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# Lebanon: The Prospects for Islamic Fundamentalism [REDACTED]

A Research Paper

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# Lebanon: The Prospects for Islamic Fundamentalism

A Research Paper



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July 1987

## Lebanon: The Prospects for Islamic Fundamentalism [REDACTED]

### Summary

*Information available  
as of 6 May 1987  
was used in this report.*

Islamic fundamentalism is the newest and most dynamic force on the Lebanese political scene, but the emergence of an Islamic republic is only a distant possibility. Major opposition to an Islamic republic comes from key militias including moderate Shias and Sunnis, Christians, and Druze and from Lebanon's neighbors, Syria and Israel. Barring a full-scale Syrian crackdown, the Islamic fundamentalist movement probably will succeed only in cementing its hold on sizable parts of South Beirut, the Bekaa Valley around Ba'labakk, and southern Lebanon over the next two years. [REDACTED]

An Islamic fundamentalist movement probably would have developed in Lebanon without outside support, but Iranian aid has been a major stimulant. Thirteen years of civil war, government neglect of rural areas and Shia interests, and repeated Israeli interventions laid the foundation for a revolutionary Islamic ideology. The success of the Iranian revolution and the resulting wave of Islamic militancy throughout the Middle East fostered the spread of fundamentalism in Lebanon. [REDACTED]

Radical Islamic ideology and political successes have proved to be potent forces within the largely impoverished Shia community. The absence of any hope for early political reform or a satisfactory end to the Lebanese civil war is increasing the appeal of radical ideology among large portions of the Shia and Sunni Muslim communities. The strong Islamic resurgence is evolving into broad-based popular movements with effective networks of followers committed to political and social change. The transformation of the largely impoverished and once apathetic Shias into a dynamic, albeit divided, community is likely to accelerate. [REDACTED]

The key figure in the Islamic fundamentalist movement is Shaykh Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah, who is considered by most Lebanese as the spiritual guide of Hizballah—the most powerful radical group in Lebanon—although he is not himself part of the organization's leadership. Fadlallah, the most revered Shia cleric in Lebanon, is determined to maintain an independent Lebanese Islamic movement. His relationship with Iran is ambivalent, and Tehran is wary of his influence. One key to Fadlallah's power is his control of the clandestine Da'wa Party of Lebanon, which has covertly manipulated the radical Shia movement. [REDACTED]

Ideological differences within the Shia community and between the Shia and the Sunni communities pose great obstacles to the establishment of an

Islamic republic in Lebanon. The country's Islamic fundamentalist organizations are extremely fragmented—a condition that undermines their strength. The Shia Hizballah and the Sunni Islamic Unification Movement are both strong supporters of Iran. Other groups like the Muslim Brotherhood are ambivalent toward Iran. The largest Shia movement, Amal, increasingly on the defensive, is closely linked to Syria. There appears to be insufficient incentive for these organizations to unite [REDACTED]

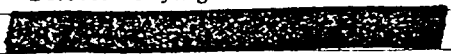
Lebanon's Christian community—traditionally allied with Israel—views the growing power of the Shias and especially of Hizballah with alarm. Christian hardliners are prepared to see Lebanon divided rather than give in to Muslim political demands for a more equitable distribution of power and believe that concessions would be construed by Muslims as a sign of weakness. Druze leaders also oppose Islamic fundamentalism and Shia domination but have chosen to let others take the lead in fighting the Shia extremists [REDACTED]

Syrian behavior, at least in the short term, will be the key determinant of Hizballah's prospects. Syria's intervention in West Beirut in February 1987, which was intended to save Amal from defeat by Druze militiamen and to bolster Damascus's declining credibility in Lebanon, curtailed radical Hizballah activities in West Beirut but did not affect Hizballah's stronghold in the southern suburbs. Should Syria decide to move against Hizballah, Damascus has the strength to force the movement underground and weaken it, but at a heavy cost [REDACTED]

Israel will confront an increasingly strong Islamic movement in the south over the next few years. The absence of Syrian troops, the provocation of Israel's presence, and the cumulative impact of years of strife make the south an attractive target for fundamentalists. The Israeli-backed Army of South Lebanon already is locked into a confrontation with several groups, but primarily with Hizballah [REDACTED]

For the United States, radical Shia growth means more terrorism against Western and Israeli targets, enhanced regional prestige for extremism at the expense of the moderate forces, and increasing opportunities for the radicals to stage incidents that could spark a Syrian-Israeli conflict. Less likely is the chance that the Islamic extremist threat could set the stage for a limited convergence of US, Syrian, and Israeli interests [REDACTED]

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## Lebanon: The Prospects for Islamic Fundamentalism

### Islamic Radicalism in Lebanon—A New Force

Islamic fundamentalism is the most dynamic political trend in Lebanon today. The Muslim resurgence is transforming large segments of Lebanon's Shia and Sunni communities into less tolerant, more radical entities. In contrast, before the outbreak of the current civil war in 1975, Lebanon's diverse Muslim sects established political parties as a vehicle for their participation in national decisionmaking. Political positions were mainly allocated to the Muslims on the basis of their loyalty to the Christian leadership and hence their acceptance of the political rules that favored Christian domination.<sup>1</sup> The traditional non-Christian leaders accepted a subordinate role in return for a share in the political and economic fortunes of the country.

The Christian-dominated political system—in a country increasingly Muslim in population—was susceptible to a protracted Muslim challenge. A civil war in 1958 almost brought a pro-Nasirite Muslim government to power, and in 1969 clashes between government troops and Muslim-supported Palestinian fighters came close to toppling the government of Christian President Helu. Both of these events demonstrated the growing Muslim demand for political reform and increased political influence. The Christians, then as now, refused to acquiesce for fear of losing their privileged position.

At the beginning of the current civil war, the Muslim-Christian rivalry took on a left-right coloration. The Druze followers of warlord Kamal Junblatt utilized their well-developed Progressive Socialist Party to lead a leftist-Palestinian alliance against a coalition of

<sup>1</sup> The Lebanese Constitution gives the Christian President wide veto powers over administrative and political decisions. The National Charter, a sort of gentlemen's agreement, allocates political positions according to sectarian affiliation. Historically, a proportional formula gave political advantage in the following order: Maronite Christians, Sunni Muslims, Druze, Shia Muslims, and other minorities.

Christian militias. Islamic fundamentalism had no significant place in this alignment, although Shia activism was growing as a result of the emergence in the late 1960s of a charismatic Shia cleric, Musa al-Sadr, at the head of the first primarily Shia militia, Amal.

### Impetus for Lebanon's Islamic Resurgence

The inability of any Lebanese faction or outside power to impose a military settlement of the civil war and the resurgence of fundamentalism elsewhere in the Middle East gave Lebanese Islamic radicalism an opening. The Islamic fundamentalist movement in Lebanon was especially influenced by the success of the Iranian revolution in 1979 and the assassination of Egyptian President Sadat by Muslim radicals in 1981. The triumph of the Iranian revolution continues to provide Lebanese fundamentalists with a model to emulate.

