing as "Israeli agents" who were not following his orders.<sup>46</sup>

One myth begets another. Israelis not only mythologized the Phalange Party but also mythologized the Maronite community as a whole. Of course, there had long been a split within the Maronite community over the question of a link with the World Zionist Organization. But those Maronites who sought a "community of faith" between themselves and Jews represented only a minority within their own camp. The majority of them were successful in lobbying France to

incorporate South Lebanon into the boundary of Greater Lebanon and, thus, deprived the Zionists of any control over the Litani river (see Chapter 5). They did so not because they believed in Lebanese Arabism, but because their predominant governmental positions were guaranteed (see Chapter 4).

In 1982, argues Bishop Khodr, the Israelis seemed not to understand that the Maronites had traditionally collaborated with any outside power that showed an interest in their affairs.<sup>47</sup> The Maronites had provided the Crusaders with "sorely needed 'guides" in 1089, cooperated with the Ottoman Empire, considered France to be their "kind mother" in the 1920s, and welcomed the Syrian army into Lebanon in 1976. In this context, their relations with the Israelis were no exception. They were willing to collaborate with the IDF temporarily in 1982, but they were not willing to compromise Lebanon's sovereignty to the new comers. Thus, in keeping with their tradition of shifting alliances whenever their interests dictated, they turned to Washington to act as a political buffer against Israeli demands.<sup>48</sup> Begin was stunned when Bashir Gemayel revealed that he and the Americans had already set priorities for negotiating the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon, including the IDF.<sup>49</sup> Even so, for the Maronites, this new alliance with Washington was business as usual. Their strategy can be illustrated in the writings of Joseph Abou-Khalil, who was the first official from the politburo of the Phalange Party to make contact with

Israel on 12 March 1975, one month before the outbreak of the Lebanese civil war. In 1990, when Syria seemed to have the upper hand in Lebanon, Abou-Khalil himself apologized for his visit to Israel and considered it not as a "political mistake" but as a "blasphemy."<sup>50</sup>

In the final analysis, Deputy Mikhael Daher argues that the Israelis did not seem to understand that the Maronites are Arabs, and that the Phalange Party does not represent them.<sup>51</sup> In June 1982, the Maronite leadership joined their Muslim counterparts in condemning the "liberation." The Lebanese Front, a political umbrella which grouped the main Maronite political parties in East Beirut, condemned the invasion as a "tragedy" and pledged to turn it in favour of Lebanon and its people and to secure the country's "total sovereignty and the liberation of its territory from all foreigners without exception."<sup>52</sup> Also joined in the condemnation were former President Franjieh who described the invasion as "barbaric"; Raymond Edde, who called for the formulation of a Lebanese government-in-exile to work for the liberation of the country; and former president Camille Shamoun, who denounced the siege of Beirut as "cruel and unjustifiable."<sup>53</sup> Had the Israelis realized that the Maronites considered themselves to be Arabs, they would have not made a "covenant" with them. Perhaps because Israelis lived their entire history surrounded by hostile Arabs, they became vulnerable to any Arab who offered to make peace with them, and as a result, they never

questioned who their Maronite allies really were.

Not only did the Israelis miscalculate the intentions of the Maronites, they also did so with respect to other Lebanese. As stated in Chapter 4, the Lebanese Republic emerged in 1943 upon an unwritten agreement reached between Maronites and Sunnis. This simple fact was ignored by most Israelis. They tended to perceive Lebanon as a country dominated by Christians, and to assume that the Maronites spoke for all Christian Lebanese, and that the Muslim Lebanese were only a minority that was not interested in forging ties with the Jewish State. However, not all Christian Lebanese shared the Maronites' fear of Arabism and Islam. In the case of the Christian Orthodox community, its members had historically identified themselves as "Orthodox Arabs and Arab Christians."<sup>54</sup> According to Bishop Boulos Bandali, the Orthodox had resisted efforts launched by Catholic Europe to "save" the region's Christians from the domination of the "infidel" Muslims. Instead, their approach to Arabism had been one of accommodation, compromise, and secular politics. With regard to the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Orthodox considered Israel to be an enemy and a threat. Not surprisingly, then, in 1982 they denounced the Israeli invasion on the ground that Christian Lebanese were in no need of protection by the IDF against the Muslims.<sup>55</sup>

Israel also miscalculated the political strength of the Shiite community. Like the Maronites, in the beginning the

Shiites welcomed the IDF to rescue them from the PLO's yoke, and to secure their position in Israel's design for Lebanon. By dismantling the PLO's infrastructure in South Lebanon in the summer of 1982, the IDF had done for the Shiites what they had not been able to do for themselves. However, by trying to restore the Maronites' hegemony over Lebanon, Israel had alienated the Shiites, who eventually became suspicious of their "liberators." In fact, with the election of Bashir Gemayel, the enthusiasm with which many Shiites received the IDF dissipated quickly, and the "liberators" of June became a force of occupation in September 1982.

