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ZIONISM AND SOUTHERN LEBANON:
A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON SIX
DECADES OF CONTROVERSY

by

Frederic Charles Hof

June 1979

Thesis Advisor: K. T. Said

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# Zionism and Southern Lebanon: A Historical Perspective on Six Decades of Controversy

by

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B.S.F.S. Georgetown University, 1969

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

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ABSTRACT

Current events in southern Lebanon are connected to a territorial dispute that emerged over sixty years ago, when leading Zionists claimed the region. That claim, which was based upon the projected economic and security needs of the Jewish national home in Palestine, did not prevail in the course of post-World War I Anglo-French diplomacy. Since then the Zionist leaders of Palestine and Israel have tried to overcome the negative economic and security implications of the boundary settlement. Yet Zionist access to southern Lebanese water has been consistently blocked, and the frontier has proven vulnerable to raids and rocket attacks by hostile forces. It appears however that Israel has recently converted the border region from a long-standing liability into a current geopolitical asset. Recent Israeli policies in southernLebanon have (1) aggravated sectarian tensions in Lebanon; (2) kept Syria tied downin a difficult stability operation; and (3) made Israel's northern settlements less vulnerable to land attacks by Palestinian commandos.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

On 1 March 1920 a small Jewish outpost located in the northwestern corner of the Hula Valley--a region claimed by both Great Britain and France, but defended by neither--was attacked and overwhelmed by a force of Damascus-based Arabs. Joseph Trumpeldor, a well-known Jewish war hero, was killed along with seven others trying to defend Tel Hai. The survivors fled for their lives, and the Jewish residents of Palestine--an area as yet undefined politically--angrily voiced demands that the British military authorities in Jerusalem do something to guarantee the physical security of outlying Jewish settlements.[1] As a result of the incident at Tel Hai, the Hula Valley and lands adjacent to it became the northernmost section of Palestine rather than part of southern Lebanon.[2]

During the early morning hours of another day in March, fifty-eight years later, in places not far removed from the site of the Tel Hai massacre, some 20,000 Jewish soldiers breached the border fence with Lebanon in five places.[3]

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[1]See Aharon Cohen, Israel and the Arab World (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1970), pp. 177-178.

[2]See section II below.

[3]The strength estimate of 20,000 is drawn from the Arab Report and Record, 1-15 March 1978, No. 5, p. 134.

They swept methodically across southern Lebanon in an operation designed to uproot Arab commandos whose activities had plagued Jewish settlements for over a decade. Ninety-one days later the Israeli Army withdrew from Lebanon, leaving in its wake approximately 1,000 dead Arab civilians, 100,000 refugees, a vast amount of physical devastation,[4] and a terribly confusing political situation that contributed to chronic unrest in the remainder of Lebanon.

For six decades Zionists in Palestine and Israel have experienced frustration and failure in dealing with problems relating to the common frontier with Lebanon. They initially failed after World War I to procure for Palestine a northern boundary that would satisfy their economic and security requirements; they consistently failed to arrange access to Lebanese water resources which they deemed to be essential to the economic development of Palestine and Israel; and they failed in the late 1930s and again since late 1968 to provide adequate security to their exposed northern settlements being harassed by Arab raiders using Lebanon as a base area and sanctuary. Yet both the magnitude of Israel's March 1978 invasion and political developments that have unfolded in its aftermath, suggest that the leaders of

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[4]The statistic on civilian deaths is from a survey by the International Committee of the Red Cross as reported in the Arab Report and Record, 1-15 April 1978, No. 7, p. 247. The refugee estimate is from the Jerusalem Post (International Edition), 21 March 1978.

Israel have found a way to convert southern Lebanon from a source of endless frustration to a useful foreign policy tool.

Despite six decades of controversy in the common frontier area of these two small Levantine states, very little exists in print which seeks to elucidate the modern political history of the region.[5] Much of what appears in newspapers, periodicals, and books concerning the Israeli-Lebanese border region concentrates on events which have taken place during the past ten years. This is understandable, because a decade of fighting between Palestinian commandos (fedayeen)[6] and Israeli forces has victimized the frontier residents--both Arab and Israeli--and has facilitated the virtual destruction of Lebanon. It may be asked, however, to what extent was the disaster that began to unfold in the Israli-Lebanese frontier region in 1968 rooted in events which had transpired over the previous five decades.

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[5]While research was being conducted for this thesis a study was published entitled South Lebanon, edited by Elaine Hagopian and Samih Farsoun (Detroit: Association of Arab-American University Graduates, Inc., August 1978). The work contains much valuable data. It is however written from a very partisan (pro-Arab) point of view, and does not attempt to address the Israeli perspective on southern Lebanon in a dispassionate manner.

[6]The Arabic word fedayeen means "self-sacrificers." In its modern military connotation it refers to armed Palestinians organized in somewhat irregular patterns, who undertake activities normally associated with commando missions, such as raids and reconnaissance. See William B. Quandt, Faud Jabber, and Ann Mosely Lesch, The Politics of Palestinian Nationalism (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), pp. 118-120.

events which received only sporadic attention in the international news media? Can current problems in the Israeli-Lebanese frontier area best be analyzed when viewed from a historical perspective? Finally, do events of the past suggest courses of action that could lead to a peaceful resolution of the problems which have plagued this extremely volatile frontier zone?

This research effort actually began as an attempt to see to what extent, if any, a resolution of the Israeli-Lebanese frontier crisis could contribute to other Arab-Israeli accomodations. What started as a routine search for background data about the frontier region itself led to the surprising discovery that nothing existed which addressed the area's political history as such. Furthermore, as data about the region was collected it became clear that the frontier area had not (as has been widely assumed) been the scene of bucolic tranquility prior to 1968. Rather it had been, since 1916, a stage for conflicting imperial and national ambitions. It was decided therefore that the Israeli-Lebanese frontier region required a thorough investigation on its own merits rather than merely as a facet of the broader Arab-Israeli dispute. An effort would be made to find out whether or not current events in southern Lebanon could be elucidated by an examination of the past, and what meaning (if any) those past events might have in the shaping of a settlement.

Several months of research produced the following thesis: that current events in southern Lebanon are indeed connected to a complex territorial dispute that first emerged over sixty years ago, when leading Zionists laid claim to the region. Consequently, these events can best be understood within the context of that long-standing controversy. The Zionist claim, which was opposed by the territorial aspirations of Christian Lebanese nationalists, was based upon the economic and security requirements projected for the Jewish national home in Palestine. The Zionist desires did not however prevail in the workings of post-World War I Anglo-French diplomacy. A boundary was drawn which gave to Lebanon most of the disputed area, an impoverished zone populated largely by Shi'ite Muslim peasants and villagers but distinguished by the presence of two streams coveted by Zionist planners: the Litani and Hasbani Rivers. Furthermore, the boundary was demarcated in such a way as to leave Palestine vulnerable to attack from the north, particularly in the form of harassment by irregular military forces. For nearly six decades the Zionist leaders of Palestine and Israel have tried, usually without success, to offset the negative economic and security implications of the initial Anglo-French territorial arrangement for Palestine and Lebanon. In recent years Israel seems to have concluded, in the light of fedayeen military activity and the Lebanese civil war, that she must now control events in southern Lebanon and must be willing to

risk war in order to do so. Furthermore, recent developments suggest that Israel, by cultivating a "special relationship" with the Christian minority in southern Lebanon, has transformed the border region from a historical liability into a current asset. By supporting the activities of a distinctively Maronite militia in southern Lebanon, Israel has succeeded in (1) encouraging Maronite separatism in Lebanon; (2) forcing arch-enemy Syria to deploy significant forces in central Lebanon rather than opposite Israeli-controlled territory; and (3) bringing, at last, a measure of security to the Jewish side of the Israeli-Lebanese boundary.

In order to present the results of the thesis research systematically, an approach will be utilized which will elucidate the traditional two-dimensional character of the Zionist approach to southern Lebanon: economics and security. Section II, immediately following this introduction, will analyze the manner in which the Palestine-Lebanon frontier was created during and after World War I. That analysis will of course focus on Zionist aspirations, but will also examine the input of three other actors in the political arena of the postwar Levant: Great Britain, France, and the Christian nationalists seeking to establish a distinctively Lebanese state. Section III will examine in some detail the geography of the frontier region, the characteristics of the boundary itself, and the broad consequences of the frontier settlement from the perspectives

of three very interested parties: the predominantly Arab population of the partitioned frontier region; the Zionists of Palestine; and the Christian Lebanese nationalists of the French-created Lebanese state. Section IV will focus on the evolving water controversy growing out of the frontier settlement. The discussion will center on several themes: the continued Zionist desire for access to Lebanese water, notwithstanding the boundary agreement reached by Great Britain and France; Lebanon's failure, under the French mandate and during the early years of independence, to tap the hydrographic resources of the south; the usefulness of Beirut's inattention to the south to Zionists as a means of justifying Israel's claims to Lebanese water; and Lebanese developmental efforts aimed at preempting Zionist claims. The issue of Lebanon's short-lived and ineffective participation in Arab efforts to divert away from Israel the sources of the Jordan River will also be addressed in Section IV. Section V will examine the evolving security consequences of the Anglo-French frontier settlement. Specific issues to be discussed include the security problems made manifest within the Palestine-Lebanon frontier in 1938 by the Arab revolt in Palestine; the military lessons learned from the Allied invasion of Vichy-controlled Lebanon in June 1941, an operation supported by Jewish commandos; combat operations in the frontier area during the 1948 Arab-Israeli war and their consequences; the military implications of the 1949 Israel-Lebanon General Armistice Agreement; and

the consequences of fedayeen military operations after the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. Section VI will analyze the impact of the recent Lebanese civil war on southern Lebanon, with special attention to Israeli efforts to develop ties to the Christians of southern Lebanon. The Israeli invasion of southern Lebanon in March 1978 will be discussed, as will Israel's continued support for the Maronite militia in the south and the implications deriving therefrom. Section VII will summarize the findings of the research effort, analyze Israel's recent departure from her traditional approaches(economic and security) to the problem of southern Lebanon, and discuss both the shape of a possible settlement and the essential precondition needed for it to come about.

## II. THE CREATION OF THE PALESTINE-LEBANON BOUNDARY

Prior to the outbreak of World War I in 1914, the entire eastern Mediterranean coastal region was part of the Ottoman Empire. Within the framework of Ottoman local jurisdiction, "Palestine" did not exist as a political entity. That Palestine did indeed exist in the minds of Biblical scholars and Zionists[7] is beyond dispute; yet nowhere can the name be found in a roster of Ottoman provinces or districts.

Lebanon, on the other hand, did exist, although not in its present form. For reasons discussed below, Lebanon enjoyed special status as an autonomous district within the Ottoman Empire. As such it covered a much smaller area than does modern-day Lebanon.

This section will examine the manner in which the boundary between Palestine and Lebanon was created. In the course of so doing it will be necessary to discuss in broad terms the way in which the two states themselves came about, for the process which created the boundary and the states is one and the same. It was a process which brought into focus the demands of powerful political forces vying for influence in the postwar Levant: British and French imperialism, Zionism, and Christian Lebanese nationalism.

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[7]Zionism is defined as a "Movement of Jewish national revival calling for the return of the Jewish people to Palestine. The name (coined by the Viennese Jewish writer Nathan Birnbaum in 1885) is derived from 'Zion,' one of the biblical names for Jerusalem." Yaacov Shimoni and Evyatar Levine, eds., Political Dictionary of the Middle East in the 20th Century, (New York: Quadrangle, 1974), p. 431.

## A. OTTOMAN POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS

In order to properly depict the genesis of the Palestine-Lebanon boundary, it will first be necessary to examine the Ottoman political subdivisions that existed in the coastal region of the eastern Mediterranean as of 1914. Map #1 on page 18 shows the jurisdictions established by the empire in the area ranging from the city of Alexandretta in the north to the Egyptian boundary in the south.[8]

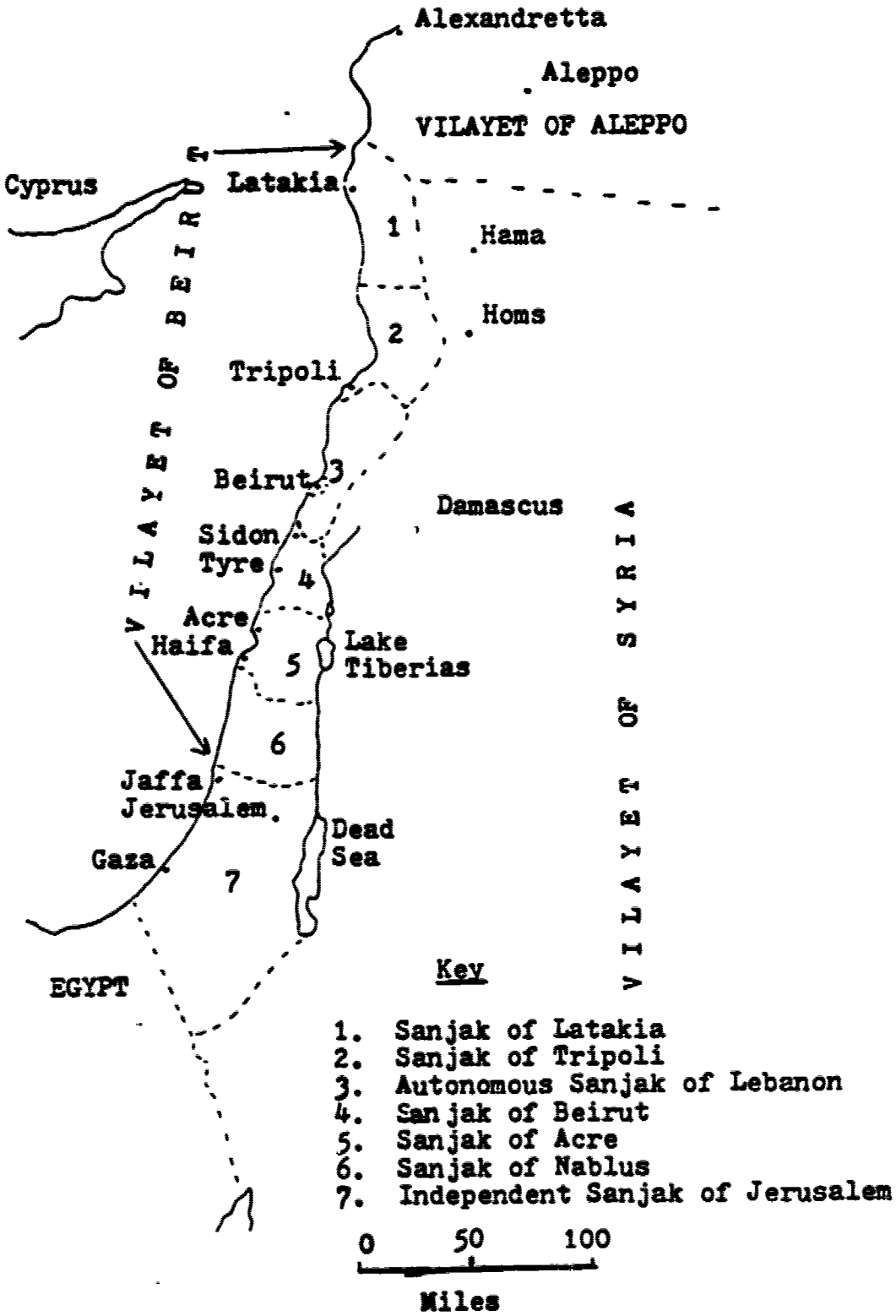
It can be seen from map #1 that most of the area under examination fell within the jurisdiction of the Vilayet (Province) of Beirut, which extended along the coast from a point north of Latakia down to the northern outskirts of Jaffa. The province was further subdivided into five sanjaks (districts). These were, from north to south, Latakia, Tripoli, Beirut (which included the province's capital city by the same name), Acre, and Nablus. Beirut, the present-day capital of Lebanon, was therefore in the early twentieth century the Ottoman administrative center for a large portion of what is now Israel, and for all of what is today coastal Syria.

The city of Beirut had <u>no</u> jurisdiction however over much of the territory which today comprises the Republic of Lebanon. The Lebanese mountain, whose population was

---

[8]Map #1 is drawn from two sources: George Adam Smith, <u>Atlas of the Historical Geography of the Holy Land</u>,(London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1915), Plate 59: and Zeine N. Zeine, <u>The Struggle for Arab Independence</u>, (Beirut: Khayat's, 1960), Plate 5, which is turn is drawn from the <u>Palestine Royal Commission Report</u> of 1937.

MAP #1: OTTOMAN JURISDICTIONS, ALEXANDRETTA TO EGYPT



predominantly Maronite (with an influential Druze minority),[9] was a separate political entity known as the Autonomous Sanjak (District) of Lebanon. The governor of Lebanon reported not to Beirut, but directly to the Ottoman Ministry of the Interior in Istanbul.[10] The special status accorded to Mount Lebanon was the product of European intervention following a bloody civil war between the Maronite and Druze communities in 1860. In 1861 the Ottoman Empire agreed, at European (mainly French) insistence, to create a distinct Lebanese jurisdiction to be governed by a Christian.[11] This extraordinary treatment aided immeasurably in the rise of Lebanese nationalism, which was itself an outgrowth of the Maronite national identity that had been formed during a millenium of relative isolation on the Lebanese mountain. In its more virulent form, Lebanese nationalism would eventually develop irredentist territorial claims to the entire Ottoman Province of Beirut.[12] Such claims were destined to conflict with the territorial aspirations of Zionism.

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[9]The term Maronite refers to "An Eastern Christian Church in communion with Rome, with its centre in Lebanon." (Shimoni and Levine, p. 249). "The Druze sect, an offshoot of the Isma'iliyya (itself an offshoot of Shi'ite Islam) developed in the 11th century around the figure of the Fatimid Caliph al-Hakim bi-Amr Illah, regarded by his followers as an incarnation of the divine spirit." (Ibid., p.107).

[10]Smith, Atlas of the Historical Geography of the Holy Land, p. xxxi.

[11]Ibid., p. xxxii.

[12]H.F. Frischwasser-Ra'anan, The Frontiers of a Nation, (London: The Batchworth Press, 1955), p. 101.

The Province of Beirut was, therefore, bisected by the Autonomous District of Lebanon. Other Ottoman jurisdictions bordering on the Province of Beirut included the Province of Aleppo in the north, the Independent District of Jerusalem in the south, and the Province of Syria in the east. Where then, within the contest of Ottoman administrative subdivisions, was Palestine? Although no province or district by that name existed, it is clear that Palestine did indeed "exist," albeit as a somewhat shadowy religio-geographical expression which transcended Ottoman administrative boundaries. No less an authority than Djemal Pasha, the Turkish wartime Governor of Syria, understood "Palestine" to include the Ottoman districts of Jerusalem, Nablus, and Acre.[13]

B. THE SYKES-PICOT AGREEMENT

The decision of the Ottoman Empire to go to war in 1914 as an ally of Germany opened the way for the partition of the Arab Levant by the Empire's enemies. The first step in the disposal of Turkey's Arab possessions was taken in May 1916, with an exchange of notes between British Foreign Minister Sir Edward Grey, and the French Ambassador to Great Britain, M. Paul Cambon. Later endorsed by Russia, the provisional arrangement--commonly known as the Sykes-Picot Agreement--provided the foundation for future struggles

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[13]Cemal Pasa, Memories of a Turkish Statesman, (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1922), p. 154.

over the boundary between Palestine and Lebanon.[14] With regard to Ottoman territories along the eastern Mediterranean, the agreement provided that the region would be divided into three sections as shown on map #2 (page 22):[15] an "international sphere" to be governed as an Allied condominium; a "British sphere" encompassing the ports of Haifa and Acre; and a "French Sphere" consisting of the coastal region north of the international sphere.

The map used by British and French negotiators to delimit Allied spheres of influence did not depict Ottoman administrative subdivisions;[16] consequently, the Sykes-Picot arrangement (had it ever been implemented literally) would have played absolute havoc with existing political units. The District of Acre, for example, contained parts of all three "spheres" projected by the Allies. When however actual military operations in "Palestine" against the Turks began to make serious headway in 1918, Great Britain and France were obliged to deal with the concrete problem of adapting

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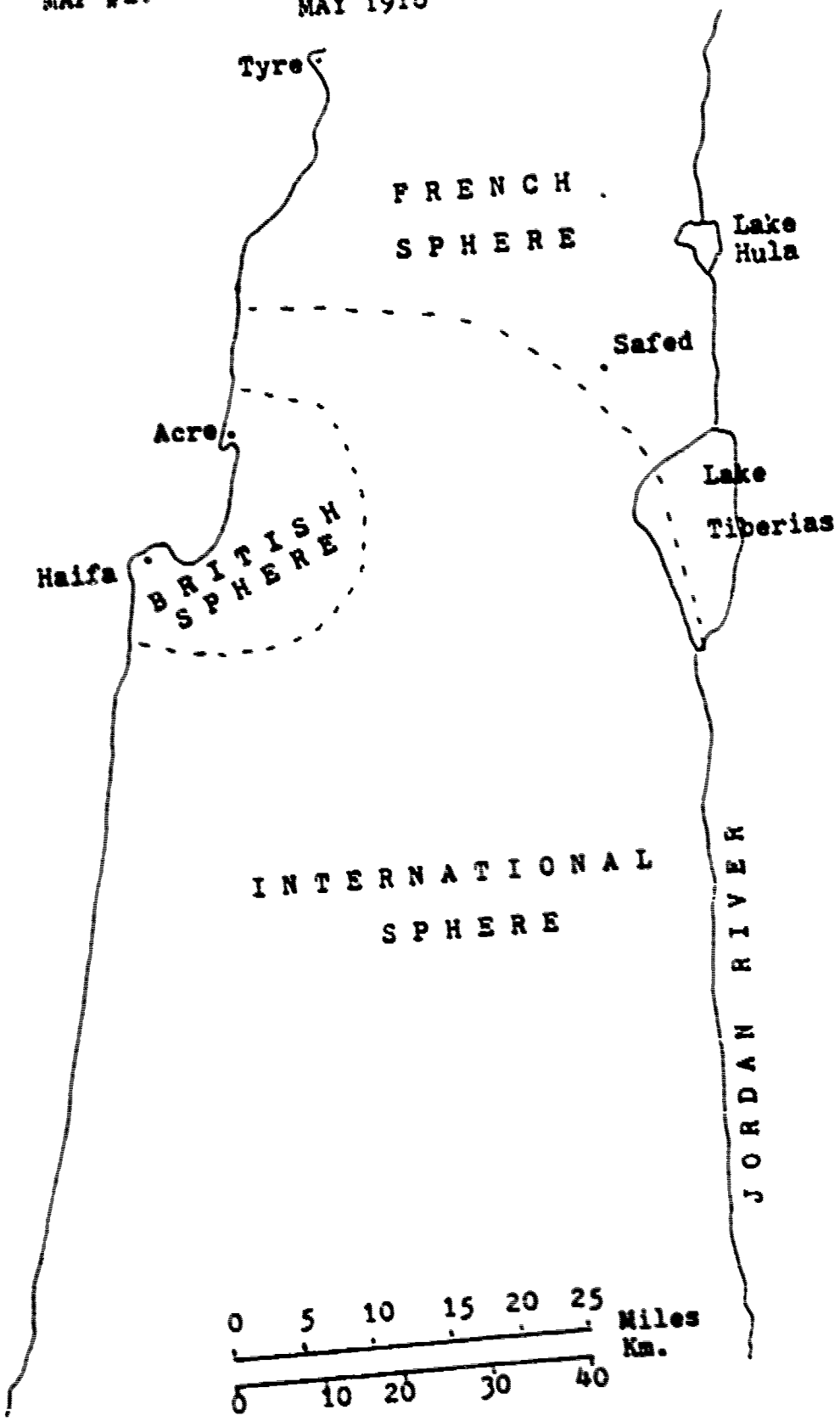
[14]The text of the Sykes-Picot Agreement may be found in E. L. Woodward and Rohan Butler, eds., Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, First Series Volume IV 1919, (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1952), pp. 241-251. Subsequent references to these edited diplomatic documents will appear under the citation of Documents, with the series and volume numbers.

[15]Map #2 is drawn from two sources: Frischwasser-Ra'anan, The Frontiers of a Nation, p. 151; and Jukka Nevakivi, Britain, France and the Arab Middle East 1914-1920 (London: The Athlone Press, 1969), p. 38.

[16]See Zeine, The Struggle for Arab Independence, Plate 6, which is a reproduction of the map attached to the original agreement.

MAP #2: ORIGINAL "SYKES-PICOT" BOUNDARIES
MAY 1916



the Sykes-Picot map to actual zones of military occupation. Consequently, the Allies agreed, on 19 September 1918, to establish Occupied Enemy Territorial Administrations (O.E.T.A.) in order to govern captured Ottoman territories along the eastern Mediterranean coastal region.[17]

Map #3 on page 24 depicts the O.E.T.A. boundary, which extended from Achzib on the Mediterranean coast to Lake Hula.[18] The O.E.T.A. line differed somewhat from the line established by the Sykes-Picot agreement, which left the coast at the same point but which had intersected with the northwestern shore of Lake Tiberias. Why the difference? According to Frischwasser-Ra'anan, the change in boundaries was most likely a simple administrative adjustment, designed "to make the O.E.T.A. boundaries coincide as far as possible with the Turkish district divisions."[19] Such an adjustment, had that been the rationale, would have been fully in accordance with normal military government procedure, which presumes that the administrative jurisdictions and practices of the former civil authority will, wherever possible, be utilized to the maximum extent by the occupying military forces. Longrigg concurs with the notion that the change was primarily an administrative act, noting that "These

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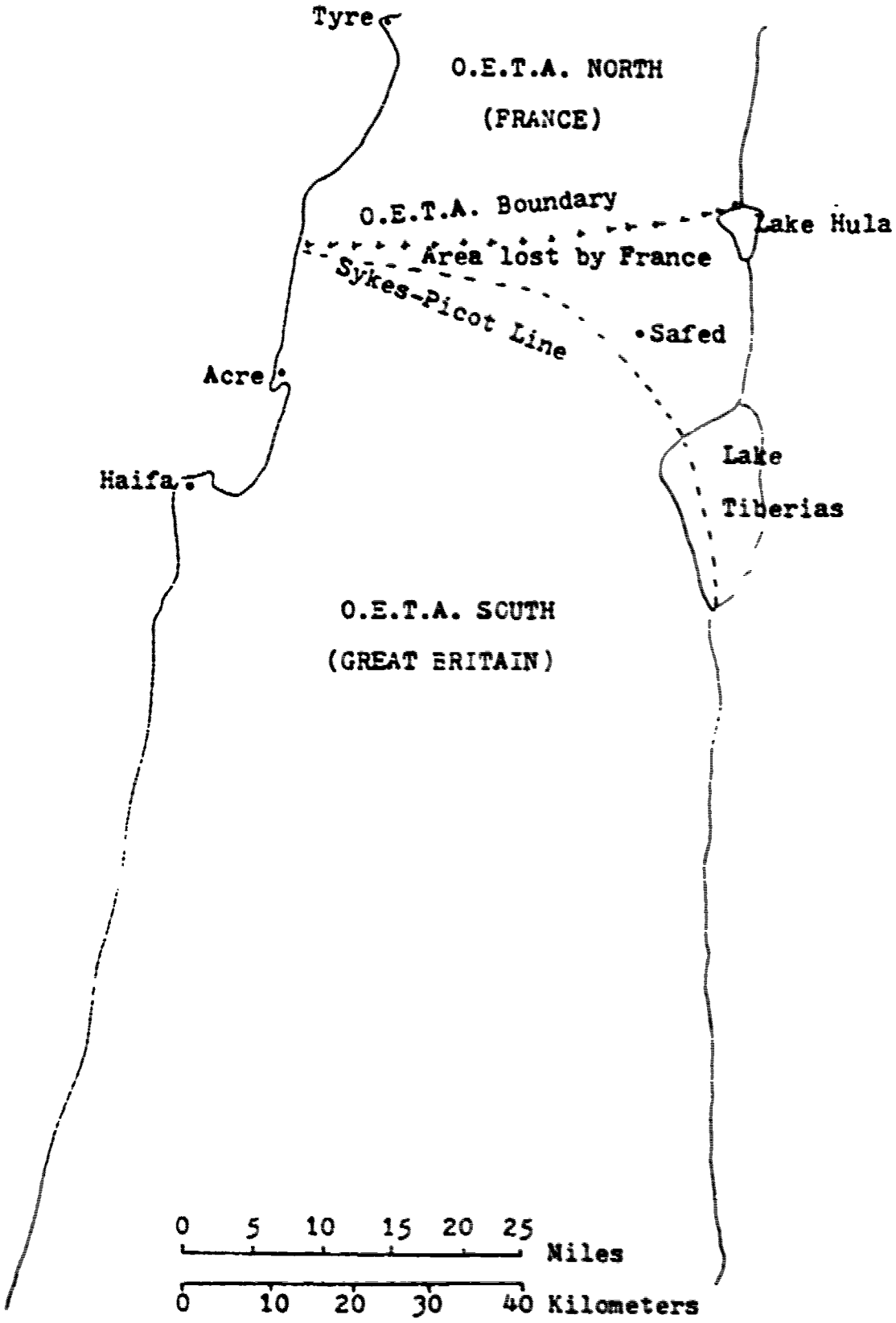
[17]Stephen Hemsley Longrigg, Syria and Lebanon Under French Mandate, (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 66.

[18]Map #3 is based on Frischwasser-Ra'anan, The Frontiers of a Nation, p. 153.

[19]Ibid., p. 96.

MAP #3: REVISED "O.E.T.A." BOUNDARY
AUTUMN 1918



[O.E.T.A.] administrations were to be of neither British nor French nor Arab nationality," and that the nationalities of the soldiers occupying the zones "would in no way prejudice forthcoming Peace Conference decisions."[20]

There are however other aspects of the O.E.T.A. arrangement which suggest that the deviation from the Sykes-Picot boundary may have been something other than an apolitical exercise in textbook public administration. The appointment of French and British Chief Administrators for O.E.T.A. North and South respectively[21] was suggestive of an eventual partition. Viewed in that light, it could be construed that Great Britain was in fact nibbling away at territory which she had promised to France in 1916. France, due to the preponderance of British arms in the area at war's end,[22] was obliged to accept the O.E.T.A. delimitation. Nevertheless, the fact that the military administration of General Edmund Allenby (the British commander of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force) saw fit to draw a line which was more generous to Great Britain than that already established by the Sykes-Picot Agreement, gave rise to much Gallic resentment. The following passage captures the essence of French disquietude:

---

[20]Longrigg, Syria and Lebanon Under French Mandate, p. 66.

[21]Ibid., p. 67.

[22]There were an estimated 200,000 British soldiers compared with a combined force of 6,000 French and Armenians. See Howard M. Sachar, The Emergence of the Middle East: 1914-1924, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969), p. 253.

> Ignorant délibérément la limite Sykes-Picot, le général Allenby avait, dès Octobre 1918, déplacé la frontière vers le nord en rattachant le caza de Safed à la zone palestinienne. Jugeant cette acquisition encore insuffisante, les Brittaniques prétendaient englober dans la Palestine le cours presque entier du Jourdain, celui du Yarmuk, [et] le cours inférieur du Litani ...[23]

In short, Great Britain appeared, in the eyes of the French, to be using the O.E.T.A. boundary adjustment as the opening gambet in a strategy designed to exclude France from all of "Palestine."

Pichon's reference to the Safed subdistrict changing hands with the drawing of the O.E.T.A. boundary further suggests that the border adjustment involved something more than the dry application of sound administrative principles. The Safed subdistrict, which under the terms of the Sykes-Picot agreement would have gone to France, contained a number of Jews.[24] Did this factor help motivate the drawing of a military zonal boundary which placed the subdistrict under British administration? The answer to this question lies in the examination of two closely related issues: the attitude of Great Britain toward the prospect

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[23] "Intentionally ignoring the Sykes-Picot boundary, General Allenby had, since October 1918, moved the frontier toward the north, joining the subdistrict of Safed to the Palestinian zone. Judging this acquisition still insufficient, the British claimed to include in Palestine virtually the entire Jordan River, the Yarmuk, [and] the lower course of the Litani..." Jean Pichon, Le Partage du Proche Orient (Paris: J. Peyronnet & Cie, 1938), p. 188.

[24] Longrigg, Syria and Lebanon Under French Mandate, p. 67.

of a French presence in the "international sphere" mandated by the Sykes-Picot agreement; and the relationship between Great Britain and the Zionist movement.

## C. THE ZIONIST FACTOR IN BRITISH DIPLOMACY

At the time of the Sykes-Picot agreement the position of Great Britain in the Middle East was exceedingly weak. Not only had the British suffered military setbacks in the Galipoli and Kut campaigns,[25] but France was bearing the heaviest manpower burden against Germany on the Western front.[26] Operating from a feeble bargaining position, the most Great Britain could achieve in the Levant was to "preclude the threat of direct French access to the Sinai Peninsula"[27] by agreeing to the establishment of an "international sphere." From the point of view of her railroad interests in southern Syria and the defense of the Suez Canal, Great Britain naturally would have preferred to establish her own direct rule over the area which had instead been designated for rule by an Allied condominium. In his note to Cambon of 16 May 1916, Grey pointedly noted that his country's acquiescence to the Sykes-Picot territorial formula involved "the abdication of considerable

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[25]For an analysis of those operations see Edmund Dane, British Campaigns in the Nearer East, 1914-1918 (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1917-1919, 2 V.)

[26]Sachar, The Emergence of the Middle East, p. 188.

[27]Ibid.

British interests."[28] Yet neither the relative weakness of Great Britain vis à vis France nor her willingness to abide by the exact terms of the Sykes-Picot agreement persisted throughout the war. Howard M. Sachar describes the British change of heart as follows:

> As the months passed ... the prospect of a French military enclave in Palestine, even as an integral part of an Allied condominium, became increasingly unpalatable to London. The idea was to become altogether unacceptable when Allenby launched his full-scale invasion of the Holy Land...[29]

The problem faced by Great Britain was essentially one of diplomatic etiquette. How could France be removed from the international sphere, and how could the projected condominium itself be terminated in favor of outright British rule, without the unseemly use of naked force against a wartime ally? Leonard Stein suggests in the following passage how the British decided to approach the problem.

> They [the French] might, in the end, be compelled to recognize a British title to Palestine by right of conquest and actual possession, but might not some moral weight be added to the British claim--was it not even possible that the French themselves might be impressed--if it could be shown that Jewish opinion throughout the world strongly favored a British trusteeship for Palestine or some other form of British control?[30]

In short, the political clout of international Zionism could be harnessed by Great Britain with the objective of easing France out of an area deemed by the British to be strategically significant.

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[28] Documents, First Series Volume IV, p. 245.

[29] Sachar, The Emergence of the Middle East, p. 188

[30] Leonard Stein, The Balfour Declaration (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1961), p. 335.

After protracted negotiations between the British Foreign Office and the Zionists, unofficially represented in Great Britain by Dr. Chaim Weizmann,[31] Anglo-Zionist collaboration in Palestine was formally instituted on 2 November 1917. Great Britain declared its "sympathy with Jewish Zionist aspirations" in a letter from the Foreign Office to Lord Rothschild, a leading British Zionist. The letter, known as the "Balfour Declaration," acknowledged British support for "the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people," and pledged to help bring it about.[32] Having won such a pledge from the British government, much of the Zionist movement was then able to define its own interests in terms of replacing the international and British spheres mandated by the Sykes-Picot agreement with a single British protectorate over all of "Palestine."

It would appear therefore that the inclusion of the Safed region within O.E.T.A. South in September 1918 was motivated partly by the British desire to "liberate" from the prospective French-controlled region as many of the already-established Jewish communities as possible

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[31]The executive bodyof the World Zionist Organization remained in Berlin during World War I. Weizmann's diplomatic efforts, aided immeasurably by Herbert Samuel (an influential British politician), were undertaken even though "he held no official position in the world Zionist movement." Walter Laqueur, A History of Zionism (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1972), p. 175.

