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# Facing Syrians, Lebanese Christians Look for Accord

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JUNIYAH, Lebanon—With Syrian troops poised on their perimeter, rebellious Christian militia leaders Sunday attempted to defuse their dispute with President Amin Gemayel.

Karim Pakradouni, one of the leaders of the militia revolt, said that his contacts with the Syrians showed that recent troop buildups would not lead to a Syrian invasion of the Christian heartland in northern Lebanon.

He told a news conference that he expects to have more contact with the Syrians in the next 24 hours, although he would not elaborate. Lebanese newspapers had suggested earlier that Pakradouni's efforts to negotiate with the Syrians had met with failure.

Pakradouni is a member of the "emergency committee" established by rebel leaders of the Lebanese Forces, the Christian community's militia group, who announced that they had seized control of Christian areas east of Beirut on Tuesday. The revolt was headed by Samir Geagea, head of the militia in the north.

The rebels complained that Gemayel, a Maronite Catholic, had usurped the Christian political voice and made too many concessions to Syria in talks with Lebanon's Muslim leaders.

On Saturday, Syria moved about 25 tanks and two dozen armored personnel carriers to the area of the Madfoun River bridge, 29 miles

north of Beirut, as part of a clear effort to pressure the rebellious militia leaders into backing down.

Fuad abu Nader, the commander of the Lebanese Forces who also joined the emergency committee, said that Syria has moved up five brigades of troops—about 2,000 men—including one armored brigade, one artillery brigade, two brigades of special forces, and an infantry brigade.

A tour of the area south of the Syrian checkpoint Sunday indicated that the Lebanese Forces have virtually vanished from the north-south coastal highway.

It appeared that if Syria attacked, the Lebanese Forces would rely on guerrilla assaults as a response, according to Lebanese Forces officials. "We don't think the Syrians want to get into a Christian Vietnam," one official said.

Syria has been warning the Christians that it would not tolerate any setback to the negotiating process they helped initiate between Gemayel and Muslim leaders.

The warnings and the movement of troops appeared to have the desired effect, with both Pakradouni and Abu Nader taking a conciliatory line toward Damascus and Gemayel during separate press conferences Sunday.

Both men said that the Christian revolt was not aimed at Syria or unseating Gemayel but that it had the goal of broadening Christian representation in the government.

The rebels are demanding the creation of a Christian Council to represent the various Christian communities in Lebanon. Although they deny any ulterior motives in the demand for such a council, the concept is clearly designed as a replacement for the Falangist Party, which has for decades been the Christian political arm in Lebanon.

As president, Gemayel has been slowly negotiating political reforms with Muslim ministers in a government of national unity formed last April. The Christian rebel leaders maintain that Gemayel cannot fairly serve as president of all Leba-

nese and negotiate on behalf of the Christians at the same time.

Pakradouni and Abu Nader also steadfastly maintained that their revolt has nothing to do with Israel, as Syria has publicly charged.

Abu Nader, who is Gemayel's nephew, acknowledged that he is about to be replaced as commander of the Lebanese Forces by a "group command." But he said that details are still being worked out.

Meanwhile, in West Beirut, an anonymous caller to news agencies claiming to represent the shadowy group known as Islamic Jihad, or Islamic Holy War, took responsibility Sunday for the abduction of three foreigners in recent days.

The three are Terry A. Anderson, 37, an American who is the chief Middle East correspondent of the Associated Press, and two Britons, Brian Levick, 59, an oil company executive, and Geoffrey Nash, 60, a metallurgist for the Lebanese government.

The caller said that the abduction of the three men came within "the framework of our operations against America and its agents."

The caller said that Islamic Jihad is working to rid "Islamic Beirut"—a reference to the Western sector of the city—"of any subversive element of the Mossad, CIA or allied intelligence services." The Mossad is Israel's intelligence arm.

The statement said that assuming the post of "a journalist, industrialist, scientist or religious man will from now on be of no avail" to spies staying in West Beirut.

(The Associated Press reported Sunday that police sources in Beirut, confirmed that a Libyan diplomat was abducted from his car in West Beirut on Saturday. They identified him as Abdel-Basset Trabulsi, a member of the Libyan People's Bureau, the equivalent of an embassy. There was no indication of who may have abducted the Libyan official.)

Islamic Jihad has claimed re-

Continued

sponsibility for the kidnaping of four other Americans who are still believed to be in captivity.

They are William Buckley, 56, a U.S. Embassy political officer; the Rev. Benjamin Weir, 60, a Presbyterian minister; Father Lawrence Jenco, a Roman Catholic priest, and Peter Kilburn, 60, a librarian at the American University of Beirut.

In two new incidents, a rocket-propelled grenade was fired Sunday at the Chinese Embassy, and a driver for the Italian Embassy driver was abducted.

All of these incidents appear to be part of a concerted effort to drive foreigners from West Beirut.

In southern Lebanon, meantime, two Israeli soldiers were killed and five were injured Sunday morning in an ambush near the town of Nabatiyeh, the Israeli military command reported in Tel Aviv. There was no immediate indication of who carried out the attack.