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Directory of Lebanese Militias



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Directory of Lebanese Militias



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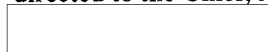
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This paper was prepared by  of the
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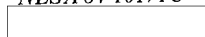
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**Directory of
Lebanese Militias**

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Summary

*Information available
as of 15 April 1984
was used in this report.*

In Lebanon, indigenous and foreign forces are struggling for turf, political influence, or merely to justify their existence.¹ Many of them profit from the almost constant fighting, and their prestige and the foreign or domestic support they attract depend on their ability to maintain viable militias. Effective national reconciliation almost certainly would require disarming the militias.

In the turbulence since the Lebanese civil war of 1975-76, Lebanese politicians have lost much of their popular support to the young militia leaders who have entered the political spotlight. Small bands of street fighters flourished in the chaos wrought by the almost constant internecine fighting. The dissolution of the Lebanese Army during the civil war freed many officers and enlisted men to join the militias, which then profited from the superior training and fighting experience of these former Army members. Entire Army units deserted and formed the core of new militias such as Maj. Sa'd Haddad's "Army of Free Lebanon" (now the "Army of South Lebanon") and the Lebanese Arab Army.

Many of the new militia leaders have amassed considerable military support and, therefore, must be included in any serious efforts to devise a new political order for Lebanon. Two of these younger politicians, Druze leader Walid Junblatt and Shia Amal leader Nabih Barri, preside over Lebanon's largest non-Christian militias and are virtually uncontested spokesmen for their coreligionists. Their militias exist principally to defend their home areas and to exert pressure on the Lebanese Government to redress their political and economic grievances.

The future of Lebanon also may be shaped by the spoiler tactics of militia leaders who, although less politically visible than Junblatt and Barri, could try to destabilize any new Lebanese government. Leaders of smaller, often more radical, militias probably are less interested in political debate because their organizations would cease to exist if the Lebanese security situation stabilized. One such leader is Ibrahim Qulaylat of the Beirut-based Murabitun militia (nearly destroyed by Druze and Shia militia attacks in early 1984). His muddled political goals appear secondary to his desire to preside over a strong militia attractive to potential recruits and supporters.

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Shia Amal militiaman in West Beirut

Sygma ©



Muslim militiaman with Soviet-made AK-47

Wide World ©

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Although a few of these leaders might be placated if consulted on the shape of the future government, radical militia chiefs like Husayn Musawi and Shaykh Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah probably would not halt their disruptive or terrorist activities as long as they could receive foreign support. Musawi's Islamic Amal militia, for example, takes orders directly from Iran, and its existence depends on Iranian support. Islamic Amal and other pro-Iranian Lebanese groups exist primarily to conduct vindictive attacks on Tehran's enemies and undertake extreme acts of violence such as the bombings against Multinational Forces facilities in Beirut on 23 October 1983.

Many of the militias accept assistance and direction from foreign governments—a development that has seriously impeded various national reconciliation efforts. Few Lebanese militias could exist without foreign support, although many receive financial aid from Lebanese citizens in contributions or protection payments.

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Shia Amal militiamen



Syigma ©

The militia's growing dependence on foreign financial and military assistance has further divided their loyalties. Increased weapons shipments from countries including Syria, Iran, and Libya have provided stronger firepower, inevitably escalating not only the level of destruction and number of casualties in any fighting that occurs but also fomenting deeper grudges among the adversaries.

Militia leaders usually have little trouble recruiting fighters. Although many fighters are drawn to certain militias principally to promote their political interests and to protect their homes, others are attracted by the promise of regular pay. Personnel strengths are subject to wide-ranging changes that often are related directly to employment opportunities—or the lack thereof—in Lebanon.

In Beirut, where possession of weapons is pervasive, many men—particularly impoverished Muslims—choose to be paid as militiamen to carry their weapons. For true mercenaries, Lebanon is a fighter's "market" allowing men to join the militia that pays best or has other attractive benefits.

Lebanese militias probably will continue to proliferate as the security situation deteriorates. Political instability in Lebanon invites foreign involvement, and, for those governments that want to avoid the appearance of direct intervention, many militias are all too willing to do their bidding.



Because there are so many small Lebanese militias that are much like street gangs, this study does not include all of them. Many Lebanese "militias" make only a fleeting appearance when fighting breaks out and then disappear—defeated, perhaps by rival factions, disbanded, or having joined new allies under another name.

Militias included in this study, although differing in size and capability, could by themselves or in combination challenge Lebanese Government control. With the exception of the Christian militias, which generally did not oppose the presence of the Multinational Forces, these militias also are capable of threatening Israeli forces in Lebanon.



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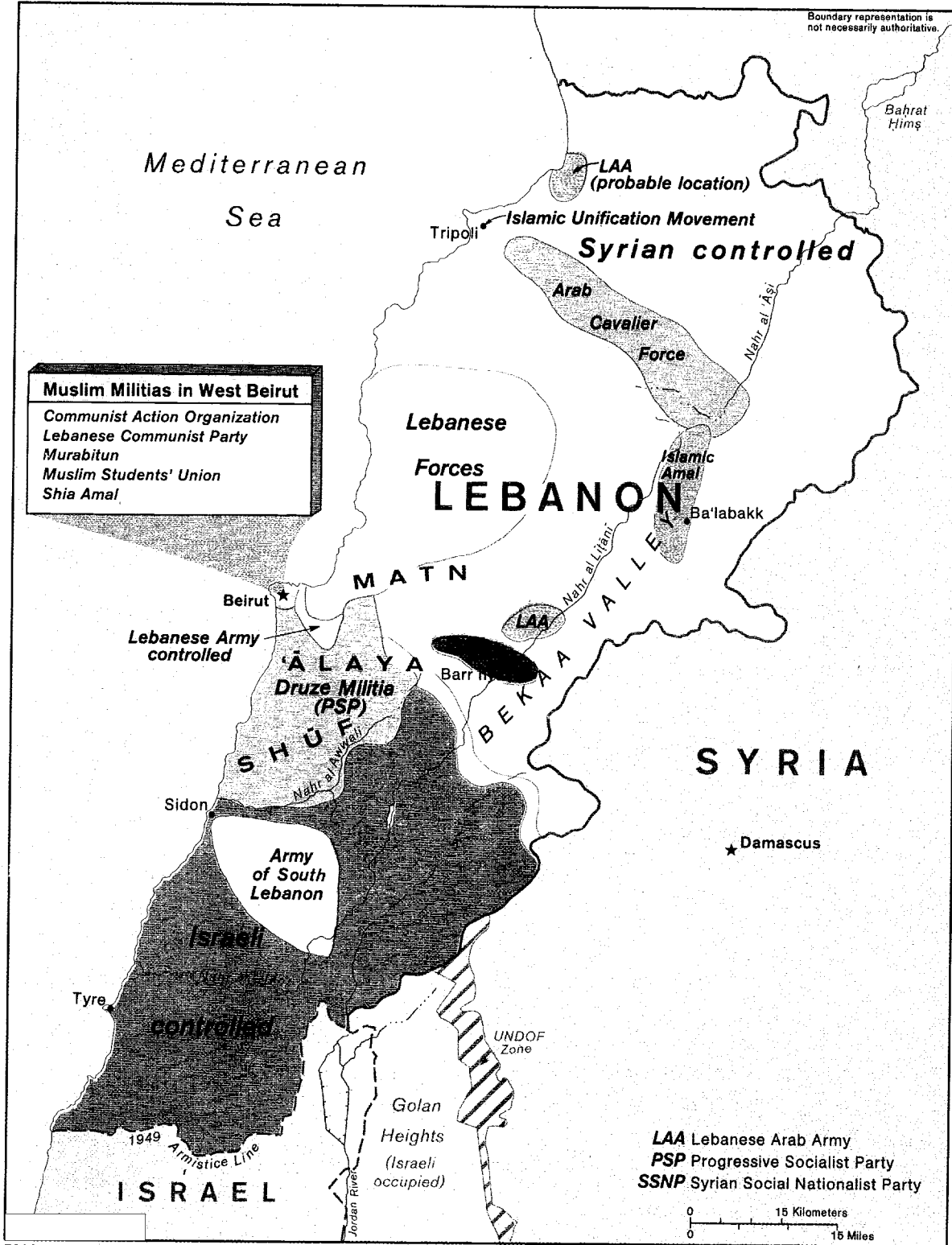
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Lebanese Militias



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Directory of Lebanese Militias

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Lebanese Forces

Leader: Fadi Fram
Personnel Strength: Approximately 5,000
Main Supporter: Israel
Objective: Preservation of Christian Maronite hegemony in Lebanon



Monday Morning ©

Fadi Fram, commander of the Lebanese Forces

Background

The Lebanese Forces militia was formed in August 1976 from the militias of four major Christian political parties. Bashir Gemayel, then commander of the Phalange Party militia, worked for the unification of the Christian militias, using force where necessary, because he hoped to create a conventional Christian army. By the end of 1980, the Lebanese Forces had a rudimentary general staff and a Command Council composed of representatives of each of the political parties, although Bashir had established Phalange predominance in the organization.

militia's generally poor performance in the fighting and ensuing financial difficulties also worsened morale problems among the fighters.