[32]A facsimile of the Balfour Declaration is found on the Frontispiece of Stein's The Balfour Declaration.

without completely ignoring the broad boundary guidance established by the Sykes-Picot agreement.

Great Britain's strategy of using Jewish opinion to remove France from the international sphere, combined with the preponderance of British arms in the Levant at war's end, achieved the desired result. Faced with a fait accompli, Premier Georges Clemenceau of France agreed in December 1918 that "Palestine" would be British.[33]

D. ZIONIST TERRITORIAL ASPIRATIONS

It remained for the statesmen to determine the territorial shape of the new political entity, and nowhere was this process destined to be more controversial and potentially explosive than in the Upper Galilee,[34] where the interests of four parties--British, French, Zionist, and Lebanese--collided. The balance of this section will deal with the conflicts and compromises surrounding the delimitation of the Palestine-Lebanon boundary.

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[33]Clemenceau's acquiescence, along with his cession of Mosul to British Iraq, constituted the so-called "Clemenceau-Lloyd George agreement." See David Lloyd George, The Truth About the Peace Treaties (London: Victor Gollancz Ltd, 1938), Volume 2, p. 1038.

[34]Upper Galilee is defined as an area bordered on the west by the Mediterranean coast, on the east by the Rift Valley (through which the Jordan River flows), on the south by the Bet ha-Karem Valley and the gorge of the Ammud Stream (both of which are now in Israel), and on the north by the gorge of the Litani River in Lebanon. See Efraim Orni and Elisha Efrat, Geography of Israel (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1971), pp. 76-78.

The Zionists did not view Palestine merely as a refuge for persecuted Jews or as the object of a religious longing. Through the initiative of Dr. Weizmann, the Zionist movement adopted the point of view that Palestine should be transformed into an economically-viable and militarily-defensible nation-state. Even though the Zionist movement had chosen to link its Palestine program to Great Britain, the Zionists retained totally independent ideas about Palestine's prospective position on the map. The initiative to procure for Palestine an economically and militarily advantageous northern frontier came not from Great Britain, but from the Zionists.

One of the better-known Zionist boundary proposals for northern Palestine was made by Harry Sacher, a noted journalist and businessman, in a book which he edited in 1916 entitled Zionism and the Jewish Future. A brief chapter on geography written by Sacher called for a northern boundary which would follow "the first five miles of the lower course of the Nahr-el-Auwali; thence a straight line to the south-east, skirting the southern extremity of the Lebanon and of Mount Hermon and running to a point situated at 36°15'N ..." Sacher's boundary proposal is depicted on map #4, page 32.[35]

Sacher's concept of the northern boundary was motivated by two factors: economics and security. The economic factor

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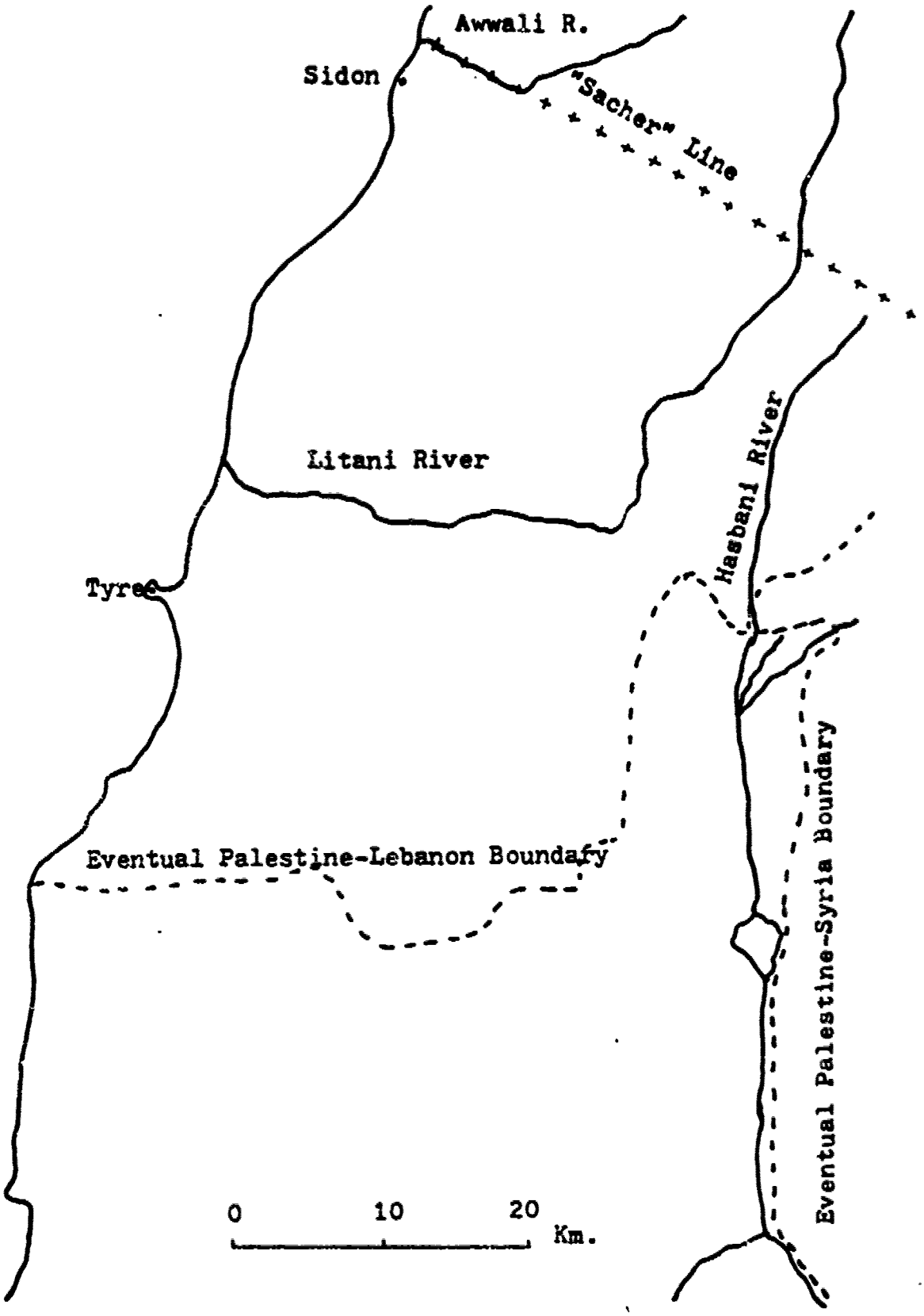
[35] H. Sacher, ed., Zionism and the Jewish Future (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1916), p. 212.

MAP #4: THE "SACHER" ZIONIST BOUNDARY PROPOSAL (1916)



was crucial, because the development of Palestine's agricultural and industrial potential was the essential precondition for massive Jewish immigration. The common denominator linking both agricultural and industrial prospects was water. Water would be needed not only to irrigate Palestinian lands already under cultivation, but to make the Negev desert in the south bloom and support an agrarian Jewish economy of its own. As early as 1905 plans had been drawn to divert the Litani River into the Hasbani River (the main source of the Jordan River) for irrigation projects further south.[36] Hydroelectric power for industrialization was also critical to Palestine's development, and could likewise be procured through a diversion of the Litani.[37] Sacher's proposal could have secured for Palestine the entire lower course of the Litani River, plus all of the sources of the Jordan River. The Sacher boundary plan would have also contributed to the military defense of Palestine, by gaining control "in the north over the Beka'a valley, which constitutes a gate of entry between the slopes of the Lebanon and Mount Hermon."[38]

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[36] Moshe Brawer, "The Geographical Background of the Jordan Water Dispute," in Essays in Political Geography, ed. Charles A. Fisher (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1968), p. 231.

[37] Frischwasser-Ra'anan, The Frontiers of a Nation, p. 87.

[38] Ibid.

During the course of negotiations leading to the issuance of the Balfour Declaration, the Zionist leaders apparently believed that the Sacher proposal was eminently feasible. As one observer put it,

> At the beginning of 1917 the Zionist leadership was still under the naive illusion that France was not interested in the country which lay to the south of Beirut and Damascus and that the whole area up to these cities could be claimed for the Jewish homeland.[39]

When the war ended in 1918, and the process of dismembering the Ottoman Empire began in earnest, the Zionist movement found itself obliged to formally stipulate its conception of Palestine's territorial extent. Although the provisional O.E.T.A. boundary had placed the Jewish residents of Safed under the British wing, the Zionists regarded that line as falling far short of Palestine's proper northern limit. On 6 November 1918 the Advisory Committee on Palestine in Great Britain, which included many leading Zionist personalities, drafted a document calling for a northern boundary that would follow the lower course of the Litani River from the Mediterranean Sea across to the village of Banias.[40] The Zionist Organization itself enlarged the claim, perhaps in anticipation of having to make concessions to France during the negotiating process. On 27 February 1919 the demands of the Zionist Organization were placed

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[39]Ibid., pp. 82-83.

[40]Ibid., p. 101.

before the Supreme Council at the Paris Peace Conference in the form of a written statement dated 3 February 1919.[41] With regard to the northern boundary, the official Zionist proposal differed somewhat from that made by Sacher in 1916, and that suggested by the Advisory Committee on Palestine in November 1918. The official proposal called for a boundary leaving the Mediterranean coast south of the town of Sidon. The line would run in a northeasterly direction, crossing the Litani River and eventually turn south toward the Golan Plateau. Map #5 on page 36 depicts the Zionist boundary proposal of February 1919.[42]

The Zionist statement emphasized the economic justification for the boundary proposal and ignored the security aspect. The area to the north of Palestine would, after all, be under the control of France. It would have been impolitic for the Zionists to frame their proposal in military terms, because Great Britain and France were ostensible allies. Water was the main justification for the Zionist boundary request, as demonstrated by the following passage from the statement of 3 February 1919:

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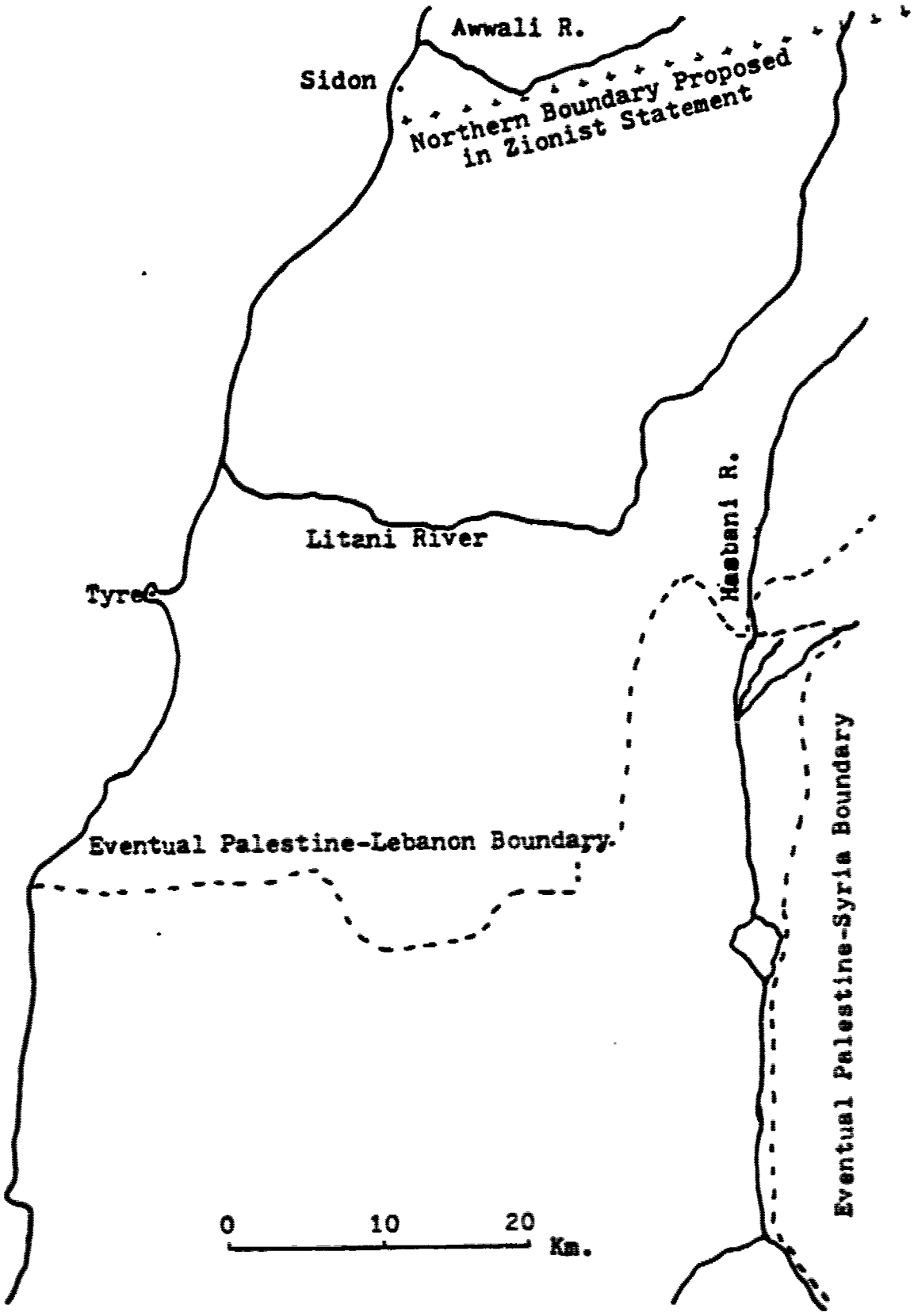
[41] Statement of the Zionist Organization Regarding Palestine, 3 February 1919, 14 pp. Copy available at Hoover Library, Stanford University.

[42] Map #5 is based on the text of the Statement of the Zionist Organization Regarding Palestine, and on an explanation of the Zionist claim found in Frischwasser-Ra'anan, The Frontiers of a Nation, p. 107.

MAP #5: THE "OFFICIAL" ZIONIST BOUNDARY PROPOSAL
FEBRUARY 1919



> The Hermon is Palestine's real "Father of Waters" and cannot be severed from it without striking at the very root of its economic life. The Hermon not only needs reafforestation but also other works before it can again adequately serve as the water reservoir of the country. It must therefore be wholly under the control of those who will most willingly restore it to its maximum utility. Some international arrangements must be made whereby the riparian rights of the people dwelling south of the Litani River may be fully protected. Properly cared for these head waters can be made to serve in the development of the Lebanon as well as of Palestine. [Emphasis added][43]

Subsequent Zionist claims to the water resources of southern Lebanon, based upon the failure of other parties to exploit those resources and the presumed collateral benefits to Lebanon resulting from Zionist exploitation, originated with the above passage.[44]

E. REACTIONS TO THE ZIONIST PROPOSAL

Inasmuch as the Zionists were the first of the interested parties to present a concrete and detailed boundary proposal, it would be appropriate to represent the positions of others as reactions to the Zionist plan. Although Lebanese irredentist claims have been extant for years,[45] the Zionists clearly seized the political initiative in the postwar diplomatic environment.

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[43] Statement of the Zionist Organization Regarding Palestine, p. 8.

[44] See Section IV of this study below.

[45] See William I. Shorrock, French Imperialism in the Middle East: The Failure of Policy in Syria and Lebanon 1900-1914 (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1976).

The reaction of Great Britain to the Zionist frontier claim was predictably favorable. What, after all, could possibly be wrong with maximizing the territorial extent of her own protectorate at the expense of France? Yet Great Britain's endorsement of the Zionist proposal was flawed in a manner which would eventually undermine the position of her Zionist protégés. Instead of adopting the sober economic arguments relentlessly advanced by Dr. Weizmann, the somewhat sentimental Christian statesmen of Great Britain chose to base their own concept of Palestine's northern extent on the Old Testament: The following non-public statement of 5 December 1918 by Lord Curzon, a member of Prime Minister David Lloyd George's Inner War Cabinet, illustrates quite succinctly the official British approach to the question of Palestine's northern frontier:

> Now, as regards the future of Palestine... I imagine we shall agree that we must recover for Palestine its old boundaries. The old phrase 'Dan to Beersheba' still prevails. Whatever the administrative sub-divisions, we must recover for Palestine, be it Hebrew or Arab, the boundaries up to the Litani on the coast, and across to Banias, the old Dan, or Huleh in the interior.[46]

Curzon obviously believed that the Litani River fell within a region defined Biblically by the phrase "Dan to Beersheba." What is important however was that the Biblical injunction itself was the operative feature of the British approach, not the hydrographic aspects of the Upper Galilee.

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[46]Doreen Ingrams, Palestine Papers 1917-1922: Seeds of Conflict (London: John Murray, 1972), p. 49.

France's reaction to the Zionist proposal was entirely negative. Having been removed from the international condominium agreed to in 1916, and having been maneuvered into accepting exclusive British rule over Palestine, France was not inclined to make further concessions. On 17 March 1919 Clemenceau gave the back of his hand to the Zionist claim by giving Lloyd George a note stating that France insisted upon the line (Achzib to Lake Tiberias) of May 1916.[47] Thus, the two extreme territorial claims--depicted on map #6 (page 40)--were established. Longrigg evaluated the situation prevailing in the Spring of 1919 as follows:

> Whereas the French demanded the Safed area, which their O.E.T.A. North (later West) did not include, the Jews asked for a wide area of southern Lebanon, the whole Litani River and southern Biqa', Hermon and the sources of the Jordan... In terms of the Balfour Declaration there was no applicable criterion whereby to establish boundaries for 'Palestine,' and the Jews not unnaturally claimed everything within reach. At the same time, the French claim to annex territory which included Palestine-Jewish settlements was clearly inappropriate.[48]

An important aspect of the French diplomatic counter-offensive to the Zionist proposal involved the Lebanese. As Frischwasser-Ra'anan has noted, "Possession of the Upper Galilee was useful to the French because of their relations with the Lebanese national leaders."[49] Indeed, just as the

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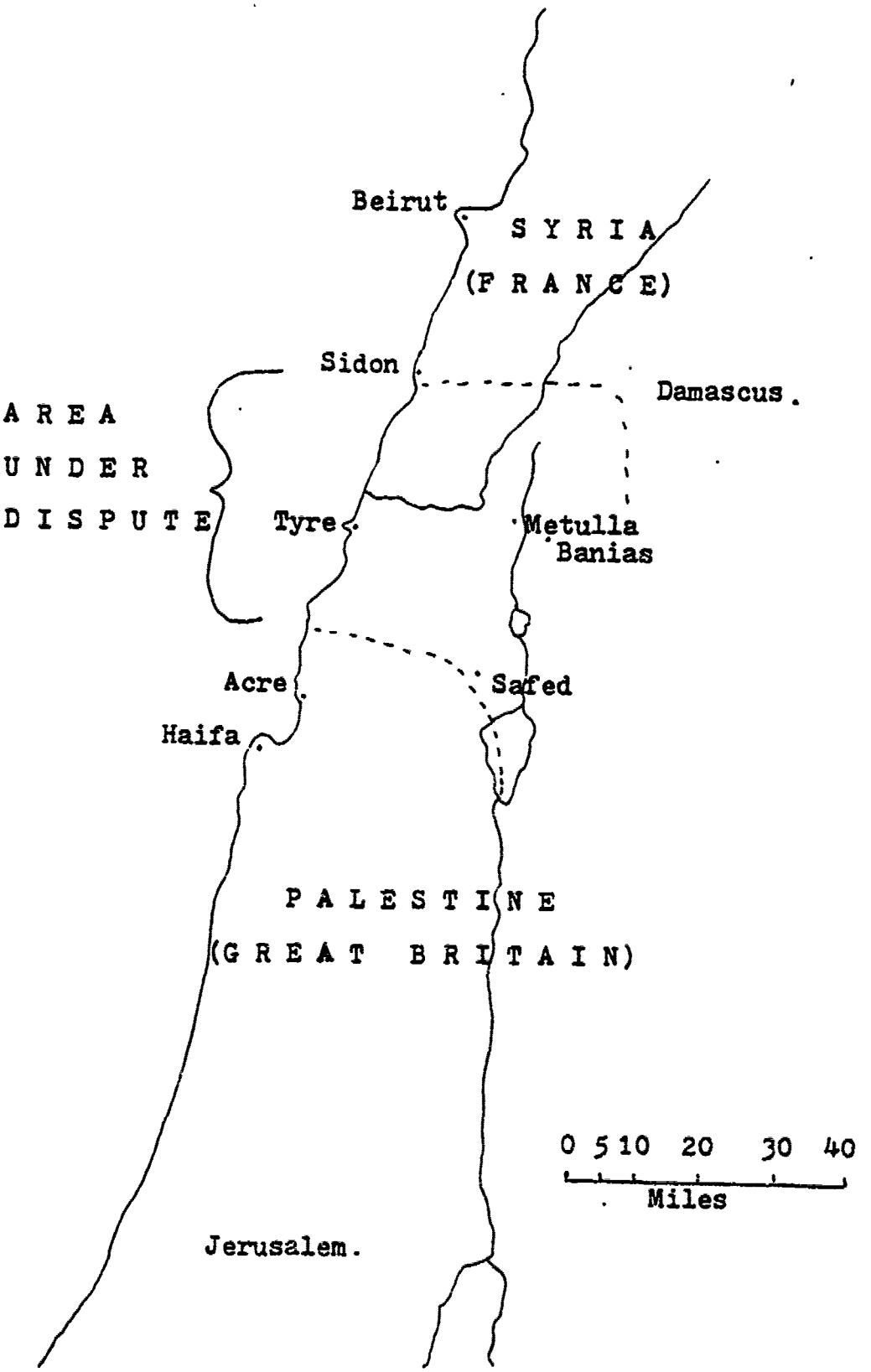
[47] Pichon, Le Partage du Proche Orient, pp. 188-189.

[48] Longrigg, Syria and Lebanon Under French Mandate, p. 67.

[49] Frischwasser-Ra'anan, The Frontiers of a Nation, p. 72.

MAP #6: DISPUTED AREA, MARCH-SEPTEMBER 1919



British relied on the Zionists to advance Great Britain's interests in the Levant, so the French used Lebanese nationalism to solidify their own grip on the disputed region. Prior to the start of World War I France received "numerous appeals from Lebanese organizations and individuals f r French assistance in achieving the annexation of Beirut, Baalbek, and the Bekaa' to the Lebanon." Although France cautioned the Lebanese to be patient, "their aspirations were not entirely discouraged."[50] The Maronite community of Mount Lebanon regarded France as its protector from Turks, Arab nationalists, and Muslims in general, and was eager to see an expanded Lebanon operating under the aegis of France. In 1908 the Lebanese nationalist, Paul Nujaym, demanded (in a book written in French and published in France) that the Autonomous District of Lebanon be expanded to include an area roughly approximating present-day Lebanon.[51]

In August 1919 France sponsored the presence at the Paris Peace Conference of a Lebanese Delegation headed by the Maronite Patriarch, Monseigneur Huwayyik, who presented a memorandum of his own on 27 August. The Lebanese memorandum closely paralleled the general thrust of the Zionist statement, albeit in the opposite direction. The Patriarch demanded that Lebanon be detached from a larger "Syrian" entity; that Lebanon's historic frontiers, which were held

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[50]Shorrock, French Imperialism in the Middle East, p. 112.

[51]K. S. Salibi, The Modern History of Lebanon (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1965), p. 118.

to be economically crucial be restored; and that the assistance of France, which was deemed to be essential to the success of Lebanese political and territorial goals, be mandated by the peace conference.[52] With the arrival of the Lebanese Delegation the "battle by proxy" between the local representatives of Great Britain and France was fully joined. Still, no amount of pressure brought to bear by Zionists or Lebanese nationalists would significantly alter the diplomatic facts of life. The line delimiting French and British spheres of influence on the eastern Mediterranean coast would have to be hammered out by the principals themselves.

F. THE "DEAUVILLE" COMPROMISE PROPOSAL

The diplomatic stalemate over Palestine's northern frontier was loosened first by a British compromise proposal made in September 1919. In an Aide-Memoire dated 13 September and handed to the French, Great Britain affirmed its intention to withdraw its forces from areas which had been promised to France. Point six of the Aide-Memoire stated that, "The territories occupied by British troops will then be Palestine, defined in accordance with its ancient boundaries of Dan to Beersheba..."[53] Map #7 on page 43 depicts the British conception of the proper northern frontier of Palestine. It is identical with the proposal drafted by the Advisory Committee on Palestine

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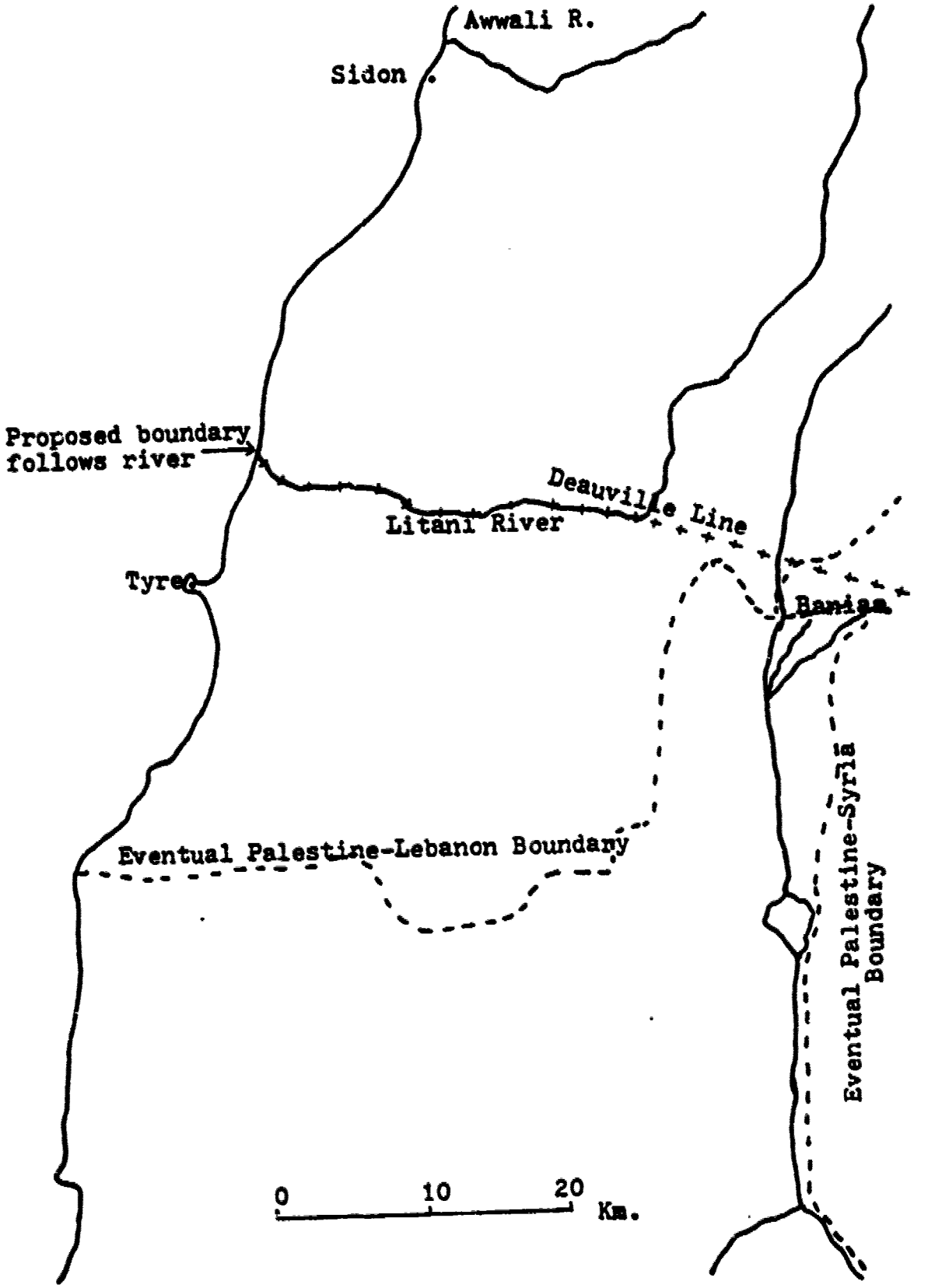
[52]Zeine, The Struggle for Arab Independence, p. 122.

[53]The complete text of the Aide-Memoire may be found in Documents, First Series Volume I, pp. 700-701.

MAP #7: THE "DEAUVILLE LINE"
SEPTEMBER 1919



in November 1918. The proposed boundary followed the Litani River from the Mediterranean coast, and then continued eastward encompassing the village of Banias, thought by British statesmen to be the ancient Dan.[54]

The significance of the Deauville proposal lay in its simultaneous abandonment of the Zionist proposal and the formal commitment of Great Britain to the somewhat nebulous "Dan to Beersheba" formula. By addressing the boundary question from the somewhat slippery basis of Scriptural geography, the British left themselves and their Zionist friends vulnerable to conflicting claims arising from Biblical scholarship. If a prestigeous Bible scholar could demonstrate, for instance, that Banias was not ancient Dan or that the Litani River lay outside of Biblical Israel, the entire British position would be gravely undermined.

It appears that once Great Britain fell back upon the Deauville formula, the Zionists countered with the argument that possession of the south bank of the Litani would not satisfy the economic requirements of Palestine. In November 1919 Colonel Richard Meinertzhagen, Allenby's Chief Political Officer in Palestine, wrote a letter to General Headquarters of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force which attacked the Deauville Line as "not satisfying the economic interests of Palestine."[55] The ardently pro-Zionist

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[54]Frischwasser-Ra'anan, The Frontiers of a Nation, p. 115.

[55]Colonel Richard Meinertzhagen, Middle East Diary 1917-1956 (New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1960), p. 61.

(though non-Jewish) Meinertzhagen made a proposal of his own which may well have represented the Zionist counter-proposal to the Deauville compromise. The "Meinertzhagen Line," depicted by map #8 on page 46 , started at the Mediterranean just north of the Litani, and paralleled the river eastward and then northward, crossing it in the vicinity of the Litani gorges.[56] The Meinertzhagen proposal would have kept all of the Litani River's lower course within Palestine. The line proposed by Allenby's Chief Political Officer differed from the Zionist Organization's claim only in that it "sacrificed" the expendable coastal strip between Sidon and the mouth of the Litani.

Events proved the Meinertzhagen proposal to be an exercise in futility. France, whose Lebanese clients considered the town of Tyre to be part of historic Lebanon, eventually rejected the Deauville Line.[57] The diplomatic stalemate was firmly reestablished as negotiations dragged on into the critical year of 1920.

## G. BREAKING THE STALEMATE

In Feburary 1920 France officially sealed the fate of the Deauville proposal (and that of the Meinertzhagen

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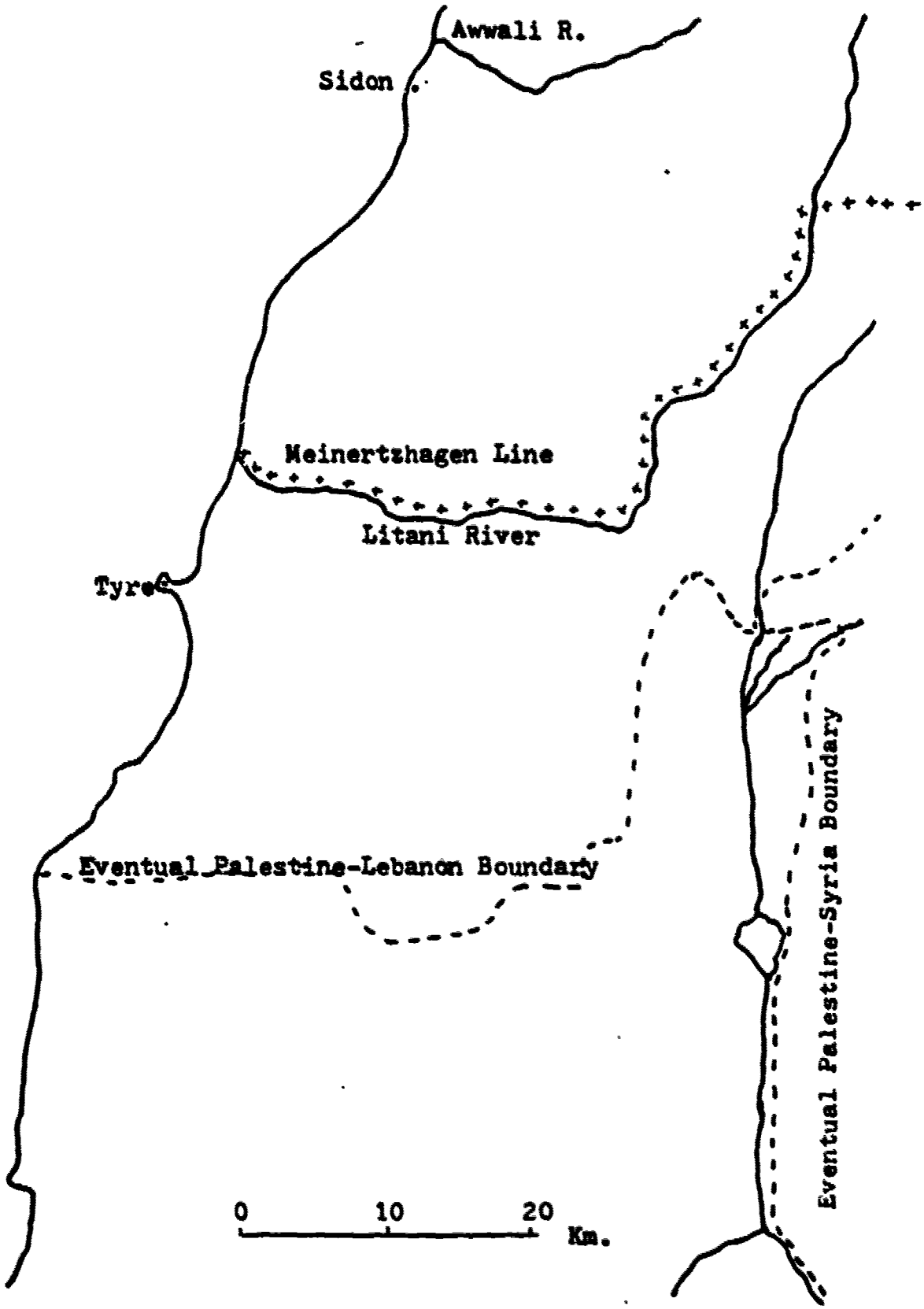
[56] Ibid., p. 62 Map #8 is based on Meinertzhagen's description of his proposed boundary, and on the map depicting his proposal on page 64 of his Diary. However, the map appearing in the Diary incorrectly places the line south of the Litani, contrary to Meinertzhagen's written description.

[57] Frischwasser-Ra'anan, The Frontiers of a Nation, p. 115.

MAP #8: THE "MEINERTZHAGEN LINE"
NOVEMBER 1919



proposal also) by insisting that the Litani River remain completely under her control. Then, according to Frischwasser-Ra'anan, "Lloyd George finally dropped his support for Zionist boundaries because he feared France would use the issue as a lever to gain more important concessions elsewhere, i.e. Tangier, Gambia, or Transjordania."[58]

Thanks to her consistent reliance on the "Dan to Beersheba" slogan Great Britain was able to salvage some honor in abandoning her Zionist allies. The transcripts of the negotiating sessions leading up to an Anglo-French understanding reveal in fact that Lloyd George made one final attempt to rescue the Deauville Line by arguing that,

> The waters of Palestine were essential to its existence. Without those waters, Palestine would be a wilderness; and all Jews were unanimously agreed that the waters of Hebron [sic--Hermon] and the headwaters of the Jordan were vital to the existence of the country. On the other hand, those same waters were of no use to anyone holding Syria.[59]

The Foreign Minister of France, M. Philippe Berthelot, rejected Lloyd George's argument.

> In regard to the watersheds, undoubtedly the rivers of southern Syria possessed a certain degree of utility for the areas north of the Jordan, but that was all. On the other hand, the snows of Hebron [sic--Hermon] dominated the town of Damascus and could not be excluded from Syria. Again, the waters of the Litanya [sic] irrigated the most fertile regions of Syria.[60]

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[58] Ibid., p. 129

[59] Documents, First Series Volume VII, p. 104.