Israel's support for the Maronites in 1982 serves to highlight the argument that Israeli decisionmakers knew little about the numerical strength of the Shiite community. Although no census had been conducted since 1932, there was good reason to believe that the large scale of Maronite emigration, and a higher Shiites birthrate, had brought the latter a numerical majority. This demographic change had convinced the Shiites of their right to be treated equally within Lebanon; it had strengthened their determination to alter the constitution of the state; and it had increased their demands for a more equitable distribution of power. They argued that the same basis (i.e., the census of 1932) which gave the Maronites their political prerogative had now changed, and that it should be applied to give them their rightful political share in the state. In retrospect, by



supporting the Maronites, Israel was simply "betting on the wrong horse."<sup>56</sup> Worse still for Israel was that its occupation of South Lebanon had given the Shiites who represented about 90 percent of the population there, "the material out of which militant myths are made."<sup>57</sup>

Thus, beside miscalculating the Shiites' numerical strength, Israel had also underestimated their military and political importance. In 1982, the Shiite heritage of submission had long been replaced by one of rebellion. Thanks to Imam Musa al-Sadr, who made the legacy of Ali's martyrdom and righteousness one of contemporary significance, the Shiites, and especially the young, became willing to die for their land.<sup>58</sup> However, after al-Sadr's disappearance while visiting Libya in 1978, the Shiite Lebanese found a new patron in the Iranian Revolution of Ayatollah Khomeini. In the course of 1982, Khomeini sent about 500 Revolutionary Guards to Lebanon via Damascus with a specific mission to fight Zionism.<sup>59</sup> Their presence in the Beqaa Valley had influenced the emergence of Hezbollah under the spiritual guidance of Sheik Muhammed Hussein Fadlallah, who sought the establishment of an Islamic state in Lebanon. To this end, he called on Shiites to wage a "holy war" against the "unbelievers and the hypocrites and deal rigorously with them."<sup>60</sup>

It should be noted that the resurgence of Shiite fundamentalism derives not only from the intrinsic development of a religious community, but also reflects reactions to

events. The most significant incident that turned the Shiites against the IDF took place on 16 October 1983. On that day, an estimated 50,000 Shiites gathered in the South Lebanon market town of Nabatiya, celebrating Ashoura, which commemorates the martyrdom of Imam Hussein, the Prophet Muhammed's grandson, in 680 A.D. Coincidentally, an armed Israeli convoy tried to make its way through the crowds and, as a result, three people were killed and several wounded. Immediately, the Shiites interpreted the Israeli intrusion as a deliberate and crude violation of their most sacred day, and they began to attack Israeli soldiers in any way and anywhere they could. The Shiites made a special use of "human bomb" attacks, as happened on 4 November 1983 when a suicide driver struck the Israeli headquarters in Tyre killing 67 soldiers. Several suicide missions followed, and it was estimated that in 1984 about 900 attacks were carried by Shiite militants against Israeli soldiers, thus forcing their withdrawal.<sup>61</sup>

Between 1982 and 1985, South Lebanon witnessed a relentless war between the Shiites and the IDF. Throughout, the Shiites fought the occupiers with zeal, fury, courage, and fanaticism. It seems that the Israeli occupation forced the Shiites to excel in deliberately seeking death. Hussein Mussawi, the leader of Islamic Amal, attributes this phenomenon to a religious basis. As he states: "It is the duty of every Muslim to counter evil with evil. Our Prophet Muhammad, praise be his name, has invoked us to carry the

sword to defend our honour."<sup>62</sup> Perhaps this explains why the Shiites displayed a type of resistance the Israelis had never encountered before. For unlike Palestinian guerrillas, the Shiite Lebanese were not only ready to kill, they were willing to die for their cause. "In 20 years of PLO terrorism", argues Rabin, "no one PLO terrorist ever made himself a live bomb -- took a car or pickup, put half a ton of high explosives in it and drove with the intention of blowing himself up with the target .... In my opinion, the Shiites have the potential for a kind of terrorism that we have not yet experienced."<sup>63</sup> Therefore, concludes Rabin, "if as a result of the war in Lebanon, we replace PLO terrorism in South Lebanon with Shiite terrorism, we have done the worst thing in our struggle against terrorism."<sup>64</sup> And so the Israelis did: the invasion did not destroy terrorism, it simply intensified it <sup>65</sup>

The point needing emphasis here is that had Israelis appreciated Shiite numerical strength and political importance, they would not have supported the Phalangists in the civil war. In a pluralistic society like Lebanon, the Maronites could not hold on to their prerogatives without Israel's long-term support. In this context, Shiite resistance in South Lebanon against the IDF can be seen as a part of their struggle over the nature of the Lebanese system. It follows that had Israel not allied itself with the Maronites, the Shiites, in keeping with Lebanon's communal

politics, would have supported, or at least not opposed, the 17 May Accord. Even so, there was still no guarantee that other Lebanese communities, like the Druzes, the Sunni, and the Orthodox Christian, who had drawn on Arab resources, would have been anxious recipients of Israel's patronage.

What was misleading for Israel in 1982 was that its entry into Lebanese politics was a variation of an old theme. Lebanese communities have always collaborated with outside powers to tip the scales against each other, and to check each other's patrons. Perhaps one of the most startling developments in Lebanon was the alliance that the Phalangists forged with the PLO in 1987 (see Chapter 6). These were the same Phalangists who teamed up with the IDF in 1982 to drive the PLO out of West Beirut. This time, however, the Phalangists perceived the Shiites, and not the Palestinians, as the greatest threat to their historical supremacy within the Lebanese political structure. No one could have expected this to happen, but such is life in the political kaleidoscope which Haddad describes as "the politics of revolving doors."<sup>66</sup>

### 7.3: Lessons of the Invasion

The purpose of this thesis has been to describe and examine Israel's decision to invade Lebanon in 1982 in the context of various psychological, domestic, and external constraints. These constraints can be seen as the lens through which a state perceives both conciliatory and hostile

behaviour by another state or a coalition of states. Since foreign policy decisions always involve a cost, decision-makers are expected to formulate a decision that has the highest return for the least cost. In the case of deciding to go to war, decisionmakers must carefully assess the compatibility between military means and the political objectives to be achieved. A general understanding by decisionmakers of their state's foreign policy environments is essential for managing the outcome of limited military operations, involving, for instance, a preemptive strike of short duration. However, confusion, miscalculations, and even greater risks may occur if the forces employed are expected to intervene in the internal politics of another state. In short, when military means and political ends are not clearly balanced, the result may be a disaster.