Lebanon's deepening social and economic crisis provided further impetus for the sharp rise in fundamentalist practices as a means of escaping the harsh realities of the civil war. Increasing numbers of Lebanese Muslims have been joining fundamentalist associations that provide a network of social welfare programs and educational assistance as a hedge against political, social, and economic chaos.

radical successes are a product of political and social alienation from the increasingly hostile environment and indicate growing disaffection with Lebanon's traditional political institutions and leadership.

Fundamentalist leaders have exploited the bitterness of many Shias—Lebanon's largest religious group.

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but traditionally the most disadvantaged—over economic and social dislocations caused by the civil war. Massive migrations of Shia families from the south to Beirut's southern suburbs and to the Bekaa Valley over the past decade have highlighted Shia social and economic inferiority and enabled the radical, pro-Iranian Hizballah movement to rally the disaffected Shias into a dynamic political movement.

[REDACTED]  
century of some 20,000 inhabitants of South Lebanon, the destruction of numerous Shia villages and countless homes, and the displacement of thousands of families.

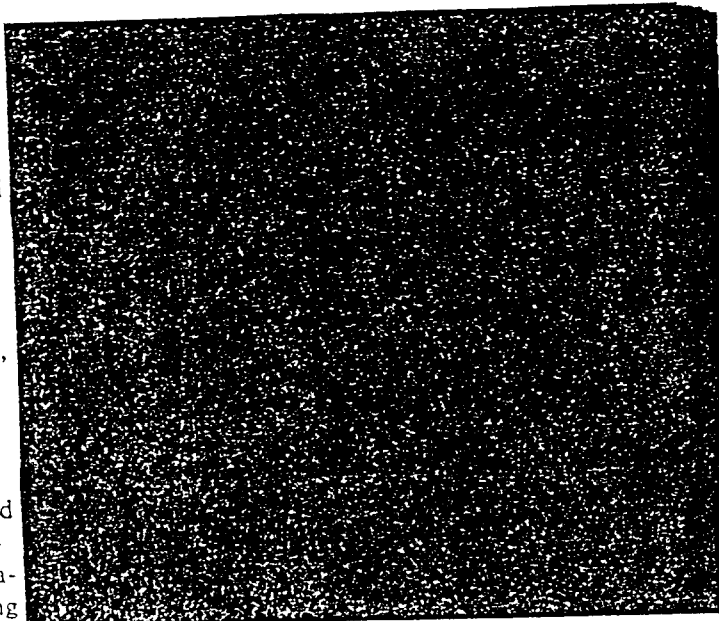
Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982 and its continued presence in the southern security zone are contributing to the radicalization of Lebanon's Muslim population. The plight of the population in the south is being successfully exploited by both radical Shias and by Iran to enlist new recruits. A deep religious and nationalist commitment to expel Israel from the south and a willingness to suffer martyrdom are enhancing the image and power of the militant Shias.

[REDACTED]

### Fadlallah's Key Role

Advocates of the Islamic revolution in Lebanon agree on the need to establish an Islamic republic, but there is widespread disagreement on a timetable. According to their public comments, some Iranian-backed clerics such as Sadiq Musawi, Ibrahim al-Amin, Abbas Musawi, and Subhi al-Tufayli view the establishment of an Islamic republic as an immediate objective. To these clerics, an Islamic government is the only acceptable alternative to the current political and social chaos in Lebanon.

Other clerics such as Shaykh Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah—the most important Shia cleric in Lebanon—see the establishment of an Islamic republic as an evolutionary process. In interviews Fadlallah argues that the deep political and religious cleavages



inherent in Lebanese society prevent the near-term establishment of an Islamic republic in Lebanon. Fadlallah has repeatedly rebuffed Iranian pressure to call openly for the establishment of an Islamic republic because this would alarm the majority of Lebanon's sectarian groups who feel threatened by such a proposal. He believes that any such advocacy would only aggravate the deepening split in the Shia community and contribute to its isolation.

Fadlallah views Iran's political goals in Lebanon as potentially in conflict with his perception of his role as the leader of Lebanon's fragmented Shia community. He wants Hizballah to remain free of outside influence and under his direct control. Fadlallah prevented Hizballah from following Tehran's order to attack Syrian security forces following their occupation of West Beirut last February.

[REDACTED]

Fadlallah seeks to remain independent of Tehran in part by maintaining his role as the head of the Da'wa Party in Lebanon, another important Shia fundamentalist organization.

[REDACTED]

*Radical Advocates of an Islamic Republic*

*Hisbollah, the Party of God, is the most important Islamic fundamentalist movement in Lebanon. The Iranian regime helped set up this movement as an alternative to the more secular and moderate Shia Amal organization following the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982. Inspired by the Iranian revolution, Hizbollah's followers seek to eliminate US, Western, and Israeli influence from Lebanon; challenge Amal's leadership in the predominantly Shia areas of Beirut, the northern Bekaa, and the south; and ultimately create an Islamic republic in Lebanon.*

*Differing opportunities and problems influence Hizbollah's effort to establish radical Islamic enclaves in the Bekaa, in the south, and in Beirut. Although Hizbollah's ultimate goal is the establishment of an Islamic republic, more pressing goals such as expelling Israel from the south, weakening Syria in the Bekaa and in Beirut, and fighting secular Lebanese militias throughout Lebanon take priority.*

*The most important Sunni group is the Islamic Unification Movement (IUM), an umbrella organization of several Sunni groups. It sought to establish Islamic rule on the Iranian model in Tripoli in 1984, but Syria and its surrogates put an end to the attempt. Although the IUM's military activities have been drastically curtailed, its leader Shaykh Sa'id Sha'ban continues to call for the establishment of an Iranian-style Islamic republic and seeks to strengthen his ties to Iran as a hedge against the Syrian campaign against him and other IUM leaders.*

*The success of the Islamic Grouping (Al Jama'a Al Islamiyah)—the strongest group in the IUM—in establishing centers in Beirut and Sidon with Iranian backing indicates that Tehran is likely to continue using such front organizations to advance its goals in Lebanon. The group's leader, Abdallah Babati, visits the Iranian Embassy seeking assistance.*

*Other Iranian-supported organizations include the Assembly of Ulama—a Sunni and Shia clerical consultative body—and the Islamic Front headed by*

*Muharram al-Arifi. Arifi's organization includes several pro-Iranian Sunni fundamentalist clerics such as Maher Hammud, Saleh Ardaqan, and Abdallah al-Habashi. Habashi and Hammud were implicated in the kidnaping of Soviet diplomats in Beirut in 1985, which was undertaken to press Syria—the Soviet Union's closest ally in the region—to halt its bombardment of IUM neighborhoods in Tripoli.*

*The Lebanese Muslim Brotherhood, increasingly active in the Beirut and Sidon areas, is foremost among those Sunni proponents of an Islamic republic that are less closely associated—but still in contact—with Iran. The Brotherhood is a loosely structured clandestine organization led by Sunni scholars and jurists who maintain close ties to Hizbollah. Hizbollah spiritual adviser Shaykh Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah regularly meets with Muslim Brotherhood leaders to coordinate fundamentalist activities. The Muslim Brotherhood also has ties to the Palestinians.*

*The strength of the Lebanese Muslim Brotherhood depends upon its ability to align itself with other Muslim Brotherhood branches in the Arab world.*