[60] Ibid., p. 107.

Seeing that France would not give in with regard to the Litani, Lloyd George took the crucial step in completely undermining the Zionist boundary proposal.

> Mr. Lloyd George said that he would like to recognize the very conciliatory and helpful spirit in which M. Berthelot had approached the subject, and he begged to assure him that the British Government would respond in a like spirit. These questions were to be settled as between Allies and friends, and not as between competitors. However, he thought the present conference was not one in which details of frontiers could be determined. A book written by a Scottish theological professor, Professor Adam Smith, had been brought to his notice. The book had been written before the war, and although the work of a theologian, was so accurate in matters of geography that it had been used by Lord Allenby during his campaign.[61]

Lloyd George offered the book to Berthelot, who drily remarked that he "would be delighted to read the book on Palestine, as he was partial both to the Scottish and to theologians."[62]

The British Prime Minister had known for quite some time what Smith's book would reveal, because several months earlier, when preparing the Deauville proposal, he had ordered that Professor Smith's book and Atlas of the Historical Geography of the Holy Land be sent to him in Paris.[63] Plate 34 of the Atlas, depicting Palestine Under David and Solomon, was the map used by Lloyd George to form his own conception of Palestine's territorial extent. Map #9 on page 49 is an approximation of the key map in Smith's Atlas,

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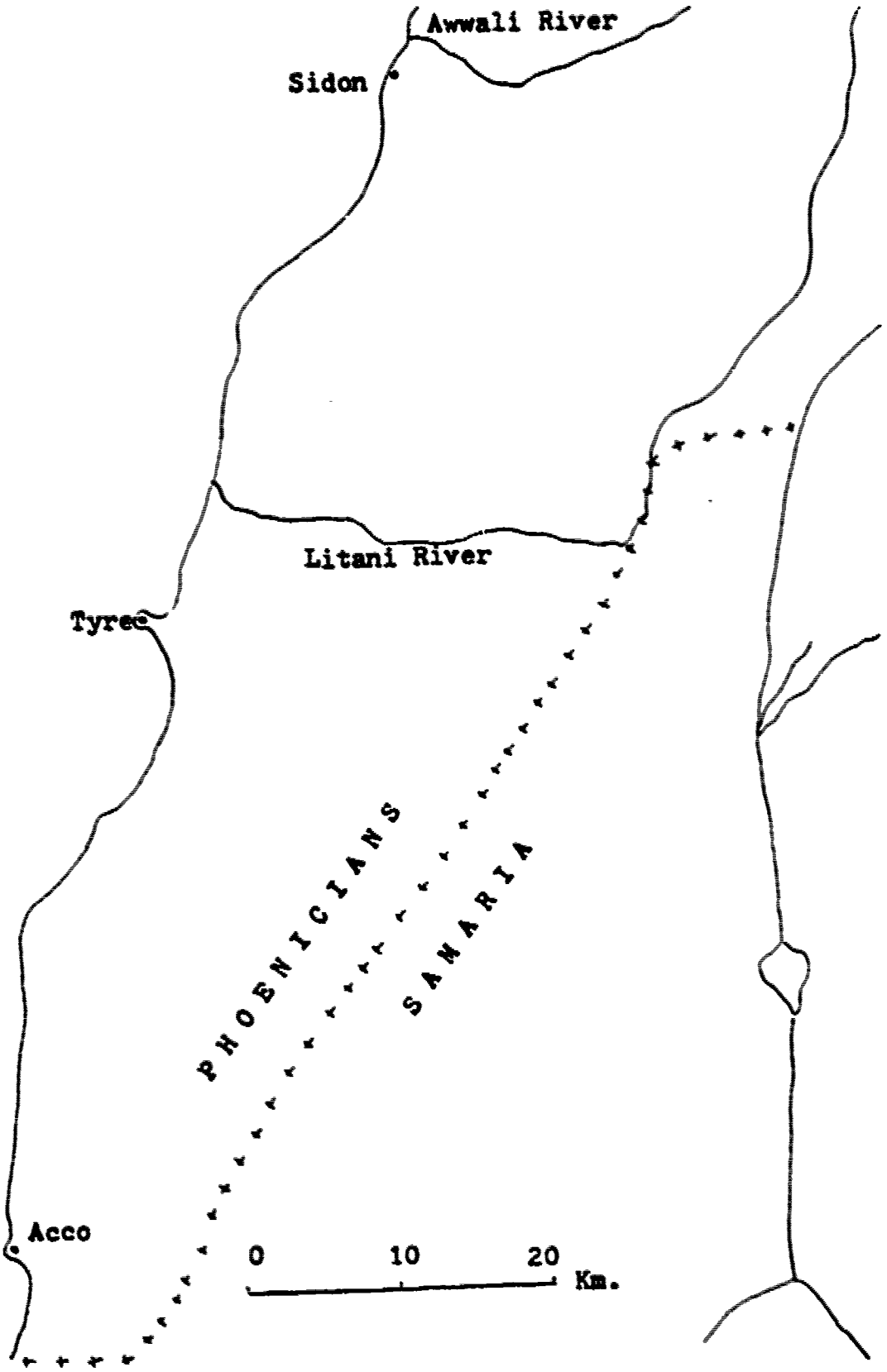
[61]Ibid., p. 115.

[62]Ibid., p. 116.

[63]Ingrams, Palestine Papers, p. 76.

MAP #9: PLATE 34, SMITH'S ATLAS



the map which Berthelot no doubt examined with great interest. It can be seen that although the Kingdom of Israel (Samaria) (according to Smith) did touch the Litani in the northeast, it did not even reach Acco (Acre) in the northwest. Since the western portion of the Sykes-Picot line had already been drawn north of Acre, it seemed fair that the new boundary be lowered somewhat in its eastern sector. Hence, the entire Litani River would be outside of Palestine.

When the negotiations reconvened Lloyd George handed the French representative a telegram that he had received from Justice Louis Brandeis of the United States Supreme Court. Brandeis, cabling on behalf of the Zionist Organization of America, urged that the Litani and Hermon watersheds be included within Palestine.[64] Berthelot's reply was stinging.

> M. Berthelot, after commenting on the fact that the contents of the telegram seemed to indicate that Judge Brandeis had a much exaggerated sense of his own importance, said that he had carefully studied an authoritative work on Palestine which Mr. Lloyd George had been good enough to lend him. The work clearly showed that the historic boundaries of Palestine had never extended beyond Dan and Beersheba, and he was quite prepared to recommend to his Government that these should be recognized as the correct boundaries... The Litany River, however, had never been included in the Jewish state.[65]

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[64] Documents, First Series Volume VII, pp. 183-184.

[65] Ibid., p. 184.

In other words, the British Deauville proposal had, according to a book used by Lloyd George himself, misrepresented the northern limit of a state which had presumably stretched from Dan to Beersheba. Only at one point--where the Litani River abruptly turns west toward the Mediterranean--did the Deauville proposal conform with Adam Smith's map.

In June 1920 France made a boundary proposal which reflected the rough understanding reached by Lloyd George and Berthelot. It corresponded closely with what was to become the final boundary between Lebanon and Palestine. It called essentially for a line which would leave the coast at Ras En Naqurah, a few miles north of the Sykes-Picot line, and proceed eastward. It was then to turn sharply north, so as to include within Palestine a "finger" of territory containing the northernmost Jewish settlement (Metulla) and the Hula Valley.[66] The Litani would be left under complete French control.

## H. ZIONIST OPPOSITION AND FINAL AGREEMENT

The French boundary proposal of June 1920 formed the basis for the final negotiations with Great Britain. Confident of achieving frontiers satisfactory to her Lebanese clients, France declared on 31 August 1920 the establishment of the state of Greater Lebanon.[67] "By act of the French

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[66] Frischwasser-Ra'anan, The Frontiers of a Nation, p. 136.

[67] Sidney Nettleton Fisher, The Middle East: A History (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969), p. 409.

government...the largely undeveloped and non-Christian areas of present-day South Lebanon, the Bekaa and North Lebanon were annexed to the relatively prosperous and largely Christian district of Mount Lebanon."[68]

The Zionists regarded the French boundary proposal as a disaster. The sense of urgency felt by the Zionist Organization with regard to the boundary issue had been heightened by the Tel Hai incident of 1 March 1920. The massacre which took place at that northern Jewish settlement reinforced the determination of the Zionists to place all Jewish settlements under the protection of a British administration in Palestine.[69] Unfortunately for the defenders of Tel Hai, General Allenby's forces had withdrawn to the O.E.T.A. boundaries in November 1919.[70] France did not move to permanently garrison the areas evacuated by the British, so the Hula Valley and surrounding areas which contained Jewish settlements were left completely undefended. Having pocketed Lloyd George's concession of the Litani River, the French acquiesced to the principle of drawing a boundary in such a way as to include all Zionist outposts within Palestine.

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[68] Michael Hudson, "Fedayeen are Forcing Lebanon's Hand," Mid East, Vol X, No. 1, February 1970, p. 11.

[69] Aharon Cohen, Israel and the Arab World (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1970), pp. 177-178.

[70] Prischwasser-Ra'anan, The Frontiers of a Nation, p. 120.

Having secured the northern settlements, the Zionist then waged a determined rearguard action from June through December 1920 aimed at salvaging the Litani River for Palestine. The following exerpt of a letter from Dr. Weizmann to Lord Curzon, dated 30 October 1920, clearly reflects both the determination and exasperation of the Zionists.

> Your Lordship, I am sure, realises the enormous importance of the Litany to Palestine. Even if the whole of the Jordan and the Yarmuk are included in Palestine, it has insufficient water for its needs. The summer in Palestine is extremely dry, and evaporation rapid and intense. The irrigation of Upper Galilee and the power necessary for even a limited industrial life must come from the Litany. Experts agree that the Litany is of little use to the well-watered Lebanon and we have always agreed that the requirements of the territory not included in Palestine should be adequately met.
>
> It is hardly possible that France even realises the extent to which the frontier she has proposed would cripple the economic life of Palestine. For if Palestine were cut off from the Litany, Upper Jordan and Yarmuk, to say nothing of the western shore of the Galilee, she could not be economically independent. <u>And a poor and impoverished Palestine would be of no advantage to any Power</u>. [Emphasis added.] [71]

Weizmann's blatant appeal to British imperial sentiments was useless. In his autobiography he stated that, "I tried to convince General Gouraud [the French High Commissioner for Syria] of the importance to Palestine of the waters of the river Litani, but could arouse no interest..."[72]

Although middle-level British negotiators charged with transforming the Lloyd George-Berthelot understanding into

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[71] <u>Documents</u>, First Series Volume XIII, p. 419.

[72] Chaim Weizmann, <u>Trial and Error</u> (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1949), p. 289.

a treaty tried their very best to satisfy the Zionists, they found themselves thoroughly undermined by the Prime Minister's Biblical diplomacy. Part of a letter written by one of the British diplomats illustrates this point.

> As our case for extended Palestine frontiers had always been argued at the Supreme Council generally on the 'historical' ground and in particular (however unfortunate it may now seem) on the basis of plate No. 34 of Adam Smith's Atlas of the Historical Geography of the Holy Land, you will readily understand how difficult it was to meet the French argument as regards the inclusion in Palestine of territory east of the Jordan and north of the Yarmuk. It would not have been so difficult, if the above plate be taken as the test, to argue for a frontier including part of the Litani but, as I have said, the course of the discussion at San Remo practically excluded that point being taken up again.[73]

Final agreement in principle was reached by Great Britain and France on 23 December 1920. The French proposal of the previous June was accepted entirely with regard to the Palestine-Lebanon boundary. A commission was established to demarcate the exact line of the boundary, and on the subject of water, Article 8 of the Franco-British Convention provided that,

> Experts nominated respectively by the administrations of Syria and Palestine shall examine in common within six months after the signature of the present convention the employment, for the purposes of irrigation and the production of hydroelectric power, of the waters of the Upper Jordan and the Yarmuk and of their tributaries, after satisfaction of the needs of the territories under the French mandate.
>
> In connection with this examination the French government will give its representatives the most liberal instructions for the employment of the surplus of these waters for the benefit of Palestine.[74]

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[73] Documents, First Series Volume XIII, p. 419.

[74] Franco-British Convention of December 23, 1920, on Certain Points Connected with the Mandates for Syria and the Lebanon, Palestine and Mesopotamia [Cmd. 1195] (London: His Majesty's Stationary Office, 1921), p. 4.

It should be noted that the Franco-British Convention made no mention whatsoever of the Litani River.

The boundary commission established by the Franco-British Convention submitted its final report in February 1922.[75] "This agreement was signed on the 3rd February 1922. It was ratified by the British Government on the 7th March 1923, and came into effect three days later."[76] Map #10 on page 56 traces the final Palestine-Lebanon boundary in relation to the many proposals that had been made previously.

The final agreement made no further mention of Zionist access to French-controlled waters. The only aspect of the boundary left subject to possible renegotiation was a short stretch of border between Metulla and Banias, half of which was part of the Palestine-Lebanon boundary and half of which divided Palestine and Syria. The boundary had been drawn parallel to and 100 meters south of a path linking Metulla and Banias. France had insisted on keeping the entire path so as to preserve and control an east-west road link. The final agreement upheld the French position, but included a provision stating that,

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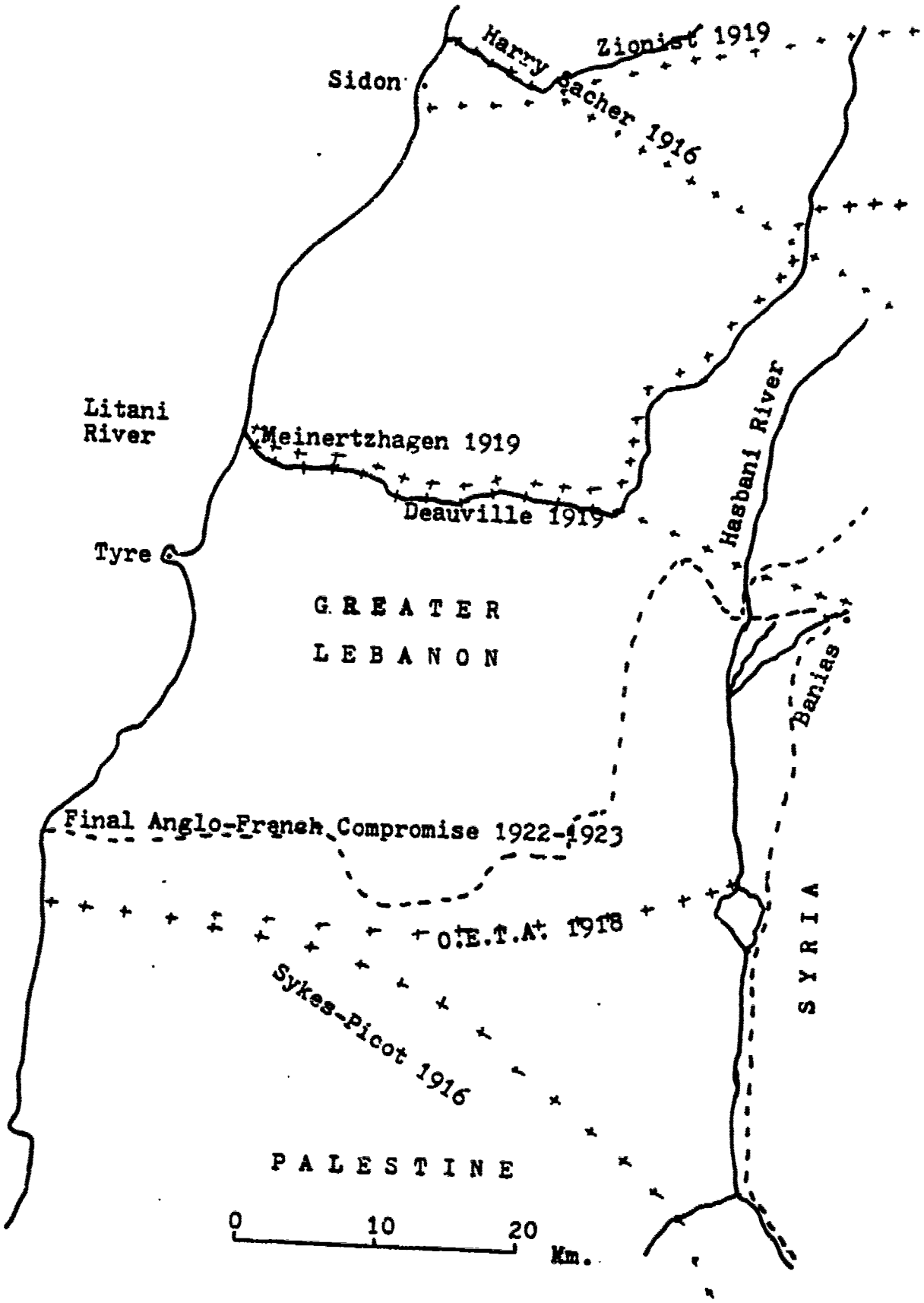
[75] Agreement Between His Majesty's Government and the French Government Respecting the Boundary Line Between Syria and Palestine from the Mediterranean to El Hamme [Cmd. 1910] (London: His Majesty's Stationary Office, 1923).

[76] H. W. V. Temperley, ed., A History of the Peace Conference at Paris, Volume VI (London: Henry Frowde and Hodder & Stoughton, 1924), p. 166.

MAP #10: BOUNDARY PROPOSALS & FINAL AGREEMENT



The British Government shall be free to reopen the question of readjusting the frontier between Banias and Metallah on such terms as may be agreed between the two mandatory Powers with a view of making the north road between these two villages the final frontier.[77]

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[77] Agreement Between His Majesty's Government and the French Government [Cmd. 1910], pp. 5-8.

## III. THE BOUNDARY AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

According to a report submitted to London by Herbert Samuel, the British High Commissioner for Palestine,

> The boundary between the two areas [Palestine and Lebanon-Syria] was adjusted in April, 1924, in accordance with an Anglo-French Convention of March, 1923. An area of 75 square miles with 20 villages was brought within the frontiers of Palestine. It included the ancient district of Dan, and its addition re-established the Biblical boundaries of Palestine--"from Dan even unto Beersheba."[78]

It soon became evident however that the new boundary was anything but divinely-inspired. The seemingly minor territorial compromise had been necessitated by the need of two great powers to maintain a harmonious postwar relationship. Yet what seemed to be minor from a great power perspective proved to be of great significance to three groups: the predominantly Arab population of a region abruptly subjected to political partition; the Zionists of Palestine; and the Lebanese nationalists of Greater Lebanon.

The purpose of this section is to examine the significance of the boundary settlement for those three groups. This will be accomplished after first analyzing the geographical implications of the boundary settlement. It will be seen that in light of subsequent events, the Anglo-French compromise benefited no one save the great powers.

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[78] Herbert Samuel, Palestine. Report of the High Commissioner on the Administration of Palestine, 1920-1925 (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1925), p. 55.

## A. GEOGRAPHICAL CHARACTERISTICS

The political boundary agreed upon in 1923 bisected three natural geographical regions: the Galilean Coast, Upper Galilee, and that portion of the great Rift Valley lying to the east of Upper Galilee. Map #11 on page 60 depicts the approximate extent of the three regions under examination.[79]

The Galilean Coast extends from the city of Acre north to the mouth of the Litani River. It is bisected very decisively however by the white limestone cliffs of Ras En Naqurah, a striking topographical feature known historically as the "Ladder of Tyre." Due to the obstacle presented by the cliffs, the traditional land route between Acre and Tyre passed not over the Tyrian Ladder, but further inland through the village of Bint Jubail.[80] In October 1918 however, General Allenby decided to proceed to Beirut via the direct coastal route, so his Chief Engineer was obliged to blast a passage way through the limestone.[81]

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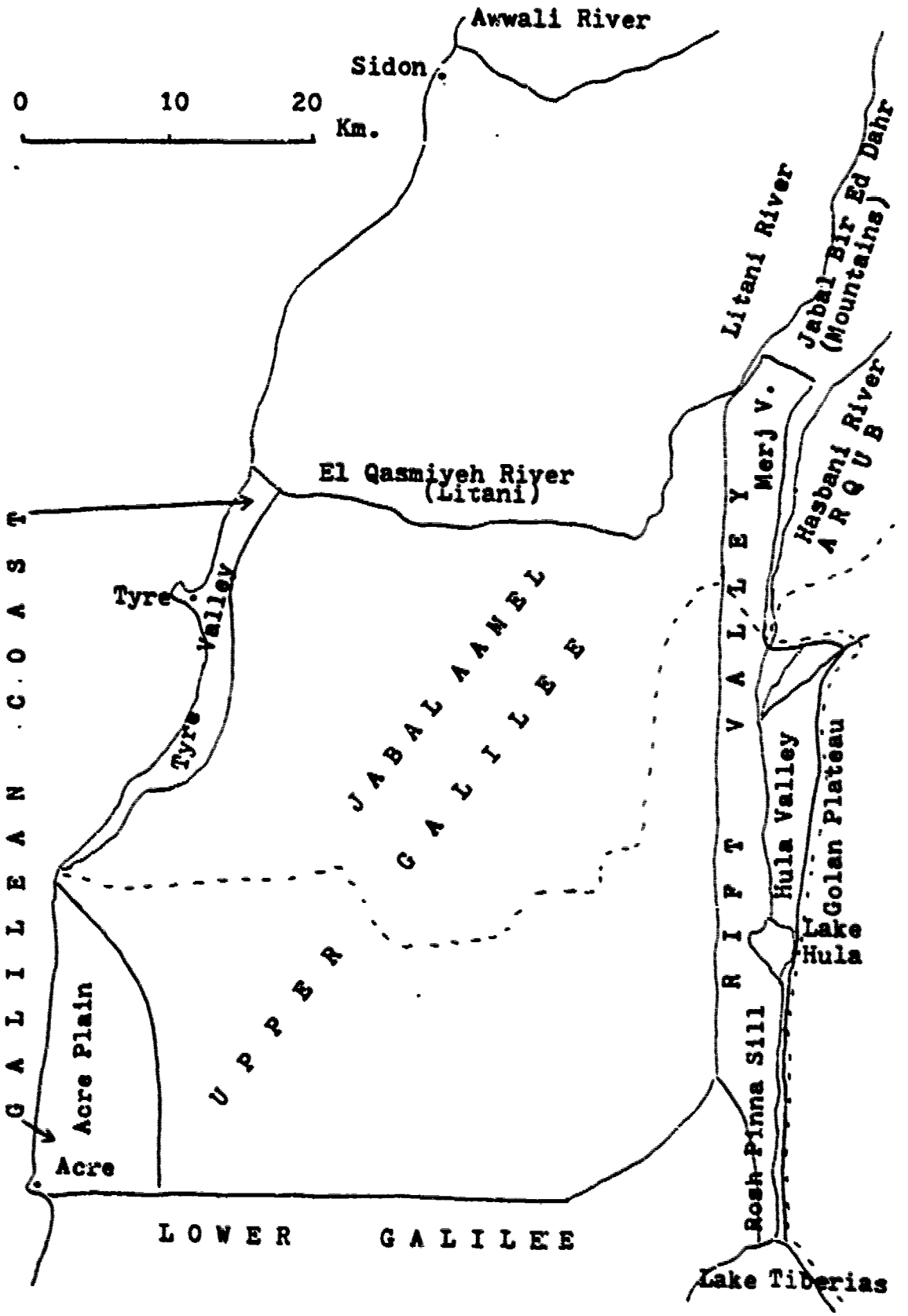
[79]Map #11 and much of the geographical terminology used in this section are based on information contained in Efraim Orni and Elisha Efrat, Geography of Israel (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1971).

[80]Yehuda Karmon, Israel: A Regional Geography (London: Wiley Interscience, 1971), p. 73.

[81]Cyril Falls, Armageddon: 1918 (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1964, p. 141).

MAP #11: GEOGRAPHICAL REGIONS



The part of the Galilean Coast lying to the south of Ras En Naqurah is known as the Acre Plain, and the section north of the cliffs is called the Tyre Valley. Although the two parts are, strictly speaking, different (the Acre Plain being a true coastal plain, while the Tyre Valley is actually a mountain valley), they share in common some rich and well-watered soil which has supported a prospering agricultural (especially citrus fruit) development.

Ras En Naqurah is actually a coastal extension of the second region under discussion: Upper Galilee. The word "upper" refers to the elevation of the region, not its geographic location (although Upper Galilee is also north of Lower Galilee). The region's natural borders are the Galilean Coast on the west, an east-west line on roughly the same latitude as Acre in the south, the Rift Valley in the east, and the lower course of the Litani River in the north. Unlike the Galilean Coast, Upper Galilee has never supported a prospering agricultural economy. The Lebanese portion of the region, known as Jabal Aamel, is an extremely poor area whose meagre natural assets are well-suited to the growth of only one product: tobacco.[82] The

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[82]See Halim Said Abu-Izzeddin, ed., Lebanon and its Provinces: A Study by the Governors of the Five Provinces (Beirut: Khayats, 1963). According to the Governor of South Lebanon, "The South, and Jabal 'Amal in particular, plants 29,000 dunums of tobacco out of 45,000 dunums licensed by the Government for all districts of Lebanon. The soil of Jabal 'Amal is one of the best for growing tobacco in Lebanon." (Page 64.)

terrain of Jabal Aamel is exceedingly rugged, and one observer has noted that "deep dissection and the absence of water-bearing strata reduce the cultivated area to less than 35% of the total available."[83] Although the Israeli part of Upper Galilee is not so severely handicapped topographically as Jabal Aamel, it too was traditionally an area of subsistence agriculture. The Litani River is both the northern boundary of Upper Galilee and the region's most prized natural feature. Rising near Ba'albek in northern Lebanon, the Litani flows southwesterly until it approaches the village of Deir Mimass, where it veers sharply to the west and empties into the Mediterranean Sea north of Tyre. Between Deir Mimass and the sea the river is known locally as El Qasimiyeh. The Litani is not navigable, and much of the area through which the lower course flows is not particularly well-suited for large scale irrigation.[84] The river does however irrigate large parts of Lebanon's fertile Biqa' Valley, and the waters of its lower course were viewed by Zionists as necessary for irrigation projects planned for Palestine.

The third region divided by the new political boundary was a small portion of the Rift Valley, a massive scar in

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[83] W. B. Fisher, The Middle East: A Physical, Social and Regional Geography (London: Methuen & Co., 1971), p. 405.

[84] See James Hudson, "The Litani River of Lebanon: An Example of Middle Eastern Water Development," The Middle East Journal, Volume 25, Winter 1971, Number 1, pp. 1-14.

the earth's surface stretching from Turkey to East Africa. Within the context of the Palestine-Lebanon frontier region, the Rift Valley contains two subsections: the Merj Valley of Lebanon, and the Hula Valley of Palestine. The Merj Valley is a continuation of the Biqa', but it is separated from Lebanon's most fertile region by two chains of hills known as Jabal Arabi and Jabal Bir ed Dahr. Bordered on the west by Jabal Aamel and on the east by the slopes of Mount Hermon, the Merj Valley is separated from the Hula Valley by the Metulla Hills. The Hula Valley is bordered on the west by the Neftali Ridge of Upper Galilee, on the east by the Golan Plateau, and on the south by the Rosh Pinna Sill, through which the Jordan River flows into Lake Tiberias.

The importance of the Rift Valley to the frontier region lies in its water resources. The Hasbani River, one of the Jordan River's three sources, rises on the northwestern slope of Mount Hermon some 32 miles northeast of Metulla. The stream becomes perennial however only about 12 miles north of Metulla, near the village of Hasbaya.[85] The Hasbani does not flow through the Merj Valley, but rather through the hills to the east of the valley in an area known as the Arqub. Although the Arqub was not contiguous with the original Palestine-Lebanon boundary, it was of interest to the Zionists because of the presence of the Hasbani River. Furthermore, when Israel occupied the Golan Heights in June

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[85]Orni and Efrat, Geography of Israel, p. 86.

1967 the Lebanese-Israeli border was in effect lengthened so as to bring the Arqub into direct contact with Israeli-controlled territory. Like the rest of southern Lebanon, the Arqub region is very poor. According to one authority on the region's geography,

> Despite being drained by the Hasbani...this is a remote and largely inaccessible area with a low density of population. Its villages are poor, since possession of elevated, defensible sites has deprived them of adequate water and cultivable land.[86]

The Merj Valley on the other hand is drained by a small intermittant stream (the Bureighit) and supports a relatively prosporous agrarian economy during times of peace.

The Hula Valley, measuring 15½ miles north to south by 4 to 6 miles east to west, consisted of a large swamp and a lake at the time of the boundary demarcation. Lake Hula, a shallow body of water roughly 5 square miles in area, was the dominant feature in the southern part of the valley. The three sources of the Jordan River--the Hasbani, Dan, and Banias--entered the northern Hula Valley, joined together, and then "got lost in the Hula swamp and lake."[87] The Jordan River then reemerged from Lake Hula and flowed south through the Rosh Pinna Sill into Lake Tiberias. By the late 1950s the swamp and lake of the Hula Valley were completely drained by Israel and converted into rich

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[86] Peter Beaumont, Gerald H. Blake, and J. Malcolm Wagstaff, eds., The Middle East: A Geographical Survey (London: John Wiley & Sons, 1976), p. 367.

[87] Brawer, "The Geographical Background of the Jordan Water Dispute," p. 231.

agricultural land. At the time the boundary was created the Hula Valley was inhabited mainly by Arab peasants engaged in subsistence agriculture.[88]

Inasmuch as the boundary agreement of December 1920 directed that a political demarcation line be drawn through the three natural regions described above, it is no wonder that the boundary passed through some unremarkable terrain. In fact, though the Convention of 23 December 1920 specified that the boundary would run from Metulla to Ras En Naqurah, it gave precious little guidance as to where the line would actually be drawn. The boundary commission was obliged therefore to stake out a line which would make use of whatever distinguishable terrain was available, and which would avoid, wherever possible, the division of property owned by individuals, single villages, or religious foundations. It proved to be an impossible task, as both the topography of the region and patterns of land ownership served to present insurmountable difficulties.

One geographer has stated flatly that "no topographic break marks the political border next to Lebanon."[89] The absence of such clearly-defined terrain--a potential deficiency that would have been avoided had the political

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[88] See Yehuda Karmon. "The Drainage of the Huleh Swamps," Geographical Review, April 1960, pp. 169-193.

[89] George B. Cressey, Crossroads: Land and Life in Southwest Asia (Chicago: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1960), p. 480.

boundary been drawn to coincide with the northern or southern limits of Upper Galilee--make a simple characterization of the line itself impossible. According to the boundary commission's report,[90] the line began at Ras En Naqurah and followed a well-defined topographic crest eastward for 3,500 meters. Thereafter the surveyors simply ran out of suitable terrain and were obliged to improvise. Boundary markers were placed more or less alternately in wadis (small valleys) or along the crest of a small plateau which tended to slope sharply to the south (into Palestine) and gently toward the north (into Lebanon.) At roughly 33°06'N by 35°30'E the line ceased moving eastward and veered abruptly to the north, as it began to form the "finger" of territory containing the northernmost Jewish settlements. The line moved northward, paralleling a ridgeline whose crests were left within Palestine overlooking the Hula Valley to the east. After passing to the east of the Lebanese hamlet of Kfar Kila, the boundary looped around Metulla and proceeded in a southeasterly direction through gently descending terrain, eventually linking up with the Palestine-Syria boundary near the Hasbani River. Due to the absence of suitable landmarks,

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[90] Agreement Between His Majesty's Government and the French Government Respecting the Boundary Line Between Syria and Palestine from the Mediterranean to El Hamme [Cmd. 1910] (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1923).

many of the thirty-eight markers placed along the Palestine-Lebanon boundary were connected by straight lines.

## B. LOCAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE BOUNDARY AGREEMENT

It is not likely that the British and French diplomats who contrived to partition Upper Galilee and the adjoining regions imagined the impact their action would have on the inhabitants of the area. Had they known, it is even less likely that they would have cared. The area was an economic and social backwater, a depressed region populated almost entirely by Arabs (except of course for those few Jewish settlements around the Hula Valley) engaged in subsistence agriculture. It hardly seemed possible that the drawing of an international boundary through such an area would have much of an impact, positive or negative, on anything.

Yet for the Arab inhabitants of the new frontier region the boundary was at best an inconvenience and at worst a potential economic and security disaster. Its very demarcation--a seemingly innocuous piece of surveying--caused unwelcomed changes. Prior to the boundary imposition the Merj and Hula Valleys had functioned as an economic unit. According to Karmon the village of Merj 'Uyun served as the area's urban center. "Here lived the landowners, the proprietors of the water mills, the grain merchants and moneylenders, on whom the inhabitants of the Hula Valley depended. With the establishment of the British mandate, Marj 'Uyun became part of Lebanon."[91] The insertion of

[91] Karmon, "The Drainage of the Huleh Swamps, p. 191.

a boundary partitioned the region and left the Hula Valley without an urban center until the creation of Qiryat Shemona by Israel.[92] Although Hourani maintains that "There was no good reason, economic or ethnic, for the inclusion of the Hulah district in Palestine,"[93] it is probably more accurate to conclude that it was the regional partition itself--irrespective of which side gained or lost--that made little sense. Had it not been for the existence of a few isolated Jewish settlements, it is likely that the Hula and Merj Valleys would have remained together under French jurisdiction.

Upper Galilee also suffered from the demarcation. Traditionally the village of Bint Jubail, which ended up in Lebanon, had served as an important junction for roads leading to Tyre from Acre, Safed, and the Hula Valley.[94] Although the coastal road would have become the primary land link between Acre and Tyre in any event, it is nevertheless true that Bint Jubail's role in Upper Galilee was seriously jeopardized by the appearance of a boundary. Much the same can be said for the Palestinian town of Safed, which most likely would have eventually served as

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[92]Ibid., p. 192.

[93]A. H. Hourani, Syria and Lebanon: A Political Essay (London: Oxford University Press, 1946), p. 56.

[94]Yehuda Karmon, Israel: A Regional Geography, p. 73.

the principal urban center for all of Upper Galilee.[95] Regrettably however the boundary nullified the area's few potentialities and worsened an already bleak economic picture.

Yet that was not all. If the mere act of drawing a boundary caused disruptions, its eventual closure could lead to catastrophe. One of the few factors which tended to mitigate the poverty of the area was the ability of people to move with relative freedom to graze livestock, sell produce, and seek odd jobs for cash. The presence of an international boundary threatened to change all of that. If political problems were ever to cause the border to close, the economic options of the Arab farmers and villagers on both sides of the line would be reduced. They would be obliged either to accept an even lower standard of living, or else flock to the cities of their respective countries in order to find employment. The citizens of southern Lebanon were particularly vulnerable to the potential effects of a border closing due to their own central government's lack of interest in developing the economy of the area.

Soon after the boundary went into effect in 1924, the mandatory authorities in Jerusalem and Beirut discovered that the inhabitants of the frontier area were acting as if no border existed. Rather than attempting to physically

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[95] Ibid.

block human traffic from moving from one side of the boundary to the other--a policy which probably would have encountered violent resistance--the British and French officials wisely chose instead to legalize the border crossing proclivities of their subjects. On 2 February 1926 an agreement was signed involving Palestine, Lebanon, and Syria. The accord had the objective of "regulating certain administrative matters in connection with the fronter" in such a way as to facilitate "good neighbourly relations in connection with frontier questions." The treaty defined the frontier region as including the subdistricts of Acre and Safed in Palestine, Tyre and Merj 'Uyun in Lebanon, and Quneitra in Syria. Special privileges were also extended to the Lebanese subdistrict of Hasbaya (the Arqub) even though it did not touch on the Palestine-Lebanon border.[96]

The agreement constituted an attempt to deal with problems caused by the boundary demarcation. One such problem was with the status of private, village, and religious property which had been bisected by the boundary. Instead of asking for a new demarcation, the 1926 accord left the boundary as it was and established equitable procedures governing the collection of taxes on divided property and subsequent title transfers.[97] The accord also stated that grazing, cultivation,

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[96] Agreement Between Palestine and Syria and the Lebanon to Facilitate Good Neighbourly Relations in Connection with Frontier Questions (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1927), pp. 1, 8.