Generally, theories of foreign policy have considered the elite perception of national roles, domestic political and economic considerations, and external factors as crucial in determining foreign policy alternatives. This is also exemplified in Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982. But Tel Aviv's failure there was not indicative of a lack of resources. As shown in Chapter 5, favourable foreign policy environments characterized Israel's decision to launch its military operation in Lebanon. Initially, the invasion was credited with domestic and American support, in addition to military strength and Arab disunity. It follows that a

comprehensive understanding of Israel's failure in Lebanon can only be appreciated in relation to the Lebanese situation. Foreign policy environments, although relevant in explaining the totality of foreign policy, do not necessarily constitute a sufficient means for assessing the performance of a state's foreign policy. This gap suggests the need for more foreign policy research using case-studies illustrative of state behaviour in relation to other countries.

What is so peculiar about Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982 is that the IDF was expected to achieve something beyond its military reach. Historically, the IDF had proven to be effective in protecting the Jewish State against its outnumbered enemies. Perhaps this effectiveness was due to the fact that prior to 1982, all of Israel's previous wars were defensive in nature, or at least were perceived to be so by the majority of Israelis. In contrast, the 1982 invasion was a kind of offensive war unprecedented in Israel's history.

The invasion was expected to lead to a peace treaty with Lebanon, to destroy Palestinian nationalism, and to defeat the Syrian army. Instead it exacerbated the strife between Palestinian nationalism and Zionism, intensified the hostility among various Lebanese communities, and reaffirmed Syria's determination to control Lebanon.

It is true that the invasion was guided by a more grandiose political conception than any other Israeli war, but the folly was in believing that the PLO was the core of

Lebanon's problems and not just one of its symptoms. The PLO was involved in Lebanese politics simply because some Lebanese, especially the Sunni community, thought of it as its "trojan horse" to challenge the Maronites' dominance of the republic. This is not to suggest that Muslim Lebanese were set on establishing an Islamic state hostile to Israel. Rather, their criticism of the central government was addressed not to its legitimacy, but to their demand for more equitable distribution of power. In the case of the Shiites, for instance, their extremist millennium has no chance of realization. Unlike Iran, Lebanon is a land of rival sects, its economic resources are limited, and it exists in the shadow of two larger powers: Syria and Israel. In other words, Lebanon is not an ideal site for a great "movement of redemption." On the other hand, the moderate elements in Amal who represent the majority of the Shiites are typical Lebanese whose characteristics have been shaped by a turbulent history of Israeli-Palestinian war, an Israeli occupation of the South, Syrian occupation in the Beqaa Valley, and a communal feud with other Lebanese.<sup>67</sup> Although they share Iran's faith, they also live in a world and a state of their own. Like other Lebanese communities, they have no territorial claim against Israel. Their cause is in Lebanon itself, while their fight against the IDF is based on the conviction that the political regime belongs to those who liberate the land.

The real source of Lebanon's troubles is related to the

communal struggle within it. Any solution to the Lebanese crisis must address the fundamental issue of the country's identity and its sectarian division. For Israel to rid Lebanon of the PLO was no cure for the country's instability in the absence of a strong central government, and this could not have been achieved by helping the Maronites to retain their hegemonic status over an unwieldy state. In retrospect, the installation of Bashir Gemayel as President was a premature measure; it came before achieving the crucial rapprochement between the various Lebanese communities on how power should be distributed among them. Israel's failure to do this alienated the majority of Lebanese against the IDF, and forced them to adopt a more radical line.

It can be concluded, then, that the best approach which Israel could have pursued during its invasion of Lebanon was as follows. First, Israel could have installed a stable government strong enough to sign a peace treaty by forcing the Maronites to accept some constitutional reforms, while at the same time encouraging Muslims to moderate their demands. Second, Israel could have avoided a military confrontation with the Syrian army by concentrating its attacks solely on PLO positions. Had Israeli decisionmakers appreciated Assad's strategic concern in the Beqaa Valley, the battle for the implementation of the 17 May Accord could have been avoided, and a de facto defense equilibrium between the two states could have been achieved. Finally, Israel could have taken



the initiative to open negotiations with Palestinians in the occupied territories without the PLO's participation. The invasion intensified the linkage between the Lebanese crisis and the Arab-Israeli conflict, and Lebanon, due to its weakness, was not best suited to break the impasse at this level.

In the final analysis, Israel's failure in Lebanon shows that the Jewish state is not always "a victim of others, but is also the victim of its own illusions, and more particularly of the leaders it has chosen for itself."<sup>68</sup> What better evidence of this can there be than the notion that peace can be achieved at the expense of justice. In commenting on the very name given to the Israeli invasion, Tueni writes that for Israel "to occupy almost half of a country, destroy its capital, disrupt its economy, ferociously kill its civilian population by the thousands -- for the sake of Peace for Galilee -- is indeed a very strange notion of peace."<sup>69</sup>

The invasion nonetheless opened up the opportunity for Israel to reconsider its "tattered sense of self and battered sense of purpose."<sup>70</sup> In various ways, Israel's venture in Lebanon is similar to the American experience in Vietnam. In Vietnam, the United States pursued a policy ultimately contrary to its national interest.<sup>71</sup> The dominant consensus which led Washington to intensify its military involvement in Vietnam concluded that the conflict was a testing ground of Western resolve and credibility. As one editorial in The