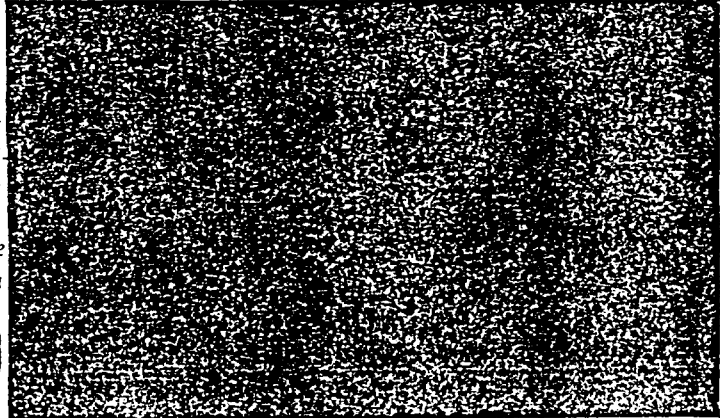
*Scores of Brotherhood survivors fled to Lebanon following Damascus's massacre of Brotherhood members in Hama, Syria, in 1982 and blended into the middle- and lower-class Sunni communities in Tripoli, Beirut, and Sidon.*

*The proponents of an Islamic republic in Lebanon are linked through a complex but loose political, social, and economic network. Hizbollah maintains close relations with Sunni fundamentalist movements in Tripoli, Beirut, Sidon, South Lebanon, and the Bekaa Valley. Heads of these groups meet to coordinate tactics and map strategy.*

---

*Hizballah: Political and Military Organization*

*Hizballah consists of a network of radical Shia paramilitary groups that agree on major strategic goals such as the establishment of an Islamic republic but often differ on tactical or operational matters. Hizballah's network includes Islamic Amal (a splinter Amal group headed by militant Shia operative Husayn Musawi and based in the Bekaa Valley), the Husayni Suicide Forces (led by a relative of Husayn Musawi, Abdallah Musawi), and the Muslim Students' Union (headed by Shaykh Fadlallah.*



*Hizballah's structure is geared to provide intensive political and religious indoctrination as well as sophisticated paramilitary training. According to an Israeli intelligence analysis, Hizballah has established regional organizations with several subdivisions and a hierarchy. Each Hizballah regional center is divided into civilian and military sections.*

*The civilian sections are responsible for political indoctrination and training and instill in Hizballah followers a strong sense of dedication to the organization. The civilian sections are also responsible for religious indoctrination. Education—based on the Iranian model—consists of intensive daily study of Islamic political institutions and thought with emphasis on jihad or holy war. According to Israeli intelligence, a complex network of mosques, religious meeting centers, and academic centers is used in the Hizballah-controlled villages and towns for political and military indoctrination.*

*Hizballah mobilizes and recruits followers through a well-developed propaganda program. The Propaganda and Indocrination Center controls the publication*

*of Al Ahad and Al Sabil. Both publications focus on Hizballah military operations and achievements and highlight the notion of Islamic martyrdom by publishing photos and wills of Hizballah fighters killed in action. They also publish interviews with Islamic radicals throughout the region—such as one with a leader of Egypt's Al Jihad group, which killed Sadat—to underscore Hizballah's regional goals. Hizballah operates a radio station in the Bekaa—the Voice of the Oppressed—which broadcasts anti-Christian, anti-Israeli, and anti-Western propaganda.*

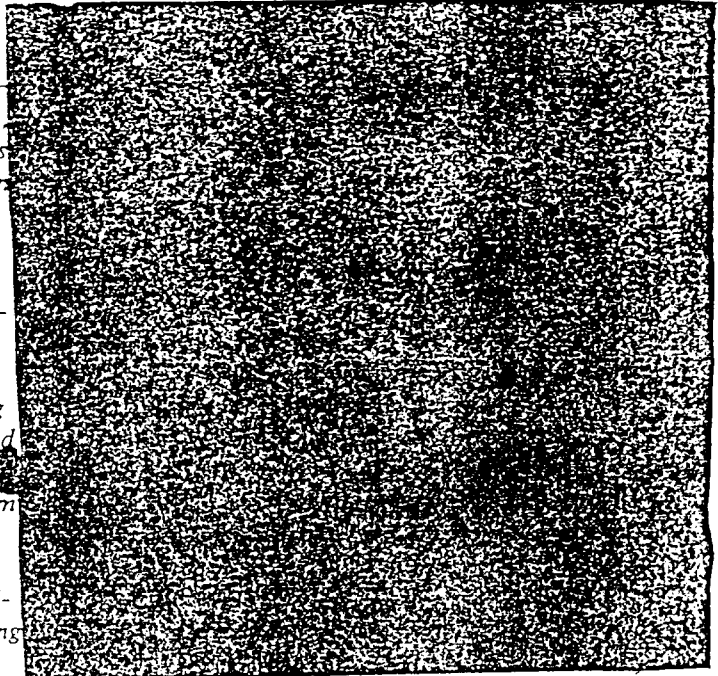
*Hizballah has considerably expanded its military organization in recent months. Israeli intelligence states that Hizballah's military force includes several units designated as "brigades," although they are probably smaller and less well equipped than Western-style brigades. The "brigades" contain engineering, commando, and civil defense units and are stationed in major regional areas.*

indicate that a sophisticated logistic and communications network links Hizballah's centers in the Bekaa Valley, Beirut, and the south. Iranian Revolutionary Guards were training a Hizballah military unit this spring in the upper Bekaa Valley [REDACTED]

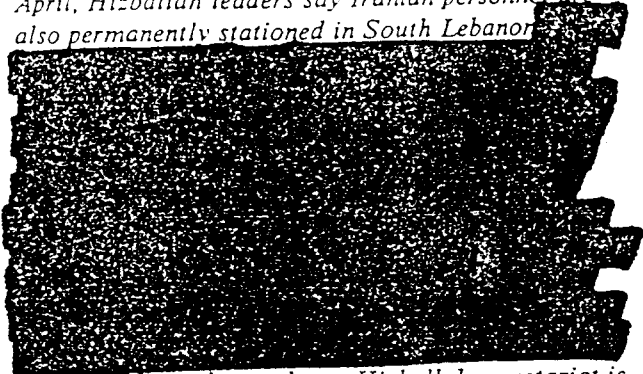
[REDACTED] Hizballah's attacks on pro-Israeli militia positions in South Lebanon have been professional, well organized, and more sophisticated than those of other Lebanese militias. Most Hizballah soldiers have gained experience from fighting during the civil war. Hizballah's soldiers are disciplined and deeply committed to their commanders and [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] derive spiritual strength from their Shia clerical members. Hizballah soldiers are organized into cells of four or five men headed by a commanding officer and named after a martyr. Individual cells conduct routine surveillance, and varying numbers of cells participate in combat operations. Hizballah has begun using military ranks for its personnel as of last April, according to reliable reports [REDACTED]