[97] Ibid., pp. 4, 6.

and water rights predating the existence of the boundary would remain in effect. The following passage specified the border crossing rights of the local inhabitants:

> They shall be entitled...to cross the frontier freely and without a passport and to transport, from one side to the other of the frontier, their animals and the natural increase thereof, their tools, their vehicles, their implements, seeds and products of the soil or subsoil of their lands, without paying any customs duties or any dues for grazing or watering or any other tax on account of passing the frontier and entering the neighbouring territory.[98]

Another provision of the accord permitted the people of the frontier area to transport (duty free) across the boundary any crops or local industrial goods produced anywhere within the frontier zone destined for family consumption in any of the subdistricts covered by the agreement.[99]

The treaty also facilitated the maintenance of public order along the common border. Police from both sides were permitted to use tracks and roads which ran along parts of the boundary "without passport or toll of any kind."[100] Furthermore, Palestinian police and civilians were granted the use, for their convenience, of certain paths located wholly within Lebanon.[101] In cases of emergency the signatories were allowed "to use the tracks and roads forming the frontier for any movement of troops, but notice

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[98] Ibid., p. 4.

[99] Ibid., p. 8.

[100] Ibid., p. 2.

[101] Ibid.

of such use shall be given to the other Government concerned as soon as possible."[102] However neither side was granted the right of "hot pursuit" in attempts to apprehend common criminals, political dissidents, or terrorists seeking refuge on the other side of the border.[103]

The "good neighbourly relations" accord of 1926 enabled the people of the frontier region to escape--though only temporarily--the greatest dangers inherent in the creation of the boundary. The benefits of the liberal frontier policy accrued most noticeably to the citizens of southern Lebanon. Thanks to Beirut's lack of interest, the region functioned economically for several years as a virtual extension of northern Palestine. According to one observer.

> During the Mandatory period most South Lebanese families had at least one member working in Palestine; and a large number of frontier villages lived on the proceeds of smuggling--hashish (en route to Egypt), arms and foodstuffs, and often "illegal" Jewish immigrants to Palestine; Jewish manufactured goods to Lebanon and Syria.[104]

The Arab-Israeli war of 1948 and the subsequent General Armistice Agreement between Israel and Lebanon caused the suspension of the 1926 agreement. The treaty was completely voided on 30 October 1953, when Israel's ambassador to the United Nations announced that "Israel does not inherit the

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[102] Ibid., p. 4.

[103] Ibid., p. 6.

[104] Ray Alan, "Lebanon: Israel's Friendliest Neighbor," Commentary, Volume 13 Number 6, June 1952, p. 556.

international treaties signed by the United Kingdom as mandatory power..."[105] The closing of the border was a severe blow to southern Lebanon. As is discussed in section V below, the 1948 war caused a dramatic demographic transformation in the frontier region. On Israel's side of the line Arab villages were vacated during and after the fighting, and occupied by Jewish settlers who had neither the need nor inclination to develop economic relationships with their Arab neighbors on Lebanon's side of the border. Cut off from economic opportunities in Israel, southern Lebanon languished. Beirut's traditional lack of concern for the predominantly Shi'ite region was reinforced by the belief, commonly held by members of Lebanon's political elite, that Israel would someday seize the area anyway. By the latter part of the 1960s the south's misery was compounded by fighting in the frontier area between Palestinian commandos and the Israel Defense Force. Again Beirut seemed justified in not investing significantly in southern Lebanon. Yet, as The Economist pointed out,

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[105] Abraham H. Hirsh, "Utilization of International Rivers in the Middle East," American Journal of International Law, Volume 50, Number 1, January 1956, p. 81n. According to Kenneth J. Keith, Israel is the only state which refuses to "succeed" to the treaties made by its predecessor. See "Succession to Bilateral Treaties by Seceeding States," American Journal of International Law, Volume 61 Number 2, April 1967, p. 524.

> The presence of the Palestinian guerrilla units and the Israeli raids have provided an excuse for inaction, but it is hard not to suspect that there has been a lack of concern for the section of the population which is least strongly represented in the corridors of power.[106]

The great suffering endured by the people of southern Lebanon, consisting of economic depression compounded in recent years by widespread death and destruction, is undoubtedly the most lamentable consequence of the 1920 Franco-British Convention.

## C. NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

The impact of the new boundary was not limited to the inhabitants of the frontier region. The decision of Great Britain and France to place the boundary where they did carried with it some significant implications both for Zionism and Lebanese nationalism.

From the Zionist perspective the implications of Palestine's new frontier were quite serious indeed. As Howard M. Sachar has observed,

> To the north and northeast, the country was deprived of almost all the major water resources--the Litani River, the northernmost sources of the Jordan, the spring of Hermon, and the greater part of the Yarmuk--needed for the power and irrigation plans that were even then being formulated...Moreover, by failing to approximate any

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[106] "Not Just a Tiny Strip of Land," The Economist, 26 January 1974, p. 15 of a special insert survey on Lebanon.

natural geographic boundaries, the borders left the country all but indefensible militarily...[107]

Zionist misgivings about the new boundary were not however shared by Great Britain. The actual British approach to the question of water resources--as opposed to the negotiating posture maintained through the early months of 1920--may be summarized by the following exchange between some very prominent British officials which took place on 10 September 1919. Arthur Bonar Law, the Lord Privy Seal, asked his colleagues to define "the value of Palestine." General Allenby replied "that it had no economic value whatsoever." Lloyd George had nothing to say about economics, but insisted nonetheless that "The mandate over Palestine would give us great prestige."[108] Later, when questioned in Parliament about his government's failure to secure the waters of the Litani River for Palestine, the Prime Minister responded by shouting

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[107]Sachar, The Emergence of the Middle East: 1914-24, p. 284. It should also be noted however that in addition to including the northern Jewish settlements within Palestine, the British and Zionists secured from France two water-related concessions at the expense not of Lebanon, but of Syria. First, that part of the Jordan River north of Lake Tiberias was kept entirely within Palestine by demarcating the boundary about 500 meters to the east of the river. Second, Lake Tiberias itself was kept entirely within Palestine, to include a ten meter-wide strip of its north-eastern shore. Se Yehuda Karmon, Israel: A Regional Geography, p. 73.

[108]Ingrams, Palestine Papers 1917-1922: Seeds of Conflict, p. 77.

> No: They have never been included in Palestine. The agreement entered into M. Clemenceau and myself [in December 1918] was that Palestine was to be the old historic Palestine, that is, from Dan to Beersheba. That does not include the Litani River.[109]

The economy of Palestine was obviously not considered to be an issue of great importance by the British Empire.

Likewise Great Britain did not share the Zionist apprehension over the military aspects of the northern frontier. Having excluded France from playing a role in the governing of Palestine, the British had succeeded in placing strategic depth between the Suez Canal and French forces in the Levant. A northern defense line anchored on the Litani River, one which certainly would have appealed to the Zionists, would have added little to Britain's ability to defend the canal. Nevertheless, as Palestine's High Commissioner reported in 1925, "Palestine is a small territory, but it is broken up by hills and mountains... Its frontiers to the north and east are open at almost any point."[110] Indeed, one would be hard pressed to identify terrain anywhere along the boundary that is well suited for either defensive military operations or routine border security. This is especially the case when viewing the ground from the perspective of Palestine (Israel). After

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[109]Khalid Kishtainy, Whither Israel? A Study of Zionist Expansionism (Beirut: Palestine Liberation Organization Research Center, 1970, p. 21.

[110]Samuel, Report of the High Commissioner, p. 3.

leaving the imposing natural obstacle of Ras En Naqurah, the boundary meanders through the open terrain of Upper Galille through wadis and along a plateau which slopes sharply to the south (into Israel) and gently toward north (into Lebanon). Only along the Neftali Ridge, which overlooks the Hula Valley to the East and Wadi Dubbah to the west, can terrain be identified as suitable (from the Israeli perspective) for security operations. The only "natural" feature of the area which tended to discourage attacks from the north was the fact that the major lines of communication in the upper Galilee region ran west and east rather than north and south. Yet the Zionists of 1923, perhaps anticipating the day when force would have to be used to transform Palestine into the Jewish State, still had good reason to be dissatisfied with the security aspect of the northern boundary.

Notwithstanding the existence of substantial economic and military problems (which will be discussed below in greater detail, in sections IV and V respectively), the Zionist movement was not, in 1923, in any position to reverse the Anglo-French decision on the northern frontier. It is clear however that the Zionists did retain hope that the boundary could someday be adjusted in Palestine's favor, and such an adjustment need not come as a result of war. In the 1920s the French authorities in Beirut were approached on the subject of permitting Zionist settlements to be established in southern Lebanon. Dr. Weizmann himself

reported that he was told by the French High Commissioner that, "Of course...I would not want you to work in southern Syria, because immediately after you'd come to Tyre and Saida you would want the frontier rectified." Weizmann neither confirmed nor refuted the High Commissioner's observation.[111] It is in any event clear that although the northern boundary settlement frustrated Zionist economic and security planning, it did not shut the door on the matter forever. Instead of acknowledging their defeat and writing it off as a lesson learned in the tangled web of international diplomacy, Zionist leaders in Palestine continued to believe that their setback could somehow be reversed. As recently as 21 March 1978, the Defense Minister of Israel was berated by a member of the Knesset (the Israeli parliament) for not simply seizing the Litani River during Israel's invasion of southern Lebanon. The MK, Mrs. Kohen, shouted, "Your uncle, the late President Weizman, knew at the time the historic significance of the Litani." Ezer Weizman's reply: "It is not from you that I will receive references about Hayyim Weizman."[112] In retrospect it appears that Dr. Weizmann's calm diplomacy, based as it was upon economic justifications for the inclusion of the Litani and Hasbani in Palestine, helped to insure that

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[111] Chaim Weizmann, Trial and Error, The Autobiography of Chaim Weizmann (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1949), p. 366.

[112] Jerusalem Domestic Service, 21 March 1978, as quoted by the Foreign Broadcast Information Service, FBIS-MEA-78-56, 22 March 1978, p. N3.

mainstream Zionist irredentism toward southern Lebanon would not have a strong religious component. Unlike post-1948 Arab Jerusalem or that part of mandatory Palestine annexed by Jordan (the "West Bank"), few Zionists would point to southern Lebanon as being part of the "Eretz Israel" (Land of Israel) promised by God to the Hebrews. Had Weizman adopted some of Lloyd George's religious fervor and declared the Litani to be part of Eretz Israel, Zionist irredentism probably would have been fulfilled long ago.

Zionism's strong desire to expand Palestine in such a way as to secure hydrographic resources and defensible terrain contrasted sharply with the indifference shown by Lebanese nationalists toward their southern districts. France, to be sure, had scored a "victory" by securing a very generous southern frontier for the new state of Greater Lebanon. The new borders of the Lebanese state substantially satisfied the expansionist dreams of Lebanese nationalists, and served French imperial interests by extending the political sway of a narrow, largely Francophile Christian majority over the largest land area possible. Yet by attaching the largely Shi'ite south[113] and other

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[113]According to a census conducted by the French government in 1921, the sectarian composition of southern Lebanon's population was as follows: 13,397 Sunni Muslims (located mainly in the towns of Tyre and Sidon); 62,796 Shi'ite Muslims; 3,519 Druze; and 31,071 Christians. See Arnold J. Toynbee, ed., Survey of International Affairs 1925 Volume I (London: Oxford University Press, 1927), p. 355.

Muslim areas to the predominantly Maronite Mount Lebanon, France also institutionalized unrest within the Lebanese political system. Philip Hitti pointed out that the creation of Greater Lebanon by France was at best a mixed blessing and at worst a political time bomb. "What the country gained in area it lost in cohesion. It lost its internal equilibrium, though geographically and economically it became more viable. The Christian overwhelming majority was seriously reduced."[114]

In order to appreciate the attitude of Greater Lebanon's political elite toward the south, it is necessary to recall that the "Lebanese nationalism" of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was really an outgrowth of the Maronite national identity which had developed during that sect's 1,000-year occupation of Mount Lebanon. Inasmuch as Greater Lebanon was the offspring of Lebanese (Maronite) nationalism and French imperialism, it comes as no great surprise that the rulers of the new political entity manifested little interest in the rural, poor, and predominantly non-Christian south. Consequently, "The French concentrated their development efforts on the mountain and Beirut..."[115] By ignoring the south France accurately reflected the desires of her Lebanese collaborators. Even after independence the first President of the Lebanese Republic, Bishara al-Khouri, reportedly told an interviewer that "the 'Lebaneseness'

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[114]Phillip K. Hitti. Lebanon in History: From the Earliest Times to the Present (New York: St. Martin's Press,1967), p. 490.

[115]"Not Just a Tiny Strip of Land,"The Economist, p. 15.

(Lubnaniyat) of the predominantly shi'i southern region had not been finally established," and for that reason the area was not entitled to large-scale developmental assistance.[116] Recent research has also revealed that in 1932 Emile Eddé, a leading Maronite politican who would serve as his country's President from 1936 to 1941, tried to convince France to get rid of Lebanon's southern region. He wrote a memorandum to the Under-Secretary of State in the French Foreign Ministry suggesting (among other things) that southern Lebanon, consisting as it did of an overwhelming Shi'ite majority, be detached from Lebanon and transformed into an autonomous state under a French administrator.[117] Although France never acted upon Eddé's suggestion, the memorandum provides an insight into the thinking of a leading member of the Maronite elite during the mandate period, and helps to explain why the Lebanese government paid little attention to the needs or potentialities of the south.

Beirut's policy of ignoring the south would eventually facilitate the destruction of Lebanon itself. The south, regarded by Lebanon's leaders as a virtually useless appendage, became a military vacuum which in some areas was eventually filled by Palestinian commandos who would use

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[116] N. Raphaeli, "Development Planning: Lebanon," Western Political Quarterly, Volume XX No. 3, September 1967, p. 719.

[117] Meir Zamir, "Emile Eddé and the Territorial Integrity of Lebanon," Middle Eastern Studies, Volume 14, No. 2, May 1978, pp. 232-233.

Lebanese territory as a base from which to attack Israeli military and civilian targets. As discussed in some detail below in sections V and VI, the absence of an effective official Lebanese presence in the frontier area encouraged Israel to act unilaterally against the armed Palestinians. Lebanon suffered repeated attacks at the hands of Israel, some of which were in retaliation for the activities of Palestinian commandos and terrorists, but all of which had the objective of forcing a confrontation in Lebanon between Lebanese nationalists (who wanted nothing to do with the Arab-Israeli conflict) and Palestinian/pan-Arab nationalists for whom the struggle against Zionism was the fundamental reason for political activity. By the Spring of 1975 Israel had succeeded in fostering civil war in Lebanon. It is very doubtful that Israel would have succeeded in Lebanon had the authorities in Beirut made sincere efforts from the beginning to integrate the south into the rest of the country. Yet southern Lebanon's "value" to the Lebanese nationalists of the post-World War I era lay solely in the space occupied by the region on the map. The inclusion of the area in Greater Lebanon satisfied the emotional yearning of Lebanese nationalists for the territory of "historic" Lebanon, but the land and the people living on it were irrelevant to the French-orchestrated political and economic processes taking place in Paris and Beirut.

The broad political significance of the 1923 boundary settlement can therefore be summarized as follows: Palestine

was deprived of an area which the Zionists wanted and which they thought they needed very badly; Lebanon was handed a piece of territory which it "wanted" but for which it had no particular use; and the people living in the contested region were considered to be irrelevant by everyone concerned. The Anglo-French compromise may have helped to facilitate a smooth working relationship between the two wartime allies, but the cost was high. Zionism lost an area which it deemed essential for the defense and development of Palestine; Lebanon gained an area which would later prove to be an enormous political liability; and the people of the frontier region found their livlihoods and eventually their lives in jeopardy. It was the fundamental assymetry between Zionist irredentism toward southern Lebanon and Beirut's indifference toward the region that kept alive a territorial controversy supposedly sealed by the accords of 1920 and 1923. Succeeding sections of this study will examine the evolution of that controversy in terms of economic and security factors, and analyze how the controversy has brought into question the very existence of Lebanon.

## IV. THE EVOLVING WATER CONTROVERSY

Between 1923 and 1968 the issue of southern Lebanon's abundant water resources and their disposition was the prime ingredient in the residue of distrust and disappointment left behind by the boundary settlement. The purpose of this section is to analyze the hydrographic legacy of the Anglo-French territorial compromise, focusing on Zionist efforts to undo or at least mitigate the setbacks contained within the accords of 1920 and 1923. It will be seen that the intensity of Zionist irredentism toward southern Lebanon was largely a function of Beirut's failure to exploit the region's water resources. It was not until the Lebanese government completed, in the late 1960s, the first phase of a project designed to exploit the Litani River that Israeli pressure on Lebanese water resources began to subside.

The boundary agreements of 1920 and 1923 cut sharply into the most optimistic Zionist estimates as to the amount of water available to support extensive Jewish agricultural colonization in Palestine. As discussed above in section II, Zionist planners had hoped to divert part of the flow of the Litani River eastward into the Hasbani, where it would flow south into the Jordan Valley and eventually be piped overland to the Negev Desert. Yet the 1920 compromise had left the Litani entirely within Lebanon, fewer than 4,000

tantalizing meters from the Palestine border at its closest point. Furthermore, neither the 1920 nor 1923 agreements even mentioned the Litani in the context of future bilateral developmental schemes. The 1920 accord, as noted in section II above, did call for the creation of a commission to study the possibility of jointly exploiting the "Upper Jordan" (Hasbani) River. Yet as Hirsch commented in 1956, the commission "seems [never] to have been formed."[118] In short, the Zionists had failed to secure even limited access to the waters of southern Lebanon.

The issue of water resources in the Palestine/Israel-Lebanon frontier region will be examined in three aspects: (1) continuing Zionist interest in southern Lebanon's most important waterway, the Litani River; (2) the role played by independent Lebanon in Arab efforts to divert the headwaters of the Jordan River away from Israel's Hula Valley; and (3) the climax of water-related tensions before, during and after the June 1967 Arab-Israeli war.

A. THE LITANI

Zionism's "loss" of the Litani did not, at least during the mandatory period, translate into Lebanon's gain. Writing in 1936, Sa'id B. Himadeh commented that, "At present the river is utilized to some extent for irrigation purposes

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[118] Hirsch, "Utilization of International Rivers in the Middle East," p. 88.

but no use has yet been made of its generating powers."[119] The limited amount of irrigation undertaken by 1936 was restricted almost entirely to the fertile Biqa' and coastal plain,[120] and France's contribution to the river's exploitation (aside from plans and studies never effectuated) only amounted to a few flood control projects completed between 1924 and 1928.[121] During World War II British military authorities in Lebanon encouraged the "Qasimiyah Irrigation Scheme" which attempted to water the coastal plain "from Sidon to a point ten kilometers south of Tyre."[122] The plan was abandoned during the war, but was later revived by independent Lebanon.

Franco-Lebanese neglect of the Litani did not go unnoticed by the Zionists. In 1934 the League of Nations gave its approval to the Anglo-French boundary agreement of 1923, "and after that the Zionist leaders slowly lost hope of ever achieving a change in the frontier line."[123] Yet in

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[119] Sa'id B. Himadeh, ed., Economic Organization of Syria (Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1936), p. 34.

[120] James Hudson, "The Litani River of Lebanon: An Example of Middle Eastern Water Development," Middle East Journal, Volume 25, No. 1, Winter 1971, p.7.

[121] Hedley V. Cooke, Challenge and Response in the Middle East (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1952), p. 137.

[122] Ibid., p. 139.

[123] Frischwasser-Ra'anan, The Frontiers of a Nation, p. 139.

1936 the Zionists received a small measure of encouragement in the matter of sharing with Lebanon the fruits of the Litani's presence in Upper Galilee. A study on regional electricity prepared for the American University of Beirut suggested that, "The Litani concession in south Lebanon could advantageously be given to one company which would serve Sidon, Tyre, Nabatiyyah, the Marj 'Ayun district and possibly Safad in Palestine."[124] [Emphasis added.] Yet the Zionist interest in the Litani had far more to do with irrigating the Negev Desert in southern Palestine, thereby facilitating Jewish immigration, than it did with providing electrical power to the Galilee. In 1943 the Lebanese engineering firm of Alfred Naccache and Jewish engineers of the Palestine Water Cooperative conducted a joint study which concluded that Lebanon could usefully employ only one-seventh of the Litani's flow. The study recommended therefore that most of the water be diverted from a point near the river's "elbow" through a tunnel into Palestine. In return for the water, Lebanon would receive "all or part of the power produced by the drop from the mountains to the Jordan Valley." The study heartened the Zionists, whose "dreams of Negev development could not be fully realized without the Litani water."[125] It is worth noting however that the underlying

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[124] Basim A. Faris, Electric Power in Syria and Palestine (Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1936), p. 292.

[125] Dana Adams Schmidt, "Prospects for a Solution of the Jordan River Dispute," Middle Eastern Affairs, Volume VI, Number 1, January 1955, p. 4.

assumption of the 1943 report was that Lebanon would use the Litani for irrigation only, and not for a fully autonomous power production project.

It certainly appeared however that the possibility of Zionist-Lebanese collaboration in the exploitation of the Litani was gaining momentum in the 1940s. Yet the Arab-Israeli war of 1948 served to fundamentally alter the prospects for such a cooperative undertaking. The Zionist victory had engendered much bitterness in the Arab world, and the Lebanese government, built as it was upon the flimsy basis of local and confessional interests, could ill-afford to provoke Arab nationalists--both within and outside of Lebanon--by striking a quick bargain with the new Jewish State. Besides, as Charles Issawi pointed out, Lebanon "profited from the Arab-Israeli war and the subsequent boycott which eliminated the potential competition of the port of Haifa and the money market of Tel Aviv."[126] Furthermore, a study undertaken by the United Nations Economic Survey Mission for the Middle East in 1949 suggested that the projected hydroelectric needs of Lebanon were quite extensive, and that Lebanon could use far more of the Litani's flow than the meagre fourteen percent envisioned by the survey of 1943 for the unilateral production of hydroelectricity. Yet the 1949 report left open the possibility that a portion

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[126]Charles Issawi, "Economic Development and Liberalism in Lebanon," Middle East Journal, Volume 18, Number 3, Summer 1964, p. 285.

of the Litani could be diverted over to the Hasbani for eventual use by Israel.[127]

Once the question of cooperative water development became wrapped up in the troubled politics of the area, Lebanese-Israeli collaboration became an impossibility. Any sign of Lebanese willingness to supply "Arab" water to the Negev, thereby facilitating Jewish immigration to Israel, would have been regarded as treachery not only by other Arab states, but by many Lebanese citizens as well. As Saliba has observed, "For Israel the development of its Negev area is not critically needed to feed the existing population. Rather the purpose is absorption of Jewish immigrants which Israel voluntarily seeks...for defensive purposes."[128]

Israel was not at all sympathetic with Lebanon's delicate position in the Arab world. During the course of fighting in 1948, Zionist forces had occupied a strip of Lebanese territory adjoining the 'elbow' of the Litani River. Under the terms of the General Armistice Agreement signed in March 1949, Israeli units pulled back from the Litani and returned to what had been mandatory Palestine. According to Earl Berger, Israel's willingness to abandon

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[127] Don Peretz, "Development of the Jordan Valley Waters," Middle East Journal, Volume 9, Number 4, Autumn 1955, p. 406.

[128] Samir N. Saliba, The Jordan River Dispute (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1968), p. 45.

her foothold on the Litani was predicated on her belief that Lebanon could be induced to sign a formal peace treaty. Thereafter, presumably, the two countries would have proceeded with the joint exploitation of the Litani envisioned by the 1943 report, and the infant Israeli state would at the same time avoid the international complications sure to follow any formal annexation of Lebanese territory. According to Berger, "If they [the Israelis] had felt...that the Lebanese did not also consider the negotiations as the penultimate step towards peace they would never have withdrawn."[129]

Having therefore failed to achieve through diplomacy that which her soldiers had won in combat, the Zionist leaders were once again forced to abandon plans of piping the abundant waters of the Litani southward to the Negev Desert.

In July 1953 Israel's cabinet approved a plan to draw water from the Jordan River at the Banat Ya'qub Bridge (north of Lake Tiberias) for diversion to the Negev. Although her failure to strike a bargain with Lebanon over the Litani had wrecked plans for large-scale desert irrigation, Israel decided that even a small Jewish agrarian presence in the Negev would be an important symbol of the vitality of the Jewish State. With or without Lebanese water, Israel was determined to make patches of the desert bloom.

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[129] Earl Berger, The Covenant and the Sword (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1965), p. 30.

Work on the canal which would carry the water southward began in September 1953. Thanks to international complications, however, the project was short-lived. The diversion point for the scheme was located in a demilitarized zone created by the 1949 Israeli-Syrian General Armistice Agreement. Syria protested that the project was a clear violation of that accord, and her position was supported both by United Nations observers and the United States. American opposition was underscored by the Eisenhower administration's decision to suspend all economic aid to Israel pending cessation of work on the project. Faced with a solid wall of international opposition, Israel stopped work on the diversion project on 27 October 1953.

The United States, which played the crucial role in forcing Israel to back down, believed that the potentially explosive water controversy could be converted into a showcase of Arab-Israeli cooperation. Regional cooperation over water, a substance needed by all regardless of political persuasion, could aid in the resettlement of Palestinian refugees and lead perhaps to accomodations of a political nature. America's decision to pursue peace in the Middle East by encouraging a multilateral water agreement served to once again focus attention on the Litani.

In October 1953 President Eisenhower dispatched a personal envoy, Mr. Eric Johnston, to the Middle East for the purpose of trying to convince Israel and the Arab states of the wisdom of undertaking the joint development of the

Jordan Valley. Johnston carried with him a plan drawn up in the offices of the engineering firm of Charles T. Main. The "Main Plan" called for a dam and reservoir to be built in Lebanon on the Hasbani River, but excluded the Litani from the Arab-Israeli development plan "on the grounds that it is a Lebanese national river that could not be included in an international scheme."[130]

It was the Main Plan's omission of the Litani from use in regional water sharing that prompted the loudest Israeli objections. In order to counter Johnston's proposal, Israel retained the services of John S. Cotton, an American engineer. The "Cotton Plan" was unveiled in February 1954, and constituted Israel's negotiating position with regard to water. It tied the Litani into a regional development scheme, and estimated that the surplus water not needed for irrigation in Lebanon amounted to nearly fifty percent of the river's flow. Accordingly the Cotton Plan urged that large quantities of Litani water be diverted to Israel from a point near Merj 'Uyun. As one observed noted at the time of the negotations,

> Given the right atmosphere...the Israelis hope Lebanon might be induced to give Israel Litani water in exchange for power. They hope Lebanon would on this basis sell up to 400,000,000 cubic meters per annum of the Litani's flow of about 850,000,000 cubic meters.[131]

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[130] Schmidt, "Prospects for a Solution of the Jordan River Dispute," p. 5.

[131] Ibid., p. 10.

As was the case with the 1943 report, Israel's hopes for access to the Litani rested on the assumption that Lebanon would not attempt to harness the river's hydroelectric potential on its own.

It must be emphasized that Israel's "hope" of Lebanese cooperation was simply that: a hope. As Brecher pointed out, "while a strong case could be made on technical and geo-economic grounds, Israel's legal claim was non-existent; the Litani was a wholly national river--of an enemy state."[132] James Hudson agreed, stating that "Since Israel has no real share of the Litani Basin, it has no claim by right under international law to any Litani water."[133] Therefore, according to Peretz, "Israel stood a far better chance of eventually obtaining some Litani water if an acceptable arrangement were first made and executed with the Arab states for the Jordan. Such an agreement might pave the way for a deal with Lebanon later on."[134] In the absence of such an agreement, an arrangement with Lebanon seemed to be out of the question. As James Hudson has pointed out.

> With the continuing Arab-Israel dispute, Lebanon would not risk its standing in the Arab world to sell water to Israel. Secondly, if an arrangement were made, past decades of suspicion might be difficult to overcome. Israel would possibly be unwilling to rely on Lebanese goodwill as a guarantee of future deliveries, and

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[132] Michael Brecher, Decisions in Israel's Foreign Policy (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975), p. 197.

[133] Hudson, "The Litani River of Lebanon," p. 13.

[134] Peretz, "Development of the Jordan River Waters," p. 406.

> Lebanon would be hesitant to allow Israel an interest in Lebanese water that might give an excuse for intervention. Finally, if Lebanon did sell water out of the country, past the eyes of the Shi'a farmers in the south who do not have irrigation water, there would be considerable local discontent.135

Israel apparently recognized that it would be impossible for the politically-fragmented Lebanese Republic to break ranks with the other Arab states and sign a water sharing agreement. Following a course similar to that pointed out by Peretz, Israel in early 1955 dropped her claim to a share of the Litani's waters, and even permitted the idea of a Hasbani River dam to die in negotiations.[136] It appeared at first that Israel's flexible bargaining position would in fact lead to an agreement on the joint Arab-Israeli development of the Jordan Valley, and that such an accord would free Lebanon from the unspoken prohibition placed upon her against making a deal with Israel. During the summer of 1955 an Arab-Israeli water compromise seemed to be within reach. Yet on 11 October of the same year the Arab League decided against signing an agreement with the Jewish state.

Twice therefore, in 1949 and 1955, Israel withdrew from the Litani--once militarily and once diplomatically--in the hope of facilitating broader agreements that would eventually allow her to achieve the long-standing Zionist goal: assured and recognized access to the waters of the Litani River. On both occasions the strategy failed. In

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[135] Hudson, "The Litani River of Lebanon," p. 13.

[136] Peretz, "Development of the Jordan River Waters," pp. 409-410.

1949 Israel discovered that Lebanon could not make a separate peace; and in 1955 she discovered that an agreement with the states of the Arab League--one which would pave the way for an Israeli-Lebanese accord on the Litani--was equally elusive. Even though one observer thought, in 1955, that Israel's renunciation of her claim to a share of the Litani's waters was tactical in nature and "need not be final,"[137] the water negotiations of the mid-1950s in fact represented Israel's last chance to draw significant amounts of water from Lebanon's largest river. Within a few short years the fundamental assumption upon which Zionist calculations had been based would change.

In June 1954 a report was issued by the U. S. Bureau of Reclamation, whose experts estimated that Lebanon could usefully employ almost all of the Litani's flow for power production as well as irrigation. The report recommended that Lebanon undertake a 25-year developmental project that would cost $97.3 million.[138] Israel argued against Lebanon's unilateral use of the Litani for power production, arguing that the 550 meter drop in elevation from the Litani to the Jordan Valley was far better suited for that purpose than the mere 150 meter drop from the river's westward bend to

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[137] Schmidt, "Prospects for a Solution of the Jordan River Dispute," p. 10.

[138] Ibid.

the Lebanese coastal plain.[139] Yet the "Litani Project" approved by Beirut in 1955, and based upon the Bureau of Reclamation's report, did not envision producing hydroelectric power from the lower course of the Litani. Instead a dam and reservoir would be constructed at Karaoun in the southern Biqa', tunnels would be blasted through the mountains to the west, and a large volume of water would be diverted down through the mountains to the Awwali River where hydroelectric power would be produced.

Beirut's decision to proceed with a comprehensive development project for the Litani after decades of inaction seems to have been inspired by two factors: Israeli pressure; and an insatiable demand for electricity in the booming metropolis of Beirut. Israel's loudly-voiced complaints to the effect that Lebanon was wasting the Litani by allowing its waters to flow unused into the Mediterranean caused considerable worry within the Lebanese political elite. Knowing that the country lacked both the military capability to defend the south, and the political strength to reach a water sharing agreement with Israel, the leaders of Lebanon found themselves obliged to do something. They elected to try to remove the basis for Israel's criticism, and to do so in such a way as to benefit primarily the commercial and banking interests of the country. A totally autonomous power producing project seemed to be the ideal course of action to follow.

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[139] Ibid.

When construction began on the Litani Project in 1957, the plan emphasized hydroelectric production but included provisions for irrigating "parts of the southern Biqa', scattered patches of good land in the Galilean Uplands, and parts of the Sidon-Beirut coastal area."[140] The project evolved however into one whose primary thrust was the provision of electricity to Beirut. This came about for two reasons: the near-immediate economic payoff resulting from the production of electricity; and southern Lebanon's lack of influence in the capital. Strong protests by the political and religious leaders of southern Lebanon eventually forced Beirut, in the mid-1960s, to adopt a plan whereby enough water would be provided to irrigate patches of good land south of the lower Litani, and near the towns of Nabatiyah, Sidon, and Merj 'Uyun.[141]

Phase I of the Litani Project--the hydroelectric phase--was completed before the start of the June 1967 Arab-Israel War.[142] The assumption upon which the Cotton Plan and previous Zionist plans for utilizing the Litani had been based were dramatically changed. Whereas Israel had hoped to get 400 million cubic meters of water from the

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[140]Hudson, "The Litani River of Lebanon," p. 8.

[141]Ibid., p. 11.

[142]John K. Cooley, "Lebanon Fears Loss of Water to Israel," Christian Science Monitor, 23 March 1978, p. 3.

Litani, the creation of the Karaoun dam and reservoir left only about 100 million cubic meters for the lower Litani. The very location of the dam and reservoir, well-removed from the frontier region, altered the Zionist assumption that hydroelectric diversions would take place near Merj 'Uyun in the vicinity of the border. Although Karaoun was one of the places mentioned in the Zionist Statement of February 1919, the diversion site was for all practical purposes located in a place where Israel had little interest or influence.

American diplomacy and engineering expertise enabled Lebanon to achieve two very important objectives: the sustaining of a rapid urban economic expansion through the provision of cheap hydroelectric power; and the deflection of Zionist claims to a share of the Litani, claims which had been based to a large degree on the contrast between Zionist need and Lebanese neglect. It was Lebanon's decision to develop her hydroelectric potentialities on her own that blocked Zionist access to the Litani.

## B. THE LEBANESE ROLE IN ARAB DIVERSION SCHEMES

Israel was determined, with or without Arab cooperation, to divert part of the Jordan River's flow for irrigation purposes. Consequently, in February 1956 a "National Water Carrier Project" for irrigating parts of the Negev Desert was approved, and the scheme was activated in November 1958. In order to avoid armistice complications, the diversion

point was shifted from the Banat Ya'qub Bridge to a spot entirely within Israeli territory on the northwestern corner of Lake Tiberias.

Yet so far as the Arab states were concerned, the 1956 Israeli plan was every bit as objectionable as the 1953 scheme. The principle, from the Arab point of view, was the same: "Arab water" from the rivers Hasbani and Banias would flow into the Jordan and eventually be used to support Zionist agricultural colonies in "occupied Palestine." On 30 January 1961 the Political Committee of the Arab League adopted a plan designed to defeat the Israeli National Water Carrier Project. Much to the discomfort of Beirut's political leaders, the plan assigned to Lebanon a very prominent role in the coming confrontation with Israel. The scheme amounted to an attempt to reroute the Arab headwaters of the Jordan--the Hasbani and Banias--away from Israel. The Hasbani would be diverted partially to the west into the lower Litani, with a somewhat smaller quantity going eastward into Syria's Banias River. The Banias would in turn be connected by canal to the Yarmuk River, a tributary of the Jordan forming the boundary between Syria and the Jordanian Kingdom. The effect of the project would be to greatly lower the amount of water flowing into the Jordan Valley between the Israel-Lebanon-Syria triborder area and Lake Tiberias.