Washington Post stated: "The United States has a major interest in the defense of Vietnam, not only because of the vast amounts of economic and military aid ... but also because American prestige is very much involved in the effort to protect the Vietnamese people from Communist absorption."<sup>72</sup> It was assumed that American military strength in South Vietnam would deter further Communist aggression elsewhere, and that the cost of not intervening to prevent the Communists from taking full control of Vietnam was deemed to be greater than the cost of intervening.<sup>73</sup> And thus, "as long as the general doctrine of military containment of communism remained the consensus," argue Gelb and Betts, "the specific military intervention in Vietnam followed logically."<sup>74</sup>

But this doctrine, which guided American policy in Vietnam for two decades, proved to be an extremely dubious hypothesis. The US effort to save Saigon from Communism through the promotion of democratic institutions was bound to be ineffective because, as Hoffman argues, no foreign intervention "can easily master the complexities of local social, economic, and political problems or overcome the resistance of local nationalism."<sup>75</sup> Worse still, as the case of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 teaches us, any foreign support for a particular regime can erode the legitimacy of that regime.

Gelb and Betts attribute the American failure in Vietnam to what they call "a conceptual and doctrinal consensus."<sup>76</sup>

They argue that some views of Vietnam had over the years acquired the character of a political imperative that made it difficult to reverse a counter-productive policy. As they state: "Doctrine and consensus are the midwives to necessity and the enemy of dissent and choice. They breed political paranoia and intellectual rigidity.... To define policy in terms of necessity, as doctrines do, is to preclude choice by definition."<sup>77</sup> In practice, the folly was in perceiving Vietnam in terms of an automatic chain reaction, while trying to reduce the danger of what appeared to be an infinite involvement to a level that could be managed routinely. Perhaps what the United States needed in order to change the course of its policy in Vietnam was a kind of pragmatism that allowed the search for alternative courses of action.<sup>78</sup> In a way, an effective foreign policy requires that its objectives be balanced continuously against the possibility that they may not be attained.

This basic lesson of the Vietnam War seems to be ignored by the Israeli leadership while it was deciding to invade Lebanon in 1982. As indicated in Chapter 5, no alternative course of action was debated prior to the attack. The Likud government was very much preoccupied with the danger of terrorism and with its own ability to solve a political problem by military means. However, as shown in Chapter 6, the outcome of the war was just about the opposite of what Tel Aviv expected the invasion to achieve. Perhaps, argue Schiff

and Ya'ari, "a misguided war is a stage that every nation goes through on its way to political maturity."<sup>79</sup>

In 1991, during the Gulf War between Iraq and the Coalition Forces operating under the UN umbrella, Israel decided not to respond to Iraqi Scud missile attacks. The Israeli decision came about as a result of considerable American pressure on Tel Aviv not to launch a pre-emptive strike against Iraq and, in the event of war itself, to refrain from retaliating if attacked. The Bush Administration was concerned that a possible Israeli military response against Baghdad would jeopardise the participation of other Arab armies in the multinational coalition arrayed against Saddam Hussein, and bolster the latter's popularity in the Arab world. Also, the deployment in Israel of two American Patriot air defense missile batteries and crews to intercept Iraqi Scud missiles seems to have persuaded the Israeli leadership that there was nothing their country could do to add to the military effort against Iraq. During Operation Desert Storm, between 17 January and 27 February 1991, 39 Iraqi Scuds landed in Israel, but failed to prompt an Israeli retaliatory strike.<sup>80</sup> In refraining from striking back, Tel Aviv had abandoned two aspects associated with its security doctrine: (1) to assume military self-reliance at all times, and (2) to retaliate swiftly and decisively against all armed attacks.<sup>81</sup>

The politics of restraint exercised by Israel during the

Gulf War defied all external expectations. No one aware of Israel's paramount concern with its security would have expected it to sustain missile attacks without responding in kind. Our knowledge of Israel's foreign policy environments is poorly equipped to predict Israel's behaviour in time of crisis. Certainly a psychological level analysis, presented in terms of Israel's location in a hostile environment, cannot explain why under certain conditions Tel Aviv would choose not to depend solely on its own forces to protect itself. Israel's policy of restraint during the Gulf War indicates that the Jewish State was capable to foresaking its own defence doctrine. As Welch states: "The fact that Israel did not retaliate illustrates at least a partial triumph of reason over inclination ...."<sup>82</sup> This is pragmatism par excellence. If so, then Israel, since its invasion of Lebanon in 1982, "has come out of its adolescence considerably sadder but wiser about the limit of what force can achieve and the illusions that power can breed."<sup>83</sup>

In the final analysis, the recent electoral victory of the Labour bloc led by Rabin on 24 June 1992 can be seen as a step in the right direction. During the election campaign, Rabin promised to be more conciliatory on negotiating self-rule for Palestinians in the occupied territories. In retrospect, the defeat of the Likud bloc, led by Shamir, seems to indicate that Israelis have finally realized that a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict must address the

Palestinian problem and try to find a just and equitable solution to it. As Hadar states: "the new national consensus, which reflected the mood of the Israeli voters in 1992, was characterized by three yes's: yes to negotiations with the Arabs, including the Palestinians; yes, to the land-for-peace formula; and yes, to strengthening the relationship with the United States."<sup>84</sup> If that happens, then the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 will have served as a gateway to peace in the Middle East.