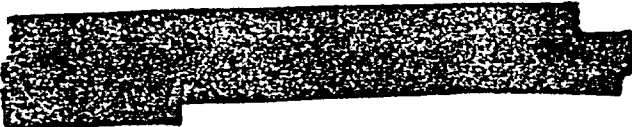
[REDACTED] Hizballah's close relationship with the Iranian Revolutionary Guard contingent in the Bekaa Valley mirrors Hizballah's ideological affinity with Iran. The Shaykh Abdallah barracks in the Bekaa—Hizballah's most important facility, serving as a primary garrison, base, and communications center—is also the headquarters for the Revolutionary [REDACTED]



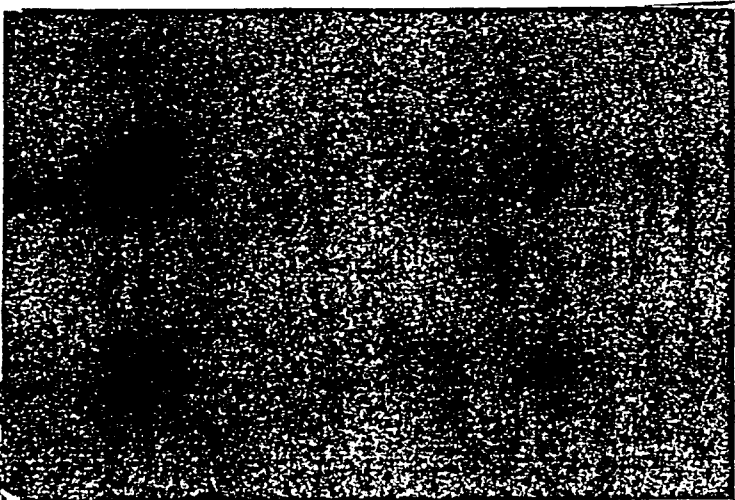
Guard in Lebanon. According to press reports in late April, Hizballah leaders say Iranian personnel are also permanently stationed in South Lebanon [REDACTED]



press reports indicate that a Hizballah secretariat is located in Tehran [REDACTED]



in Beirut state that Fadlallah is considered one of the party's founders. The Da'wa Party was imported from Iraq in 1969 by followers of its founder, Muhammad Baqr al-Sadr. The Da'wa activists originally included Musa al-Sadr, Baqr al-Sadr's cousin and Amal's founder, and Subhi al-Tufayli, a key Hizballah cleric from the Bekaa Valley. Shortly after the disappearance of Musa al-Sadr while on a visit to Libya in September 1978, Fadlallah began pushing for an independent revolutionary Shia movement under the banner of the Da'wa Party



By virtue of his status as the most important Shia cleric in Lebanon, Fadlallah is Hizballah's spiritual guide—a role that gives him significant religious authority



Fadlallah's determination to be independent of Tehran has been a source of continuing friction between them. It has prompted Tehran to circumvent Fadlallah's authority by dealing directly with Hizballah officials through the Iranian embassies in Beirut and Damascus and through the Iranian Revolutionary Guard contingent in the Bekaa Valley. Iran also exerts influence through the Council of Lebanon, a nine-member body that includes the Iranian ambassadors to Syria and Lebanon, the commander of the Revolutionary Guard contingent in Lebanon, and prominent Lebanese Shia clerics. Three subcouncils—the Council of Beirut, the Council of the Bekaa, and the Council of the South—were also created by Iran to strengthen Tehran's influence and to reinforce its links to local Shia leaders. The councils meet regularly—often with Iranian officials—to coordinate activities and to plan strategy

Fadlallah engages in numerous informal meetings with Lebanese Shia clerics and security officials as a means of circumventing Tehran. Fadlallah has been displeased in the past that Iran has not kept him

informed of its positions. He lodged such complaints with Tehran last February following the entry of Syrian troops into West Beirut and shortly thereafter contacted the Iranian Embassy requesting that he be included in the Syrian-Iranian negotiations on Syrian troop deployments in Beirut's southern suburbs. Fadlallah visited Damascus in April to hold his own talks separate from Iran on Syrian troop dispositions in West Beirut.

#### Hizballah's Regional Successes

Hizballah has established what is virtually a radical Islamic canton in the Bekaa Valley, despite Syria's military presence there. The areas under Hizballah control are subject to strict Islamic rules. Sale and transport of liquor are prohibited, women are forbidden from interacting with men in public and must adhere to a strict dress code, civil crimes are punished according to the Koran, and Western education and influences are prohibited



Hizballah's success in the Bekaa is in part related to its links to key Shia clans in the valley.

The Musawi, Tufayli, and Hammadi clans have long been key figures in the Bekaa and have given Hizballah important grassroots support.

Hizballah also is gaining ground in South Lebanon—traditionally Amal's stronghold.

\_\_\_\_\_ Hizballah has become the dominant political force in a number of strategically located villages in the south. \_\_\_\_\_ Hizballah cadres from Beirut moved to these villages after Syria occupied West Beirut.

Amal appears to be losing its competition with Hizballah for the loyalty of the southern Lebanese Shias. We believe that Hizballah's success stems from its ability to score direct—albeit small—hits against Israel and the Israeli-backed Army of South Lebanon. To survive, Amal is increasingly forced to compete with Hizballah on the same level. The Amal leader in Tyre, Da'ud Da'ud, imposed Islamic rule in areas under his control—evidence that Hizballah's drive to establish Islamic fundamentalism in the south is popular among the Shias. A revolt last March by Amal leader Nabih Barri's former aide Hassan Hashem sharpened Barri's differences with two other Amal leaders in the south, Da'ud Da'ud and Mahmud al-Faqih.

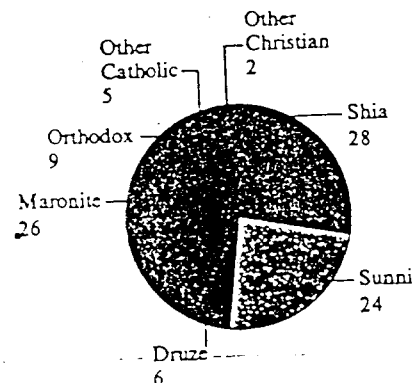
Hizballah has proved to be the most important newcomer on the political scene in Beirut. The US \_\_\_\_\_ Hizballah is the most dynamic political movement in the southern suburbs, home for some 600,000 displaced Shias from South Lebanon. Until the Syrian troop deployment into the Lebanese capital on 22 February 1987, Hizballah maintained several well-fortified centers in the heart of West Beirut, often rivaling Amal and other militias for control of that section of the city.