Israel's reaction to such a project was understandably negative. Noting that the Arab League had earmarked part of the water from the diverted Hasbani for irrigation in southern Lebanon, Israel argued--just as Zionists had argued

for decades--that "Lebanon has ample water for irrigation; arable land, not water, has always been the factor limiting the development of Lebanese agriculture."[143] Noting that Lebanon was continuing to "waste"[144] the waters of the Litani, Israel argued that the Arab League diversion scheme

> ...would robe the villages in the northern Hula district of the waters of the Hasbani and the Banias which they have been using for centuries. As ancient canals and their ancient names still testify, those waters have been their primary source of irrigation for hundreds of years.
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> But what is even more serious: the effect of the diversion on Israel would be to diminish, by at least a third, the supply of water to its Lake Kinneret-Negev water project, to cut off the sweet waters of the River Jordan's tributaries, and to add heavily to the salinity of the Lake, which is the intake point of the project, thereby rendering its waters largely unfit for irrigation.[145]

Lebanon of course was squarely on the spot. Irrigating the Negev was a venerable Zionist dream, and now Lebanon seemed to be willing to convert her passivity toward Israel into an aggressive program of water denial. In January 1964 the Arab League voted to implement the project, and Lebanon decided to proceed with her share of the undertaking without inviting forces from other Arab states to help

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[143] "The Arab Plan to Divert the Headwaters of the River Jordan," Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Jerusalem), April 1965, in Yoneh Alexander and Nicholas N. Kittrie, eds., Crescent and Star: Arab and Israeli Perspectives on the Middle East Conflict (New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1973), p. 289.

[144] Ibid.

[145] Ibid., pp. 288-289.

defend southern Lebanon. By the early summer of 1965 a track had been leveled from the Hasbani in the direction of the Syrian border, and work had begun on a diversion canal. According to Bar-Yaacov, however, the government of Israel was determined to stop the diversion of the Hasbani even through force if necessary, and such a message was clearly conveyed by Israel to Beirut.[146] Sensing that she had gone quite far enough in demonstrating her "Arabness," Lebanon elected to stop work on the diversion project in July 1965.

Syria continued to work on the Banias diversion site, which from time to time was attacked by Israeli forces. The June 1967 Arab-Israeli war, caused in large part by tensions arising from the water crisis, put a sudden and final end to the Arab League's diversion plan. When the war ended Israel was in complete possession of the Banias River, the key to the whole scheme. The Hasbani of Lebanon was the only source of the Jordan not located within Israeli-controlled territory.

## C. THE HYDROGRAPHIC FACTOR IN PERSPECTIVE

In a period of only six days, from 5 through 10 June 1967, the amount of territory controlled by the Jewish State tripled. The Golan Heights, the balance of mandatory Palestine, and the entire Sinai Peninsula fell under Israeli military occupation. All of Israel's neighbors, with the notable exception of Lebanon, went to war with their Zionist

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[146] N. Bar-Yaacov, The Israel-Syrian Armistice (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1967), p. 148.

enemy and lost. In the wake of his country's stunning military success, Defense Minister Moshe Dayan was quoted as stating that Israel had at last achieved "provisionally satisfying frontiers, with the exception of those with Lebanon.[147] [Emphasis added.] Dayan's statement, coupled with Israel's renunciation of the 1949 General Armistice Agreement with Lebanon (see section V below) led many Lebanese to conclude that Israel intended to "invade and annex a part of Lebanon that would incorporate the Hasbani River."[148]

Had Israel seized the Hasbani in 1967 she would have completed the job of securing the sources of the Jordan River. With the Dan River inside of Israel proper, and the Banias controlled from June 1967-on by Israeli military forces, only the Hasbani lay beyond Israel's grasp. In order to understand Israel's somewhat bellicose attitude toward Lebanon in the months following June 1967, it is necessary to acknowledge that water disputes had contributed heavily to the tensions which lead ultimately to war. From the Israeli perspective Lebanon had not only frustrated Zionist claims to a share of the Litani, but had also gone as far as possible in support of Arab diversion schemes involving the Jordan headwaters. Inasmuch as Syrian-Israeli skirmishing over water diversion projects had helped to

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[147] Cooley, "Lebanon Fears Loss of Water to Israel," p. 3.

[148] Paul A. Jureidini and William E. Hazen, The Palestinian Movement in Politics (Lexington: D. C. Heath and Company, 1976), p. 59.

ignite the June 1967 war, Israel's position was that Lebanon had indeed played a role--albeit an ineffective one--in making war possible. Viewed in this light, Dayan's statement about the unsatisfactory nature of the Israeli-Lebanese frontier probably reflected two considerations: Israel's desire to insure that the one remaining source of the Jordan beyond her control would never again be tampered with; and a feeling that Lebanon ought somehow to share in the disasterous consequences suffered by her Arab allies.

Israeli frustration with and antagonism toward Lebanon over the water issue had become apparent in the years immediately preceeding the June 1967 war. Three factors contributed to Israel's displeasure. First was the issue of the Litani. As Phase I of the Litani Project neared completion in the mid-1960s, Israel realized that the amount of water left for the river's lower course--water that could presumably be diverted to Israel--would be sharply reduced. Zionist exploitation plans which had been first drawn in the early years of the twentieth century would thereby be conclusively nullified. Second was the issue of Arab diversion schemes. Lebanon's decision to see how far she could go in diverting the Hasbani was galling to Israel, particularly when viewed in the light of Lebanon's success in denying Israel access to the Litani. Finally, the questions of the Litani's utilization and the Hasbani's potential diversion were evaluated by Israel's leaders in the context of a third issue: the near total consumption of water available within Israel itself. In 1965 it was estimated that Israel

would be using ninety percent of her own water once the National Water Carrier Project was completed.[149] It is no wonder that Lebanese water maneuvers were viewed with neither sympathy nor amusement by Israel.

Israel's irritation with Lebanon became obvious in the course of a parliamentary debate which took place on 8 March 1964, two months after the Arab League had decided to implement its Hasbani River diversion plan. On that day the Knesset witnessed an angry squabble over who was responsible for "losing" the Litani River after the first Arab-Israeli war. Former Prime Minister Ben Gurion, eager to advance the political fortunes of his protege, Moshe Dayan, claimed that Israel would have occupied more territory in 1948 had Dayan been Chief of Staff at the time. Ben Gurion's allegation was angrily rebutted by Minister of Labor Yigal Allon, who said that it was Ben Gurion himself who had ordered the army to halt when it had been "on the crest of victory on all vital fronts from the Litani River in the north to the Sinai desert in the south-west." Just a few more days of fighting, according to Allon, would have sufficed to "liberate the entire country."[150] Although the debate had more to do with internal Israeli political

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[149] "The Arab Plan to Divert the Headwaters of the River Jordan," p. 289.

[150] "Dispute Over Size of Israel," Times (London), 9 March 1964, p. 8.

rivalries than anything else, it nevertheless suggested that Israel's leaders--all of whom participated in the 1948 war--had, by the mid-1960s, developed profound regrets over not having adjusted the frontier with Lebanon when the opportunity existed. Those regrets had undoubtedly been prompted by the contrast between Israeli water requirements on the one hand, and Lebanese maneuvers with regard to the Hasbani and Litani on the other. By 1967 Prime Minister Eshkol of Israel was publicly resurrecting the age-old allegation that Lebanon was wasting the precious water of the Litani by allowing it to run into the sea.[151]

By renouncing the armistice agreement and declaring the Lebanese frontier to be less than satisfying, Israel seemed in 1967 to be seriously considering an adjustment of her boundary with Lebanon. Indeed, Michael Hudson reported in 1970 that "since the June war Israeli officials had gone out of their way to communicate to Lebanon that the 1949 armistice was no longer binding."[152] There appear to be two reasons why Israel ultimately chose not to occupy Lebanese territory during or after the 1967 war. First, the renunciation of the General Armistice Agreement had to do only partly with the festering water issue between the two countries. It was also designed to solidify Israel's legal status with regard

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[151]Cooley, "Lebanon Fears Loss of Water to Israel," p. 3.

[152]Hudson, "Fedayeen Are Forcing Lebanon's Hand," p. 7.

to her continued military occupation of Arab lands conquered in 1967, an issue that will be addressed in section V of this study. Second, the water issue itself lost much of its urgency in the months and years following June 1967. On the one hand the diversion of large quantities of Litani water at Karaoun became a fait accompli about which Israel could do very little. Second, with the seizure of the Banias stream by Israel in June 1967, the prospects of the Hasbani ever being diverted became nil. Lebanon had been severely chastened by the spectacle of the six-day war, and she was obviously in no position to threaten the supply of water to the upper Jordan Valley. An Israeli seizure of southern Lebanon would have provoked international outrage and condemnation without significantly enhancing Israel's economic prospects.

By October 1968 the water controversy, a dispute which had led to the third Arab-Israeli war, and which for two decades had imperiled Lebanon's sovereignty over her southern districts, had faded considerably. In its place was a more deadly confrontation, one which would eventually bring Lebanon itself to the brink of destruction. The advent of fedayeen commando activity in the frontier area, a phenomenon which will be analyzed in the balance of this study, served to completely change the focus of the Israeli-Lebanese territorial problem from water to security. Perhaps nothing better illustrates this change than an incident which occured during the height of the recent Lebanese civil war. The Christian town of Merj 'Uyun, cut off from the rest of

Lebanon by severe fighting, developed some economic ties with Israel. A water pipeline was eventually laid, linking the Lebanese town with an Israeli settlement. When the water was finally turned on, one of the great ironies of the Israeli-Lebanese relationship transpired. Notwithstanding the long and highly controversial history of Zionist demands for a share of Lebanon's water, the water flowing in the Merj 'Uyun pipeline came not from Lebanon for use by Jewish farmers in the Negev, but from Israel for the relief of beleagured Lebanese villagers.[153]

Although some commentators still see traditional Zionist claims on Lebanese water as an important motivating factor behind Israel's involvement in Lebanon's civil war,[154] there is no evidence that the Israelis have done anything to procure water from their wartorn northern neighbor. Instead it appears that the recent activities of Israel in southern Lebanon have far more to do with broader geopolitical considerations, a finding which will be discussed in some detail in the concluding section of this thesis. Yet even though

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[153]Helena Cobban, "S. Lebanon: Integration with Israel?", Christian Science Monitor, 9 November 1977, p. 34.

[154]See Hasan Sharif, "South Lebanon: Its History and Geopolitics," in South Lebanon edited by Elaine Hagopian and Samih Farsoun, p. 21. Sharif believes that use of Lebanese waters is the quid pro quo that Israel will exact for her assistance to Lebanese rightists, and that the rightists have already acceeded to Israel's desire. This agreement, according to Sharif, is "a well-propagated 'secret' among the Lebanese." No evidence is offered however to document the existence of such an "agreement."

water seems no longer to be the key determinant in Israel's approach to the problems of southern Lebanon. there is no question that the frustrations and defeats suffered by Zionism over the water issue between 1923 and 1968 served only to increase the bitterness engendered by the initial Anglo-French boundary compromise. It seems reasonable to suggest that the prolonged Zionist frustration over the issue of water contributed to the violent tenor of subsequent Israeli actions in southern Lebanon, even though the proximate reason for Israeli violence in southern Lebanon was fedayeen violence against targets in Israel. To the extent that Zionist frustration over water helped to dictate Israel's subsequent attitude toward southern Lebanon, Beirut's "victory" in the water controversy was quite costly indeed.

## V. THE SECURITY FACTOR

It will be recalled that in the course of negotiations which led ultimately to the Franco-British Convention of December 23, 1920, Dr. Weizmann and his colleagues argued their case for the northern boundary on economic grounds. They were also quite concerned however about the military defense of Palestine, and the Tel Hai incident of March 1920 solidified their fears. Although the Zionists were not able to openly debate the location of suitably defensible terrain in the Upper Galilee (Great Britain and France being, after all, "allies"), there is no question that the security factor was considered. Colonel Meinertzhagen's boundary proposal of November 1919, which may be regarded as the Zionist response to the British "Deauville" proposal, certainly took into account military geography. Had Meinertzhagen's proposal prevailed, the northern defense line of Palestine would have been anchored in the west and center on the Litani River, and in the east in the chain of hills dividing the Biqa' and Merj Valleys, astride the natural invasion corridor from the north. As was discussed above in Section III, however, Great Britain and France eventually contrived a northern boundary which was easily penetrable by small units at almost any point.

Nevertheless between 1924, when the boundary was finally fixed, and 1968, when fedayeen commandos made their first

appearance in significant numbers, the preeminent Zionist complaint about the location of the Lebanese border had to do with water. That issue was liscussed in the previous section. Since 1968 however Israel has been preoccupied with the presence of Palestinian commandos in southern Lebanon, and since April 1974 in particular Israel has been vitally concerned with providing security for her settlements adjoining the border with Lebanon. Many of the security problems faced by Israel in recent years were however first exposed during those relatively tranquil times when no sustained commando threat was present. There were even occasions--in 1938, 1941, and 1948--when military operations along the boundary with Lebanon overshadowed the issue of Zionist claims for a share of Lebanon's abundant water resources.

The objective of this section is to present the results of research which has attempted to place the security problems associated with the Israeli-Lebanese frontier zone in historical perspective. Hopefully it will be demonstrated that many aspects of the current military situation in southern Lebanon have their antecedants in events which occured years ago and which were barely noticed at the time.

Although the drawing of historical parallels may prove useful in explaining the current status of southern Lebanon, it will also be shown that the advent of fedayeen activity in 1968 brought about a significant change in Israel's attitude toward her northern neighbor. No longer preoccupied

with the issue of Lebanon's water--a matter which had, in any event, lost much of its urgency with the completion of Phase I of the Litani Project--Israel concentrated her efforts instead on providing security for her northern settlements. The problem was complicated by the porousness of the boundary itself, and by difficulties encountered by the Lebanese government in controlling fedayeen activities. Reacting both to commando raids and incidents of international terrorism, Israel tried to force a Lebanese-Palestinian confrontation through a program of military action against Lebanon. The ultimate result of the Israeli strategy was the civil conflict in Lebanon that began in 1975.

A. CHRISTIAN MILITIA ACTIVITY IN SOUTHERN LEBANON: 1925

As Israeli forces swept methodically across the Jabal Aamel toward the Litani River in March 1978, their allies--a Christian Lebanese militia led by a Lebanese Army major--followed in their wake, systematically looting and pillaging Shi'ite Muslim villages.[155] The militia's behavior shocked and embarrassed Israel, which had no intention of alienating the religious community which accounts for the overwhelming majority of southern Lebanon's population. Stephen Longrigg made the following observation with regard to the arming of southern Lebanon's Christians:

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[155] Arab Report and Record, 16-31 March 1978, Number 6, p. 200.

> ...whatever the admitted shortage of regular troops, and the urgent pleas of defenseless Christians, the result could never be to produce effective or reliable auxiliaries, but always to prejudice the future by increasing ill-feeling, and sometimes vendetta, between Christian and Muslim, from which the former must be the greater sufferers.[156]

Ironically, Longrigg's admonition was not directed at Israel in 1978. Rather it was aimed at France in 1925.

The armed rebellion which broke out in the Jebel Druze region of Syria in late 1925 had the unforseen side-effect of producing conditions in southern Lebanon that would later figure prominently in Israeli efforts to bring security to the frontier region. The rebellion, which was caused by misguided French efforts to impose social reforms on the extremely conservative Syrian Druze community, evolved rapidly into a general Syrian uprising against the French mandatory regime. By November 1925 the insurrection had spilled over into southern Lebanon.

At first the rebel campaign in Lebanon was quite successful. After taking the village of Hasbaya the rebels occupied the Christian towns of Kawkaba and Merj 'Jyun on 11 and 15 November respectively. France, which had a skeletal security force in Lebanon, capitalized on the traditional Maronite-Druze antipathy by arming the Christian villages of southern Lebanon. The Christians, all too aware of past encounters with the Druze, responded eagerly

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[156] Longrigg, Syria and Lebanon Under French Mandate, p. 161.

to the French offer. From Merj 'Uyun the insurgents launched an unsuccessful attack against Nabatiyah, and laid siege to Rashaya. The French broke the siege on 24 November and the brief Druze campaign in southern Lebanon quickly came to an end.

The Christians of southern Lebanon viewed the Druze incursion not as an attack on France, but as an armed assault on their own community. The fighting of 1925 "drove terrified Christians in thousands from their village homes,"[157] an event facilitated no doubt by memories of ancestral experiences with the Druze. The rebels had hoped to obtain the "friendly neutrality" of the Christians, but sectarian violence in Kawkaba made that an impossibility.[158] Although the uprising never touched Palestine, it reinforced the tendency of the outnumbered Christians on the Lebanese side of the border to view politics largely in terms of communal survival, and to reach out if necessary for assistance from non-Arabs in order to fight other Arabs. Yet according to one contemporary account of the campaign in southern Lebanon, France's employment of untrained Christian volunteers helped to insure the early loss of Merj 'Uyun to the rebels, and constituted a "political disaster."

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[157] Ibid.

[158] Toynbee, ed., Survey of International Affairs 1925 (Volume I), p. 433.

> By calling upon one community in the mandated territory to take up arms against another the mandatory Power intensified the traditional blood-feuds between Syrian communities of different religions and thus actually worked against the purpose of the mandatory regime, which had been intended to educate the Syrians in the art of co-operation as an essential step towards self-government.[159]

The events of 1925 confirmed the isolation of the Christian minority in southern Lebanon, and foreshadowed the eventual collaboration of that Christian community with Israel's efforts to secure her northern boundary.

B. TEGART'S WALL

Between 1924 and 1936 the Palestine-Lebanon boundary was unfenced, virtually unguarded, and extremely quiet. Zionist misgivings about a boundary that offered almost no natural, defensible terrain seemed to have been rendered irrelevent by two factors: friendly relations between Great Britain and France, which were fully reflected in the benign relationship between Palestine and Lebanon; and the sensibly flexible frontier regulations embodied in the 1926 "good neighbourly relations" accord. The boundary between the two Levantine states posed no particular problem to either of the mandatory regimes.

Growing tensions between Zionism and Arab nationalism caused a change in conditions along the boundary however, and resurrected Zionist worries about the defense of northern Palestine. In April 1936 a series of Arab uprisings

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[159] Ibid., p. 437.

began in Palestine, disturbances caused by "(i) The desire of the Arabs for national independence [and] (ii) Their hatred and fear of the establishment of the Jewish National Home."[160] There was much sympathy for the Arab revolt in the states bordering Palestine, and in time the regions contiguous to Palestine became staging areas and sanctuaries for bands of Palestinian Arab guerrillas.

Within Lebanon the district of Bint Jubail became the area "most notoriously utilized for the passage of aid to the insurgents."[161] The British authorities, finding themselves completely incapable of stemming the flow of men and materiel from Lebanon and Syria, appealed to the French officials for assistance. The British discovered, as would the Israelis some three decades later, that an effective military defense of Palestine would have to begin in southern Lebanon; that the political boundary itself crossed terrain which permitted and in fact encouraged infiltration from the north. The British also discovered, as would the Israelis in the fullness of time, that the authorities in Beirut were none too eager to lend a helping hand. As one contemporary account explained,

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[160] Report of the Peel Commission as cited in Ibrahim Abu-Lughod, ed., The Transformation of Palestine (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1971), p. 298.

[161] Times (London), 10 October 1938, p. 16.

> Efforts made by the Palestine Government to obtain the cooperation of the French mandatory authorities...have been unsuccessful. The French have given over much of the detail of government to the Syrian and Lebanese States, whose sympathy with the Palestinian Arab Nationalists in the one case and fear of antagonizing the French in the other prevent them from doing anything.[162]

Put differently, France had no desire to touch off another rebellion in Syria by helping the British quell the Arab uprising in Palestine. The Lebanese authorities, not wishing to create difficulties either for their French patrons or themselves (by stirring up Arab nationalist sentiment within Lebanon), simply ignored the use to which their southern districts were being put.

Unable to seal the border, and unable to secure French or Lebanese cooperation, the British were forced to act unilaterally. "Unofficial" raids were launched against Arab villages through Lebanese territory by Jewish commandos led by a British officer, Orde Wingate.[163] These raids probably helped the future military leaders of Israel overcome any reservations about conducting military operations on Lebanese territory. In 1937 the Inspector-General of the Palestine Police, R.G.B. Spicer, proposed that the country's land borders be physically sealed. His recommendation was shelved due to the anticipated cost of the undertaking, but worsening security conditions caused the idea to reappear

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[162] Times (London), 28 May 1938, p. 13.

[163] Leonard Mosley, Gideon Goes to War (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1966), p. 57.

in 1938 as a recommendation by Sir Charles Tegart, security advisor to the Palestine government. Tegart's proposal was accepted on 1 May.[164]

A contract worth 90,000 pounds sterling was awarded to the Jewish firm of Soleh Boneh, Ltd., of Haifa to construct a barrier along Palestine's borders with Lebanon, Syria, and Transjordan. With regard to the Lebanese border, the specifications called for a barrier consisting of two or three (depending upon the terrain) barbed wire fences, with tangled wire between each fence. The wall itself would be guarded by the frontier posts already existing, with additional pillboxes to be constructed in areas where footpaths crossed the boundary.[165] Even before construction was finished the edifice came to be known as "Tegart's Wall."

The wall was built during the months of May and June 1938. Its objective was to strictly regulate the passage of human traffic back and forth between Palestine and Lebanon along the entire length of the common border. It failed quite miserably. Instead of improving the security of Palestine, Tegart's Wall spread rebellion to the frontier zone itself. Instead of immunizing Palestine from the activities of outsiders, it united Arab peasants on both sides of the boundary in a violent campaign against the wall

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[164] Times (London), 2 May 1938, p. 15.

[165] Times (London), 28 May 1938, p. 13.

and against the British security forces trying to guard it. A newspaper account of the problem which was printed in July 1938 gave the following assessment of the wall's impact:

> Intended to be no more than an obstacle which would slow up the passage of bandits and contraband arms, this fence has stirred up the wrath of villagers on both sides of the frontier because it has bisected village lands, interfered with normal pasturage, and erected for the first time an artificial barrier to the trade, both legal and contraband, which has gone on between adjacent villages from time immemorial. Attacks on the "Wall" became so difficult to control that a special military force was posted along it at the end of June.[166]

The 800-man Rural Mounted Police force dispatched to guard the fence was simply no match for the anger of Lebanese and Palestinian Arab peasants. The authorities in Jerusalem were obliged to impose curfews on the Arab villages of the Acre and Safed subdistricts near the Lebanese border,[167] but resistance to Tegart's Wall was too intense to be overcome without French cooperation.

The disasterous effects of Tegart's Wall induced Great Britain to redouble her efforts to secure French assistance. Eventually France agreed to field a 1,000-man unit to patrol the Lebanese and Syrian boundaries with Palestine, a force consisting of four squadrons of horse cavalry and two squadrons of mechanized cavalry.[168] The French effort, belated though it was, succeeded in impeding raids launched from Lebanon. In the end however it was a political

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[166] Times (London), 26 July 1938, p. 11.

[167] Times (London), 1 July 1938, p. 15.

[168] Times (London), 4 May 1939, p. 9.

accomodation rather than Anglo-French security operations that restored tranquility to the frontier area. The Arab revolt itself ended in 1939, when Great Britain issued a White Paper that did much to placate the fundamental Arab grievances over Zionist expansion in Palestine.[169] Left undefended, Tegart's Wall was rapidly dismantled.

Three significant lessons were learned from Britain's experience with a physical barrier along the Palestine-Lebanon boundary. First, Zionist qualms about the military-geographic deficiencies of the border proved to be well-justified. The 1920 Anglo-French compromise had sought to assuage Zionist fears through the simple expedient of drawing a boundary line around the northernmost Jewish settlements, the unspoken assumption being that British sovereignty itself would be an adequate security guarantee. The real problem uncovered during the period 1936-1939 however was that northern Palestine was penetrable almost everywhere. This revelation--which had actually figured in Zionist boundary calculations from the beginning--helped to reinforce that dimension of Zionist thinking that viewed the Litani River not only as a potential economic asset, but as a natural obstacle in a security sense as well.

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[169]See J. C. Hurewitz, Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East, A Documentary Record: 1914-1956, Volume II (Princeton: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1956), pp. 218-226.

The second lesson to be derived from Tegart's Wall had to do with the residents of the Palestine-Lebanon frontier zone. If geographic homogeneity made border security difficult, ethnic homogeneity made it impossible. The existence of a preponderantly Arab population on both sides of the boundary not only facilitated infiltration, but substantially frustrated British attempts to deal with the situation. During the 1930s Arabs comprised about ninety percent of the population of the Safed subdistrict of Palestine, and ninety-nine percent of Palestine's Acre subdistrict.[170] Furthermore, as late as 1944 Arabs held eighty-two percent of the land in the former subdistrict, and ninety-seven percent in the latter.[171] By 1946 the total Jewish population for both subdistricts bordering Lebanon was a mere 10,000.[172] Throughout the mandate period therefore the frontier region remained almost entirely Arab, and cross-border contacts remained intact despite the existence of a political boundary. As Sharif [illegible] pointed out, "many families had branches in vi[illegible]n both sides of the border. Indeed it was difficult to find a family that did not have a relative on the other side."[173]

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[170] Janet Abu-Lughod, "Demographic Transformation," in The Transformation of Palestine, p. 147.

[171] John Ruedy, "Dynamics of Land Alienation," in The Transformation of Palestine, p. 121.

[172] Janet Abu-Lughod, "Demographic Transformation," p. 153.

[173] Hasan Sharif, "South Lebanon: Its History and Geopolitics," in South Lebanon ed. by Elaine Hagopian and Samih Farsoun, p. 14.

Arab solidarity in the border area was conclusively demonstrated by the negative public reaction to the imposition of a fence along the border, an obstacle which threatened patterns of life in the Upper Galilee in an unprecedented manner. The security implications of the public outcry against Tegart's Wall were therefore clear: unless the Arabs living on each side of the line could be induced to develop mutally-exclusive national loyalties to Palestine and Lebanon respectively--a rather unlikely prospect--then the ethnic homogeneity of the area would forever preclude the effective closing of the border by any non-Arab regime in Jerusalem. Unless that homogeneity could be broken, northern Palestine would always constitute a security nightmare for any authority seeking to pursue policies contrary to the aspirations of the Arabs in the frontier zone. Even with the severe military-geographic handicaps presented by the frontier, an organized defense of northern Palestine could in fact be undertaken by non-Arab forces <u>provided</u> the people on one side of the line were clearly different from the people on the other side.

Finally, the use of Lebanese territory as a sanctuary and staging area combined with the initial absence of French/Lebanese cooperation provided a lesson for the future. Beirut's lack of initiative in 1938, a prudent course of inaction designed to placate both Lebanese and Syrian supporters of the Arab rebellion in Palestine, gave the guerrilla bands complete freedom of action for a limited

period of time. Great Britain was in no position to force French cooperation, and was obliged instead to build a barrier which only exacerbated the security problem. Had the two countries not been nominal allies, it is quite possible that the British would have assigned responsibility for the deteriorating security situation to Beirut and would have undertaken retaliatory operations on Lebanese soil. Indeed such a policy would eventually be followed by Israel when faced with Arab commandos operating from neighboring countries, a policy of retaliation applied not only to Lebanon, but Syria, Jordan and Egypt as well.

The events of 1936-1939 enabled the Zionists to give serious thoughts to the very weighty security problems presented by the boundary drawn for Palestine and Lebanon by Great Britain and France. Within a very short period of time Zionist military personnel would be given the opportunity to conduct combat operations in southern Lebanon, operations that would yield valuable data on how to "defend" the Jewish Homeland from the vantage point of Lebanese territory.

## C. OPERATION EXPORTER

Peace had barely been restored to the Palestine-Lebanon frontier when events in Europe suddenly put an end to the officially harmonious relationship between the mandatory regimes in Beirut and Jerusalem. France fell to Nazi Germany in April 1940, and a collaborationist French government was installed at Vichy. Lebanon and Syria were governed by an

administration which opted to remain loyal to Vichy, thus putting the French Levant at odds with British Palestine. Great Britain viewed the Vichy presence in the Middle East as an opening for Germany, and began quickly to formulate plans for the invasion of Lebanon and Syria. General de Gaulle's Free French were apprised of the British plans so as to still the inevitable French fear that Great Britain's real objective was to supplant the French imperial presence in Beirut and Damascus with her own. An invasion plan was eventually formulated and named "Operation Exporter."[174]

On 30 June 1940 the Palestine-Lebanon border was partly closed by the British authorities. On 25 May 1941 it was officially closed.[175] Although the effect that these administrative measures may have had on the peasants of Upper Galilee is not known, it is likely that the only area really affected by the border closure was the official crossing point at Ras En Naqurah. In any event Operation Exporter commenced on 8 June 1941. Although the campaign included an attack on Damascus (as well as Dayr az Zawr on the Euphrates), this study will be restricted to the operation's main thrust which was an invasion of Lebanon launched from Palestine.

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[174]Perhaps the most comprehensive account of Operation Exporter is to be found in Major General I. S. O. Playfair, The Mediterranean and the Middle East, Volume II (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1956). This work is part of the History of the Second World War, United Kingdom Military Series ed. by J. R. M. Butler.

[175]Longrigg, Syria and Lebanon Under French Mandate, pp. 298, 309.

The main objective of Operation Exporter was Beirut. The attacking force consisted of two infantry brigades of the 7th Australian Division and one battalion of Jewish commandos. Opposing the invasion was a French ground force of roughly equal strength. However the Australians possessed significant air and naval advantages.[176]

The Australians selected two axes of advance from Palestine into Lebanon. The main attack would be launched from Ras En Naqurah and proceed along the coastal road directly to Beirut. A supporting attack would proceed from Metulla, through Merj 'Uyun, into the Biqa' Valley and then (if necessary) turn westward toward Beirut along the Beirut-Damascus highway.[177] Both axes channeled the attackers into relatively narrow corridors, thereby offering a significant terrain advantage to the defense. Yet the Australians had little choice. An attack launched at any point along the boundary between the coast and Metulla would have had little hope of ever progressing through the twisted terrain of Jabal Aamel. Furthermore, the coastal axis gave the attackers the opportunity to exploit one of their few clear advantages: naval gunfire.

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[176] Ibid., p. 314.

[177] Ibid., p. 311.

On 8 June the 21st Infantry Brigade (Australian) seized the Lebanese border post at Ras En Naqurah and began to move north. Progress was slow, and it was feared that the French would have ample time to destroy the coastal bridge spanning the mouth of the Litani River, thereby seriously impeding the main attack. On 10 June a commando operation was mounted which attempted to size the bridge intact. Battalion C of the Special Services Brigade, a unit consisting of British-trained Jewish commandos, conducted an unsuccessful and very costly seaborne assault near the mouth of the Litani. It was during that operation that a bullet took the left eye of Moshe Dayan,[178] who would serve as Israel's Foreign Minister thirty-seven years later when Jewish soldiers would again attempt to control the Litani River bridge. Despite the failure of Battalion C's assault, the 21st Infantry Brigade fought its way across the Litani and captured Sidon on 15 June.

The supporting attack from Metulla by the 25th Infantry Brigade (Australian) succeeded in taking Merj 'Uyun on 11 June. However the failure of the Jewish commando assault on the coast and the slow progress of the main attack led to a change of plans. The 25th Infantry Brigade was ordered to halt at Merj 'Uyun, and then execute a turning movement toward the coast by way of Jezzin. Some twenty kilometers of torturous mountain terrain would have to be traversed

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[178]Mosley, Gideon Goes to War, p. 78.

in marching northwest to Jezzin, with a similar distance yet to be crossed over like terrain from Jazzin to the coast at Sidon. What may have appeared to the hardy Australians to be a mere forty kilometer hike--perhaps a day's walk--proved instead to be a topographical nightmare. The brigade became bogged down in the virtually impassable mountainous terrain and was effectively out of action for the balance of Operation Exporter.[179]

While the main body of the 25th Infantry Brigade was busy losing itself in Lebanon's hills, a skeletal force consisting of one cavalry detachment, one infantry battalion, and one battery of artillery, was left behind to garrison Merj 'Uyun. On 16 June the French, seeing that the Australians were betting everything on the coastal axis of advance, counterattacked and recaptured Merj 'Uyun. Palestine itself was open to attack through Metulla by way of the Merj Valley. However the French had insufficient forces to exploit their opportunity, and Merj 'Uyun was eventually recaptured by the Australians on 24 June.[180]

The balance of the campaign in Lebanon was devoid of turning movements and invasion threats to Palestine. The 21st Infantry Brigade on the coastal road made full use of

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[179]According to Playfair, the 25th Infantry Brigade was still bottled up north of Jezzin when the French in Beirut capitulated. The Mediterranean and the Middle East, Volume II, p. 220.

[180]Ibid., pp. 211-216.

the air and naval superiority at its disposal, and simply bludgeoned its way to within five miles of Beirut before a ceasefire was declared at midnight, 11-12 July 1941. An armistice was signed on 14 July ending Vichy rule in Lebanon and Syria.[181]

Operation Exporter constitutes scarcely more than a footnote to the history of the Second World War. Yet just as events associated with Tegart's Wall provided Zionist leaders in Palestine with vital information about the defense of the border area, so Operation Exporter told them a great deal about military operations in southern Lebanon. Such information could provide useful guidance for future operations designed either to improve the security of the Jewish border settlements, or even to expand the Jewish State to the banks of the Litani River.

Operation Exporter demonstrated a fundamental asymetry with regard to the military geography of the frontier region. Whereas Palestine was open to infiltration from Lebanon at almost any point, conventional axes of advance into Lebanon were few. Keeping in mind that the Australian objective was Beirut--not the seizure or pacification of southern Lebanon--only two axes of advance were deemed to be approprate, and in both cases the attackers were channeled into slow and costly frontal assaults. Given parity in air and indirect fire support, the French surely would have defeated both

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[181] Longrigg, Syria and Lebanon Under French Mandate, p. 314.

attacks. With forces of roughly equal size and capability therefore, geography favors the conventional military operations--offensive and defensive--of the force facing south. It must be kept in mind however that conventional operations of an offensive nature would be difficult regardless of the direction of the attack because of the existence of only two "high speed" approaches: the coastal road and the Merj 'Uyun-Metulla route. The entire boundary region between the coast and Metulla was (and is) characterized by a preponderance of secondary roads which run west and east, thereby rendering Lebanon's conventional offensive "advantage" more apparent than real. Northern Palestine's most critical security problem was its complete vulnerability to small unit commando and irregular operations. Yet the spirited Vichy defense of southern Lebanon and the momentary threat of invasion from Merj 'Uyun--when combined with subsequent experiences of the 1948 Arab-Israeli war--seemed to convince the Zionists that the threat of conventional invasion from the north outweighed the unconventional threat.

Although the experiences associated with Tegart's Wall and Operation Exporter certainly refocused the attention of Zionist military thinkers on the security problems presented by the northern boundary, the two episodes yielded contradictory prescriptive concepts. If on the one hand the threat to northern Israel was one of commando raids by irregular forces, it would certainly be in the Zionists' best interests to secure the cooperation of a sizeable

Lebanese security force in controlling the commandos. Both the British and the Zionists would have welcomed such a force in 1938. If on the other hand the threat were conventional in nature, the Zionists would demand that southern Lebanon be garrisoned by forces of a very small size and limited capability. A skeletal security force in southern Lebanon would have been welcomed by the Australians and Zionists in 1941. It later became clear, by the terms of the armistice between Lebanon and Israel signed after the end of the first Arab-Israeli war, that the Zionist military planners finally opted to give more weight to the potential conventional threat from the north.

## D. WAR AND ARMISTICE

Shortly after the conclusion of World War II Levantine politics became transfixed once again on the clash between Arabs and Zionists over the future of Palestine. Great Britain found her position as mandatory power to be untenable, and following her failure in February 1947 to negotiate an Arab-Zionist accommodation she called upon the United Nations to deal with the question of Palestine. On 29 November 1947 the General Assembly approved a resolution which called for "dividing Palestine into Arab and Jewish states which were to remain in economic union and the establisnment of a special international regime for the City of Jerusalem..."[182] The resolution was rejected by the

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[182] Hurewitz, Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East, Volume II, p. 281.

Palestinian Arabs, who undertook to prevent its implementation by means of force.