Fadi Fram, the Phalange's leading military figure, has succeeded Bashir Gemayel as head of the militia. Fram was one of the first members of the Lebanese Forces to be trained in Israel and supports close militia relations with Tel Aviv.

Organization

The Lebanese Forces' headquarters performs all the staff functions of a regular army headquarters, Below a general staff are the heads of military branches and five regional military commanders.

as the military objectives of the militia evolved, they included recovery of formerly Christian villages in the Shuf and 'Alayh regions south of Beirut, destruction of the rival Maronite Christian militia of Sulayman Franjiyah in the north, expansion of Lebanese Forces control south to the Nahr al Awwali (Awwali River), and the expulsion of most Palestinian refugees from Lebanon.

Heavy fighting with Syrian-backed Druze and Palestinian forces in the fall of 1983 exacted a heavy toll on Lebanese Forces' fighting capabilities and failed to bring the militia any closer to its goal of establishing a defensible Christian presence in the Druze-dominated mountains south of Beirut.

Assistance

Since the 1975-76 civil war, the Lebanese Forces and Israel generally have had a close relationship.

serious military reverses have compelled the Lebanese Forces to focus on its own survival. The



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began providing the militia with training, advisers, and equipment. [redacted] about 4,000 Lebanese Forces militiamen received training in Israel between 1978 and 1983—most of it apparently aimed at upgrading their proficiency in communications, basic infantry tactics, and individual and crew-served weapons. [redacted]

Relations between the Lebanese Forces and Tel Aviv cooled in mid-1982 because the militia failed to support invading Israeli troops then fighting in Beirut. [redacted] Israel drastically reduced its supplies of military equipment to the militia and apparently halted almost all training of Lebanese Forces fighters. [redacted]

The militia's relationship with Israel continued to deteriorate in 1983. Israel tried to cultivate ties with the Lebanese Druze and Shia communities to create a security zone in southern Lebanon. It closed the Lebanese Forces barracks south of the Awwali River, while Christian militiamen grumbled about the tight control Israel maintained over their activities in southern Lebanon. [redacted]

After the heavy fighting of September 1983 subsided, leaving the Lebanese Forces in desperate need of military assistance, [redacted] Israel again increased its arms supply to the militia. Israel decided to improve relations with the Christian militia as part of its policy of broadening ties with various confessional militias. In March 1984 Israel brokered an agreement between the Lebanese Forces and the Druze militia that provided for the evacuation of Christian militiamen from the Kharrub region south of Beirut. [redacted]

The extent of Israel's revived military supply relationship with the Lebanese Forces is unclear, but it is considerably less than before June 1982 and has not restored the Christian militia's capabilities. In the aftermath of the heavy fighting last year, [redacted] Lebanese Forces leaders considered disbanding the militia and joining the Lebanese Army to alleviate critical financial and military supply difficulties. [redacted]

Lebanese Forces Weapons Inventory

- Tanks (Sherman, Super Sherman, and AMX-13)*
- Armored personnel carriers (BTR-152, M-113)*
- Mortars (80 mm to 120 mm)*
- Antitank rifles (75 mm, 85 mm, 106 mm)*
- Artillery (155 mm, 130 mm, 122 mm) (s)*

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After failing to reach agreement with the Lebanese Army, Lebanese Forces leaders abandoned dissolution as an option. President Amin Gemayel's proposal that half of the Lebanese Forces personnel be integrated into the Lebanese Army found little support within the Christian militia. Militia leaders wanted all of their fighters accepted into Army units segregated from regular Army personnel. [redacted]

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Fighting Capabilities

In spite of its poor performance in the mountain fighting in September 1983, the Lebanese Forces militia remains one of the largest and best equipped of the Lebanese militias. The number of full-time fighters fluctuates between 4,000 and 5,000, and as many as 5,000 reservists could be called upon in a crisis. While the other militias typically have fewer than 20 armored vehicles, [redacted] the Christian militia has about 200 tanks and armored personnel carriers—most of which are Israeli supplied. [redacted]

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The militia's inability to rely on Israel for military assistance probably accounts in part for the Lebanese Forces' poor showing in the Druze-controlled mountains in the fall of 1983. Although they are experienced and competent in urban warfare, Lebanese Forces militiamen proved less adept fighting against their Druze counterparts, who were familiar with the mountain terrain in the Druze heartland and enjoyed extensive military support from Syria. The Christian militiamen also apparently were unaccustomed to coordinating military operations among units of more than 30 men. [redacted]

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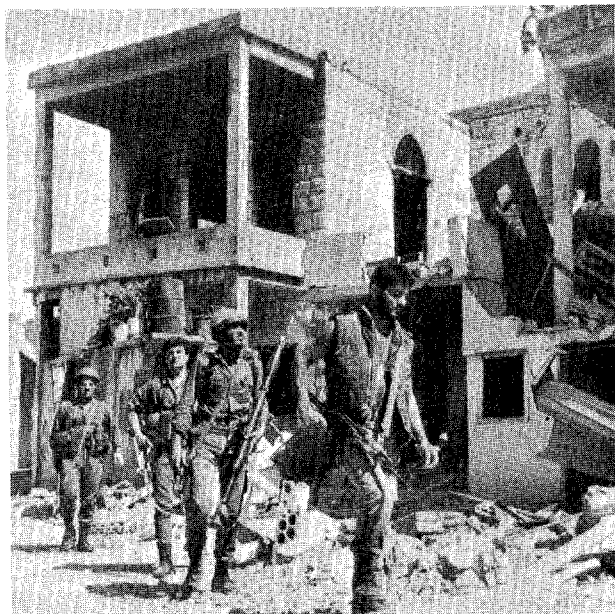
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Lebanese Forces militiamen [Redacted]

Wide World ©



Lebanese Forces militiamen during one of the many cease-fires in fall 1983. [Redacted]

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Prospects

The Lebanese Forces militia, although suffering from critical financial troubles, severely depleted weapons stocks, and poor morale, probably will rally and concentrate on defending the Christian heartland north of Beirut. The militia's weak performance in the fall of 1983 probably convinced its leaders that their goals were too ambitious. [Redacted]

Lebanese Forces officials probably will focus on reorganizing the militia in 1984. Foremost among their considerations will be obtaining much-needed financial support to retain full-time militiamen. The Lebanese Forces will continue to exert pressure on the Lebanese Government to comply with Christian demands. [Redacted]

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Army of South Lebanon

Leader: Maj. Gen. Antoine Lahad

Personnel Strength: 2,000

Main Supporter: Israel

Objective: To assist the Israeli Defense Forces in preventing Palestinian infiltration into southern Lebanon and protect northern Israel from Palestinian rocket and terrorist attacks



An-Nahar

Antoine Lahad, leader of the Army of South Lebanon militia

Background

The militia of the Army of Free Lebanon, now called the Army of South Lebanon, was created during the 1975-76 civil war, when Lebanese Army Maj. Sa'd Haddad, a Greek Catholic, deserted from the regular Army with many of the troops under his command in southern Lebanon. Approximately 500 regular officers and enlisted men joined Haddad's new group, [redacted] Haddad also enlisted volunteers from Christian villages and the Druze and Shia communities in southern Lebanon. [redacted]

Although Haddad depended completely on Israeli support and was little more than an Israeli puppet—a "faithful quisling," according to one observer—he considered himself independent and the leader of the "free Lebanon republic" he had declared in southern Lebanon. Neither Beirut nor Tel Aviv officially recognize this Christian entity, but the former can do little to challenge it. Israel, in contrast, controls it. [redacted]

Haddad died of cancer in January 1984, leaving the militia with no obvious successor. It was several months before Israeli military planners agreed on Maj. Gen. Antoine Lahad as a Christian replacement. Lahad, a former Lebanese Army officer, had a strong military record and was anti-Palestinian. He renamed the militia "Army of South Lebanon" and announced his intentions to expand the force to 6,000 men organized into three brigades. Israeli officials believed that Lahad would work with them to double the size of the militia and reequip it with modern weapons. [redacted]

Organization

In late 1983 [redacted] the Free Lebanon militia numbered about 2,500, a figure that probably included all full-time and partially mobilized

fighters. The militia now probably has about 2,000 men in active service. Christian Lebanese Forces militiamen probably make up part of the South Lebanon militia, for many returned to their homes in southern Lebanon after the fighting in late 1983. [redacted]

The "Army of South Lebanon" is organized along the lines of a Lebanese brigade. The militia's command, however, is not as tightly structured and unified as in a conventional military force. The lack of cohesion in command levels is due to Israeli control of its activities. [redacted]

Assistance

From its formation, Israel has given extensive economic and military support to the militia, recognizing that a strong pro-Israeli Lebanese force in southern Lebanon could provide northern Israel with added protection from Palestinian attacks. Israel has given tanks and armored personnel carriers, as well as Israeli uniforms and military training, to the militia. [redacted]