Hizballah lost these strongholds following the Syrian entry, forcing it to consolidate inside the southern suburbs. \_\_\_\_\_ Hizballah is

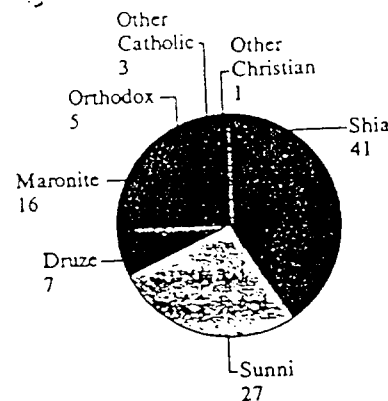
Figure 2  
Lebanon: Estimated Distribution of Confessional Groups, 1975 and 1984

Percent

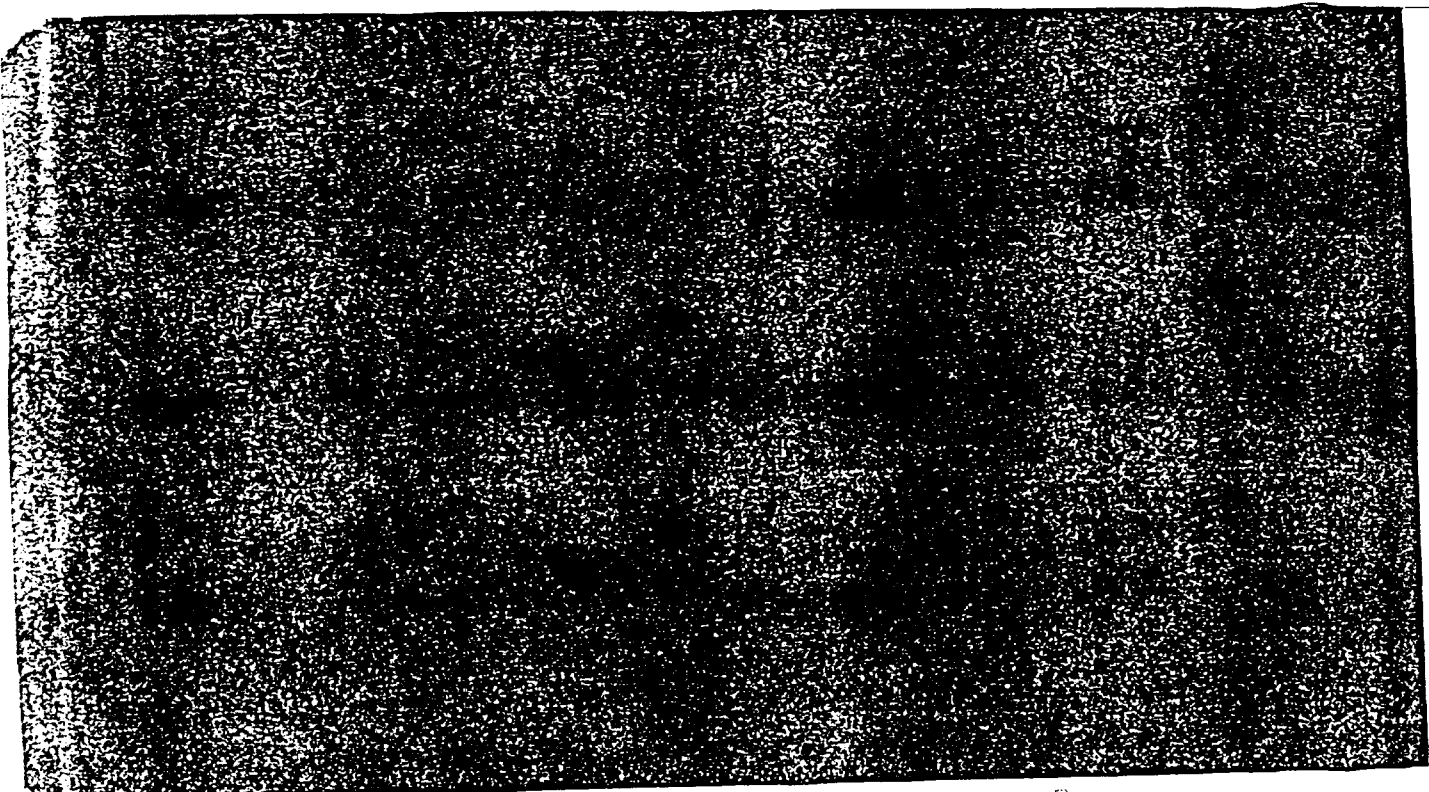
1975



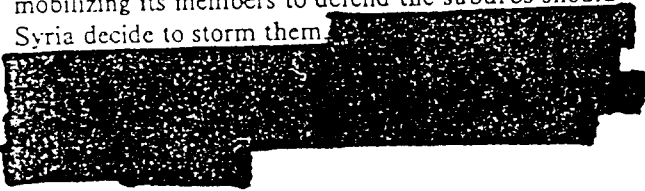
1984



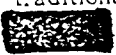
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mobilizing its members to defend the suburbs should Syria decide to storm them.



Although Hizballah withdrew from West Beirut following the loss of its main interrogation center and the killing of at least 23 of its followers by Syrian soldiers last February, it maintains a clandestine presence. Syria views seriously Hizballah's threat to its occupation forces. The Syrian security forces in West Beirut no longer venture into remaining Hizballah strongholds in the capital such as Ras An Nab, a traditionally Sunni neighborhood on the Green Line.