**ENDNOTES**

1. The discussion of Sharon's role in Israel's Lebanon war is not to indicate that Tel Aviv changed its objectives once the invasion had began. Certainly, the argument by Schiff and Ya'ari shields the Israeli Cabinet of its collective responsibility and places the blame for Israel's quagmire in Lebanon entirely on the Defense Minister. It remains true, however, that Israel's revealed objectives could not be attained by a limited military operation as envisioned by most Israeli ministers on the eve of the invasion. See Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 301.
2. Ibid., p. 182.
3. Ibid., p. 187.
4. Ibid., pp. 301-302.
5. Ibid., p. 105.
6. According to Schiff and Ya'ari, Begin was as astonished as his ministers to discover that Israeli troops were in Beirut, (Ibid., p. 193).
7. Ibid., p. 58.
8. Ibid., p. 305.
9. Friedman, From Beirut to Jerusalem, p. 131.
10. Apparently Ben-Gurion repeated the same claim in May 1948, ten days after the establishment of the state of Israel, when he presented the General Staff with a plan to establish a Christian state north of the Litani river with which Israel would form an alliance. See Randal, Going All The Way, p. 188. See also Chomsky, The Fateful Triangle, pp. 162-163 and p. 184.
11. Randal, Going All The Way, p. 191.
12. Karkabi, Israel's Fateful Hour, p. 101.
13. Davis, 40 Km Into Lebanon, p. 115.
14. Harkabi, Israel's Fateful Hour, pp. 96-97.
15. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 306.
16. Harkabi, Israel's Fateful Hour, pp. 100-101.

17. Ibid., p. 103.
18. Ibid., p. 103.
19. R. Gabriel, "Lessons of War: The IDF in Lebanon", Military Review, Vol. LXIV, No. 8, 1984, pp. 47-48.
20. Ibid., p. 48. See also Gabriel, Operation Peace for Galilee, p. 193.
21. Ibid., p. 49. See also Gabriel, Operation Peace for Galilee, pp. 195-196.
22. Harkabi, Israel's Fateful Hour, p. 100.
23. Friedman, From Beirut to Jerusalem, p. 145.
24. W. Bundy, "A Portentous Year", Foreign Affairs, Vol. 62, No. 3, 1983, p. 509.
25. This terminology was used by Hassan Uz al-Din in an interview conducted on 1 October 1990.
26. Harkabi, Israel's Fateful Hour, p. 94.
27. Annahar Arab and International, 9 August 1982, p. 14. (Arabic)
28. Al-Anwar, 18 August 1982, p. 1. See also Bashir Gemayel: Presidentials, (Beirut: Bashir Gemayel Foundation, 1985), p. 26.
29. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 200.
30. Ibid., pp. 51-52.
31. Ibid., p. 307.
32. Ibid., p. 201.
33. Ibid., p. 234. For a detailed accounts of Bashir Gemayel's secret encounter with Begin on 30 August 1982, see Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, 234-236; Randal, Going All the Way, pp. 9-11; Pakradouni, Curse of a Nation, p. 46; Abou-Khalil, The Story of the Maronites In the War, pp. 221-224; and Gemayel, The Greatest Bet, pp. 105-106.
34. According to Jansen, Bashir Gemayel sent a message to King Fahd in which he suggested that when the king sent him the routine message of congratulation after his formal inauguration, he should express the wish that Lebanon remain a member of the Arab family -- in other words, no separate



peace with Israel -- and that all foreign forces should withdraw. See Jansen, The Battle of Beirut, pp. 93-94.

35. For more details on Bashir Gemayel's reconciliatory gestures towards the Muslim Lebanese, see Al-Anwar, 31 August 1982, p. 3; Bashir Gemayel: On the Way to the Presidency, (Beirut: Bashir Gemayel Foundation, 1986), p. 15; Randal, Going all the Way, p. 10, and Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 225.

36. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, pp. 236-237. See also Jansen, The Battle of Beirut, p. 94.

37. Friedman, From Beirut to Jerusalem, p. 138.

38. Pakradouni, Curse of a Nation, pp. 42-43. See also Abou-Khalil, Lebanon and Syria: A Strained Brotherhood, (Beirut: Distributing and Publishing Company, 1991), pp. 12-13, Al-Anwar, 22 June 1982, p. 2.

39. P. Gemayel, Lebanon: Present and Future, (Beirut: Al-Kataeb Publications, 1970). See also Pakradouni, Stillborn Peace, p. 100.

40. Ibid., pp. 121-154.

41. Friedman, From Beirut to Jerusalem, p. 139.

42. Interview conducted with Bishop George Khodr on 11 October 1990.

43. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 18.

44. Al-Anwar, 15 June 1982, p. 3.

45. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 291.

46. Ibid., p. 278.

47. Interview conducted with Bishop George Khodr on 11 October 1990.

48. Perhaps one of the ironic outcome of the 1982 war was that the United States replaced Israel as the chief political ally of the Maronites. See D. Ignatius, "How To Rebuild Lebanon," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 61, No. 5, 1983, p. 1147.

49. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 234. See also R. Gromoll, "The May 17 Accord", Case Study in International Negotiation, p. 19.