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Former Army of Free Lebanon leader, Sa'd Haddad, welcomes Israelis [redacted] Sygma ©

Army of South Lebanon

- About 20 tanks (Sherman, AMX-13)*
 - Armored personnel carriers (BTR-152, M-113)*
 - Mortars (80 mm to 120 mm)*
 - Artillery (155 mm, 130 mm, 122 mm)*
 - Assault rifles (s)*
-

Prospects

The Army of South Lebanon may go through several transformations in the next few years, but its mission will remain the same: to protect northern Israel from Palestinian attacks. The success of Lahad's efforts to strengthen the militia will depend on how the local Shia communities view his Israeli connections. His prospects for winning Shia support probably are better than they were for Haddad because he does not seem to have his predecessor's confrontational manner. [redacted]

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The militia also depends on taxes levied on shops, motor vehicles, and the transportation of goods in southern Lebanon to fund its operations. Members receive about 1,700 Lebanese pounds (LL) per month (about US \$340), [redacted]

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Progressive Socialist Party Militia

Leader: Walid Junblatt

Personnel Strength: 5,000 to 6,000

Main Supporter: Syria

Objective: Defense of Druze villages and Lebanese Government recognition of local autonomy for the Druze community

Background

The Progressive Socialist Party (PSP) militia has become a tenacious defender of Druze territory and interests in the mountains southeast of Beirut and fought the Lebanese Army to a standstill in the fall of 1982. A united military command for the PSP militia and Druze volunteers in the Shuf region was formed during Lebanon's civil war in 1975-76. Following his father's assassination in 1977, Walid Junblatt took over as PSP leader.

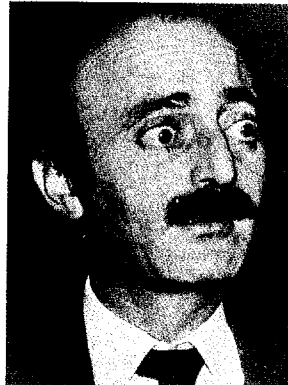
clashes with the Maronite Christians forced Walid to accept increased military aid from the PLO and eventually the Syrians. Many Druze object to these ties, fearing that outsiders could gain too much influence over Druze affairs. Junblatt has acknowledged their worries but believes he has no choice.

Organization

No strict chain of command exists in the Druze militia, although Walid Junblatt has delegated responsibilities to commanders at various echelons in the militia's organization. Commanders, such as Sharif Fayyad and Anwar al-Futayri, are selected by consensus as a result of courage displayed in combat, leadership ability, or family ties. The basic combat element is a militia group of about 50 men, in some cases drawn entirely from one extended family.

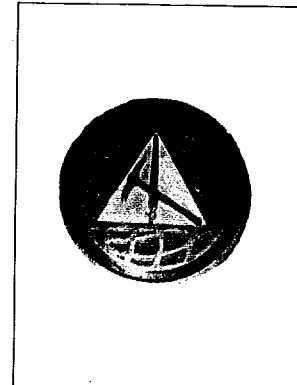
The militia reserve is based on a system of interlocking village defense companies arranged so that each fighter defends his own home.

this arrangement is particularly suited to the clannish Druze community, where allegiance usually is based on the individual's perception of family interests. During the heavy fighting with the Lebanese Army and Christian Lebanese Forces militia in September 1983, the village-based companies and the PSP militia proved able to coordinate their activities.



Monday Morning ©

Walid Junblatt, leader of the Progressive Socialist Party and the Druze community



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Assistance

Syrian assistance has been essential to sustain Druze militia operations. Syria increased its support to the Druze shortly after the signing of the Lebanon-Israel troop withdrawal accord on 17 May 1983 by supplying extensive military materiel and tactical advice. In fostering nearly total Druze dependency, Syria gained leverage over any fighting that occurred as a result of Israel's withdrawal from Druze-claimed areas south of Beirut.

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Syrian support was instrumental in the Druze militia's largely successful defense of the Druze areas against encroaching Lebanese Army and Lebanese Forces militia units in the fall of 1983. We believe Syrian supplies included no new equipment, because Druze militiamen lack the appropriate training to operate and repair more advanced items.

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Fighting Capabilities

Although Syrian military support has been crucial to Druze military successes, traditional Druze characteristics and past fighting performance indicate that the Druze could put up stiff resistance even without such help—at least until they exhausted their weapons supply.

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Druze militiamen are tough, experienced fighters determined to defend their mountain homeland at all costs. The Druze have deep roots in the contested Shuf and Alayh areas, and their worst memories are of the

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Druze Weapons Inventory

T-54/55 tanks
BTR-152 armored personnel carriers
82-mm, 120-mm mortars
122-mm D-30 howitzers
130-mm M-46 field guns
RPG-7 antitank guns
122-mm BM-21 rocket launchers
Probably SA-7 surface-to-air missiles
Light and medium 7.62 machineguns
AK-47 rifles

Christian Lebanese Forces militia entering their vil-
 lages and massacring most of the inhabitants.



*Druze militiamen manning a post in the Shuf
 mountains near Beirut*

Camera Press ©

In the fighting in early 1984, the Druze militia demonstrated improved capabilities in strategy, tactics, and command and control. Instead of attacking the Lebanese Army at its strongest position in the mountains south of Beirut—as they repeatedly did the previous fall—Druze fighters selected an exposed element of an already isolated Army brigade as the point of attack. The Druze also took advantage of the outbreak of fighting in Beirut's southern suburbs and, combining their forces with those of the Shia Amal militia, managed to push the Army—weakened by desertions of many of its Muslim soldiers—out of West Beirut into Christian East Beirut.

The Druze militia also benefits from its leaders' formal military training. Many are former Lebanese Army officers who joined the Druze militia when the Army disintegrated under confessional pressures during the 1975-76 civil war.

Without outside assistance, however, strengths such as these would not be enough to sustain the Druze militia. Their weapons stockpiles would be quickly depleted, and eventually even their determined resistance would prove inadequate. The vast array of diverse weapons supplied over the years by various sources presumably undermines Druze fighting capability because they lack adequate numbers of instructors. Such weapons diversity also makes training all the more complex and inadequate.

Prospects

The Druze militia will continue to expand and improve as long as Lebanon is torn apart by internal and external forces. With continued Syrian support, it probably will remain one of the strongest Lebanese militias. The Lebanese Government, whatever its political coloring, cannot afford to ignore Druze desires for more significant representation, because the increasingly strong Druze militia proved in late 1983 that it could prevent the government from exerting its influence over predominantly Druze areas. The Druze, moreover, almost certainly will not lay down their arms unless the Lebanese Army proves that it can act effectively as a nonpartisan force, protect the Druze, and, most importantly, disarm the Christian Lebanese Forces.

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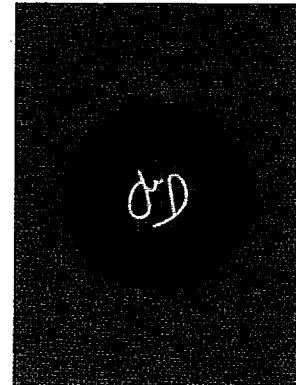
Shia Amal Militia

Leader: Nabih Barri

Personnel Strength: 5,000

Main Supporters: Lebanese Shia community and Syria

Objective: Equitable representation of Lebanese Shias in the Lebanese Government and economic development in Shia areas



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Nabih Barri, leader of the Shia Amal

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Background

Traditional Shia leaders created the Shia Amal militia in the early 1970s as a paramilitary force in support of their political aims. Imam Musa al-Sadr, a charismatic Lebanese cleric with strong ties to Iran, urged his coreligionists to take up arms to press government authorities to address Lebanese Shias' social and economic grievances.

living in the valley. Even Barri's nominal representative there has cooperated with the pro-Iranian group,

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Fatah was the militia's major supplier of arms and training until late 1979,

when Palestinian leaders found the Shia militia increasingly assertive and difficult to control as a result of the attraction of many members to the Iranian revolution. Nabih Barri took control of the Shia Amal in early 1981, but many Shias became impatient with his moderate course and were drawn, instead, to activist Shia leaders, who advocated a more militant approach.

the infiltration of elements of Communist groups, the pro-Syrian Ba'thists, and Islamic fundamentalists has weakened Barri's hold on Lebanese Shia communities. Many of these groups virtually disbanded during the Israeli occupation, and their fighters sought to attach themselves to existing militias such as Barri's Amal. In the south, the Israelis took advantage of the instability to encourage the formation of village defense groups in predominantly Shia southern Lebanon.