### Obstacles to the Establishment of an Islamic Republic

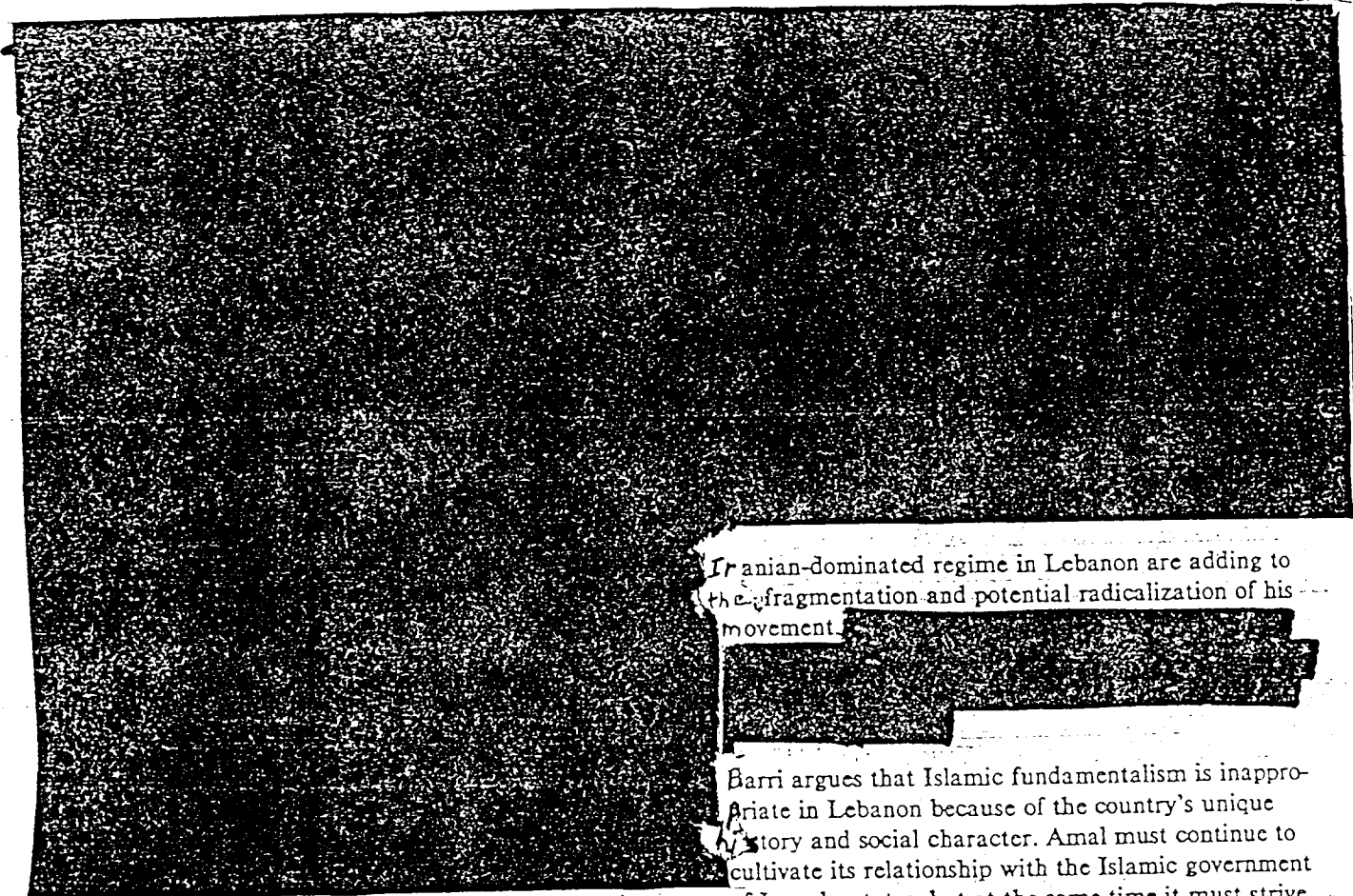
#### Internal

The proponents of an Islamic republic in Lebanon face major internal political and military obstacles.

As a result of their fears of the Shias' numerical majority, the Druze, Christians, and moderate Muslims all oppose Shia domination of Lebanon.

*Sunni-Shia Schism.* [redacted] traditional Sunni-Shia schism is a major obstacle to the fundamentalists' efforts to establish an Islamic republic in Lebanon. Although Muslim leaders often quote the Koran in exhorting Muslims to unite, they remain fragmented. Religious and political divisions between the two sects are so deep that they will almost certainly prevent serious discussion of the nature and leadership of a Lebanese Islamic republic.

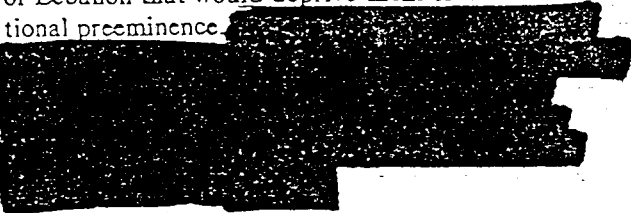
*The Druze.* The Druze would view a significant increase in Shia power as a threat to their enclave in the Shuf. [redacted] Druze relations with Hizballah have remained cordial only because Druze leader Junblatt does not consider Hizballah a near-term threat to the Druze enclave [redacted]



Iranian-dominated regime in Lebanon are adding to the fragmentation and potential radicalization of his movement.

Barri argues that Islamic fundamentalism is inappropriate in Lebanon because of the country's unique history and social character. Amal must continue to cultivate its relationship with the Islamic government of Iran, he states, but at the same time it must strive to avoid emulating the Iranian model in Lebanon. Barri argues that the establishment of an Islamic republic in Iran had its own justifications, since the vast majority of Iranians are Shia Muslims. Lebanon differs drastically from Iran because it is composed of competing sectarian groups, all possessing legal and historical rights to exercise meaningful political power. None are likely to accept the hegemony of one group without effective guarantees for minority rights.

*The Christians.* The Christians also fear the growing numerical and political power of the Shia community. They strongly oppose changes in the political makeup of Lebanon that would deprive them of their traditional preeminence.



*Amal.* Amal opposes the establishment of an Islamic republic, even though leader Nabih Barri continues to call for drastic political reform that would give the Shias a greater share of the country's political and economic power. Barri continues to challenge Iranian policies in Lebanon, while Tehran has refuted Barri's claim to leadership of the Lebanese Shia community.

Barri's reliance on Damascus and his negative attitude toward the establishment of an

*Other.* Secular groups also oppose the growing power of the fundamentalists. The Lebanese Communist Party and the Syrian Social Nationalist Party, two Syrian-backed factions in Lebanon, have clashed with Hizballah several times in the past year.



[redacted] The Hizballah leadership has been successful in avoiding prolonged confrontations with these and other factions, however, a factor that has contributed to Hizballah's endurance and growth.

External

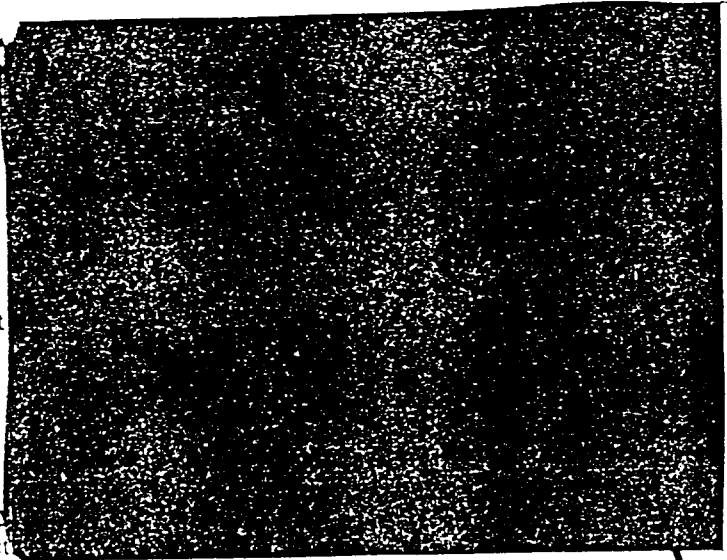
Syria [redacted] Syria poses the greatest threat to an Islamic fundamentalist movement in Lebanon. Syria is not willing to clamp down on Hizballah and thereby sacrifice its alliance with Tehran, but it is taking an increasingly tough line toward the fundamentalists. Following a new wave of kidnappings of Westerners and Lebanese in West Beirut last January and February, Damascus took limited steps to restrict Hizballah activities in the Bekaa. The kidnaping in February of Jean Ubayd, a pro-Syrian former aide to President Gemayel, was especially irritating to Syrian President Assad. According to press reports, Syrian security troops detained members of a radical Shia family to gain the release of Ubayd. [redacted]

The entry of Syrian troops into West Beirut led to additional confrontations over Syria's determination to enforce a new security plan in areas under Hizballah's control.

[redacted]

Syrian security forces view Hizballah and its main military backer—the Iranian Revolutionary Guard—warily. Numerous clashes have taken place between Hizballah and Syrian security officials and other Syrian surrogates in the Bekaa during the past year, [redacted] The Revolutionary Guard contingent stationed at the Shaykh Abdallah barracks has been occasionally harassed by the Syrians [redacted]

[redacted]



If Syrian-Iranian relations deteriorate, Syria almost certainly will tighten its grip on the Bekaa Valley in anticipation of a major confrontation with Hizballah. If Syria is forced to choose between accepting the consequences of crushing Hizballah or accommodating its policy to the growing fundamentalist influence in neighboring Lebanon, we believe it would decide reluctantly to crush Hizballah. If pressed, Damascus would use the same brutal tactics it used to crush the Muslim Brotherhood in Hama. For example, the Syrians would shell Beirut's southern suburbs rather than engage in house-to-house fighting that would result in heavy Syrian casualties but limit the loss of life among civilian residents. [redacted]

Israel. Israel is also an important obstacle to Hizballah's success, but it has few options available to defeat the fundamentalists. Israel seeks to counter Hizballah's growing military capabilities in southern Lebanon mainly by relying on the Army of South Lebanon.