50. Abou-Khalil, The Story of the Maronites In the War, p. 10.
51. Interview conducted with Deputy Mikhael Daher on 9 October 1990.
52. Al-Anwar, 10 June 1982, p. 2.
53. See Al-Anwar, 12 and 24 June, and 30 July 1982.
54. This is how the Orthodox Bishop Boulos Bandali identifies himself in an interview conducted with him on 22 October 1990.
55. Ibid.
56. Interview conducted with Dr. Salim Daher on 5 October 1990.
57. F. Ajami, "Lebanon and its Inheritors", Foreign Affairs, Vol: 63, No. 4, 1985, p. 779.
58. The Imam is the prayer leader in the Sunni tradition. In Shiite tradition, however, there are twelve Imams. Politics of the 1970s and 1980s had expanded the use of the term beyond its original meaning to include religious-political leaders such as Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran and Musa al-Sadr in Lebanon. See Ajami, The Vanished Imam, pp. 15, 22-23, and 205.
59. Al-Anwar, 14 June 1982, p. 1.
60. Dr. Jamal Badawi argues that "holy war" is alien to Islam literally and connotatively. It refers to a struggle or exertion of effort on three levels. First, at the level of the individual, Jihad can be seen as a part of an internal moral struggle for spiritual purification. Second, at the level of the society, Jihad can be employed by the pen, by the tongue, and by actions for the betterment of the community. Finally, at the level of the battlefield, Jihad is subject to stringent conditions such as only for self-defense or against tyranny and aggression. See J. Badawi, "Peace and War: An Islamic Perspective", Symposium on the Gulf War, Saint Mary's University, Halifax, 3 March 1991. See also Ajami, The Vanished Imam, p. 215.
61. For more information on the Shiites' resistance against the IDF in South Lebanon see K. Mrueh, The Resistance, (Beirut: Dar al-Farabi, 1985); R. Nesrallah, The Lebanese National Resistance: 1982-1985, (Beirut: The Arabic Information Centre, 1985); Ajami, The Vanished Imam, pp. 202-203; Fisk, Pity the Nation, p. 459; Friedman, From Beirut to Jerusalem, pp. 179-180; El-Khalil, "The Role of the South in

Lebanese Politics", in Shehadi and Mills, (eds.), Lebanon: A History of Conflict and Consensus, pp. 305-314.

62. Fisk, Pity the Nation, p. 521.

63. Time, 11 February 1985, p. 30.

64. Ibid., p. 30.

65. With all fairness, the resistance against the IDF in South Lebanon was not merely a Shiite but a national one. Indeed, members from various Lebanese communities had participated in "human bomb" operations against the IDF. Of most significance, was the role played by the Syrian Nationalist Socialist Party and the Lebanese Communist Party (See Appendix 2). In an interview conducted on 1 October 1990, Jihad Nafeh, a member of the SNSP, argued that initially the resistance was a simultaneous reaction to the occupation carried out by individual initiatives and without a unified leadership or organizational structure. It was not long, however, before the resistance was developed into a dynamic movement known as the Lebanese National Resistance. Its main objective was to force the total withdrawal of the IDF from Lebanon, for it would be impossible to negotiate any constitutional reform with the Phalangists while their patron still occupied the southern part of the country. To this end, the LNR employed guerrilla tactics against Israeli soldiers including hit and run ambushes, nail bombs, roadside bombs, snipers, and suicide operations.

Regarding this last, Nafeh argues that "it took a courageous decision to sacrifice one's life for the liberation of Lebanon. In a way, thanks to the invaders for they forced my countrymen to seek happiness through self-immolation." It was reported that Sana Muhaydli, a seventeen-year old Lebanese woman, had prepared herself for the suicide attack on the Israeli checkpoint on 9 April 1985 as if she was going to attend her own wedding ceremony. See Sabah el-Kheir, No. 478, 13 April 1985, pp. 4-29. See also Nesrallah, The Lebanese National Resistance: 1982-1985, pp. 120-137.

66. Haddad, Lebanon: The Politics of Revolving Doors.

67. Ajami, The Vanished Imam, pp. 217-218.

68. Harkabi, Israel's Fateful Hour, p. 103.

69. Tueni, "Lebanon: A New Republic?", pp. 85-86.

70. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 308.

71. See Tuchman's argument on the politics of folly in Chapter Two.

72. As quoted in L. Gelb and R. Betts, The Irony of Vietnam: The System Worked, (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1979), p. 210.
73. Ibid., pp. 1-4.
74. Ibid., p. 366.
75. As quoted in R. Pfeffer, (ed.), No More Vietnam: The War and the Future of American Foreign Policy, (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1968), p. 194.
76. Gelb and Betts, The Irony of Vietnam: The System Worked, p. 367.
77. Ibid., pp. 365-366.
78. Ibid., p. 368.
79. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 308.
80. D. Welch, "The Politics and Psychology of Restraint: Israeli Decision-Making In the Gulf War", International Journal, Vol. XLVII, No. 2, Spring 1992.
81. Ibid., p. 329.
82. Ibid., p. 357.
83. Schiff and Ya'ari, Israel's Lebanon War, p. 308.
84. L. Hadar, "The 1992 Electoral Earthquake and the Fall of the Second Israeli Republic", The Middle East Journal, Vol. 46, No. 4, Autumn, 1992, p. 610.

## APPENDIX 1

### LEBANON'S MAJOR COMMUNITIES<sup>1</sup>

#### 1) The Maronites

Originally monotheist Christians, the Maronites take their name for St. Maron, a legendary fifth century figure. But it was under the leadership of St. John Maron (d.707) that a sense of a "Maronite peoplehood" developed. Their sense of sect identity was reinforced by the community's most enduring institutions: its Patriarch and its monasteries. Having been persecuted by both the Byzantine Empire and the Muslim armies who stormed the region in 635 A.D., they came and settled in Mount Lebanon where they showed a peasant shrewdness for survival. At the turn of the century, the Maronites still faced the continuing question of survival. They lobbied France - their "kind mother" - and got what they wanted within the framework of Greater Lebanon. As they continued to dominate Lebanon's politics, they resisted Arab nationalism with its ultimate aim of incorporating Lebanon into the Arab world in 1958, and waged war against the Palestinians in 1975.