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Growing radicalization of segments of the Lebanese Shia community presented a serious challenge to Barri's control of the Shia Amal in 1982. In the aftermath of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon that year, Lebanese Shias, bitter about the Amal's failure to oppose actively the Israeli occupation, increasingly turned to pro-Iranian radical Shia leaders for direction. Shia communities in southern Lebanon and the Bekaa Valley—at the periphery of Barri's influence—were especially vulnerable to the appeal of extremist groups. In the fall of 1982 a radical faction seceded from the Shia Amal and formed a pro-Iranian radical Shia group called Islamic Amal based in the Bekaa Valley

Organization and Capabilities

Amal is organized around a 27-member council in the West Beirut suburb of Burj al Barajinah,

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The council is composed of staff officers with a variety of responsibilities including military, religious, financial, and administrative. Amal leaders have divided the city into sectors, subsectors, and enclaves. The paramilitary branch of the organization is composed of an armed militia and an intelligence section.

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The militia numbers about 5,000 full-time militiamen and, as most Shia either belong to or support the organization, probably could field at least twice as many fighters during a crisis. The militia's basic

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Shia Amal militiaman beneath poster of founder, the Imam Musa Sadr

Wide World ©



Shia Amal militiaman in southern Beirut during a cease-fire

Wide World ©

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tactical unit, at least in the Beirut area, is a squad of about 10 men, each of which is assigned to an enclave in West Beirut. Each squad is armed with an RPG-7 antitank gun and assault rifles.

the Shia Amal also coordinated its activities with Druze fighters and sometimes acted as forward observers for Druze artillery gunners in the hills south of Beirut.

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Before the fighting in the fall of 1983,

Assistance

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Shia Amal militiamen were paid about LL700 to 800 per month (about US \$140 to 160) and provided two meals daily. By early October funds were depleted, and Amal was forced to lower the fighters' monthly pay to about LL300 and provide only one meal a day, forcing street fighters manning roadblocks to beg food from nearby residences.

Amal has received military and financial assistance from a variety of sources who often have been each other's opponents.

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both the Lebanese Army and the Christian Lebanese Forces supplied the Shia militia with weapons and ammunition throughout 1983 after Fatah ceased providing military assistance. Syria also continued to provide military aid to the militia. Funds raised among wealthy and middle-class Lebanese Shias also were funneled into arms purchases. An undetermined amount of funding comes from the sale of hashish grown in the Bekaa Valley

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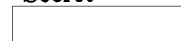
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By early 1984, when the Shia Amal began to play a major role in the fighting, many new fighters—caught up in the rising Muslim tide against the Gemayel government and the Lebanese Army—flocked to join the militia. Reinforced by Druze and Palestinian elements, the Shia Amal succeeded in forcing the Lebanese Army out of predominantly Muslim West Beirut. Barri apparently exercised fairly effective control over his militiamen, as they did not make a move unless they had specific instructions from Amal headquarters.

New militia recruits receive basic training either during a six-month course in the Ba'labakk (Baalabakk) area or by attending weekend classes in Burj al Barajinah. Training is conducted in the use of individual and crew-served weapons, with emphasis on guerrilla warfare and neighborhood defense. Although

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[redacted]

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Fatah provided most of the instructors in the past, Amal probably has enough seasoned fighters from which to create its own corps of instructors. Former members of the Lebanese Army who defected during the 1975-76 civil war also probably provide training assistance. [redacted]

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Prospects

The militia's strong performance in the fighting in early 1984 will increase the Shia Amal's status as the leading political body for Lebanese Shias. During the fighting, most Muslim factions recognized Barri as the civil and military commander of West Beirut and obeyed his instructions. Their active role in fighting also probably strengthened the resolve of Shia Amal militiamen to support Barri. Many of those who earlier were impatient with the Shia leader's middle-of-the-road course probably lost interest in deserting to join radical, pro-Iranian Shia groups. [redacted]

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Nabih Barri's control over Shia communities outside Beirut—especially those in the Bekaa Valley that are under the influence of the pro-Iranian Islamic Amal—may continue to erode, particularly if inter-factional fighting continues. Persistent financial difficulties also could undermine Barri's efforts to retain Shia Amal militiamen outside the city, as many of the more radical militias can afford to pay their militiamen generously. Many Amal fighters in Beirut probably will remain loyal to Barri, however, unless forced by economic necessity to seek other employment.

[redacted]

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Islamic Amal Militia

*Leader: Husayn Musawi
Personnel Strength: 800+
Main Support: Iran*

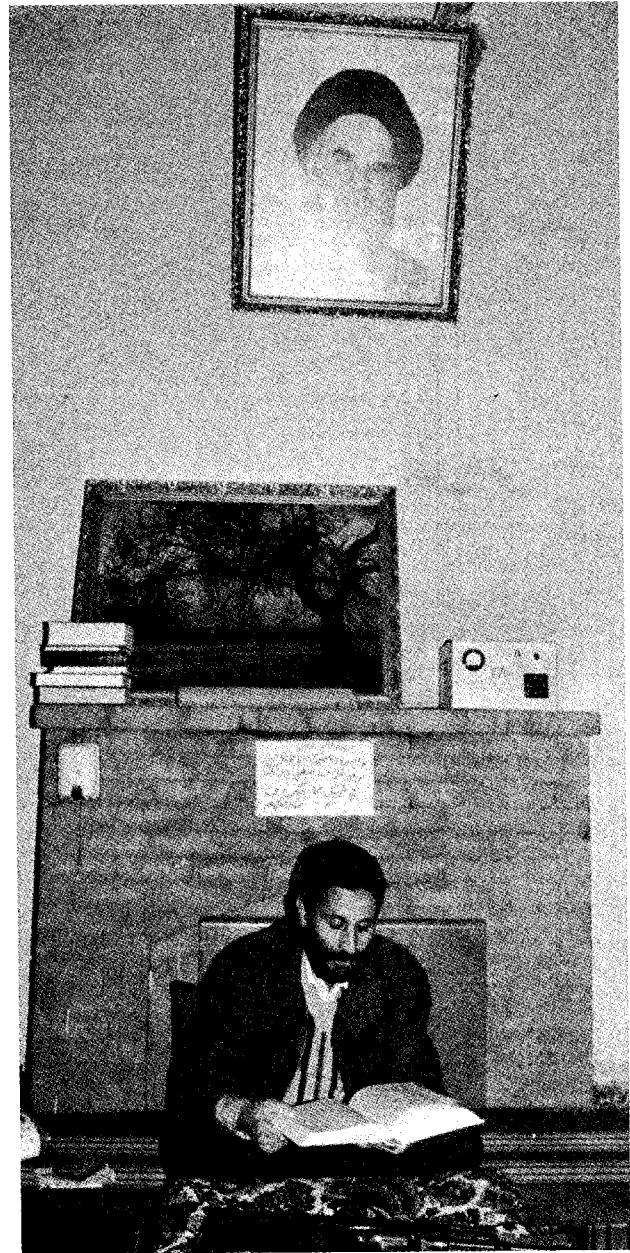
Objective: To spread the fundamentalist tenets of the Iranian revolution among Lebanese Shias, develop a strong group of militant followers willing to carry out terrorist attacks in support of Iran, and create conditions conducive to a revolution in Lebanon

Background

The Islamic Amal, a pro-Iranian radical Shia militia based in the northern Bekaa Valley, was formed in the wake of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 by militants of the predominantly moderate Shia Amal militia who were angry with their leaders for not militarily opposing the Israeli invasion. Husayn Musawi, a 40-year-old former teacher, instigated the secession and, with Iran's support, set up strongholds in the northern Bekaa Valley. In addition to establishing new camps and headquarters, the group took over a Shia Amal training camp in the Bekaa and evicted Lebanese Army troops from a garrison in Baalabakk.

[Redacted]
Although Musawi nominally commands the Islamic Amal, he is little more than a puppet for Iran, which, [Redacted] provides most of the financial and military assistance to the group. Musawi cooperates with Iran in spreading Ayatollah Khomeini's fundamentalist tenets and worked Iran's wrath on the Multinational Forces contingents in Beirut as well as on Israeli units stationed in southern Lebanon. Musawi's group is the prime suspect in the bombing on 23 October 1983 of the US Marine Corps barracks and a building of the French contingent of the MNF. [Redacted]

[Redacted] press accounts revealed that Israeli and French airstrikes on Islamic Amal locations in the Bekaa Valley not long afterward increased the desire of radical Shia militants for vengeance. The militants' perceptions of US complicity in the airstrikes encouraged them to plan retaliatory terrorist attacks against US forces as well. [Redacted]



Husayn Musawi, leader of Islamic Amal [Redacted] Stern Magazine ©

Assistance

Iranian assistance to Islamic Amal has included the provision of arms, training, financial support, and even personnel. [Redacted] as of late 1983 approximately 700 Iranian Revolutionary Guards were distributed throughout the militia's locations and an Iranian commander headed each of the mixed militia units. [Redacted]

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Estimated Islamic Amal Militia Weapons Inventory


- AK-47s and M-16s*
- Heavy machineguns (DSHKs and 12.5)*
- RPG-7 antitank guns*
- Various mortars (60 mm, 81 mm, 120 mm)*
- Field artillery guns (130 mm)*
- Rocket launchers (type 36)*
- Trucks equipped with 50-caliber machineguns or 23-mm anti-aircraft guns*
- Land Rovers equipped with heavy machineguns* 

Prospects



The Islamic Amal, with Iranian and possibly Syrian direction, will attempt further attacks on Israeli units in Lebanon. Husayn Musawi's militia probably will grow and become more radical as impoverished, hitherto passive Lebanese Shias, impatient with the inability of Amal leader Nabih Barri to extract political and economic gains from the central government, seek out activist leaders whose militancy seems to offer hope for a better future. 