[redacted]

Tel Aviv faces a cruel dilemma. Israeli efforts to attack the Shias inside Lebanon would gain Hizballah more supporters and further radicalize the Shias in southern Lebanon. An Israeli withdrawal from the

*Hizballah and Fatah*

*Hizballah has forged a close tactical alliance with Yasir Arafat's Fatah group. Each group sees the other as a useful ally. Hizballah assists Fatah's return to Lebanon.*

*Many Hizballah leaders began their careers as Fatah militants before the Israeli invasion in 1982. Arafat and his top aides maintain personal ties to selected Hizballah officials, although the relationship combines strains with solidarity:*

[REDACTED]

- *The PLO chairman has repeatedly complained about editorials critical of his handling of the camps war in Hizballah's mouthpiece, Al Ahad. Tehran has accused the PLO of instigating the ill-fated Sunni fundamentalist uprising against Syrian troops in Tripoli, causing Damascus to react violently against the fundamentalist movement there.*

[REDACTED]

*The Fatah-Hizballah relationship illustrates Hizballah's growing independence of Iran. Tehran broke with Arafat in the early 1980s over his support for Iraq, but Hizballah remains close to Fatah. This alliance is likely to last at least as long as both see Syria as a major enemy.*

south, on the other hand, would be seen as a victory for the radicals and their Palestinian supporters—a move that is likely to swell their ranks. Meanwhile, Hizballah's policy of attacking the Israeli security zone is adding to the group's credibility as a serious opponent of Israeli and Amal influence in the south, in our view.

**Outlook**

The Lebanese Islamic fundamentalists' efforts to create an Islamic republic will continue to create serious difficulties for the United States. Hizballah seeks to

destroy the remnants of Western influence in Lebanon—particularly the official US presence.

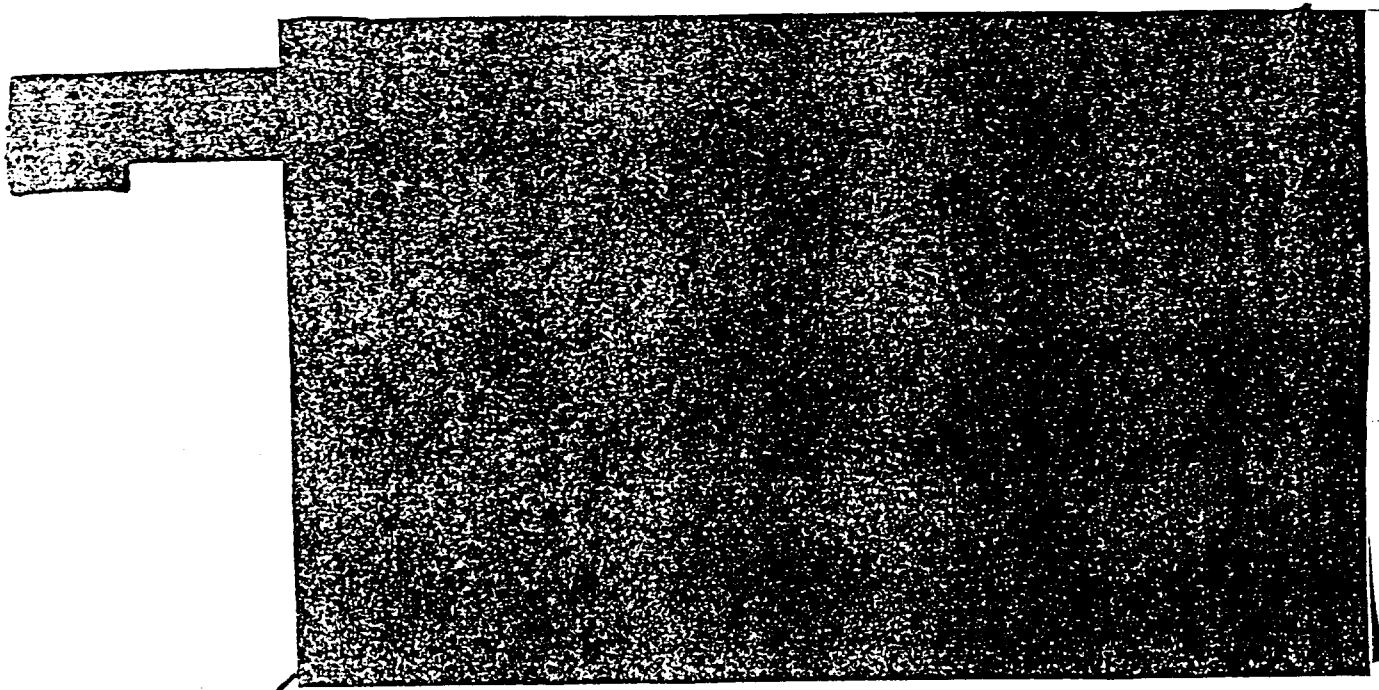
[REDACTED]

The determination of Hizballah to strike at US personnel and installations has clearly hampered the conduct of US diplomatic, military, and commercial representatives in Lebanon. The continued presence of the US Embassy Annex in East Beirut spurs Hizballah to increase its operations against US citizens. Hizballah's links to Sunni fundamentalist movements and to the Palestinians will ensure that these organizations will have ample support to carry out terrorist activities against Western interests in Lebanon. For Hizballah, these operations have helped swell the ranks of the radical movement.

If Hizballah succeeds in replacing Amal as the dominant Shia organization in Lebanon—a more likely outcome than the establishment of an Islamic republic—Hizballah will increasingly turn its attention to the pro-Western Christians and pro-Israeli Army of South Lebanon. Increased attacks on Israel's security zone by Hizballah would force Israel to retaliate harshly against Hizballah's Shia sympathizers—a development that is certain to aggravate the security problems in South Lebanon and add to that region's military and political instability. Israeli retaliation would prolong the Western hostages' captivity and threaten their physical safety.