#### 2) The Druzes

Originally, the Druzes were the followers of the Fatimid Caliph al-Hakim of Cairo (996-1021), who proclaimed his divinity in the early eleventh century and so split with traditional Shiism. As a religion, Druism can be seen as an

attempt to bridge the gap between man the finite and God the infinite. In essence, the Druzes believe in reincarnation. Although they read the Koran and consider Muhammed as God's prophets, they do not necessarily follow all the Muslim rules.

Historical circumstances caused the Druzes to develop a community organized for war. As they progressed, they migrated from Egypt and moved to the central part of Mount Lebanon where they developed a sense of solidarity as well as a vigorous spirit of independence. In the early sixteenth century the Druzes fought in the Ottoman army against the Egyptian Mamluk. In return, the Porte appointed a Druze as Prince of Mount Lebanon. From then until 1860, the Druzes cooperated with the Maronites, and together they nurtured the emergence of an intersectarian system in the Mount. However, between the late 1800s and until 1920, the Druzes' status was gradually reduced and allotted to that of the Sunni Muslims. In the mid-1970s the Druzes represented only eight percent of Lebanon's population. Yet the Sect's unity and firm control over the Shouf mountains have ensured it an influential role on the Lebanese political stage. Under the leadership of Kamal Jumblatt, the Druzes opted for Nasserist pan-Arabism in 1958, and championed the Palestinian cause in the mid-1970s.

### 3) The Shiites

The Shiites, literally the partisans, differed from the Sunni, literally the orthodox, over the question of the

Prophet's succession. While the Sunnis insisted that the faithful should choose the caliphs (successors), the Shiites maintained that Ali, Muhammed's cousin and son-in-law and his descendants (the twelve Imams) were the legitimate caliphs. This doctrinal difference generated an historical antagonism between the two, out of which the Shiites began to fear the Sunni majority. Subsequently, they settled on Mount Lebanon, where they came to share with the Maronites a common cause against the Sunnis. But, unlike the Maronites, the Shiites failed to develop their own doctrine of independence and autonomy. Indeed, with the exception of a few feudal families, the era of Lebanon's independence did not benefit the vast majority of Shiites who lived in Jabal Amil and the Beqaa Valley.

However, the lot of the Shiites changed drastically upon the arrival of Musa al-Sadr-a highly educated Iranian cleric - in the city of Tyre in 1959. As a charismatic preacher and a shrewd organizer, al-Sadr made the Shiites aware of their numerical strength and historic importance and mobilized them into a social-political organization called the "Movement of the Disinherited." Declaring that "arms were the adornment of men", he formed a Shiite militia named Amal (the Arabic word for hope) in 1975 -- one with serious consequences for Lebanon's future.

#### 4) The Sunnis

The Sunnis were known for their stand on the issue of the Prophet's succession, an issue which divided Islam in 660 A.D. Over the following centuries, the Sunnis' ascendancy and interests coincided with those of the Mamluk and Ottoman empires. Within the framework of Lebanon's independence, the Sunnis came to share more interests with their Christian compatriots than with their Shiite co-religionists. The city's mercantile interests, which replaced the entente between class leaders in the mountains, brought about the emergence of the Sunni-Maronite alliance, thus laying the basis for the "merchant republic" of 1943.

The Sunnis have always constituted an obstacle to the status quo in Lebanon. Unlike the Maronites, the Sunnis have not developed a sense of "Lebanism." To them, Arabism and the eventual Islamization of Lebanon takes precedence over their allegiance to the state. The Sunnis denounced the "detachment of Lebanon's Muslim districts from Syria" in 1926, welcomed the unity between Syria and Egypt in 1950 and desired to bring Lebanon into the new state, and supported the PLO's efforts to build its military base in Lebanon in the early 1970s.

#### 5) The Greek Orthodox

The Greek Orthodox were the original inhabitants of the Fertile Crescent after the inception of Christianity. They followed the Byzantine rite and used the Greek language in



their liturgy. In 635 A.D., however, when Syria was conquered by the Muslims, the Orthodox started to identify themselves with the Arab environment. This stand has allowed some community members to play a fundamental role in the creation of the Arab identity and the liberation of Arab national thought.

In Lebanon, the Orthodox numbered around 300,000 in the mid-1970s, but they are widely dispersed geographically, urbanized and well educated. Members of this community customarily are assigned the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Deputy Prime Ministership and Deputy Speakership of the Chamber of Deputies.

#### 6) The Greek Catholic

As a result of Catholic missionary activity, this group detached itself from the Greek Orthodox and sought refuge in Lebanon in the mid-1700s. Except for mentioning the Pope's name in the mass, the Greek Catholics persist in using the Byzantine rite with the Greek liturgy. In Lebanon, these Catholics (roughly 200,000 in the mid-1970s) are overwhelmingly urban and are concentrated heavily in Lebanon's largest cities and towns. They are probably the most prosperous religious community, for many of its members are bankers, merchants and financiers. Since the mid-1970s they have tended to split between the philosophy of resistance (Maronite) and that of accommodation (Orthodox).

**ENDNOTES**

1. For more information on Lebanon's major communities see P. Hitti, Lebanon in History, (London: Macmillan, 1961); see also R. Betts, Christians in the Arab East, H. Cobban, The Making of Modern Lebanon; K. Salibi, A House of Many Mansions: The History of Lebanon Reconsidered, K. Salibi, The Modern History of Lebanon, K. Pakradouni, Stillborn Peace, (Beirut: Fiches du Monde Arab, 1985); and F. Ajami, The Vanished Imam, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986).