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Islamic Amal fighters receive religious and military training. Religious shaykhs emphasize to the trainees that martyrdom during an attack on an enemy guarantees entrance into paradise. Military training emphasizes small-arms firing, street combat, martial arts, and some tactics. 

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Syria has provided extensive local support to Islamic Amal,  In many instances, Syrian Army units are virtually colocated with Islamic Amal and Iranian Revolutionary Guard units, a situation that facilitates the movement of Syrian supplies to the radical Shia militia. Syria has provided the militants with arms, ammunition, food, fuel, and medical supplies. 

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Certain Islamic Amal operations have been executed by a group known as the Husayn Suicide Commandos. Led by the Islamic Amal leader's cousin, Abu Haydar al Musawi, this group probably is a loosely structured strike force and obtains fighters from Islamic Amal on an ad hoc basis. The two cousins almost certainly collaborate in carrying out Iranian directives. The Husayn Suicide Commandos may exist only when fighters are needed to perform a suicide mission. 

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Muslim Students' Union Militia

Leader: Shaykh Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah
Personnel Strength: Probably has no regular fighters, but sends promising candidates to Islamic Amal for training and may establish its own militia

Main Supporter: Iran
Objective: Establishment in Lebanon of an Islamic state on the Iranian model and attacks on "collaborators" with Israel



Shaykh Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah, leader of the Muslim Students' Union, giving a speech [redacted]

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An-Nahar

Background

The Muslim Students' Union (MSU) is an extremist Islamic fundamentalist group based in Beirut's southern Ash Shiyah suburb and, although primarily political and religious in orientation, encourages fanatical terrorist activities and apparently sends prospective fighters to the Islamic Amal militia in the Bekaa Valley. Led by Lebanese cleric Shaykh Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah, whose Khomeini-style religious zeal attracts young Shia followers, the MSU seeks the establishment in Lebanon of an Islamic state similar to that in Iran. [redacted]

In pursuit of his goal of spreading "true Islam," Fadlallah is attempting to undermine moderate Shia Amal leader Nabih Barri's support among Shias in West and South Beirut, [redacted]

[redacted] The Shaykh charges that Amal fighters lack religious purpose and are corrupted by Barri's contacts with Druze leader Walid Junblatt, who receives Libyan aid. Lebanese Shias despise Libya because of the abduction and presumed murder in Libya in 1978 of their religious leader, Imam Musa al-Sadr. [redacted]

[redacted] Fadlallah's involvement in the suicidal truck bombings of the US Marine barracks and the French military headquarters in Beirut on 23 October 1983. Although the operation almost certainly was planned and carried out by the pro-Iranian, radical Shia Islamic Amal, [redacted]

[redacted]

Organization

The Muslim Students' Union apparently is primarily a political organization and also is known as the Al Dawa Party. Its military wing, [redacted] is known as Jund Allah and probably is a component of Islamic Amal.² Fadlallah maintains close contacts and usually coordinates his activities with Husayn Musawi and other radical Lebanese Shias. He combines his propaganda efforts with a comprehensive social action program to recruit young Shias to "true Islam." His charitable activities include giving money to impoverished Shia families and to Shia students so they can continue their education. [redacted]

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The MSU, [redacted] is organized along neighborhood lines in West Beirut. Shia clergymen provide political and religious indoctrination in mosques and report regularly to Fadlallah. Promising candidates are given weapons and sent to training camps established in the Bekaa Valley by Husayn Musawi. The training includes instruction in the use of light automatic weapons, rocket-propelled grenades, and explosives. [redacted]

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² The Muslim Students' Union and Islamic Amal probably are subsumed under the umbrella organization of "Hizb Allah." "Hizb Allah" appears to be a term used loosely to identify pro-Iranian, radical Shia movements in Lebanon and may also represent a supervisory political group. [redacted]

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Assistance

The MSU probably receives most of its support and instructions from Iran, but this aid may be channeled through Musawi. [redacted]

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[redacted] most weapons destined for Fadlallah's group are smuggled into Beirut's southern suburbs in vegetable trucks from the Bekaa Valley.

Fadlallah's social action program aimed at drawing Shia supporters away from Nabih Barri probably depends almost entirely on Iranian funds. [redacted]

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Fadlallah also receives Syrian assistance, probably arms and funds. In late 1983 [redacted]

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[redacted] Fadlallah had established a joint military committee with Syria to carry out Syrian directives in Beirut's southern suburbs. Through this committee, Syria coordinates the delivery of arms and money to the MSU. [redacted]

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Prospects

Although the MSU is small, the political extremism and religious fanaticism of its members constitute a major terrorist threat to the Lebanese Government. The growing impatience of impoverished Lebanese Shias to have their social and economic grievances redressed provides a good environment for recruiting. More Shias may abandon Nabih Barri if he fails to win concessions from the government and may join radical groups such as Fadlallah's MSU. [redacted]

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[redacted]

[redacted]

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Islamic Unification Movement Militia

Leader: Shaykh Said Shaban

Personnel Strength: Probably less than 1,000

Main Supporter: Possibly Iran: traditional PLO support probably has terminated

Objective: Sunni control of Tripoli and establishment of a Muslim government for all of Lebanon independent of foreign influence

Background

The Islamic Unification Movement (IUM), one of the strongest of a multitude of Tripoli-based political groups and militias, rallied in popular resistance to the presence of Syrian troops in the area. The group was founded by Shaykh Said Shaban, who, although one of Tripoli's leading mosque orators, is known for his "fuzzy" ideology and rapidly shifting political alliances. [redacted]

Shaban traditionally had close ties with Fatah forces loyal to Arafat, but Arafat's departure from Tripoli in late 1983 left the Sunni leader and his fighters weak and without the support they needed to protect themselves against Syrian-backed Fatah rebels. [redacted]

[redacted] Iran quickly sought both to aid Shaban's militia and influence the IUM leader's behavior because Shaban's continued public accusations against Syria would damage Iranian relations with Damascus. [redacted]

Organization

The militia of the Islamic Unification Movement probably lacks a formal chain of command and may not even have organized fighting units. Its members, although equipped with light arms and antitank guns, probably have had little formal military training, but many have years of street fighting experience. The fighters are mostly Sunni residents of Tripoli who are adept at neighborhood defense [redacted]

Assistance

Before his departure from Tripoli in 1983, [redacted] Arafat provided extensive support to Shaykh Shaban to gain an ally against PLO dissidents and to encourage the leader in his efforts to consolidate all Muslim forces in Tripoli under one

command. By providing Shaban with funds, equipment, and assistance in recruiting, Arafat hoped to elicit the Muslim leader's support in eliminating pro-Syrian forces in Tripoli. [redacted]

In 1983, [redacted] IUM fighters began a campaign against smaller militias in Tripoli, beginning first with rival anti-Syrian groups, forcing them either to disband or to join the IUM. Anti-Syrian forces such as the pro-Iraqi Ba'ath Party and the 24 October Movement were virtually crushed. IUM fighters also took on their Communist counterparts and militiamen of the Syrian Social Nationalist Party (SSNP). Members of the SSNP held out successfully against IUM attacks. [redacted]

Prospects

If Iran becomes the IUM's principal supporter, a relationship may develop resembling that between Tehran and the Bekaa Valley-based radical Lebanese Shia militia. The IUM probably would have to accept increased Iranian influence in Tripoli and adopt Iranian-inspired goals. Syria may acquiesce in Iran's support of the IUM but probably would not provide support to the traditionally anti-Syrian organization. [redacted]

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[redacted]

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Murabitun Militia

Leader: Ibrahim Qulaylat

Personnel Strength: 200 to 500³

Main Supporters: PLO

Objective: Equitable Muslim representation in the Lebanese Army and Government

Background

Murabitun militiamen first appeared during the fierce street fighting that took place in Beirut during Lebanon's 1975-76 civil war. Although small in number, they proved to be tough, well organized, and ruthless. They quickly seized control of West Beirut's tallest structure, the Murr Tower, and from its rooftop—a vantage point coveted by other militias—relentlessly bombarded nearby Lebanese Army and Christian Lebanese Forces positions. [redacted]

The Murabitun emerged from the fighting as one of the more radical and better armed small militias in West Beirut—a status that it maintained until early 1984, when combined Druze and Shia Amal militia attacks weakened it. Its founder, Ibrahim Qulaylat—a Sunni Muslim—is now in his forties and continues to espouse an ill-defined Pan-Arab ideology. His political statements generally reflect standard leftist demands for expanded Muslim representation in the Lebanese Government and the Army. [redacted]