[REDACTED]

Although we believe that neither Damascus nor Tel Aviv is eager to engage the other militarily over Lebanon, increased Hizballah attacks on Israel's security zone could set the stage for fighting between Israel and Syria. Israel would probably feel compelled to retaliate with airstrikes against suspected fundamentalist targets deep in Syrian-occupied territories—possibly provoking Damascus to strike back. A persistent



Israeli troop buildup and an escalation of attacks against Hizballah north of the security zone might also prompt Damascus to mobilize its forces in the Bekaa to counter perceived threats to its presence there. [REDACTED]

The potential exists for a convergence of US, Syrian, and Israeli interests in halting the growth of Shia extremism in Lebanon. The key player is Damascus, which is reluctant to break with Iran but may be forced by events to do so. [REDACTED]

#### Alternative Scenario

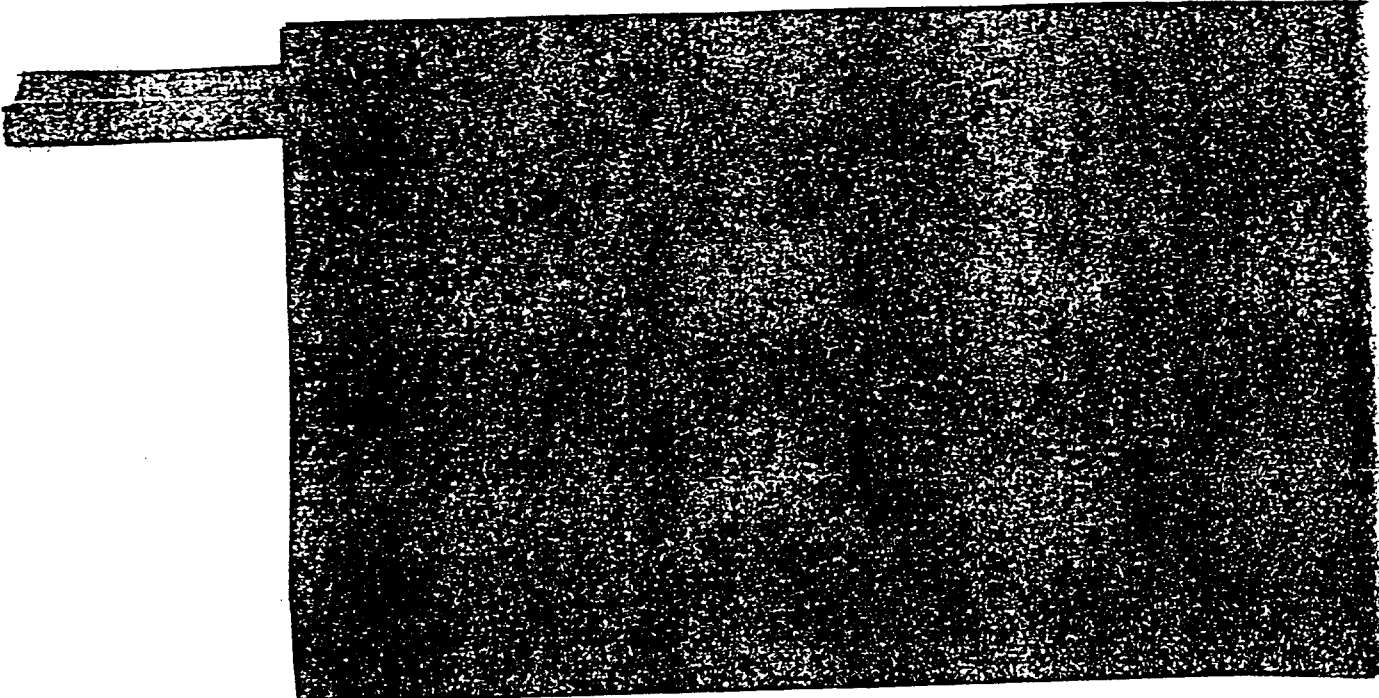
In the unlikely event that an Islamic republic emerged in Lebanon—perhaps because developments in Syria forced Damascus to turn inward—the implications for the United States are more grave. [REDACTED]

Establishment of an Islamic republic would undermine US interests in several moderate Gulf states where the Shia communities' demographic and financial influence is growing. Saudi Arabia's Eastern Province, Bahrain, and Kuwait are most vulnerable to pro-Iranian Shia agitation. Kuwait, where 17 Shia

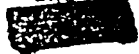
terrorists remain imprisoned for a series of attacks on Western embassies and the attempted murder of the Amir, is likely to continue experiencing terrorist attacks instigated by Iran and by Lebanese Hizballah relatives of the prisoners. [REDACTED]

An Islamic fundamentalist success in Lebanon would provide other Islamic movements in the region with the impetus to challenge existing moderate Arab regimes. The fundamentalist trend has been growing in Egypt, Sudan, Tunisia, Jordan, and Turkey since the success of the Iranian revolution. Although deep ideological differences hamper Tehran's efforts to unify the Islamic fundamentalist movement under its banner, [REDACTED] a victory in Lebanon would encourage many Middle Eastern fundamentalists to adopt the Iranian model as a vehicle for social and political change. [REDACTED]

The creation of an Islamic republic in Lebanon would stimulate the political activism of Palestinians on the West Bank and contribute to closer cooperation between fundamentalists and Palestinian nationalists. Should the fundamentalists win in Lebanon, West Bank Palestinians would be likely to turn increasingly



to Islamic movements to challenge Israel's hegemony—a development that almost certainly would increase the spiral of violence in the occupied territories and harden Israel's position on a political settlement.



## Appendix A

### Selected Sayings of Fadlallah

No one has a serious plan to solve the Lebanese crisis. . . . All proposals for peace in Lebanon have so far been either confusing or self serving. . . . No partition, Muslim or Christian, could be viable in Lebanon. Those who want to turn Lebanon into a Muslim state are in essence fooling themselves if they believe that such a state could survive. The governing of Lebanon should depend on people, not sects. . . . Several people object to the plan for an Islamic republic and accuse its advocates of extremism, but they do not object to the plan for a Marxist state, which opposes all religions. Islam, in its political plan, does not contradict Christianity, which does not have in its intellectual base a political plan. Christianity is an act of faith, for the kingdom of Christ is not of this world. ■

My relationship with Iran is one of independence. We consult with Tehran but do not take orders from it. The revolutionary circumstances in Iran are fundamentally different from those in Lebanon. ■

We believe that war with Israel will necessitate the destruction of many Arab cities and towns. But we believe that, the more Israel expands, the deeper it will sink in the mire and the closer it draws to defeat. Hizballah's strategy is a strategy of jihad that insists that the presence of Israel in Palestine is illegal and that it is an imperialist base representing a great danger to the Arab and Muslim world. It must, therefore, be removed from the map completely. This is what the slogan of liberating Jerusalem means. ■

This Islamic revolution was able to create, in its increasing activity at the frontline, a great deal of

Islamic political awareness both in thought and practice. The uprising of the Islamic movement in Iran and Lebanon inspires the Muslim as to how Islam can lead to freedom and progress. We believe that the Islamic revolution has an important role to play in achieving this Muslim awareness. The challenges that accompany and confront this revolution also contribute to this awareness. ■

The Syrian presence here, I suspect, has to do with their judging the international climate as conducive to their imposing a security solution on Beirut. . . . Syria itself is being used as a proxy on behalf of other powers to apply pressure and to make other things possible that have nothing to do with us. ■

What is at stake is the freedom and right of the mujahedin to continue their armed struggle against the Israelis. An improvement in security in the region is not welcome if it results in restrictions on the resistance movement. . . . By re-creating the spirit of jihad we have been able to inflame the *umma* [Muslim peoples] even in occupied Palestine. We see Israel as a regional danger that must be confronted whatever the cost. ■

Pages 17-18  
Denied in Full  
(b)(4), (b)(3)