Had the partition resolution of November 1947 ever been implemented, its impact on the Palestine-Lebanon frontier would have been quite considerable indeed. According to the terms of the resolution, that part of the 1923 boundary extending from the Mediterranean coast at Ras En Naqurah across to a point just north of the Palestinian village of Saliha would have been under the jurisdiction of the Arab State. Along the coast the Arab jurisdiction would have extended from Ras En Naqurah south to Acre, and inland the northern portion of the Arab State would have reached south to a point just below the town of Nazareth.[183] Map #12 on page 131 shows how the Palestine side of the frontier zone would have been affected by implementation of the partition resolution. It is worth noting that nearly the entire subdistrict of Safed--an area which figured so prominently in the post-World War I Anglo-French boundary negotiations because of the presence of Jewish settlements--was set aside for inclusion of the proposed Jewish State, despite the presence of a preponderantly Arab population in the subdistrict.

Arab opposition insured however that the partition resolution would never be implemented. As the British

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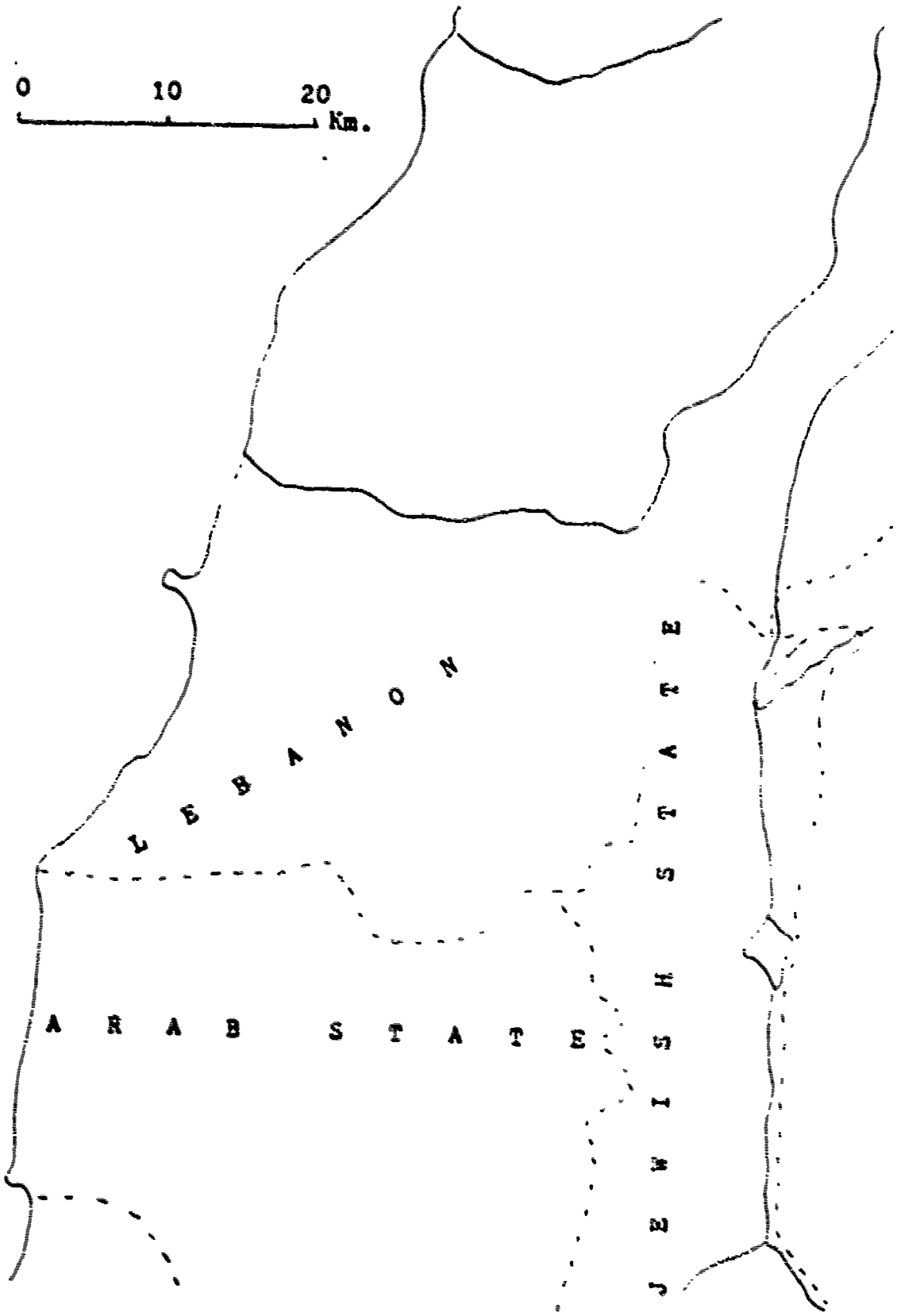
[183] "UN General Assembly Resolution 181 (II)," in Hurewitz, Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East, Volume II, pp. 289-292.

MAP #12: EFFECT OF THE 1947 PARTITION RESOLUTION



mandate drew to a close in May 1948, conditions along the Palestine-Lebanon boundary reverted to the chaotic state that had prevailed during the Arab uprising of 1936-1939. An Arab guerrilla band known as the Arab Liberation Army, under the leadership of one Fawzi al-Quwaqji (a veteran of the 1936 Arab uprising), operated with a great deal of freedom on both sides of the border in the Upper Galilee. Southern Lebanon, now part of the independent Republic of Lebanon, again served as a sanctuary and staging area for Arab raiders.

As was the case one decade earlier, Lebanon was disinclined to interfere with commando operations against targets in Palestine launched from her southern districts. Like the other Arab countries, Lebanon harbored serious doubts that an autonomous Arab state would ever emerge in partitioned Palestine. Furthermore, like her sister Arab governments, Lebanon entertained the notion of gaining some territory at Palestine's expense. Beirut decided therefore to use the Lebanese Army to support and supply Quwaqji's forces "in the hope that if there was to be a carve-up of Arab Palestine, she at least might lay claim to the Upper Galilee...."[184] There were however limits to the extent of Lebanon's armed commitment to the "rescue" of Palestine. With a small army tailored to the requirements of maintaining internal security, Lebanon was in no position to conduct sustained offensive operations in Palestine. Her military

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[184] Edgar O'Ballance, The Arab-Israeli War, 1948 (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1956), p. 185.

involvement in the struggle for Palestine would be largely symbolic, an attempt to derive maximum political and territorial gains from minimal military efforts.

From the point of view of the Zionist military leadership there were three avenues of approach leading from Lebanon into Palestine: on the left from Ras En Naqurah straight down the coast toward Acre; in the center from the vicinity of Bint Jubail to any number of border crossing points; and on the right through the Hula Valley by way of Marjayoun and Metulla.[185] Yet, as Sacher has pointed out, "The lines of communication were not...favorable to the attack. As the roads across Galilee ran west and east and not from north to south, an advance from Lebanon was handicapped."[186] Aside from occupying the Palestinian border post at Ras En Naqurah on 24 May 1948, the Lebanese Army's involvement in the first Arab-Israeli war was limited to the Bint Jubail sector of the frontier. On 15 May 1948, Israel's first day as a self-proclaimed independent state, two Lebanese infantry battalions and a company of armor attacked and overran the tiny settlement of Malkiya.[187] The seizure of Malkiya formally placed Lebanon in opposition to the U.N.

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[185] Lt. Colonel Netanel Lorch, The Edge of the Sword: Israel's War of Independence 1947-1949 (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1961), p. 155.

[186] Harry Sacher, Israel: The Establishment of a State (New York: British Book Centre, 1952), pp. 233-234.

[187] Lorch, The Edge of the Sword, pp. 155-156.

partition plan for Palestine, as the settlement was located in an area designated by the U.N. as part of the projected Jewish State.

Three days later Israel launched a counterattack. A small motorized Israeli force entered Lebanon near the hamlet of Aadaisse, some eighteen kilometers north of the Malkiya crossing point. The Israeli force drove south within Lebanese territory past the hamlets of Markabah, El Hula, Meis el Jabal, and Blida. South of Blida the Israelis turned southeast and reentered Palestine, taking the small Lebanese garrison by surprise and recapturing Malkiya from the rear.[188]

The Lebanese Army reacted to the loss of Malkiya by conducting, on 6 June 1948, its only real combat operation of the war. Malkiya was successfully stormed and another small settlement, Kadesh-Naftali, was overrun on the next day. According to O'Ballance,

> This assault on Malkiya was the solitary Lebanese success of the war, and it consisted of an infantry attack by about 800 men, with only mortar support. Not much can be deduced from this action as the victory was perhaps as much due to overwhelming numbers as to any other factor.[189]

Lebanon was not however emboldened in the least by her apparent prowess on the battlefield. After the victory at

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[188] Ibid., p. 158.

[189] O'Balance, The Arab-Israel War, 1948, p. 113.

Malkiya she prudently retired from active participation in the war, turning over her gains in the central sector to the Arab Liberation Army. At the end of the first Arab-Israeli truce (9 July 1948) Lebanese forces in the frontier region were deployed at Bint Jubail and a few meters across the border in the "Arab" sector of Palestine at Ras En Naqurah.[190]

Lebanon found however that disengagement from the war in Palestine was no simple matter. Israeli forces, intent upon securing as much of mandatory Palestine as possible for the Jewish State, launched in October 1948 a campaign designed to clear the Arab Liberation Army from northern Palestine. "Operation Hiram," named after the ancient King of Tyre, was an unqualified Israeli success. The Arab Liberation Army was forced to abandon Palestine, and retreated into the Lebanese district of Bint Jubail. Israeli forces pursued the enemy into Lebanese territory where (according to an Israeli observer) they "were molested less by Kaouk'ji's men than by aggressive Levantine salesmen armed with fountain pens, nylons, and souvenir trinkets from the markets of Beirut and Tyre."[191] The Lebanese Army judiciously refrained from taking a stand against the invading Israelis, and the Jewish forces found themselves in control of eighteen

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[190] Lorch, The Edge of the Sword, p. 253.

[191] Dan Kurzman, Genesis 1948 (Cleveland: The New American Library, Inc., 1970), p. 514.

Lebanese villages in an area "running parallel to the Manara road up to Wadi Du-ba and the Litani River, which geographically and historically marked the boundary of Upper Galilee."[192] Map #13 on page 137 depicts the extent of Israel's occupation of Lebanese territory at the end of the first Arab-Israeli war.

At last the Zionists had secured a foothold on the Litani River, and there was at first every indication that they intended to keep it. In late 1948 claims emanated from Israeli diplomatic and journalistic circles to the effect that the occupied Lebanese villages were asking to be placed under Israeli military authority, and that there was a pro-Zionist "Free Lebanese movement" active in Israel.[193] In short it appeared that some public relations groundwork was being done to justify the outright annexation of Lebanese territory by Israel.

Instead of changing her northern boundary however, Israel adopted the strategy of trading land for political concessions. As was discussed in the previous section of this study, the leaders of Israel believed in early 1949 that they could conclude a very attractive peace settlement with the Christian-dominated Lebanese state. Presumably such a treaty would not only secure for Israel access to the waters of the Litani, but would further fragment the Arab

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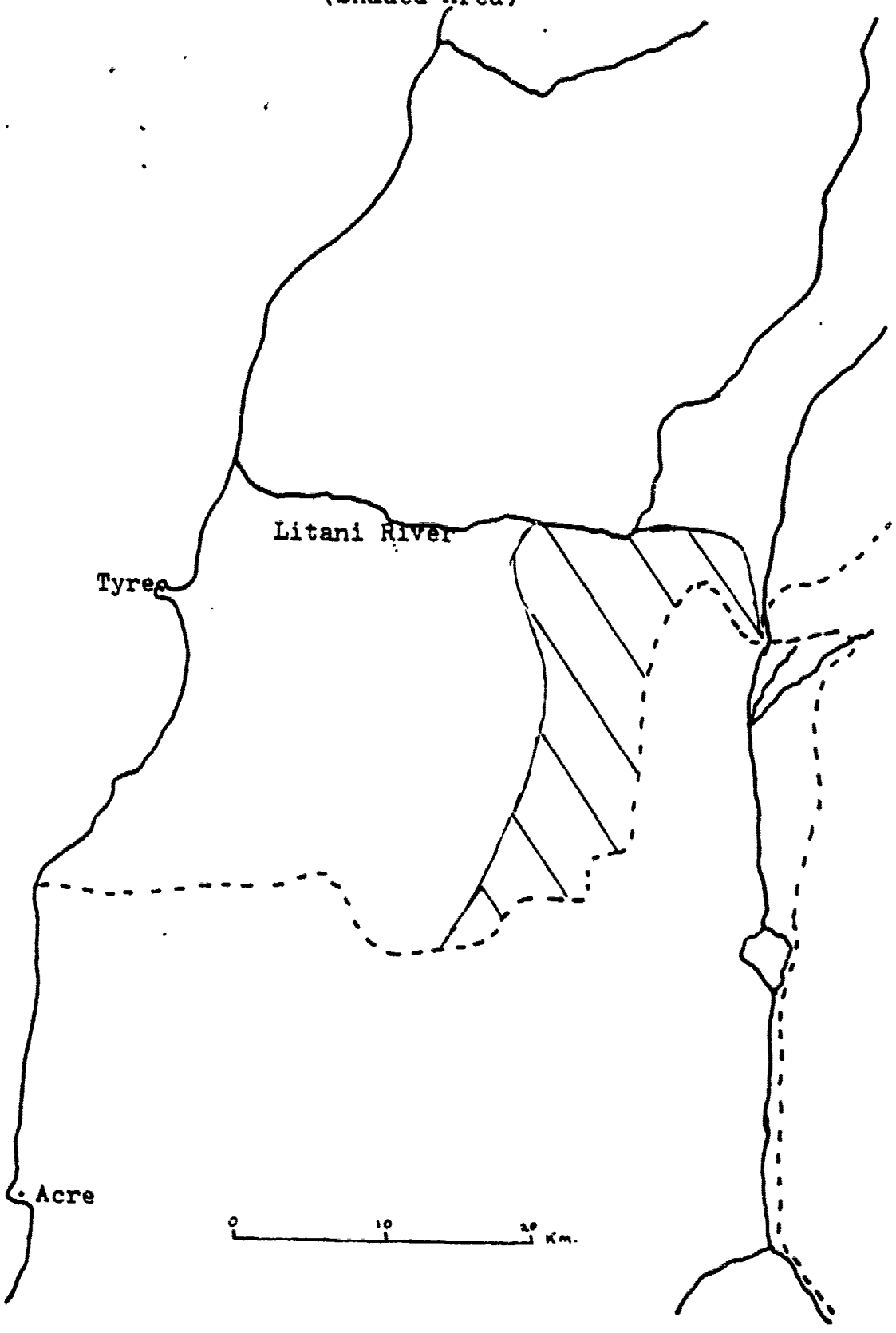
[192] Lorch, The Edge of the Sword, p. 378.

[193] George Kirk, Survey of International Affairs: The Middle East 1945-1950 (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), pp. 288-289.

MAP #13: LEBANESE TERRITORY OVERRUN BY ISRAELIS
(Shaded Area)



world by detaching Lebanon from the Arab coalition. Consequently when armistice talks with Lebanon under U.N. auspices began in January 1949, Israel displayed a willingness bordering on eagerness to part with territory, as she quickly withdrew from four of the occupied Lebanese villages in return for a miniscule Lebanese pullback from the Israeli side of Ras En Naqurah.[194] However several weeks of stalemate followed, as Israel tried to couple her withdrawal from Lebanon with a Syrian withdrawal from a tiny piece of Palestinian territory in the Hula Valley. The issues were eventually separated however, and on 23 March 1949 a General Armistice Agreement (GAA) between Israel and Lebanon was signed.

The GAA was not a peace treaty. It left Lebanon and Israel in a technical state of war, even though Israel regarded its signing as "the penultimate step towards peace."[195] Israeli forces withdrew from Lebanon behind an Armistice Demarcation Line (ADL), the purpose of which was to "deliniate the line beyond which the armed forces of the respective parties shall not move."[196] As to the location of the ADL, the GAA provided that "The Armistice

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[194] Times (London), 17 January 1949, p. 4.

[195] Berger, The Covenant and the Sword, p. 30.

[196] See John Norton Moore, ed., The Arab-Israeli Conflict, Volume III: Documents (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), p. 392.

Demarcation Line shall follow the international boundary between the Lebanon and Palestine."[197]

Not only did the GAA restore the 1923 boundary in the form of an armistice line, but it established specific military limitations to be observed on both sides of the ADL. The text of the GAA called for the stationing of "defensive forces only" in the "region of the Armistice Demarcation Line."[198] "Defensive forces" were defined as follows in the Annex to the GAA:

1. In the case of the Lebanon:
   (i) Two battalions and two companies of Lebanese Regular Army Infantry, one field battery of 4 guns and one company of 12 light armoured cars armed with machine guns and 6 light tanks armed with light guns (20 vehicles). Total 1500 officers and enlisted men.
   (ii) No other military forces, than those mentioned in (i) above, shall be employed south of the general line El-Qasmiye-Nabatiye Ett Tahta-Hasbaya.
2. In the case of Israel:
   (i) One infantry battalion, one support company with six mortars and six machine guns, with six armoured cars and one reconnaissance company, six armoured jeeps, one battalion of field artillery with four guns, one platoon of field engineers and service units such as Quartermaster and Ordnance, total not to exceed fifteen hundred officers and enlisted men.
   (ii) No other military forces, than those mentioned in 2 (i) above, shall be employed north of the general line Nahariya-Tarshiya-Jish-Marus. 199

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[197] Ibid., p. 393.

[198] Ibid.

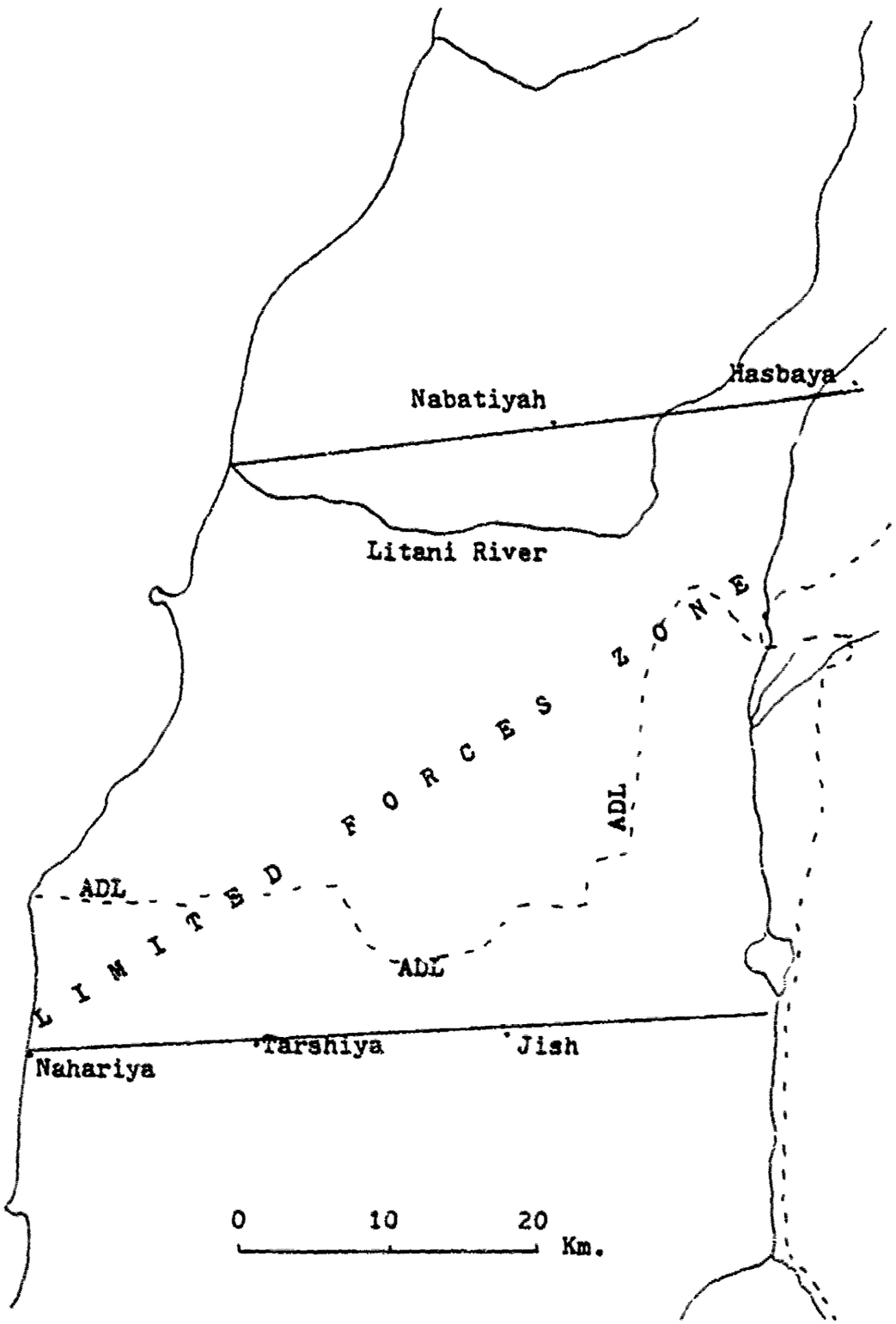
[199] State of Israel Yearbook 5712 (1951/52), (Jerusalem: Government Printer, October 1951), p. 269.

Thus it is clear that the "region of the Armistice Demarcation Line" called for the virtual demilitarization of southern Lebanon. Map #14 on page 141 depicts the limited forces zone agreed upon by the two sides. It will be noticed that on the Lebanese side of the ADL offensive forces were prohibited not only south of the Litani River, but south of Nabatiyah, a full seven kilometers north of the river. The point at which offensive forces could be closest to Israel was approximately twelve kilometers north of Metulla near the village of Blat.

In Israel the limited forces line was drawn much closer to the ADL near the Mediterranean end of the boundary than was the corresponding line in Lebanon, but at its eastern terminus was much further from Lebanon than was the Lebanese limited forces line from Israel. Under the terms of the GAA it would be clearly permissable for Israel to concentrate the bulk of her "defensive forces" in the Hula Valley region, where she also had Syrians to contend with, and still have unlimited forces behind a line only ten kilometers south of the Lebanese boundary from the Mediterranean coast to the vicinity of Malkiya, where the boundary turned sharply to the north. Furthermore the GAA said nothing whatever about <u>paramilitary</u> forces being stationed in newly created Jewish settlements being built right up against the ADL.

If the demilitarization of southern Lebanon eased Israeli anxiety about the possibility of a conventional

MAP #14: LIMITED FORCES ZONE OF 1949 GAA



military threat from the north, the demographic transformation of northern Israel was seen as at least a partial answer to the problem of irregular warfare. Thousands of Arabs fled to Lebanon from northern Palestine during the fighting of 1948, and their abandoned villages abutting the Lebanese border were converted into armed Zionist settlements. During the years 1948-1950 many such settlements were established, and Arabs still living near the border were relocated for security purposes.[200] In effect on ethnic security belt was stretched across northern Israel, and with a string of Zionist outposts facing Lebanon the Upper Galilee would no longer offer unchallenged access for infiltrators and raiders based in southern Lebanon. As Israel's Attorney General stated in 1972, "we do not want Arab villages near the (Lebanese) border. We do not want to provide an opportunity for them to contact, or be contacted by Arabs on the other side." Arabs expelled from the border villages of Ikrit and Berem in 1948 have been refused access to their villages by the Israeli government, despite the fact that several of the villages' young men have served loyally in the Israeli armed forces.[201]

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[200] The following Jewish settlements were established either during or soon after the 1948 war: Rosh-Hanikra, Bar'am, Yiron, Malkiya, Yifta, Shelomi, and Khiryat Shemona. See Zev Vilnay, The New Israel Atlas. Bible to Present Day (Jerusalem: Israel Universities Press, 1968), pp. 109-112. For an account of Arabs displaced from the border region within Israel, see Peter Grose, "Arabs Ejected from Homes in '48 May Not Return," New York Times, 24 July 1972, p. 2.

[201] Ibid., (Grose).

In summary therefore, the immediate military effect of the GAA was to mollify Zionist fears about the defensibility of the northern border. Lebanon, hardly a potent offensive threat in any event, was prohibited from stationing more than 1,500 soldiers south of a line running from the mouth of the Litani across to Hasbaya. Although Israel was subject to parallel limitations, there was nothing in the GAA preventing her from transforming her side of the boundary into a series of fortified Jewish settlements. The ethnic homogeneity of the frontier region was destroyed, the fear of invasion from the north was diminished, and the southern Lebanese battleground which had claimed many Australian and Jewish lives in 1941 was almost completely disarmed. Israel was not able to foresee in 1949 that a stronger Lebanese presence south of the Litani would have helped facilitate her own security. From the Israeli perspective of late March 1949, all that remained to be accomplished was the signing of a peace treaty with Lebanon.

## E. A QUIET INTERLUDE: 1949-1967

Israel's hope of rapidly concluding a peace treaty with her northern neighbor proved illusory. In April 1949 the U.N. established a Conciliation Commission for Palestine which undertook to sponsor Arab-Israeli peace discussions at Lausanne, Switzerland. It was at Lausanne that Israel discovered that she had yield her toehold on the Litani for naught.

The Israeli proposal to Lebanon at Lausanne was stark in its simplicity but rich in its implications. Tel Aviv suggested that the ADL between the two countries be transformed by a treaty of peace into an official, internationally-recognized boundary.[202] The new Jewish State was prepared to renounce the traditional Zionist claim to southern Lebanon in return for a simple declaration of peace, one which would imply (a) Lebanon's defection from an Arab world hostile to Israel; (b) a de facto alliance between the Jewish and Catholic minorities in the predominantly Muslim eastern Mediterranean coastal region; and (c) a cooperative, bilateral approach toward the exploitation of southern Lebanon's water resources.

The promise of an official Zionist acknowledgement of Beirut's sovereignty over southern Lebanon proved however to be an insufficient inducement. Lebanon made two counter-proposals: first, that the 125,000 Arabs who had fled to Lebanon from Palestine during the fighting of 1948 be repatriated by Israel; and second, that that portion of Western Galilee which had, in 1947, been set aside by the UN for the Arab sector of partitioned Palestine, be turned over to Lebanon.[203] Presumably the refugees, ninety percent of whom were Muslims,[204] would be settled in that region,

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[202]Berger, The Covenant and the Sword, p. 55.

[203]Ibid., p. 59.

[204]Samir N. Saliba, The Jordan River Dispute, p. 80.

thus insuring that the narrow Christian majority in Lebanon-proper would be preserved. Israel rejected the Lebanese proposal, which if accepted would have expanded "southern Lebanon" to include Acre on the coast and Nazareth inland. The discussions ended with no agreement being reached, and Lebanon settled into a policy of non-recognition of Israel.

Although she was obliged by the other Arab states and by a significant portion of her own citizenry to adhere to a tough negotiating line with the Zionists, Lebanon was quite sensitive to the military facts of life in the border region adjoining Israel. As was the case during the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, Beirut sought from 1949-on to enjoy the best of both worlds. She gave up the opportunity to obtain official Zionist recognition of her jurisdiction in southern Lebanon, but by so doing she reaped a financial harvest from the Arab economic boycott of the Jewish State. Furthermore she took substantive steps to insure that Israel would have no reason or justification for the seizure of Lebanese territory. Diplomatic obduracy toward Zionism was offset by a policy of cooperation with Israel in the frontier zone, a policy that sometimes bordered on obsequiousness.

Article VII of the GAA signed by Israel and Lebanon in March 1949 established an Israeli-Lebanese Mixed Armistice Commission (ILMAC) under U.N. auspices. The ILMAC was authorized to establish two headquarters, one at the Israeli frontier post north of Metulla, and the other at the Lebanese frontier post a Ras En Naqurah. The mission of the

ILMAC was to enforce, on the basis of unanimous consent, the provisions of the GAA.[205] Both sides initially had good reasons for seeing the ILMAC perform effectively. Lebanon wanted to avoid any and all all acts of provocation that could bring about the reintroduction of Israeli forces to southern Lebanon. Israel desired Lebanese cooperation in preventing the return of Arab refugees while she consolidated a line of Jewish settlements along the boundary.

In November 1949 the ILMAC faced its first difficult task. The Lebanese government, claiming that raids were being conducted from Israel against its southern villages, requested that the ILMAC undertake the project of clearly demarcating the ADL. The objective of the proposed boundary-marking exercise was to "put an end to frontier incidents," thereby presumably reducing the likelihood of an Israeli invasion.[206]

Prior to the Lebanese request the U.N. Conciliation Commission at Lausanne had indeed recommended that in cases where no competing territorial claims existed, Israel and her Arab neighbors should move toward the creation of recognized boundaries.[207] That suggestion had focused attention on the Lebanese-Israeli ADL, because notwithstanding

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[205] Moore, Documents, pp. 394-395.

[206] New York Times, 7 November 1949, p. 18.

[207] Ibid.

the longtime interest of Zionists in southern Lebanon there were no territorial disputes of a magnitude similar to those between Israel and Syria and Israel and Jordan. Lebanon rejected the idea of a formal boundary settlement however on the grounds that it would imply her recognition of the Jewish State. Still, Lebanon very badly wanted the ADL redemarcated. Every time a Lebanese villager strayed across the poorly-marked boundary the Lebanese authorities feared an Israeli military response. Lebanon did not intend to give Israel any excuse to occupy Lebanese territory but neither did she want to give the boundary international legal status through a peace treaty. Troubled by the border crossing propensities of her own citizens, Lebanon invented the pretext of Israeli raids in order to seize the initiative in requesting that the ADL be better defined on the ground.

Inasmuch as the original Anglo-French Boundary Commission had published a detailed report of its surveying procedures, it appeared that the ILMAC's task was simple and straightforward: mark the ADL and post warning notices for the inhabitants of the frontier zone. Yet the 1923 boundary line bisected parcels of land in some places which were owned by single villages or individuals, a defect which had been successfully ameliorated by the 1926 "good neighbourly relations" treaty. That accord, which validated patterns of human interaction predating the existence of Lebanon and Palestine, institutionalized cross-border movement in the frontier region. The GAA of 1949 was

however a military agreement undertaken by two hostile states, and as such it authorized both sides to prohibit civilians from crossing the ADL.[208] Whereas the Jewish settlers occupying abandoned Arab villages near the Lebanese border had no reason or desire to cross the ADL, Arab villagers in Lebanon were under the impression that they could continue to graze cattle or plant tobacco on "their" land--even though some of that land was now on the "wrong" side of an all but invisible boundary. Israel took sharp exception to Arab border crossings, so Beirut concluded that the requirement for absolute quiet in the frontier zone outweighed the property rights and economic well-being of the Lebanese villagers living next to Israel.

The ILMAC established a special subcommittee on 1c November 1949 to study the 1923 boundary agreement and to post warning signs along the ADL. The subcommittee completed its work on 27 January 1951,[209] leaving the boundary unfenced but well-marked except for six kilometers "where the two sides maintained different interpretations of the Franco-British frontier agreement of 1923."[210] Although some Jewish-owned land in southern Lebanon was lost, the big losers were the

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[208] Moore, Documents, p. 392.

[209] Mohammad Taki Mehdi," Arab-Israeli Tension: A Study Border Conflicts." University of California (Berkeley), 1953, p. 62.

[210] Odd Bull, War and Peace in the Middle East (London: Leo Cooper, 1976), p. 62.

Arab peasants of southern Lebanon. Not only did they lose valuable land, they were also denied access to jobs and markets on the Israeli side of the border. A valuable economic safety valve had been lost, and ironically the loss had been facilitate by official Lebanese initiative.

The boundary-marking project was supplemented by mixed Israeli-Lebanese police investigations which were designed to stop cross-border smuggling and theft. Many minor disputes involving wandering livestock and fishing boats were expeditiously settled by the mixed police, who operated under ILMAC auspices. Lebanese police even assisted Israel in expelling to Lebanon several hundred Arab refugees who had infiltrated into Israel for the purpose of returning to their homes.[211]

According to Lieutenant-General Burns, Chief of Staff of the U.N. Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) from August 1954 to November 1956,

> UNTSO had very few difficulties in connexion with the General Armistice Agreement between Israel and Lebanon. In fact, the Israel-Lebanon MAC worked as it had been intended all MAC's should. It met at periodic intervals, and seldom had serious complaints to deal with. Those that were presented related mostly to grazing of cattle on the wrong side of the ADL.[212]

Burns did note, however, that the Lebanese were obliged to go out of their way to appease the Israelis in the border

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[211] Mehdi, "Arab-Israeli Tension," p. 63.

[212] Lieutenant General E. L. M. Burns, Between Arab and Israeli (London: George G. Harrap & Co., Ltd., 1962), p. 120.

region. In 1955 some Israelis were killed by Arab infiltrators from Lebanon. The incident alarmed the Lebanese authorities who set about quickly to remove "all refugees and people other than old established residents...from a zone ten kilometers deep on the Lebanese side of the border."[213]

By paying careful attention to Israeli sensitivities in the border area, Lebanon bought nearly two decades of peace with her southern neighbor. Yet her policy of local appeasement eventually came to naught. In the wake of the June 1967 Arab-Israeli war--a war which Lebanon characteristically avoided--Israel declared the 1949 armistice to be void. Furthermore, by the end of 1968 Israel began to hold Lebanon directly responsible for the activities of the armed Palestinians in the frontier region. After two decades of peace and prosperity, Lebanon found herself being drawn into the Arab-Israeli vortex.

## F. CONSEQUENCES OF THE JUNE 1967 WAR

Israel's stunning military successes of June 1967 left her in possession of the Sinai Peninsula, the balance of mandatory Palestine, and the Golan Heights. Her decision not to relinquish those territories to their former owners--Egypt, Jordan, and Syria--meant that the 1949 armistice agreements with those states no longer corresponded with de facto conditions. Three of the four armistice demarcation lines established in 1949 were, after the second week

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[213] Ibid., p. 122.

of June 1967, well to the rear of Israel's forward military positions. If the armistice agreements were still valid, Israel obviously would have been obliged to withdraw to positions behind the 1949 demarcation lines. However Israel had no intention of making any such withdrawal, and instead took the position that "Arab aggression" in June 1967 had demolished the legal validity of the 1949 armistice accords. Furthermore, according to Israel, "The texts of the Agreements between Israel and Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Egypt clearly point to the fact that the lines dividing them were of a provisional and non-political nature: they were not intended to, and did not constitute international boundaries."[214]

If the purported aggression of Egypt, Jordan, and Syria had provided Israel with justification for repudiating the 1949 armistice regime, what would her attitude be toward the GAA with Lebanon, her ostentatiously non-belligerant northern neighbor? According to General Odd Bull, commander of UNTSO at the time of the 1967 war,

> There had been no hostilities between Israel and Lebanon during the June War, though Israeli planes were reported to have flown over Lebanese territory...In spite of this Israel announced that its armistice agreement with Lebanon...was ended.[215]

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[214] "The Provisional Nature of the 1949 Armistice Lines," Statement by the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, March 1971, in Crescent and Star: Arab & Israeli Perspectives on the Middle East Conflict, ed. Yonah Alexander and Nicholas N. Kittrie, p. 228.

[215] Bull, War and Peace in the Middle East, p. 130.

According to Bull Israel took the position that Lebanon had indeed been a legal participant in the conflict even though she had conducted no offensive military operations. During the war a junior Lebanese officer had refused an Israeli request for a meeting of the ILMAC, stating that such a meeting was impossible because the two countries were at war.[216] That, claimed Israel, amounted to a declaration of war.

Furthermore, an article of very questionable origins appeared in the New York Times in June 1967,[217] alleging that the Prime Minister of Lebanon had ordered the army to attack Israel, but that the army commander refused. The report suggested that military insubordination alone had kept Lebanon from invading Israel. Inasmuch as the Lebanese Prime Minister lacks the authority to order the army into action, and in the light of the report's additional claim that Lebanon had participated in the 1956 Arab-Israeli war (along with Syria!), it may be concluded that the article was either a piece of very careless reporting, or a crude plant by Israeli intelligence. When combined with the "declaration of war" proclaimed by the Lebanese officer, the New York Times report clearly suggests that Israel was most interested in portraying Lebanon as the malevolant destroyer of the 1949 GAA.