Organization

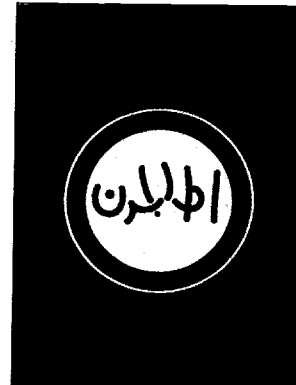
Following the civil war, Qulaylat and his supporters intensified their efforts to enlist new party members, [redacted] On the eve of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in the summer of 1982, he had approximately 1,200 to 1,500 fighters. The Israeli occupation of Beirut and the subsequent exodus of many Palestinian fighters left the militia a skeleton of what it had been. [redacted]

In 1983, Qulaylat and his deputies, aware of the heightening tension in Beirut because of the anticipated Israeli withdrawal, attempted to improve and expand the Murabitun militia. [redacted]

³ Combined Druze and Shia Amal forces attacked Murabitun strongholds in West Beirut in early 1984 in an effort to destroy the militia because it was a rival for Muslim support and apparently had also been assisting Palestinian infiltration into the city. The militia probably lost more than 50 percent of its personnel to desertions and fighters taken prisoner. [redacted]



Ibrahim Qulaylat, leader of the Murabitun [redacted]



[redacted]

Qulaylat began sending his deputies to seek outside support and found Fatah dissidents most receptive. Relations between Murabitun and Fatah usually had been good, [redacted] Qulaylat resolved to remain neutral regarding the split in the PLO in order to preserve all sources of support.

[redacted]

Murabitun fighters outside of Beirut may number between 150 and 200. In the Bekaa Valley and the Tripoli area they receive orders from the central

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Murabitun militiamen stage military parade in West Beirut [Redacted] Liaison ©

Assistance

Qulaylat has accepted money, training, and weapons from a variety of sources. During the civil war, for instance, the Murabitun was one of several Lebanese leftist groups depending on Fatah for support. [Redacted]

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[Redacted] Fatah originally supported the Murabitun because the Palestinians wanted to use the Sunni militia to mask Palestinian involvement in the conflict. More recently, Fatah consistently supported the Murabitun because the militia represented the Sunni community and was a source of information as well as a security and military asset for Fatah. [Redacted]

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command in each region, [Redacted]
[Redacted] In southern Lebanon, primarily Sidon, Murabitun fighters take direction from the Beirut central command. [Redacted]

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Ready availability of weapons and ammunition and the attraction of regular pay have again succeeded in drawing young fighters to the militia.

[Redacted]

Iraq also assisted the Murabitun after the civil war by providing funds for the Murabitun radio station, [Redacted] The station's "Voice of Arab Lebanon" presents noon sermons on Fridays given by a well-known Sunni shaykh who is popular with West Beirut Muslims. The Murabitun uses the sermons to criticize the Gemayel government and the Christian Lebanese Forces militia. [Redacted]

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Syria and Libya increased their support to the Murabitun after the small militia performed impressively during the 1975-76 civil war. Syria provided training, equipment, and funds to the militia. In early 1981, Libya sent artillery specialists to train Murabitun members. [Redacted]

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The Murabitun's reported monthly payroll suggests that only a fraction of the militiamen are actually paid full-time wages. [Redacted]

[Redacted] Qulaylat stated in October 1983 that the monthly payroll for his fighters was LL720,000 (about US \$145,000). Divided equally among roughly 750 fighters (before March 1984), the sum does not appear generous. Many militiamen may be paid allowances to participate in training activities and to join the militia quickly in the event that fighting erupts. [Redacted]

Former members of the Lebanese Army, which splintered along religious lines during the civil war, also provided training assistance. [Redacted]

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Prospects

The Murabitun militia is likely to make a comeback in spite of the beating it took in early 1984. Qulaylat was in Libya at the time of the Druze and Shia attacks on his militiamen, and he may still be able to solicit support from Qadhafi and other sources for the militia. Judging from characteristics revealed in past Murabitun fighting, such as the militia's penchant for making a sensational entrance and then quickly fading from the scene, we believe that, once it is reorganized, the militia will have a limited role in future fighting in West Beirut. [redacted]

[redacted] the Syrians revealed their willingness to provide generous financial support and materiel in order to create a Sunni network in Beirut responsive to Syrian directives. Sunni leaders probably tried to resist Syrian attempts to dominate their new political groups but may eventually be intimidated by Syrian threats and choose either to disband or to accept Syrian aid and domination. [redacted]

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New Sunni Militias

In 1982 at least two Sunni figures began independent efforts to rebuild or form new Sunni militias in West Beirut because of growing Sunni perceptions that their interests were being crowded out by the increasing militancy of other Lebanese confessional groups. Dr. Samir Sabbagh, Qulaylat's right-hand man, led a secessionist revolt from the Murabitun in the summer of 1983 and is forming a new Sunni political group and its requisite militia. [redacted]

Although the Beirut-based Murabitun militia is well known and led by a Sunni, it has not represented specific Sunni interests. Instead, Murabitun political statements generally have called for expanded Muslim representation in the Lebanese Government. Murabitun leader Ibrahim Qulaylat's reputation as an uneducated street thug has increased anxiety within the Sunni establishment about its eroding political standing. The defeat in early 1984 of the Murabitun in fighting with Druze and Shia Amal militiamen, moreover, could further persuade Sunnis to support the efforts of their coreligionists to create new militias. [redacted]

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[redacted] Sabbagh, who is better educated than Qulaylat, became discouraged because of fruitless efforts to replace the Murabitun leader and many personal disagreements. Sabbagh's new organization has tended to play down the Pan-Arab aspects of Murabitun pronouncements in favor of a more nationalistic approach focusing on Sunni interests. Although Sabbagh took several Murabitun officials with him, his new group remains small and probably does not present a serious threat to Murabitun recruiting efforts. [redacted]

Tamam Salam, son of former Sunni Prime Minister Saib Salam, also tried to create a new Sunni militia last summer. Tamam sought support from a Sunni charitable organization and influential Sunni leaders in Beirut. [redacted]

Shia Amal militiamen intercepted a large shipment of weapons destined for the new militia. The weapons probably originated in Syria. [redacted]

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Syria was concerned about the prospect of independent Sunni militias in West Beirut, [redacted]

[redacted] and warned various Sunni leaders there against speaking for the Sunni community without first closely coordinating with Damascus. [redacted]

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Lebanese Arab Army*Leader: Ahmad al-Khatib**Personnel Strength: 500 to 700**Main Supporters: PLO and Syria**Objectives: Uncertain; probably acts on Syrian directives***Background**

The Lebanese Arab Army (LAA) was created in 1976 by a disgruntled former lieutenant in the Lebanese Army, Ahmad al-Khatib, a young Muslim officer who frequently had been passed over for promotion. Lebanese Army units defected en masse, bringing with them most of their weapons and equipment, to join Khatib's breakaway "Muslim Army," then forming in the Bekaa Valley. [redacted]

Khatib's militia declined in importance after the Lebanese civil war, and many of its members served instead under Fatah command in southern Lebanon. By early 1981 the LAA had approximately 500 to 700 members who were almost completely integrated with Palestinian units in southern Lebanon. [redacted]

[redacted] Fatah paid the salaries of LAA members, and provided them equipment, as well as funds, personnel, and training to maintain the equipment. [redacted]

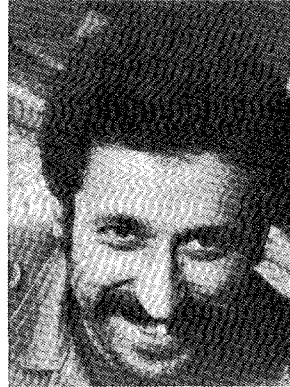
Organization and Assistance

Khatib began reorganizing the LAA in 1983 and made weekly trips to Syria for advice and, presumably, aid. Syria probably became interested in developing the LAA as another surrogate in Lebanon because of the bitter feud taking place within Fatah, traditionally Khatib's main supporter. Khatib [redacted]

[redacted] was receiving funding from both Fatah factions and wanted to remain neutral in the PLO dispute. Syria discouraged his dependency on Fatah and pressed Khatib to subordinate himself and his militia to Syrian political and military goals in Lebanon. [redacted]

Lack of popular support probably has hampered the LAA's reorganization efforts. [redacted]

[redacted] training apparently is still conducted in the same five LAA camps that have existed in central and northern Lebanon for years. There is no indication that the LAA has more manpower than it



Wide World ©

Ahmad al-Khatib [redacted]



Ahmad al-Khatib with Lebanese Army deserters who joined his militia during the 1975-76 civil war [redacted]

Wide World ©

did shortly after the 1975-76 civil war, and the fighting capabilities of its personnel probably have declined because of the lack of formal military training. [redacted]

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Syria's interest in the LAA appears limited; Syrian involvement in the Muslim Army's reorganization in 1983 appeared to be minimal. Syria, with more powerful surrogates such as the Lebanese Druze militia and the Arab Cavalier Force in northern Lebanon, probably will only help Khatib if he actively supports Syrian interests in Lebanon. [Redacted]

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Prospects

The Lebanese Arab Army remains relatively weak, suffering from a shortage of officers and financial backing. Unless an outside supporter such as Syria increases its support to Khatib, the militia probably will continue to have problems attracting new fighters. The LAA therefore is unlikely to play a significant role in any fighting in the foreseeable future. [Redacted]

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Arab Cavalier Force

*Leader: Nassib al-Khatib
Personnel Strength: 1,500
Main Supporters: Syria and Libya
Objectives: To project Syrian power against other
Lebanese militias and to establish Rif'at
Assad as a significant player on the
Lebanese scene*

Background

The Arab Cavalier Force (ACF), also known as the Red Cavaliers and the Pink Panthers because of the distinctive rose color in its militia uniforms, was created in June 1981 by Syria from a breakaway element of about 500 men from the Lebanese Arab Army. Syrian authorities believed that, to achieve their goals in Lebanon, they needed a new militia whose "Lebanese" cover would conceal the Syrian role in certain activities. Syria, moreover, had been experiencing problems in getting existing Lebanese militias to follow Syrian direction. [redacted]

Rif'at Assad, the Syrian President's brother, was the primary instigator in the creation of the ACF. He wanted a militia powerful enough to exert his influence on the Lebanese scene as well as to protect his many interests there, which [redacted] include a profitable hashish crop in the Bekaa Valley.