## APPENDIX 2

### LEBANON'S MOST INFLUENTIAL PARTIES<sup>1</sup>

#### 1) Lebanese Nationalism

##### **a) The Phalanges Libanaises (al-Kataeb)**

After visiting Germany in 1936, Pierre Gemayel (1905-1984) founded the "Phalanges Libanaises." Reportedly, Gemayel was impressed by the fascist discipline of Hitler's Nazism and Franco's Falangism. He borrowed many of their ideas and named his party after that of Franco. As an authoritarian and paramilitary organization, the Kataeb was established to create a "Lebanese nation" and to strengthen Lebanon's independence against pan-Syrian and pan-Arab nationalism. At times of particular crises, especially those of 1958 and 1975, Gemayel constantly expressed the Maronite fears of Arabism and Islam. To him, Lebanon was unique as long as the Maronite ascendancy was protected. Any political aegis other than a Maronite hegemony automatically would be considered as catastrophic for Christians, not only in Lebanon but in the Arab East as well.

##### **b) Amal (Hope)**

The Amal Movement reflects the sectional view of the Shiites who form its backbone. In 1978 Amal found a new source of inspiration in the Iranian Revolution of Ayatollah Khomeini. The Iranian leader had a double effect on the

Shiite Lebanese. First, the moderate Shiite mainstream, represented by Amal, saw the revolution as a chance for themselves, as Lebanon's largest group, to lay claim to a legitimate share of power. Second, Khomeini inspired the growing number of radical Shiites (i.e., Hezbollah or Party of God, the Islamic Amal and the Islamic Jihad) who wanted to turn Lebanon into an Islamic state.

**c) The Progressive Socialist Party (PSP)**

This party was founded by Kamal Jumblatt in 1949 with the aim of building a "strong and prosperous Lebanon." The PSP advocates a socialist system and seeks to abolish feudalism, confessionalism and the class system. In essence, the PSP constitutes a Druze interest group. It is the only Druze organization of note and it stands, first and foremost, for the well-being of the Druze community in the Shouf mountains.

**2) Arab Nationalism**

**The Arab Nationalist Movement (ANM)**

The ANM reflects the aspirations of Sunni Lebanese. It was founded at the turn of the century by a few Sunni students at the American University of Beirut to unite all Arabs, from the Ocean to the Gulf, into one state. It was hoped that such a transition would bring the unity of all Sunnis in the Arab East, where they constitute a majority. In retrospect, the Sunni Lebanese found it difficult to accept the formula of

Greater Lebanon, which transformed them from being a part of the ruling majority in a vast empire (Ottoman or Arab) into a second-class minority in a much smaller state. Thus, throughout the years the ANM has capitalized on every opportunity to bring Lebanon into a closer relationship with the Arab world: it rejected the formula of a Greater Lebanon in 1936, urged Nasser to take a more militant approach in pursuing Arabism in the mid-1950s and allied itself with the Palestinians (their Sunni co-believers) in the mid-1970s.

### 3) Syrian Nationalism

#### **The Syrian Nationalist Socialist Party (SNSP)**

The SNSP was founded by Antoun Saadeh in 1932. Saadeh introduced and stressed the distinct personality of the Syrian community. He based his party on two principles: he acknowledged the ethnic unity of the Syrian people, and argued that the country of Syria is geographically distinct. The party proclaimed that Lebanon and its people do not constitute an independent entity but are part of the Syrian nation. It presented itself as being against Christian "isolationism", Arab Muslim fundamentalism and Zionism.

Since 1932, the party has campaigned for the dissociation of religion from the state, for the removal of sectarian barriers, and for the abolition of feudalism. In essence, the SNSP is the only major faction in today's Lebanon to cut across religious lines. On 4 July 1949, the party declared

its "social nationalist revolution": against the corrupt rule that the alliance between feudalism, sectarianism and favouritism has maintained since the dawn of independent Lebanon in 1943; it opposed pan-Arab Nasserism in 1958; and fought the "internal Zionists" (i.e., the Phalangists) in 1975.

**ENDNOTES**

1. For more information on Lebanon's most influential political parties see H. Smith, (ed.), Area Handbook for Lebanon, (Washington, D.C.: The American University -- Foreign Area Studies, 1974); see also M. Hudson, The Precarious Republic, (New York: Random House, 1968); K. Pakradouni, Stillborn Peace; H. Cobban, The Making of Modern Lebanon; F. Ajami, The Vanished Iman; and P. Gemayel, Lebanon: Present and Future.

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## **INTERVIEWS**

A "field-research" was conducted in Lebanon between September 1990 and November 1990. During that time, interviews were carried out with many Lebanese officials, academics, and ordinary citizens who were asked to share their knowledge and insights on the Israeli invasion of their country in 1982. Due mainly to security reasons, some of them wished to remain anonymous. Below, we mention the names of those who did not express the same reservation.

Bishop Boulos Bandali, 22 October 1990.

Deputy Mikael Daher, 9 October 1990.

Dr. Salim Daher, 5 October 1990.

Dr. Yousef Farah, 27 September 1990.

Bishop George Khodr, 11 October 1990.

Joseph Khoury, 10 November 1990.

Jihad Nafeh, 1 October 1990.

Chamsy Sarraf, 21 September 1990.

Iskandar Succar, 6 October 1990.

Hassan Uz al-Din, 1 October 1990.