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[216] Ibid., pp. 130-131.

[217] New York Times, 21 June 1967, pp. 1, 18.

The issue to be examined here is not however the merits of Israel's public relations campaign against Lebanon. Rather the key question is whether or not Israel's determination to scuttle the GAA signaled a renewed Zionist effort to adjust the northern boundary and seize Lebanese water. The answer to that question appears to be a qualified "no." It is quite true, as was discussed in the preceding section of this thesis, that water disputes played a large role in causing the 1967 war, and that Lebanon had indeed played a role in those disputes. There were undoubtedly some Israelis in influential positions who would have liked to take the Hasbani, thereby bringing under Israel's control all of the Jordan River's sources, and perhaps even the lower course of the Litani. Yet such a course of action surely would have provoked a storm of international protest, especially in the light of Lebanon's evident docility toward her southern neighbor ("declarations of war" notwithstanding). By failing to move into southern Lebanon during the June War itself, when an adequate pretext surely could have been invented, Israel demonstrated quite clearly that her repudiation of the armistice was not intended as a prelude to a new conquest.

It appears instead that Israel's decision to terminate the GAA with Lebanon was prompted by a desire to take a legally and logically consistent position toward the entire Arab-Israeli armistice regime. Article VIII of the Israel-Lebanon GAA established procedures whereby the agreement

could be modified "by mutual consent."[218] The other three Arab-Israeli armistice agreements contained similar language. None of the agreements provided for either bilateral or unilateral repudiation of any provision by any party, unless of course the GAAs were to be replaced by peace treaties. Israel's desire to hold Arab territories overrun in June 1967 forced her to take the position that the GAAs were dead. She could not very well adhere to the terms of the GAA with Lebanon while at the same time rejecting near-identical language appearing in the other three. She would have to repudiate all of the agreements or none. Furthermore, if she wished to base her repudiation of three of the agreements on a claim of Arab aggression in June 1967, then she would be obliged to find similar grounds on which to base her renunciation of the GAA with Lebanon. The purported Lebanese "declaration of war" supplemented by the bogus New York Times report gave Israel the pretext to reject the GAA, thereby enabling her to take a consistent--if legally questionable--position toward all of the armistice agreements. This conclusion is supported by the existence of a March 1971 statement issued by the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs on "The Provisional Nature of the 1949 Armistice Lines,"[219] a position paper that carefully mentioned

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[218] Moore, Documents, p. 395.

[219] Alexander and Kittrie, Crescent and Star, pp. 228-219.

Lebanon even though the objective of the statement was to provide the legal justification for the continued occupation of territories taken in June 1967. To uphold the Israel-Lebanon GAA would be to uphold the validity of the 1949 armistice demarcation lines with Egypt, Jordan, and Syria as well.

In addition to the breakdown of the GAA, the 1967 war extended the length of the Israeli-Lebanese border by about twelve miles, due to the advance of Israeli forces into the Golan Heights. Whereas the easternmost point of the common boundary had formerly been located just to the north of the Hula Valley, Lebanon now had to contend with the presence of Israel along the slopes of Mount Hermon to a point south of the village of Chebaa. The extension of the common boundary might have been of little or no significance had it not been for yet another consequence of the June War: the rise of fedayeen commando activity.

## G. THE FEDAYEEN FACTOR

According to Edgar O'Ballance the first fedayeen attack on Israel from Lebanon took place on 1 June 1965, when a small band of Palestinians slipped over the unguarded boundary and blew up a house in the hamlet of Yiftah.[220] It was not until October 1968 however that Palestinian commandos first entered Lebanon in significant numbers.

The defeat of the conventional Arab armies in June 1967 had left the growing Palestinian resistance movement as the

[220] Edgar O'Ballance, Arab Guerrilla Power 1967-72 (Hamden: Anchor Books), p. 30.

only force capable of continuing an armed struggle against Israel. Although the main fedayeen bases for armed operations were (prior to September 1970) located in Jordan, commandos did begin to make their presence felt in southern Lebanon by late 1968. The official Lebanese reaction to the prospect of an organized fedayeen raiding campaign against Israel headquartered on Lebanese soil was predictably negative and fully in keeping with Beirut's desire to keep the frontier region totally quiet. According to Kamal Salibi,

> If the Lebanese authorities were willing to condone a limited amount of Palestinian military training on Lebanese territory, one thing which they were determined not to tolerate was Palestinian commando infiltration from Lebanon into Israel...While Israel argued that the former frontier between Palestine and Lebanon could only be regarded as an armistice line so long as Lebanon remained formally in a state of war with Israel, the Lebanese authorities were anxious not to give Israel any excuse to question this frontier and force even the least change in it...[221]

Three factors combined however to thwart Beirut's efforts at controlling Palestinian activities in the south. First was the small size of Lebanon's armed forces which, by 1968 had reached a strength of approximately 13,200 men.[222] Such a small force would be hard-pressed to enforce discipline on the growing numbers of fedayeen in Lebanon who were receiving financial and logistical support from other Arab states,

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[221] Kamal S. Salibi, Crossroads to Civil War: Lebanon 1958-1976 (Delmar: Caravan Books, 1976), p. 27.

[222] Area Handbook for Lebanon (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1974), p. 297.

particularly Lebanon's sizeable Syrian neighbor. The second factor which limited Beirut's ability to deal with the armed Palestinians was the skeletal governmental presence in southern Lebanon, a deficiency that allowed fedayeen forces relative freedom of movement. As Michael Hudson observed in early 1970,

> Often, the only evidence of Lebanese government presence in South Lebanon's little hamlets is the shabby, one-room police post, with its faded flag hanging over the entrance. There are reports that guerrillas have been cordially received in these villages, despite the appalling danger they carry with them, because they minister to the medical and economic needs of the villagers more effectively than the Lebanese government has been able to.[223]

The third, and by far the most significant factor preventing Beirut from controlling the commandos was Lebanon's chronic lack of consensus on the question of national identity. Whereas most of Lebanon's Muslim citizens and some Christians (especially members of the Greek Orthodox sect) saw Lebanon as an Arab state obligated to aid the Palestinian resistance movement, the Lebanese economic and political elite--predominantly Maronite (but not without Muslim Lebanese support)--viewed Lebanon as a halfway house between East and West and urged that the country remain aloof from the Arab-Israeli controversy. In April 1969 the Prime Minister of Lebanon, Rashid Karami, summarized the government's dilemma by stating that

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[223]Michael Hudson, "Fedayeen are Forcing Lebanon's Hand," Mid East, Volume X, Number 1, February 1970, p. 13.

> There are two sides in Lebanon, one saying commando action should be carried out from Lebanon whatever the circumstances, [and the other saying] the commandos represent a danger to Lebanon...That is why no government can take either view without splitting the country.[224]

Yet the President of the Republic, Charles Helou, did not share Karami's sober appreciation for the explosiveness of Lebanon's national identity problem. On 24 June 1969 Helou called for the removal of the fedayeen from Lebanon on the grounds that their presence constituted an invitation to Israel to seize southern Lebanon.[225] While Karami could clearly foresee the destruction of Lebanon as the ultimate consequence of Israeli-Palestinian fighting, Helou took the more traditional view that what was really at stake was the potential loss of southern Lebanon to Israel.

The official Israeli policy toward the fedayeen presence in Lebanon was first enunciated before cross-border operations from Lebanon had begun in earnest. An attack on an Israeli civilian airliner at the Athens airport on 26 December 1968 by two Arab assailants from Lebanon prompted Israel's Transport Minister Moshe Carmel to state that Israel would not "relieve the government of Lebanon from responsibility for acts of sabotage organized on Lebanese soil with governmental encouragement."[226] Two days later, on 28 December

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[224] Lester A. Sobel, ed., Palestinian Impasse: Arab Guerrillas&International Terror (New York: Facts on File, Inc., 1977), p. 66.

[225] Ibid., p. 67.

[226] Ibid., p. 36.

1968, Israeli commandos raided the Beirut International Airport and destroyed thirteen civilian planes. Unlike their British predecessors thirty years earlier, the Israelis chose not to politely inquire about the possibility of Lebanese assistance in controlling the activities of anti-Zionist Arabs.

During the early part of 1969 fedayeen activity in Lebanon consisted almost exclusively of establishing base camps in the foothills of Mount Hermon (the Arqub), and securing supply trails into the Arqub from Syria. Later the area would become known as "Fatahland," after al-Fatah, the largest and most active of the many autonomous fedayeen organizations. Gradually the Lebanese government disappeared from the Arqub, and the Lebanese Army took up positions on the west bank of the Hasbani River to prevent the Palestinians from establishing bases near the old Palestine-Lebanon boundary. Commando activity emanating from Lebanon was therefore limited for the most part to raids on Israeli targets in the occupied Golan Heights. In the Spring of 1969 however the fedayeen began to probe along the Hasbani River, thereby provoking clashes with the Lebanese Army. The first major encounter occurred on 14 April 1969, when the Army evicted armed Palestinians from the village of Dayr Mimass.[227] Open warfare raged during the Autumn of 1969 as the Lebanese Army attempted, with some success, to bottle up the fedayeen east of the Hasbani and restrict

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[227] Michael Hudson, "The Palestinian Factor in the Lebanese Civil War," Middle East Journal, Volume 32, No. 3, Summer 1978, p. 263.

the flow of men and supplies to the Arqub from Syria. On 3 December 1969 the fighting ended and an accord known as the "Cairo Agreement" was signed. Designed to govern Lebanese-Palestinian relations, the Cairo Agreement reportedly divided southern Lebanon into three regions. In the Arqub, or eastern sector, the fedayeen were granted virtual autonomy. In the central sector of the Israel-Lebanon border region responsibility for military defense was left with the Lebanese Army, but a fedayeen presence in limited numbers and in specified locations was permitted. In the western sector, or coastal plain, no armed Palestinians would be allowed outside of refugee camps.[228]

In reality the Cairo Agreement settled nothing. Fedayeen raids into the occupied Golan Heights continued and Israeli retaliation against Lebanese territory followed very predictably. The Lebanese government was caught squarely in the middle. Michael Hudson expressed the triangular relationship as follows:

> Victory for the Lebanese government was in proportion to its ability to seal off the commandos from Israeli territory and avert Israeli reprisals, but for the commandos such an outcome would mean defeat. Lebanon's gains would be the Palestinian's losses. But enhanced commando access to Israel meant certain retaliation: commando gains would be Lebanese losses. As a third part to the conflict, it was to Israel's interest to hinder any modus vivendi between the two by keeping up the pressure on the Lebanese...[229]

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[228] Sharif, "South Lebanon: Its History and Geopolitics," p. 16.

[229] Hudson, "Fedayeen Are Forcing Lebanon's Hand," p. 14.

Pressure was indeed applied. On 6 March 1970 the Israeli Northern District Commander, Major General Mordechai Gur, reportedly threatened to "turn a six-mile stretch of southern Lebanon into a scorched-earth desert."[230] Fifteen years earlier the Lebanese government had felt constrained to remove all Palestinian refugees from that same six mile (ten kilometer) strip. In May 1970 a thirty-two hour sweep of the Arqub was conducted by an Israeli force of about 2,000 men. Another sweep of the Arqub took place between 25 and 28 February 1972 following a warning by Israeli Chief of Staff Lieutenant General David Elazar that fedayeen activity was "liable to bring disaster upon the villages of south Lebanon."[231] After the completion of the Arqub operation Defense Minister Moshe Dayan announced that Israel reserved the right to occupy Lebanese territory indefinitely unless Beirut took steps to oust the commandos from the slopes of Mount Herman.[232] Another Israeli sweep--this time through the Merj Valley and along the Mediterranean coast--took place on 16 and 17 September 1972 following the murders of Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympic Games.

Following the September 1972 operation the commandos acceeded to new territorial restrictions imposed by the

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[230]Sobel, Palestinian Impasse, p. 91.

[231]Ibid., p. 139.

[232]Ibid., p. 141.

Lebanese government. However on 15 October 1972 Israel launched air attacks against Palestinian bases in Lebanon, and announced that she would no longer wait for commando acts or terrorist incidents before striking targets in Lebanon. Former Israeli Chief of Staff Chaim Herzog announced that, "We are not engaged in reprisal, but a war against terror. The very presence of terrorists in the area between the border and the Litani River is a provocation [and Israel is] free to act against them."[233]

According to Lebanese government sources there were 44 major Israeli attacks on Lebanon between mid-1968 and mid 1974, resulting in the deaths of 880 Lebanese and Palestinian civilians.[234] As Hudson has observed,

> That these attacks were a major drain on Lebanon's thin governmental legitimacy is self evident. It is also manifest that the traditional Maronite leaders and their constituencies had come to regard the Palestinian guerrillas, rather than Israel itself, as chiefly to blame for this state of affairs.[235]

Prior to 1971 the main fedayeen bases for operations against Israel were located in northwestern Jordan.[236] The camps in the Arqub of Lebanon were strictly subsidiary. Yet the Jordanian civil war of September 1970 and subsequent

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[233]Ibid., p. 144.

[234]Hudson, "The Palestinian Factor in the Lebanese Civil War," p. 263.

[235]Ibid.

[236]John K. Cooley, Green March, Black September (London: Frank Cass, 1973), p. 103.

mopping-up operations by the Jordan Arab Army in the Spring of 1971 caused the focus of fedayeen activity to shift to "Fatahland," with the result being a fundamental shift of Israeli anti-fedayeen activities from Jordan to Lebanon. According to O'Ballance some 9,000 fedayeen escaped from Jordan to Syria in 1971, and by November of the same year the commando buildup began in the Arqub. Nevertheless,

> Raids from the Lebanon [Arqub region] into Israel had been limited in scope as the Israelis were in good positions in the overlooking hills, and in fact had constructed a road to supply them, a mile or so of which actually lay within Lebanese territory.[237]

In summary, fedayeen activity in southern Lebanon between the third and fourth Arab-Israeli wars was not particularly effective and had a very limited impact on northern Israel. The commandos were, for the most part, restricted to the Arqub region of Lebanon. With a few minor exceptions their cross-border activities were limited to the occupied Golan Heights and had little effect on Israeli settlements lying astride the 1949 GAA. It is worth noting that it was not until May 1974 that Israel began to build a barrier--a latter-day version of Tegart's Wall--along the old Palestine-Lebanon boundary.[238] Between the Autumn of 1968, when fedayeen

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[237] O'Ballance, Arab Guerrilla Power, p. 122.

[238] Terence Smith, "Israel Builds New Border Fence," New York Times, 14 July 1974, pp. 1, 17.

in noticeable numbers began to arrive in southern Lebanon, and July 1974, the border between Lebanon and Israel contained no significant physical obstacle.[239]

Israel's policy of striking at Palestinian targets in Lebanon was not therefore the result of a commando campaign being waged in the Acre and Safed subdistricts, as had been the case in 1938. To the extent that Israeli attacks on Lebanon were retaliatory in nature, they stemmed from acts of international terrorism against Israelis and from commando activity in the occupied Golan Heights. To the extent that the attacks were not retaliatory--as indicated by Herzog's statement cited above--Israel's main interest seemed to lie in provoking a violent confrontation between Lebanon's Maronite nationalists and the Palestinian commandos. Following a bold Israeli commando raid on Beirut on 10 April 1973, one which resulted in the deaths of three Palestinian leaders, fighting broke out between the Lebanese Army and the fedayeen which lasted from 1 through 17 May. According to Hudson the fighting, which took place mainly in the vicinity of the Palestinian refugee camps of Beirut, "led only to a standoff" and was a "psychological defeat for the Army."[240]

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[239] "For the most of its length the border is marked by neither fences nor mine fields. It takes little bravado to stroll a few yards into Lebanon, and people do so." Charles Mohr, "Lebanese Border with Israel Calm," New York Times, 7 November 1969, p. 5.

[240] Hudson, "The Palestinian Factor in the Lebanese Civil War," p. 266.

In the Spring of 1974 the Palestinian-Israel confrontation acquired a new dimension, as fedayeen raiders from southern Lebanon began to strike into Israel proper. On 11 April 1974 three commandos stormed an apartment building in the Israeli town of Qiryat Shemona, ultimately killing sixteen Israeli civilians and two soldiers. On the next day Israeli forces retaliated by blowing up buildings in the Lebanese border villages of Dahira, Yarun, Mehebab, Blida, Ett Taibe, and Aitarun. Defense Minister Dayan called upon Lebanon to eliminate the commando presence, adding ominously, "The Lebanese villagers will have to abandon their homes and flee if the people of Qiryat Shemona cannot live in peace. All of southern Lebanon will not be able to exist."[241] The U.N. Security Council condemned the Israeli raids, prompting Israel's delegate to state that Israel would "continue to hold the Lebanese government responsible for any armed attacks organized in or perpetrated from Lebanon."[242]

On 15 May 1974 three fedayeen commandos raided the Israeli border village of Maalot, killing twenty-five Israelis. Israel refrainedfrom a ground attack against Lebanon, but bombing raids against Palestinian targets in Lebanon produced heavy casualties.[243] On 13 June 1974 a

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[241]Sobel, Palestinian Impasse, p. 209.

[242]Ibid.

[243]Ibid., p. 210.

fedayeen attack on the Israeli settlement of Shamir resulted in the deaths of three women and brought more Israeli air attacks on Lebanon.[244] A seaborne raid on the Israeli town of Nahariya on 24 June 1974 produced four Israeli deaths and brought Palestinian positions in southern Lebanon under heavy Israeli artillery attacks. Later, Israeli gunboats raided three Lebanese ports in further retaliation for the Nahariya operation.[245]

Shortly after the raid on Qiryat Shemona Israel decided to try to seal the Lebanese boundary with a twelve-foot high security fence topped with barbed wire and equipped with electronic warning devices. A smooth dirt track was created on the Israeli side of the fence to pick up footprints, and machine gun positions were established at intervals along the fence. The security barrier proved to be far more effective than its 1938 predecessor because of the absence of Arabs (except for loyal Israeli Druze) on the Israeli side of the border. Yet the new security system was not infallable. As one Israeli officer observed,

> We realize it's impossible to seal the border completely. But this fence will at least slow a terrorist down. If the system works properly, we'll be able to kill him before he manages to cut his way through.[246]

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[244] Ibid., p. 212.

[245] Ibid., pp. 213-214.

[246] Smith, "Israel Builds New Border Fence," p. 1.

Indeed, the largest number of commandos who participated in any of the bloody raids that terrorized northern Israel in 1974 was only _four_. Even with an elaborate security system it would be no easy task to stop small groups of infiltrators, particularly if they were willing (if not eager) to sacrifice their lives.

It is clear that the sudden rash of assaults on Israeli civilians dramatically increased popular pressure on the Israeli government to "do something" about the _fedayeen_ presence in southern Lebanon. Civil war in Lebanon--a conflict brought on by the seemingly endless cycle of Palestinian-Israeli violence in the border region--afforded Israel the opportunity to "do something" far more effective than conducting retaliatory raids and building security fences. The total collapse of Lebanon's weak central authority enabled Israel to enlist the aid of anti-_fedayeen_ Lebanese Christian militiamen in the defense of northern Israel.

## VI. CIVIL WAR AND THE SOUTH

Between April 1975 and October 1976 Lebanon was convulsed in a civil war that resulted in widespread physical destruction, the collapse of the country's fragile political system, and over 40,000 deaths, most of which were innocent civilians. The war began as a confrontation between the Maronite militias, eager to restrict or eliminate the troublesome Palestinian presence in Lebanon, and the fedayeen. In short order however Lebanese leftists nursing old grudges against the country's political and economic elite entered the fight, transforming the Maronite-Palestinian clashes into a true civil war. Syria intervened twice in Lebanon to restore order. In January 1976 units of the Damascus-controlled Palestine Liberation Army (PLA) entered Lebanon on the side of the fedayeen-Lebanese leftist coalition and successfully overcame the rightist Christian militias. Shortly thereafter however the war again erupted, as the Lebanese left rejected the mildly reformist Syrian political formula for peace.[247] That rejection caused an unbelieveable turnabout in the Syrian position. As James Markham put it,

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[247] The Syrian-backed program, known for a time as the "New Lebanese National Covenant," is summarized by Salibi, Crossroads to Civil War: Lebanon 1958-1976, pp. 163-164.

> Most dramatically, at the height of the Lebanese civil war in the summer of 1976, Syrian armor lunged deep into Lebanon and clashed with the Palestinians, who seemed on the verge of victory over Christian rightists that might have provoked what Mr. Assad [the President of Syria] feared most--an untimely war with Israel.[248]

The Syrian military campaign, conducted in concert with the rightist militias, eventually overcame the Palestinian resistance and a shaky peace was restored to Lebanon--except for the south. On 14 April 1976 Israeli Prime Minister Rabin, anticipating further Syrian armed intervention in Lebanon, announced the existence of an unspecified "red line" in Lebanon south of which Syrian forces would not be permitted to move.[249] Although it was widely assumed that the "red line" was the lower course of the Litani River, subsequent developments proved that it was in fact the limited forces line of the 1949 GAA. It will be recalled that that line extended from the mouth of the Litani, through Nabatiyah, to Hasbaya. When in January 1977 a Syrian battalion occupied Nabatiyah, vigorous Israeli complaints led to a Syrian withdrawal.[250]

The Lebanese civil war had induced most of the fedayeen commandos stationed near the Israeli border to move north in

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[248] James M. Markham, "Syria's Role in Lebanon is Murkier than Ever," New York Times, 26 March 1978, p. 2E.

[249] New York Times, 15 April 1976, p. 4

[250] Ibid., 26 January 1977, p. 2, and 13 February 1977, p. 5.

order to fight the rightist militias and the Syrians. The Rabin government viewed the Palestinian evacuation as an opportunity to solve once and for all the vexatious problem of border security. It therefore became Israeli policy to bar the reintroduction of fedayeen commandos to the frontier region. The lessons of the past clearly indicated to Israel that the pacification of southern Lebanon was the prerequisite for the security of her own northern settlements. The balance of this section will focus on Israeli efforts to secure her northern boundary by attempting to control events in southern Lebanon.

## A. THE GOOD FENCE PROGRAM

The new Israeli policy, as announced by Defense Minister Shimon Peres on 19 July 1976, was what Peres called the "good fence program."[251] There were three basic aspects of the program: humanitarian relief for the beleaguered residents of southern Lebanese border villages; the exclusion of all non-Lebanese military forces from the area adjoining Israel; and the creation of a pro-Israeli southern Lebanese militia to aid in barring the reintroduction of fedayeen commandos. Although Israelis, when referring to the "good fence program" stress its humanitarian aspect, it is more accurate to view the entire undertaking in the context of a comprehensive security policy.

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[251] Ibid., 20 July 1976, p. 3.

The humanitarian element of the program amounted to a series of Israeli gestures designed to establish a bond of friendship between the impoverished Lebanese civilians of the border region and the government of Israel.[252] The security fence which had divided Lebanon and Israel since 1974 was opened at two places: Metulla and Dovev. By providing to Lebanese citizens (most of whom--due to the location of the fence openings--Maronite Christians) such vital services as water, medical care, employment, markets for agricultural produce, and access to Israeli manufactured goods, Israel hoped to turn the residents of the Lebanese border villages into willing collaborators against the fedayeen. It appears that some strong cross-border links were established, although many southern Lebanese were understandably leery of becoming identified too closely with Israel. Yet one measure of Israel's success was indicated by a story in the Jerusalem Post of 21 February 1978, which reported that Lebanese Major Saad Haddad, the leader of the pro-Israeli Maronite militia in southern Lebanon, visited Israel to remonstrate with Israel's top labor union official about underpaying Lebanese laborers. He reportedly secured an agreement to the effect that Lebanese

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[252] An account of the humanitarian side of the "good fence program" was written by Gertrude Samuels, "Israel's New Experiment in Peace," New Leader, 27 September 1976, pp. 9-11.

workers in Israel would receive wages equal to those of their Israeli counterparts.[253]

The second element of the "good fence program" was the attempt to exclude non-Lebanese (Syrian and Palestinian) military forces from the south. Rabin's 'red line" statement of 14 April 1976 was later supplemented by Foreign Minister Allon's proposal of 31 January 1977 that a multilateral agreement be reached concerning the presence of Arab military units near the Israeli-Lebanese border.[254] Allon reiterated his proposal on 13 February 1977, emphasizing that Israel would accept the stationing only of Lebanese forces in the frontier zone.[255] Israel was obviously opposed to the reintroduction of fedayeen commandos, and was likewise opposed to the idea of Syrian regulars directly facing Israel on a new front.

The third element of the security program involved an attempt to fill the security vacuum which Israel and the virtually nonexistent Lebanese central authority had imposed on southern Lebanon. The Lebanese Army, reflecting the same contradictions that had brought Lebanon itself to ruin in 1975 and 1976, had all but collapsed. It was simply not prepared to move south in 1976. In order to obstruct the return of the Palestinians therefore, Israel was faced with

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[253] "Lebanese Claim for Equal Wages," Jerusalem Post (International Edition), 21 February 1978, p. 4.

[254] New York Times, 1 February 1977, p. 5.

[255] Ibid., 14 February 1977, p. 5.

the choice of either occupying southern Lebanon or creating and supporting a pro-Israeli Arab force to police the area. Beginning in August 1976 Israel greatly increased the frequency of armored patrols which penetrated several miles into Lebanon in order to check for fedayeen concentrations.[256] By October of the same year however much of the patrolling activity in Lebanon was being carried out by a pro-Israeli Maronite militia led by Major Haddad, an officer of the recently disintegrated Lebanese Army. Armed, clothed, fed, and trained by Israel, the militia's mission was to give northern Israel an "early-warning system, permitting it [the IDF] to move a task force into Lebanon quickly" should the Lebanese militia encounter Palestinian commandos.[257] Although many of the militiamen were local natives who, like their kinsmen in 1925, had no great love for non-Christian Arabs, some were reportedly transported by Israel to southern Lebanon from Junieh (the Maronite "capital" north of Beirut) by way of Haifa.[258] Haddad's strange role in the southern Lebanese political vacuum was demonstrated by

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[256] Terence Smith, "Israelis Stepping up Patrols in Lebanon," New York Times, 3 August 1976, pp. 1, 4.

[257] Henry Tanner, "In South Lebanon, an Odd War: Arab Soldiers with Israeli Arms," New York Times, 8 October 1976, pp. 1, 7.

[258] Ibid., p. 7.

the fact that as leader of the 3,000-man militia,[259] he (1) collaborated fully with Israel, (2) received orders from and reported directly to Maronite political and military leaders in Beirut,[260] and (3) continued to receive his regular pay from the official Lebanese government of President Sarkis,[261] whose desires were routinely ignored and obstructed by Haddad.

So long as fedayeen forces in Lebanon found themselves fighting Syrians, the "good fence program" work relatively well for Israel. Yet the Syrian-imposed peace in Lebanon north of the Litani in the Autumn of 1976 permitted large numbers of armed Palestinians to again move south and join their Lebanese leftist allies still active in the Shi'ite villages of southern Lebanon. Syria, angered and embarrassed by the open collaboration of certain of her Maronite "allies" with Israel, again changed direction and facilitated the reentry of armed Palestinians to the south of Lebanon. The Syrian objective was not to help reinstitute fedayeen attacks on Israel, but to punish those elements of the Maronite community who had welcomed Syrian intervention in

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[259] Jay Bushinsky, "Lebanese Major Shows Israelis His Touchy Position," Christian Science Monitor, 1[illegible] October 1[illegible], p. 10.

[260] Le Figaro (Paris), 20 April 1978, p. 1[illegible] (Foreign Broadcast Information Service, 24 April 1978, p. [illegible].)

[261] Bushinsky, "Lebanese Major Shows Israelis His Touchy Position," p. 10.

June 1976 only to seriously humiliate the Asad regime (itself based on a religious minority group)[262] by open cooperation with the Israeli military. Inasmuch as Syria could not move her own forces south of the "red line" without provoking an Israeli military response, the only alternative was to turn the Palestinians loose on Major Haddad's militia.

B. WARFARE IN SOUTHERN LEBANON

Severe fighting broke out in southern Lebanon in February 1977, as Haddad's rightist militia attacked Palestinian and Lebanese leftist positions in the villages of Kfar Tebnit and Ibl as Saqi,[263] north of Israel's Hula Valley. Attacks and counterattacks continued through July 1977, with Israel providing artillery and logistical support to her Arab allies in an effort to create an anti-fedayeen buffer zone along the entire length of the Israeli-Lebanese boundary. Syria gave parallel support to the Palestinian-leftist forces. Israeli support for the Maronite militia in the south became more open and militant with the coming to power of Prime Minister Menachem Begin in June 1977. On 8 August Begin publicly called attention to Israel's support of the rightist militia, claiming

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[262] As a member of the minority Alawite Shi'ite sect, Asad's position in predominantly Sunnite Syria was jeopardized by his "rescue" of the Lebanese Maronite elite. See "Syria Has an Enemy Within," New York Times, 4 Sept. 1977, Sect. 4, p. 2.

[263] Keesing's Contemporary Archives, 23 December 1977, p. 28734.

that the fedayeen had embarked on a program of "genocide" against the Christians of southern Lebanon. By affirming that Israel would "never abandon the Christian minority across the border,"[264] Begin was clearly raising the stakes in southern Lebanon. No longer was Israel engaged in a tactical campaign aimed simply at providing adequate frontier security. Begin's open proclamation of support for the Maronites appeared to signal Israel's interest in, if not open support of, the idea of partitioning Lebanon itself along sectarian lines, with the predominantly Christian areas of Mount Lebanon and east Beirut linked to its Jewish neighbor to the south by a neutralized southern Lebanon. As one observer noted,

> ...some sections of the Lebanese right wing have been so encouraged by the Israeli premier's recent public statement of support for their cause that they have been echoing Israeli calls for an international buffer force to be deployed in south Lebanon.[265]

Alarmed by the implications of the budding relationship between Israel and prominent Maronite leaders--most notably former President of the Republic Camille Chamoun--the Lebanese government, in concert with Syria, pressed for an end to the hostilities in the south. They obviously recognized that instability in the south was keeping all of Lebanon strapped to a powder keg. On 19 July 1977

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[264] Ibid.

[265] Helena Cobban, "Pacifying South Lebanon Tied to Israeli Cooperation," Christian Science Monitor, 19 August 1977, p. 4.

the Palestinian forces agreed to stop fighting in southern Lebanon.[266] On the next day delegations representing the Palestinians, the Syrian Army, the Lebanese Army, and the Arab Deterrent Force (a predominantly Syrian peacekeeping force in Lebanon authorized by the Arab League) met at Chtaura, Lebanon, to map out a common strategy. An agreement was reached on 25 July. With regard to southern Lebanon, the Chtaura Agreement provided that fedayeen commandos would withdraw to a line roughly fifteen kilometers from the Israeli-Lebanese border, and that the reconstituted Lebanese Army would move south and relieve the pro-Israeli militia of its border security functions.[267]

The United States moved quickly to capitalize on the Chtaura Agreement by pressing for Israeli cooperation. On 11 September the New York Times reported Lebanese press sources as stating that Israel had informed the United States that she "would not object" to the presence of the Lebanese Army along the boundary provided that the promised Palestinian withdrawal was effected, and that the Palestinians agree to conduct no more cross-border operations.[268] It appeared that an agreement was within reach, and that

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[266] Keesing's Contemporary Archives, 23 December 1977, p. 28736.

[267] Ibid.

[268] New York Times, 11 September 1977, p. 14.

Lebanon was ready to deploy approximately two-thirds of its 3,000-man rebuilt army to southern Lebanon.[269]

Despite its promising start, the Chtaura Agreement foundered on the all-important matter of timing, and was never implemented. President Sarkis was extremely reluctant to deploy his new army to the south without first assuring himself that the pacification plan would work. He did not want the army, a key institution in the rebuilding of Lebanon, to be subjected again to devisive forces. Yet the question of who exactly would make the first move in the pacification of southern Lebanon became the major stumbling block. The Palestinian forces made their withdrawal contingent upon the insertion of the regular Lebanese Army in the border area. Sarkis however refused to deploy the army without assurances from the United States that Israel would not undermine the operation. Israel refused to give such assurances without first seeing a total Palestinian withdrawal.[270] In an atmosphere of mutual distrust the fighting in the south resumed. Clashes in the vicinity of Merj 'Uyun and Khiam, just north of Metulla, again brought Israeli forces onto Lebanese territory in support of their rightist militia allies.[271]

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[269] Ibid.

[270] Keesing's Contemporary Archives, 23 December 1977, p. 28736.

[271] Ibid.

The United States refused however to allow the Chtaura initiative to die, and on 26 September 1977 arranged a ceasefire in southern Lebanon. Under the ceasefire formula, the entrance of the Lebanese Army and withdrawal of fedayeen units would take place simultaneously in early October. Israeli forces immediately withdrew from Lebanon.[272] However the ceasefire was vigorously opposed by Major Haddad, who made the following statement:

> The cease-fire was forced on us...No one asked us. Others obligated us. We were against it. We are not against peace, but this cease-fire is not fair.
>
> They should have provided for a concurrent withdrawal by the Israeli Army and the guerrillas. That's the way we thought a cease-fire should be. I cannot understand how Israel accepted a condition like this, specifying a one-sided troop pullback, even if it was imposed by the United States.[273]

Of course, the "concurrent withdrawal" envisioned by Haddad and his mentors in Beirut would have left his own forces in control of southern Lebanon, a prospect none too pleasing to either the Palestinian-leftist coalition or the Syrian backers of President Sarkis.

Within three weeks the ceasefire had broken down. Despite the Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon and the initiation of direct talks between Israeli and Lebanese officers in early October, [274] the rightist militia and

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[272] Ibid., p. 28737.

[273] Bushinsky, "Lebanese Major Shows Israelis His Touchy Position, p. 10.

[274] New York Times, 29 October 1977, p. 5.

Palestinians simply could not refrain from firing at one another. The rightist forces in southern Lebanon urged their Israeli supporters to scrap the ceasefire, and the Israeli Defense Minister obliged them by making the implementation of the ceasefire contintent upon a unilateral Palestinian withdrawal from Khiam, only five kilometers north of Metulla.[275] The Palestinians refused, fighting resumed, and again Sarkis declined to insert his army into the southern Lebanese maelstrom. Adding to the general confusion were demands by Israel that Lebanon recognize Major Haddad's militia as part of the regular Lebanese Army, and that Israel be permitted to maintain her "good fence" relationship with Lebanese border villages for an indefinite period.[276] Despite the fact that Haddad remained on the Lebanese government payroll, the Sarkis regime was in no position to accept the Israeli demands.

The abortive ceasefire was killed on 8 November 1977 when fedayeen forces, firmly in control of the coastal sector of southern Lebanon, rocketed the Israeli town of Nahariya for the second time in three days, killing three Israelis. Israel retaliated by bombing the Rashidiya refugee camp, killing about seventy people.[277] Sporadic fighting

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[275] Jason Morris, "Shaky Truce Invites Israeli Troops Again," Christian Science Monitor, 17 October 1977, p. 7.

[276] Cobban, "S. Lebanon: Integration with Israel?", p. 34.

[277] Geoggrey Godsell, 'Israeli Retaliation Raids Buffet U.S. Peace Efforts," Christian Science Monitor, 10 November 1977, pp. 1, 11.

continued in the south, with Israeli forces occasionally crossing the border to assist Haddad's militia.

By March 1978 however it was clear that Israel's attempt to establish an anti-fedayeen security zone on Lebanese territory along the length of the boundary had met with only patrial success. Although the combination of Israeli patrolling and rightist militia activity had reduced Palestinian actions against Israel to infrequent and ineffective indirect fire attacks, the fact remained that long stretches of the boundary were still vulnerable. According to a map appearing in the Israeli press, only three small Christian enclaves existed on the Lebanese side of the border, and it was only in those areas where Israel could rely upon her allies to effectively provide security.[278] Despite the sound civic action principles embodied in the "good fence program," Israel apparently succeeded in securing the cooperation of only 20,000 Lebanese living in the Christian border enclaves.[279] By supporting Major Haddad's militia Israel had forfeited the cooperation of the Shi'ites in southern Lebanon. This was recognized by an Israeli journalist who recently observed that,

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[278] Jerusalem Post (International Edition), 21 March 1978, p. 7.