The Syrians appointed a former Lebanese Arab Army officer, Nassib al-Khatib, to lead the ACF, but he has never had any real authority. Rif'at Assad's Syrian Defense Companies trained ACF recruits and graduated 1,200 new militiamen in July 1981. Many of the new fighters probably were indigent Lebanese Shias, [redacted] a significant number of Syrian officers were seconded to the ACF from Rif'at Assad's elite Defense Companies. [redacted]

Organization

The Arab Cavalier Force probably has about 1,500 fighters, most of whom are stationed in the Tripoli area. Token ACF detachments are also located in the Bekaa Valley, the Shuf region, and in Beirut. [redacted]



Sana ©
Rif'at Assad, actual leader of
the Arab Cavalier Force [redacted]



Syrian Special Forces patch,
sometimes worn by Arab Cavaliers [redacted]

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A significant number— [redacted] between 30 and 80 percent—of ACF officers and enlisted men are Syrian. At least 15 Syrian officers from the Syrian Defense Companies command the ACF militia. [redacted]

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Although Khatib nominally heads the ACF, Syrian-ordered troop movements routinely take place without his concurrence and without any official notification from Syrian headquarters elements. Khatib merely serves as a front man on whom blame can be fixed for the militia's activities. He travels to Damascus on the average of once weekly to confer with Rif'at Assad or one of his deputies. [redacted]

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The militia's headquarters for the Bekaa Valley is located in a new barracks at Baalabakk, and other headquarters almost certainly are located in the Tripoli area, Beirut, and possibly in the Shuf or Matn regions. These headquarters probably relay Rif'at Assad's orders directly to the Syrian commanders of ACF units. [redacted]

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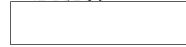
Assistance

Rif'at Assad's Defense Companies provide all training, weapons, and ammunition to the ACF. ACF militiamen are equipped with multiple rocket launchers, air defense artillery, mortars, and assault rifles.

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Members of the Arab Cavalier Force

Sygma ©

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[redacted] basic training for ACF militiamen is conducted by 10 Syrian officers at a training camp near Hirmil in the northern Bekaa Valley. [redacted]

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Libya has provided financial assistance to the ACF in the past, but it is not clear if this aid continues. Syrian funds almost certainly constitute the bulk of the ACF's financial resources. [redacted]

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Prospects

The ACF probably will continue to be highly visible in the Tripoli area as well as occasionally in Beirut. Its rose-colored uniforms, reported predilection for using excessive firepower, and Rif'at Assad's strongman tactics probably will ensure that the militia stays in the spotlight. [redacted]

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Syrian backing virtually guarantees that the militia will grow in manpower and strength, representing an increased threat to the Lebanese Government. If the security situation in and around Beirut continues to deteriorate, the ACF probably will try to establish a stronger presence in the area, placing itself on the frontlines of future internecine fighting. [redacted]

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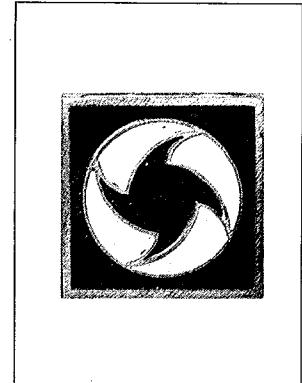
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Syrian Social Nationalist Party Militia

Leader: In'am Ra'ad
Personnel Strength: Probably less than 200
Main Supporter: Uncertain; Fatah rebel support probably depends on Syrian approval
Objective: Ideologically espouses a "Greater Syria" geographically composed of most of Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Israel and practically seeks Syrian financial and military support



Monday Morning

In'am Ra'ad, leader of the Syrian Social Nationalist Party [redacted]

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Background

The Syrian Social Nationalist Party (SSNP) has its roots in the former Parti Populaire Syrien (PPS) founded in 1932 by Antoun Saadeh, an advocate of "Pan-Syrianism." Educated in Germany and impressed with Hitler's national socialism, Saadeh sought the realization of his geographical concept of Pan-Syrianism. [redacted]

collected from various SSNP centers in Beirut and armed with assault rifles and RPG-7 antitank guns. [redacted]

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In 1961 the PPS failed to overthrow the Lebanese Government of Gen. Fuad Chehab, in the first attempted coup in Lebanon's history. Many of the party members were jailed, and by the time they were released, about a decade later, the party had abandoned its rightist orientation and adopted a distinctly leftist platform. In an attempt to project a new image, members renamed the party the SSNP, seized upon the Palestinian cause, and developed their own militia. [redacted]

Assistance

The SSNP depended on Fatah for financial and probably military aid since at least 1970, but the split in the PLO forced the party's leaders to reconsider their sources of support. SSNP leaders already had close working relations with Syrian-backed Fatah rebels, but they realized that any future aid from them hinged on approval from Damascus. By 1983, moreover, Syrian ground forces controlled areas in Lebanon where SSNP operational centers were located. [redacted]

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Organization

The SSNP attempted in 1983 to reorganize and expand its militia, [redacted] but apparently lacked the financial and military support to attract a large following. The number of SSNP fighters probably remains close to 200. Many of these fighters and other party members settled near Barr Ilyas in the southern half of the Bekaa Valley, [redacted]

[redacted] Syrian officials probably carefully considered SSNP requests, as Damascus has proved generally interested in Lebanese militias that could serve its interests in Lebanon. Syrian officials, however, probably have had difficulty forgetting political differences that, in the past, led to the party's illegal status in Syria. [redacted]

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Reorganization efforts probably have made little progress since late 1983, when SSNP officials met frequently in Beirut to gather all SSNP members and divide them into fighting units. [redacted]

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[redacted] only about 100 fighters were [redacted]

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Militiamen of the Syrian Social Nationalist Party patrolling the streets of Bhamdun, a Druze-held town east of Beirut Wide World ©



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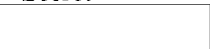
Prospects

Without an accommodation with Syria, the SSNP militia probably cannot survive. Syrian backing, however, would ensure the militia's growth and enable it to play a more significant role in future fighting. Given Syrian support, the party almost certainly would adjust its more immediate goals to whatever direction it receives from Damascus.



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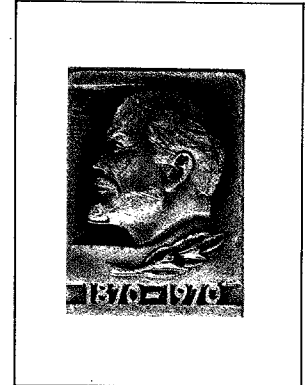
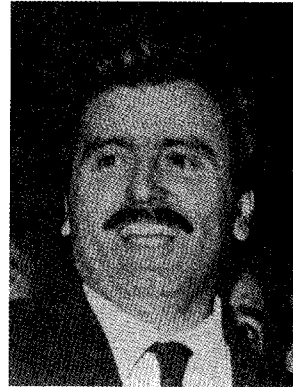
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Lebanese Communist Party Militia

Leader: George Hawi
Personnel Strength: 500 to 600
Main Supporters: Soviet Union and Eastern Europe
Objective: To mount attacks against Israeli forces in Lebanon as well as the Lebanese Army and Christian Lebanese Forces



George Hawi, leader of the Lebanese Communist Party
[redacted]

Background

The Lebanese Communist Party (LCP) is an outspoken opponent of the Christian Phalange Party and the West, including the United States. It is led by George Hawi, a Greek Catholic, adheres to a strict Marxist-Leninist line, and traditionally has received political direction and military training from the Soviet Union.

[redacted] the Soviet Union has become increasingly displeased with Hawi's variety of Communism, Moscow probably continues to support the party's growing militia. [redacted]

Although the party and its militia were well organized before Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982, they were disbanded during the Israeli occupation of Beirut. By early 1983, [redacted] the LCP militia was in severe financial straits and could field only about 100 fighters—a substantial decrease from its reported full-time strength in 1982 of more than 1,000 militiamen. [redacted]

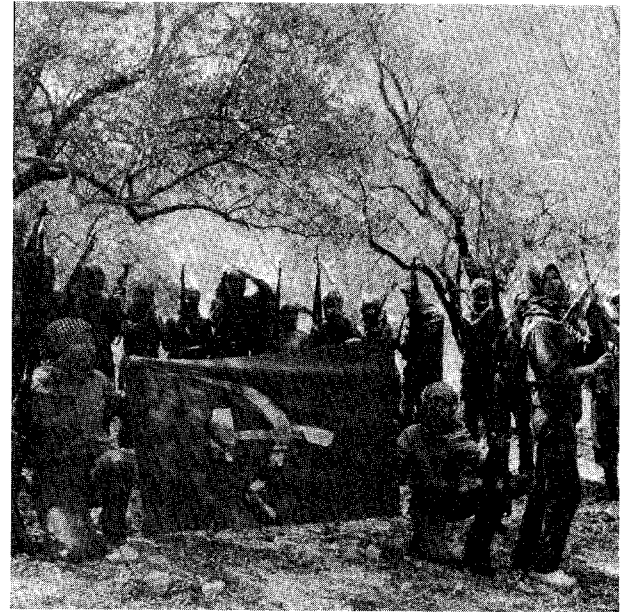
The LCP weathered its financial crisis and by late 1983 was recovering much of its former strength. In the interim, the party stayed involved in fighting by coordinating many of its activities with the Communist Action Organization, the only other Beirut-based Communist group. [redacted]

[redacted] some of its fighters also voluntarily placed themselves under Druze militia commands. We estimate the militia has around 1,000 part-time and regular fighters. [redacted]

Assistance

[redacted] before the Israeli invasion in 1982 that LCP militia officers traditionally received military training in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. [redacted]

[redacted] It is unclear how [redacted]



Communist militiamen providing training to private citizens in southern Lebanon before the 1975-76 civil war
[redacted]

Liaison ©

many of these officers returned to the militia when it was reorganizing in 1983, but many of them presumably were eager to regain their former positions. [redacted]

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Communist militia training in southern Lebanon before the 1975-76 civil war [redacted]

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The LCP normally receives weapons from Eastern Europe, particularly Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia, via Syria, but other sources also have provided arms and financial assistance. Before withdrawing from Beirut in September 1982, for instance, the PLO provided funds to the LCP. The militia may have assumed control of some PLO arms caches. Palestinian funding apparently dried up soon thereafter, and we do not know if it has been resumed. Syria also may have provided assistance to the LCP, [redacted]

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Prospects

The LCP militia appears to be rebuilding its strength and, in the event of prolonged factional fighting, probably will have little trouble recruiting new members. Its relatively large size and well-trained officer corps probably will increase the militia's visibility in future fighting. The LCP militia probably will have to fight its own battles, however, because other, larger Lebanese militias would not agree to a formal alliance with the Communist fighters [redacted]

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Communist Action Organization Militia

Leader: Muhsin Ibrahim

Personnel Strength: 100 to 200

Main Supporters: Soviet Union and Eastern Europe

Objectives: To support Muslim demands for greater political representation and to spread Communism in Lebanon

Background

Founded in 1970 by Muhsin Ibrahim, the Communist Action Organization (CAO) attempts merely to outdo its allies. [redacted]

CAO strives to be more Communist than the Lebanese Communist Party (LCP), more Palestinian than the Palestinians, and more Arab than other Arabs. [redacted]

The militia typically has recruited among the impoverished Shias of south Beirut, the Beirut student community, and members of leftist trade unions. In late 1983, [redacted] CAO militia had 1,600 men dispersed in the southern suburbs of Beirut, the Shuf mountains, and in the Bekaa Valley. We estimate the number of full-time militiamen to be closer to 100 to 200. The larger figure may represent the number available in the event of a crisis. [redacted]

The CAO had a fairly significant role in the early fighting in the fall of 1983. CAO militiamen wore masks to conceal their identities and urged the youth in West Beirut to attack Lebanese Army units. The militia also took part in an attack on the Murr Tower, Beirut's tallest structure. [redacted]

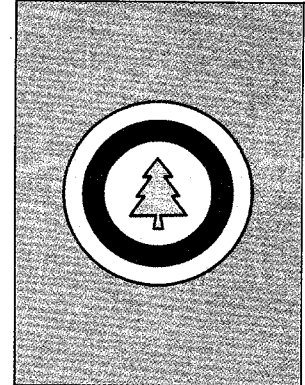
Assistance

Like the Lebanese Communist Party, the CAO normally receives weapons through Syria from Eastern Europe, particularly Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia. Syria has also provided arms to the CAO. In one instance, before the fighting in September 1983, Syrian forces gave the CAO arms captured from two Fatah arms depots. Although some CAO militia leaders presumably have been trained in the Soviet Union as have their LCP counterparts, [redacted] the officer corps and staff structure of the CAO are weaker than those of the LCP. [redacted]



Wide World ©

Muhsin Ibrahim, leader of the Communist Action Organization, meeting with Yasir Arafat in June 1982 [redacted]



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Prospects

Widespread fighting and continued political instability in Lebanon will provide a conducive environment for the growth of the CAO. CAO fighters have seemed fairly eager to join in Beirut street fighting, and they probably will assume at least a minor role in any fighting in the future. As a result, the CAO militia is yet another group likely to confront, with machineguns and grenades, the authority of the present and future governments of Lebanon. [redacted]

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Major Lebanese Militias

	Objective	Main Weapons
Christians		
Lebanese Forces (5,000) ^a Leader: Fadi Fram	To preserve Christian hegemony in Lebanon's predominantly Muslim society	Tanks (Sherman, Super Sherman, AMX-13) Armored personnel carriers (BTR-152, M-113) Mortars (80 mm to 120 mm) Artillery (155 mm, 130 mm, and 122 mm)
Army of South Lebanon (2,000) Leader: Antoine Lahad	Control buffer zone along Israeli border Receives extensive Israeli economic and military support	Tanks (Sherman, AMX-13) Armored personnel carriers (BTR-152, M-113) Mortars (80 mm to 120 mm) Artillery (155 mm, 130 mm, and 122 mm) Machineguns
Muslims		
Progressive Socialist Party Militia Druze (5,000 to 6,000) Leader: Walid Junblatt	Recognize the Druze community as an equal confessional entity with commensurate political privileges	Tanks (T54/55) 122-mm D-30 howitzers 82-mm mortars 130-mm M-46 field guns Probably SA-7 missiles
Shia Amal Militia (5,000) Leader: Nabih Barri	Establish a national government that is representative of Shia interests and the Shia Muslims' plurality in Lebanon's confessional balance	Assault rifles Antitank guns Mortars (60 mm, 82 mm, and 120 mm)
Islamic Amal Militia (800+) Leader: Husayn Musawi	To spread the tenets of the Iranian revolution among Lebanese Shias and to develop group of militant followers willing to carry out terrorist attacks	Assault rifles Heavy machineguns Various mortars Rocket launchers
Muslim Students' Union Militia Leader: Shaykh Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah	Establish an Islamic state in Lebanon on the Iranian model and attacks on "collaborators" with Israel	Unknown
Islamic Unification Movement Militia (1,000-) Leader: Shaykh Said Shaban	To gain control of Tripoli for the Sunnis and establish a Muslim government for all of Lebanon	Unknown
Murabitun Militia (200 to 500) Leader: Ibrahim Qulaylat	Equitable Muslim representation in the Lebanese Army and Government	Assault rifles Mortars (60 mm, 81 mm, and 120 mm) 122-mm D-30 howitzers
Lebanese Arab Army (500 to 700) Leader: Ahmed al-Khatib	Support Syrian objectives in Lebanon	Tanks (M41, Charioteer) Armored personnel carriers (M-113) Mortars (60 mm, 81 mm, and 120 mm) Artillery (105 mm, 120 mm, 122 mm, and 130 mm)
Arab Cavalier Force (1,500) Leader: Nassib al-Khatib	To establish, with appropriate Lebanese cover, a force capable of projecting Syrian influence in Lebanon Syrian controlled	Assault rifles 82 mm, 120-mm mortars Multiple rocket launchers
Syrian Social Nationalist Party Militia (200-) Leader: In'am Ra'ad	Ideologically espouses a "Greater Syria" composed of most of Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Israel Depends on Syrian financial and military support	Unknown
Lebanese Communist Party Militia (500 to 600) Leader: George Hawi	To mount attacks against Israeli forces in Lebanon, as well as the Lebanese Army and Christian Lebanese Forces	Unknown
Communist Action Organization Militia (100 to 200) Leader: Muhsin Ibrahim	To support Muslim demands for greater political representation and to spread Communism in Lebanon	Unknown

^a Numbers in parentheses are estimates of the number of militia-men who could go into action with little advance warning.

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