[279] Cobban, 'S. Lebanon: Integration with Israel?' p. 34.

> Without forsaking its alliance with the Christians and without leaving the Christian militias to their fate, Israel must now show initiative and imagination and pave a way to the heart of the Moslim population residing right next to it. Precisely because the Shi'ites are a minority within the Sunni Moslim world encircling us, they will need the defense of those same elements who had shown their loyalty to other minorities in the Middle East.[280]

In February 1978 the Israeli military reportedly made a serious effort to establish such links with the Shi'ite community in the frontier zone. According to the Shi'ite spiritual leader, Mufti Abdel Amir Kabalan, Israeli forces occupied the Shi'ite village of Meis al Jabal in early February and offered the town's residents the entire "good fence" package in return for cooperation against the Palestinians. The villagers politely refused, pointing out that no fedayeen were based in Meis al Jabal. According to the Mufti, the Israeli overtures were rejected in six other Shi'ite border villages.[281]

By basing her security policy on the small Maronite minority of southern Lebanon, Israel found herself on shaky ground in the highly-charged atmosphere of sectarian and village rivalries in the Jabal Aamel region. Unless she could build bridges to the Shi'ite community of the south--a process that would probably require the reining-in

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[280] Shemu'el Segev, Tel Aviv Ha'aretz, 12 April 1978, p. 5 (Foreign Broadcast Information Service, 13 April 1978, p. N5).

[281] Marvine Howe, "Israelis Said to be Seeking Use of Lebanese Villages," New York Times, 26 February 1978, p. 11.

of Haddad's Maronite militia--Israel would be obligated to continually intervene in those parts of the border region beyond Haddad's control. On 11 March 1978 however a terrorist atrocity in Israel gave the Begin government an opportunity to create a new set of facts for southern Lebanon. On 15 March 1978 Israel undertook a full-scale invasion of southern Lebanon.

C. OPERATION STONE OF WISDOM

On 11 March 1978 Palestinian commandos seized an Israeli bus near Tel Aviv in a raid which resulted in thirty-seven deaths.[282] Although the entire world recognized the inevitability of an Israeli reprisal against Lebanon, the scope and intensity of the Israeli operation came as a great surprise.

In retrospect it appears that the Palestinian action of 11 March was not the cause of Israel's subsequent invasion. Rather it provided the Begin government with a strong public relations basis upon which an already urgently-needed military operation could be launched. The salient feature of the military situation in southern Lebanon in the beginning of March 1978 was the conspicuous failure of Major Haddad's militia to extend its control beyond the three Christian border enclaves. The very size of the Israeli invasion on 15 March suggests that it was a well-planned action designed to clear fedayeen and

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[282] Arab Report and Record, 1-15 March 1978, No. 5, pp. 185-186.

Lebanese leftist forces from the frontier region, not a spontaneous reaction to a particularly gruesome incident of Palestinian terrorism.

On 2 March 1978 Haddad's militia made a strong effort to break out of a Christian enclave. The rightist militia seized the small village of Maroun er Ras,[283] located only slightly more than a single kilometer from the Israeli border. The significance of Maroun er Ras lay not however in its proximity to Israel, but in its elevated position overlooking the town of Bint Jubail two kilometers to the northwest. As was the case forty years earlier when Arab guerrillas were raising havoc along the Palestine-Lebanon border, Bint Jubail was, in March 1978, the major Palestinian-leftist stronghold in the central sector of the boundary region. Despite the many changes wrought over six decades, Bint Jubail still enjoyed some significance as a road junction in the Lebanese portion of the divided Upper Galilee.

The Palestinian-leftist forces counterattacked immediately and expelled Haddad's militia from Maroun er Ras.[284] The engagement, though hardly a candidate for inclusion in a list of the world's great battles, nevertheless demonstrated conclusively to Israel that Haddad would not be able on his own to crack the enemy stronghold in and around Bint Jubail.

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[283] Ibid., p. 162.

[284] Ibid.

In order to sweep the fedayeen and their Lebanese partners from the Shi'ite border villages Israeli regulars would have to be used. It was because of Maroun er Ras that Israel decided that the time had come to invade southern Lebanon.

At 0140 on 15 March 1978 Isareli artillery opened up on the following villages held by the Palestinians and leftists: Ras el Biyada, Bint Jubail, Maroun er Ras, Taibe, Khiam, and Rashaya al Foukhar.[285] The shelling was followed by a ground attack, with approximately 20,000 Israeli soldiers advancing on the following five axes: Ras En Naqurah-Ras el Biyada; Yarine-Tair Harfa; Maroun er Ras-Bint Jbail; Aadaisse-Taibe; and Metulla to the vicinity of Merj 'Uyun (Blat, Ibl es Saqi, and Khiam).[286] In only two places, Bint Jbail and Taibe, did the Palestinian-leftist coalition offer significant resistance.[287] The overwhelming majority of commandos simply evacuated their positions and headed north.

Although Israel had obviously contemplated a large incursion into Lebanon prior to the Palestinian terror action of 11 March, it appears that military events which unfolded after 15 March involved a good deal of politically-inspired improvisation. At first the objective was limited: "to break the tightening terrorist stranglehold around the Christian

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[285] Hirsh Goodman, "Israel Forces Holding Southern Lebanon," Jerusalem Post (International Edition), 21 March 1978, p. 7.

[286] Arab Report and Record, 1-15 March 1978, No. 5, p. 184.

[287] Goodman, "Israel Forces Holding Southern Lebanon," p. 7.

enclaves in the central and northern sectors of southern Lebanon."[288] In other words, the Israeli operation--code-named "Stone of Wisdom"--was designed to save Major Haddad's crumbing position. Indeed, Haddad greeted the invasion with undisguised relief, saying "I've been waiting for this night a long time."[289] So were his men. As the Israeli forces moved north, Haddad's militia followed in their wake, looting the Shi'ite villages which had successfully held out for so long.[290] It was 1925 all over again, with some old local vendettas settled and some new ones created.

The military objective was achieved within approximately fifteen hours. The significance of the operation was explained as follows by the Israeli Chief of Staff:

> In southern Lebanon there were a number of junctions, large villages and, closer to the border with Israel, key regions which we took on the first night when we spoke about a security belt. If we go from west to east the region of Ras al-Bayyadah, on the seashore; in the center we have the Maroun al-Ras-Bint Jabayl area; opposite Rahim and Misgav 'Am we have At-Taiyba ridge and on the Fatahland front, what we call the Naqurim ridge--a ridge that controls the roads coming from 'Abaqah south. On this front they split further south to the region of Metulla. These territories must be controlled by some force or another if we want to prevent terrorist activity on the northern front.[291]

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[288] Ibid.

[289] Ibid.

[290] Arab Report and Record, 16-31 March 1978, No. 6, p. 200.

[291] "Press Conference with Ezer Weizman & Mordechai Gur," Jerusalem Domestic Service, 20 March 1978 (Foreign Broadcast Information Service, 21 March 1978, pp. N3-N5.)

By the end of the first day Israel had secured that which Major Haddad's militia had failed to provide: a buffer zone, ranging in depth from five to twenty kilometers, stretching from the Mediterranean Sea to the foothills of Mount Hermon. It appeared that the operation had ended.

Between 16 and 18 March Israeli forces continued to make small advances in those areas where the security belt was less than ten kilometers deep. Tibnine and Qantara fell on 17 March, and Israeli forces pushed up the coast to Mansoura. In the eastern sector the offensive continued in the general direction of Kawkaba and Hasbaya.[292] Concerned about casualties, the IDF abandoned its traditional practice of high mobility, choosing instead to advance its mechanized infantry very cautiously behind a devasting wall of artillery fire. Although that technique did indeed minimize Israeli casualties,[293] it maximized non-combattant deaths and civil destruction, and permitted the great bulk of enemy commands to cross the Litani River to relative safety. According to the military affairs writer of the Jerusalem Post, "The Israeli Army, once renowned for its Davidian finesse, was used as a huge, stomping Goliath, hitting with all its might at places from which the terrorists had already fled."[294]

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[292] Arab Report and Record, 16-31 March 1978, No. 5, pp. 222-223.

[293] The IDF suffered only eighteen deaths during the operation. Newsweek, 3 April 1978, p. 39.

[294] As quoted in Newsweek, 3 April 1978, p. 42.

On 19 March, with the invasion seemingly ended, the IDF suddenly broke out of the newly-created buffer zone toward the Litani River. According to one Israeli source the new advance "was designed to carve out a PLO-free security belt in the 1,200 sq. km. between Israel's northern border and the Litani River..."[295] The Jerusalem Post offered the following explanation as to why a decision was made to seek a wider security belt:

> It is believed that the decision to thrust deeper into Lebanon was taken only on Saturday night prior to Premier Menachem Begin's departure for the U.S. Israel had initially announced that it would penetrate no deeper than 10 kilometers into Lebanon, but the decision was apparently prompted by several factors: continued terrorist shellings on Israeli targets; the lack of Syrian involvement in the fighting; the desire to do further harm to the terrorist organizational infrastructure, specifically in the Tyre area; and the tactical advantage of bringing terrorist concentrations north of the Litani into Israel's artillery range, and the desire to control access routes.[296]

The Post's explanation of Israeli motives for expanding the operation is of interest both because of what it says and because of what it does not say. It is true that Israeli mop-up operations were being harassed by enemy artillery and mortar fire. That was due in large part to the ponderous IDF advance of 15-18 March which had permitted large numbers of enemy commandos to escape and regroup. It was also true that Syria abstained from the fighting, thereby leading

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[295] Anan Safadi, Jerusalem Post Magazine, 7 April 1978, p. 4.

[296] Hirsh Goodman, "IDF Extends its Control of Southern Lebanon," Jerusalem Post (International Edition), 21 March 1978, p. 2.

Israel to believe that an expanded operation need not lead to a war with Syria. By the same token however Israel knew that the overextended Syrians were not likely to intervene anyway. The destruction of the enemy infrastructure in the Tyre area never did take place, as the IDF--seeking to minimize its own casualties--completely bypassed the port city. The references to enemy concentrations north of the Litani and the importance of access routes can again be tied into the slowness of the initial Israeli thrust. What the Post failed to mention was the fact that a resolution, sponsored by the United States, was being placed before the U.N. Security Council calling upon Israel to get out of Lebanon. The notion that Israel might want to seize more territory for bargaining purposes seems not to have occured to the Post.

In the second stage of the Lebanon operation Israeli forces moved as far north as Aabbassiye in the west--bypassing the Palestinian-leftist stronghold of Tyre--and consolidated a line just south of the Litani River from Aabbassiye to Taibe.[297] This brought the two Litani River bridges--the Qasimiyah on the coast (where Dayan had been wounded in 1941) and the Akkiyah in the central sector--under Israeli artillery fire. The third Litani bridge, the Khardali near Merj 'Uyun, had already been subjected to Israeli bombardment in the first phase of the invasion. Map #15 on page 190 depicts the Israeli frontline positions as of 18 and 19 March 1978.

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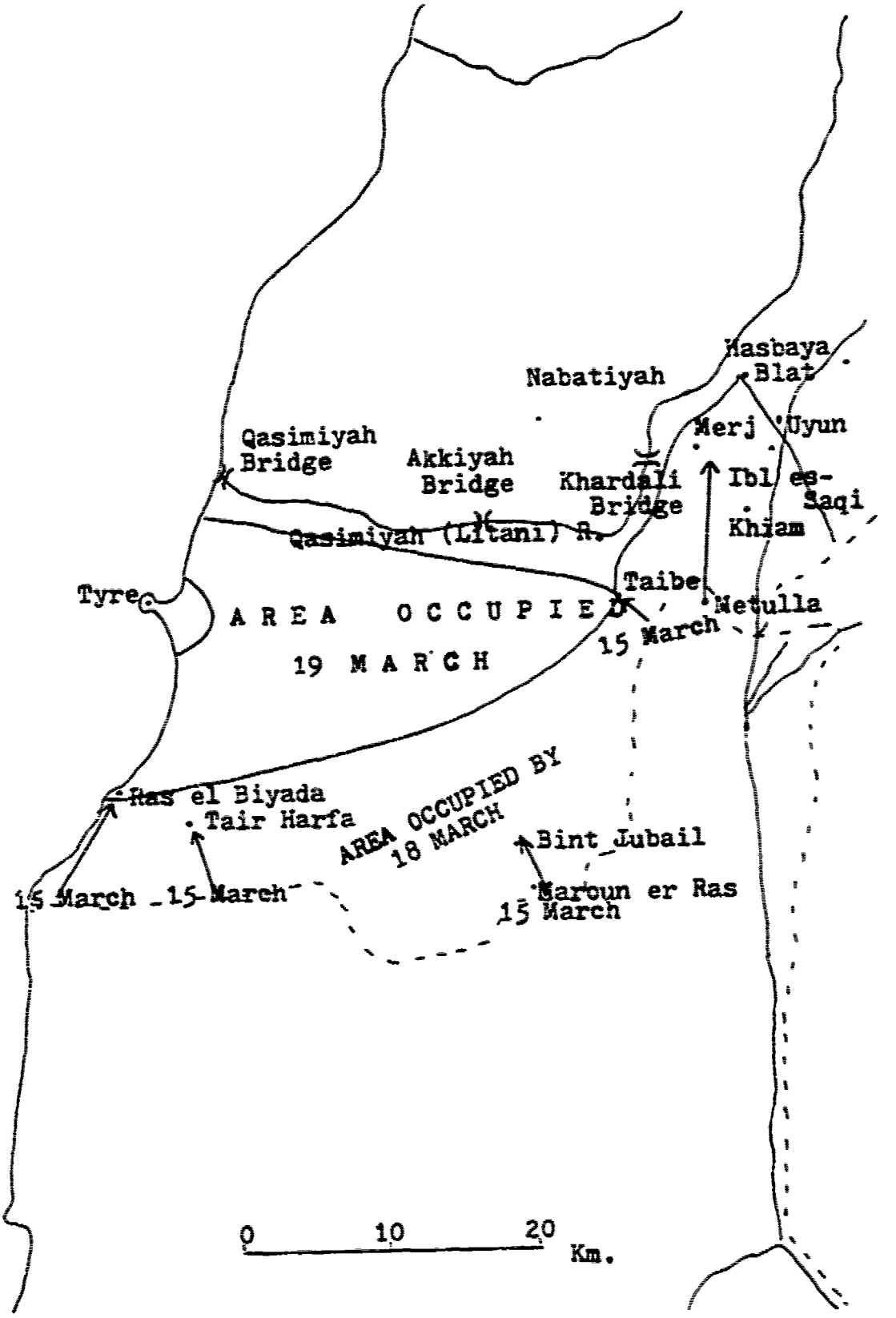
[297]Ibid., p. 1.

MAP #15: ISRAELI INVASION, MARCH 1978



Although the expanded operation was explained in terms of tactical military necessity by General Gur, who emphasized the importance of controlling access to southern Lebanon across the Litani bridges ("Whoever holds these territories can control, in a satisfactory manner, what happens on the routes to southern Lebanon"),[298] international politics played the crucial role in the decision to expand the operation. On 19 March 1978, hours after the IDF began to move toward the Litani, the U.N. Security Council adopted Resolution 425. The two key points of the resolution, which was sponsored by the United States, were (1) a call upon Israel to immediately "cease its military action against Lebanese territorial integrity and withdraw forthwith its forces from all Lebanese territory;" and (2) the establishment of a "United Nations interim force for southern Lebanon" (subsequently known as UNIFIL--United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon), for the purpose of "confirming the withdrawal of Israeli forces, restoring international peace and security and assisting the government of Lebanon in ensuring the return of its effective authority in the area..."[299] The Israeli thrust toward the Litani was therefore seen in many quarters "as a burst aimed at achieving as much as possible

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[298] "Press Conference with Ezer Weizman and Mordechai Gur," p. N4.

[299] The complete text of Resolution 425 may be found in Arab Report and Record, 16-31 March 1978, No. 6, p. 221.

before the vote on the proposed UN Security Council Resolution."[300] Even General Gur acknowledged on 19 March that "We are not talking about a security belt any more, but about a general agreement in the area."[301] Phase II of the Israeli invasion was aimed at giving Israel the best possible bargaining position in the pursuit of a "general agreement."

The political objective of the expanded operation was quickly achieved. On 20 March Israeli Defense Minister Ezer Weizman and General Gur met with General Siilasvuo, Commander of UNTSO, and Major General Erskine, newly-appointed UNIFIL commander. Despite Israel's vehement opposition to the U.S.-sponsored Resolution 425, the four men quickly reached agreement on its implementation. It was reported that three points were established: (1) the area between the Litani and a line running from Ras al Biyada to Ibl es Saqi--roughly the area overrun by the IDF in the second stage of the invasion--would become a buffer zone; (2) UNIFIL would be responsible for patrolling the buffer zone; and (3) the strip of land lying between the Israeli-Lebanese boundary and the UNIFIL buffer zone would be designated a "peace zone" to be patrolled by the rightist militia of Major Haddad and (eventually) units of the Lebanese Army. Israel would be permitted to continue its 'good fence program" with the Lebanese inhabitants of the border region.[302] Consequently,

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[300] Ibid., p. 224.

[301] Ibid.

[302] Ibid., p. 225.

instead of being pressured into turning over her ten kilometer "security belt" to UNIFIL, Israel simply bargained away her additional conquests of 19 March, thereby buying time in which to solidify Major Haddad's grip on the strip of Lebanese territory immediately adjacent to the border. Seen in this light, it is clear that the second stage of the Israeli invasion was designed to immunize the conquests of the first stage from occupation by an international force. Having achieved her objective, Israel unilaterally declared a ceasefire on 21 March.[303]

Despite the widespread physical destruction visited upon southern Lebanon between 15 and 21 March by Israeli artillery and airstrikes--including the total destruction of Bint Jubail and several other Shi'ite villages[304]--it was estimated that the Palestinian-leftist coalition lost only between 200 and 300 men out of a total force in southern Lebanon of approximately 10,000.[305] That represents relatively insignificant combattant losses in the context of an operation that caused the deaths of about 1,000 Arab civilians[306] and which, according to the Jerusalem Post, sent

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[303] Ibid.

[304] "They [the Israelis] also seemed to be engaging in a general leveling of almost every significant structure in the occupied area..." Newsweek, 27 March 1978, p. 40.

[305] John K. Cooley, "PLO-Israeli Strife Shakes Uneasy Peace in Lebanon," Christian Science Monitor, 7 April 1978, p. 4.

[306] According to a survey by the International Committee of the Red Cross, as reported in the Arab Report and Record, 1-15 April 1978, No. 7, p. 247.

100,000 civilians (about forty percent of the southern Lebanese population in March 1978) fleeing to the north for their lives.[307] Given the practice of near-total reliance on artillery and airstrikes by the IDF--tactics described as "unprofessional" by the London Sunday Telegraph[308]--it can be reasonably concluded that operation "Stone of Wisdom" was designed not to inflict a conclusive military defeat on the fedayeen and leftist commandos, but to create new facts in southern Lebanon. These facts may be summarized as follows: (1) the securing in Lebanese territory of a security belt along the entire length of the boundary, not just in areas populated by Christians; (2) the occupation of the rest of southern Lebanon by an international force, on whose shoulders would fall the burden of preventing new commando infiltration; and (3) a new appreciation by the inhabitants of southern Lebanon--eighty percent of whose villages were damaged or destroyed by Israeli bombing and shelling[309]--of the dire consequences of trafficking with those who would attack Jewish towns and villages. Asked whether or not the Israeli invasion could be considered a success, an unnamed western military expert replied, "If it was meant to drive the Palestinians out of the south and denude the area of its civilian population, the operation was a

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[307] Jerusalem Post (International Edition), 21 March 1978, p. 2.

[308] As quoted in the Arab Report and Record, 16-31 March 1978, No. 6, p. 222.

[309] According to a survey by the International Committee of the Red Cross, as reported in the Arab Report and Record, 1-15 April 1978, No. 7, p. 247.

complete success. But if it was meant to destroy the guerrilla movement...then it was a complete failure."[310] Perhaps the Israelis expected that the refugees and armed commandos leaving the south would, by their very presence in and around Beirut, serve to reignite the Lebanese civil war.

## D. CONTINUING UNREST: AFTERMATH OF THE INVASION

The first contingent of UNIFIL entered Lebanon by way of Israel on 22 March 1978,[311] and in the months of April through June the international force, projected to reach a total strength of 4,000,[312] began to take up positions south of the Litani. The Israeli withdrawal called for by Resolution 425 took place very slowly and in several stages commencing on 11 April. By 30 April Israel had turned over to UNIFIL some 550 square kilometers of Lebanese territory overrun between 19 and 21 March, and was left in control of the security belt seized during the first phase of the invasion.[313]

With regard to the evacuation of the security belt itself, Israel dragged her feet. She insisted that UNIFIL

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[310] As quoted in Newsweek, 3 April 1978, p. 42.

[311] Arab Report and Record, 16-31 March 1978, No. 6, p. 225.

[312] John K. Cooley, "UN Faces an Uncertain Role in South Lebanon," Christian Science Monitor, 22 March 1978, p. 34.

[313] Arab Report and Record, 16-30 April 1978, No. 8, p. 313.

take full responsibility for preventing the reintroduction of commandos south of the Litani.[314] Although UNIFIL was created primarily for the purpose of "confirming the withdrawal of Israeli forces," Israel's position coincided with that of the Lebanese government, which was once again showing great reluctance to send army units to the troubled south. According to an unnamed Lebanese senior official, "We see [Resolution 425] referring to the return of Lebanon's effective authority in the area as meaning the removal of any armed forces that are present without our authorization," Palestinians as well as Israelis.[315] Despite the cooperation of Palestine Liberation Organization Chairman Yasir Arafat, fedayeen elements apparently not under his control sniped at UNIFIL positions and launched rockets at Israeli settlements from positions north of the Litani River.[316] UNIFIL's position became increasingly difficult, as members of the peacekeeping force found themselves being harassed not only by Palestinians, but by Major Haddad's militia as well.[317]

Israel took the position that although she had no claim on Lebanese territory, she would leave Lebanon only

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[314] Cooley, "UN Faces an Uncertain Role in South Lebanon," p. 34.

[315] Marvine Howe, "PLO Reports Raids on Israeli Troops," New York Times. 26 March 1978, p. 10.

[316] Cooley, "PLO-Israeli Strife Shakes Uneasy Peace in Lebanon," p. 4.

[317] Arab Report and Record, 1-15 April 1978, No. 7, p. 248.

"when it was certain that UNIFIL was strong enough to prevent attacks on Israel from Lebanon."[318] Furthermore, Israeli Foreign Minister Dayan affirmed that Security Council Resolution 242, not Israeli territorial annexations, would provide the basis for settling the differences between Lebanon and Israel.[319] Even though Dayan's statement was interpreted in some quarters as meaning that Israel would eventually ask for some Lebanese territory in order to create a more "secure" boundary (in accordance with Resolution 242),[320] it certainly appeared to rule out a unilateral border adjustment. Under strong international pressure Israel, on 21 May, finally set a firm date for her final withdrawal from Lebanon: 13 June 1978. The withdrawal, according to Israeli Cabinet Secretary Ayre Naor, would be unconditional, but Israel would be obliged to "take measures to ensure the security of the local Christian Lebanese population."[321]

On 13 June, as promised, the IDF ended its ninety-one day occupation of southern Lebanon. In a military ceremony at Meis el Jebel the Israeli flag was lowered.[322] However, the security belt occupied by Israel since 15 March was

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[318] Facts on File, 21 April 1978, p. 274.

[319] Ibid., p. 275.

[320] See "New Government, Old Problems," An-Nahar Arab Report and Memo, 24 April 1978, p. 3.

[321] Arab Report and Record, 16-31 May 1978, No. 10, p. 389.

[322] "Israel Leaves Southern Lebanon," Christian Science Monitor, 14 June 1978, p. 3.

handed over not to UNIFIL, but to Major Saad Haddad and his rightist militia. As Israel's northern commander Major General Avigdor Ben-Gal explained, "The Israeli Government is insisting upon its commitment to protect the Christian minority in southern Lebanon."[323] Accordingly Major Haddad was given responsibility for securing the entire eastern sector of the border, from Khiam to Bint Jubail and his associate, Major Shidiaq, was put in charge of the western sector, from Bint Jubail to Ras el Biyada.[324] The two officers would henceforth secure for Israel a strip of Lebanese territory ranging in depth from five to eight kilometers, with an even larger bulge in the Merj 'Uyun area.

As one observer noted, the transfer of the security belt to Haddad by Israel raised the "central question" of "the chain of command between the Lebanese Government and Haddad."[325] If Haddad were not Beirut's official representative in the south, Israel's action would have clearly been contrary to the will of the Security Council as expressed by Resolution 425. Yet President Sarkis, hoping to mollify the extreme Maronite nationalists in Lebanon,

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[323] Ibid.

[324] Arab Report and Record, 1-15 June 1978, No. 11, p. 427.

[325] Louis Wiznitzer, "UN Troops Sitting on a 'Volcano' Now That the Israelis Have Pulled Out," Christian Science Monitor, 15 June 1978, p. 6.

accorded provisional recognition to Haddad,[326] thereby granting a measure of legitimacy to Israel's action.

The question of Major Haddad's attitude toward the officially recognized Lebanese government remained however unanswered for the time being. Although President Sarkis was willing to accord an aura of legitimacy to Haddad, he was also eager to dispatch Lebanese regulars to the border area in order to supplement the rightist militia. With characteristic caution Sarkis dispatched several Lebanese officers to meet with their Israeli counterparts at the UNIFIL Headquarters at Naqurah to discuss the impending southern movement of the Lebanese Army.[327]

During the meeting, which took place on 30 July 1978, Israel issued four guidelines for the southern deployment of Lebanese regulars: (1) the positions of Majors Haddad and Shidiaq must be officially recognized by the Lebanese government; (2) units of the Lebanese Army could be deployed only outside of the Christian border enclaves; (3) no Syrian officers or advisors could accompany the Lebanese; and (4) no interference with the "good fence program" would be tolerated.[328]

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[326] Ibid.

[327] Hirsh Goodman, "Israel 'Guidelines' for Lebanese Troops," Jerusalem Post (International Edition), 1 August 1978, pp. 1-2.

[328] Ibid.

The nature of the demands made it clear that Israel would accept no Lebanese military deployment along the border except under conditions that would make the Sarkis regime--still propped up by Syria--an active accomplice in the Israeli security plan for the border region. Points (1) and (3) probably could have been accepted by Sarkis inasmuch as he had already provisionally recognized Haddad and the Syrians had no particular desire to challenge the Israeli "red line" policy. Yet points (2) and (4) were clearly aimed at luring Sarkis into an arrangement whereby the Christian enclaves would be Lebanese in name but governed in fact by Israel. Had he accepted the Israeli conditions Sarkis would have undermined the already tenuous domestic position of Syria's Asad and enraged the Lebanese left. Israel was in the ideal position of having nothing to lose regardless of Sarkis' choice.

On 31 July 1978 the Lebanese President dispatched a 650-man army battalion from Ablah, in the central Biqa', to the south. The unit planned to establish its headquarters in Tebnine, a village north of Bint Jubail and outside of the Israeli security belt. The Lebanese soldiers reportedly received enthusiastic receptions in the villages of the Biqa' as they marched south. The cheering stopped at Kawkaba, however, as the battalion came under an artillery attack by Major Haddad's militia. By entering Kawkaba the Lebanese unit indicated its intention of moving to Tebnine by way of the Christian enclave in the vicinity of Merj 'Uyun,

a violation of point (2) of the Israeli guidelines. In fact Israeli Television blamed Sarkis for provoking the shelling by having the unit attempt to pass through Christian territory rather than through Leftist-controlled Nabatiyah. Apparently the guidelines were meant to be taken quite literally. Rather than redirecting the unit so as to conform to the march plan established for it by Israel, the Lebanese Defense Ministry ordered its expeditionary force back to its barracks.[329]

If the abortive movement of Lebanon's Army to the south accomplished nothing else, it clearly demonstrated the intentions of Majors Haddad and Shidiaq. The pretense of loyalty to the Lebanese government--an illusion that had been maintained by Haddad, Sarkis, and Begin--was finished. The military affairs writer of the Jerusalem Post, Hirsh Goodman, blamed both Haddad and the Israeli government for the continuing mess in southern Lebanon. According to Goodman, Haddad's extremely close relationship with Israeli military commanders was in fact subverting the Begin's government's policy toward southern Lebanon. Goodman noted Israel's willingness to permit the Lebanese Army to patrol roads on the periphery of the Christian enclaves, but

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[329] Arab Report and Record, 16-31 July 1978, No. 14, p. 518, and Francis Ofner, "Lebanon Christians Block Army Drive," Christian Science Monitor, 1 August 1978, pp. 1,10. According to Ofner, the Syrian Minister of Information had stated on 29 July 1978 that the Lebanese unit would have arrested Haddad and Shidiaq, and closed the "good fence."

observed that Haddad would not even go along with that. The IDF, complained Goodman, seemed to be willing to grant Haddad's every wish. Goodman concluded his analysis with the following observation:

> Major Haddad should be made to realize that moderation is a price he has to pay--in the interest of ultimate stability in Southern Lebanon, and in order to ensure the continuation of the Israeli support upon which he has been able to rely until now.[330]

Whether Haddad is obstructing or facilitating Israeli policy in southern Lebanon is moot. According to one high-ranking Lebanese Army officer who worked with and counseled Haddad before the Lebanese civil war, the rightist major is an "extraordinarily weak man" capable of little or no self-initiative. The officer interviewed found it inconceivable that Haddad would fire on the Lebanese Army without the permission of either Israel or the Maronite military leaders in Beirut.[331]

The distinct possibility exists therefore that southern Lebanon has become for Israel a stage upon which a scene far more important than those played over the past six decades in the Upper Galille is now being acted out. Perhaps Mr. Goodman has missed the point in assuming that Israel seeks "stability" in southern Lebanon, and that a

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[330] Hirsh Goodman, "Muddling Along in Lebanon," Jerusalem Post (International Edition), 15 August 1978, p. 8.

[331] Interview with a senior Lebanese Army Officer, Monterey, California, 23 December 1978.

renegade Lebanese Army Major is stupidly wrecking the policies of Mr. Begin. As James M. Markham as noted,

> As long as southern Lebanon remains unstable, the rest of Lebanon remains unstable; in the south artillery shells have been exploding daily, killing people, but farther north, in the beautiful mountains above Beirut, one can hear Bashir Gemayal's [the Phalangist military chief] militiamen practicing with mortars and automatic weapons. Guns continue to be shipped into the Maronite port of Juniye, and there have been occasional sharp clashes...between Syrian peacekeepers and Christian militia. "Many of us do not consider that this war has ended," says Charles Malik [a leading Lebanese Christian ideologue] calmly.[332]

The war cannot end until the problem of southern Lebanon is settled, and for the present time it appears that Israel has little interest in pursuing such a settlement, or in promoting stability in southern Lebanon.

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[332] James M. Markham, 'The War That Won't Go Away," New York Times Magazine, 9 October 1977, p. 52.

## VII. CONCLUSION

It was stated at the outset that perhaps a resolution of the Israeli-Lebanese frontier crisis could lead to other Arab-Israeli accommodations. That in any event was the idea that provided the genesis for this study. A decision was made to examine the frontier area from a historical perspective, analyzing events of the past six decades which led to the current crisis. Implicit in such an approach was the assumption that much could be learned about the current situation in southern Lebanon and its possible resolution by a thorough examination of the past. Nevertheless the guiding question for the entire research effort was, "What do all of these facts--all of these little-known and somewhat esoteric events, all of the past crises--tell us in terms of a possible Israeli-Lebanese accomodation?"

The research effort centered on two fundamental Zionist objections to the northern boundary given to Palestine by Great Britain and France: water and security. Although the issue of southern Lebanon's water resources, and Zionist claims to a share of them, dominated the frontier question for a half century, the dispute finally died in 1968. The Litani Project enabled Lebanon to divert huge quantities of Litani water away from southern Lebanon westward into the Awwali River, thus ending Zionist hopes of drawing significant

amounts of water from the lower Litani for use in the Negev. The water issue was also killed by Israel's seizure of the Banias River (on the Golan Heights) in June 1967, thereby ending Arab plans to divert the Jordan headwaters, plans in which Lebanon had been a cautious, and ultimately non-active participant.

On the other hand, the security problem never died--though it slept from 1949 to 1967. Beginning in 1968 it completely dominated the frontier region. The Israeli-fedayeen confrontation, fought to a large degree on Lebanese soil, aggravated Lebanon's chronic identity problem and finally plunged the country into a monumentally destructive civil war in 1975. Israel took advantage of the situation by attempting, through an alliance with southern Lebanon's Christian minority, to completely exclude the fedayeen and their Lebanese allies from the border region. The attempt failed and produced the devastating invasion of March 1978. In the aftermath of the invasion Israel reiterated, often in strident terms, her determination to "protect" the Christians of Lebanon from "genocide." In southern Lebanon that translated into a policy of supporting a Christian Lebanese militia which, on 31 July 1978, openly rebeled against Lebanese authority by firing upon a unit of the official Lebanese Army attempting to move south.

It was assumed throughout the course of the research effort that despite sixty years of controversy it would somehow be possible for Israel and Lebanon to work out an

arrangement whereby Lebanese sovereignty could be restored to all of southern Lebanon, and Israel's security requirements could be accommodated. In that context it seemed that Foreign Minister Dayan's April 1978 statement that U.N. Security Council Resolution 242 would guide future Israeli-Lebanese negotiations was helpful.[333] Of course the Lebanese press viewed Dayan's statement with alarm, claiming among other things that "Israel is serving notice that it intends to renegotiate this frontier...at Lebanon's expense."[334] In the light of subsequent events it would be safe to say that if all that befalls Lebanon in her dealings with Israel is a renegotiated southern frontier, she will be able to count herself lucky. Indeed, under current conditions Lebanon would be fortunate to be able to constitute a truly national government capable of giving away patches of southern Lebanon. Recent events indicate however that Israel's interest in a conventional settlement, even one that might incorporate the Christian enclaves into Israel, is minimal. The very assumption that a settlement is possible must therefore be challenged.

On 21 May 1948 David Ben Gurion, the first Prime Minister of Israel, made the following entry in his diary:

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[333] Facts on File, 21 April 1978, p. 275.

[334] "New Government, Old Problems," An-Nahar Arab Report and Memo, 24 April 1978, p. 3.

> The Achille's heel of the Arab coalition is the Lebanon. Muslim supremacy in this country is artificial and can easily be overthrown. A Christian State ought to be set up there, with its southern frontier on the river Litani. We would sign a treaty of alliance with this state.[335]

Of course the above quotation can be used to "prove" the existence of Zionist irredentism in southern Lebanon, with the words "river Litani" either underlined or italicized. One pro-Arab publication has even gone so far as to misquote Ben Gurion's subsequent letter on the same subject to President De Gaulle of France, changing it from a disclaimer of further interest in the Litani to a reaffirmation.[336]

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[335]Quoted by Michael Bar-Zohar, Ben Gurion: The Armed Prophet (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1968), p. 130.

[336]According to Hasan Sharif, Ben Gurion wrote to De Gaulle stating that "My dream is to see the Litani River as the northern border of Israel." Sharif based his Ben Gurion quote on a "special report of the PLO Planning Center." See Elain Hagopian and Samih Farsoun, eds., South Lebanon, pp. 19, 33. However C. C. Aronsfeld in "The Historical Boundaries of Palestine," Contemporary Review, December 1968, pp. 296-297, gives the following version of Ben Gurion's letter to the President of France:

> In his recent correspondence with General de Gaulle, Ben Gurion recalled how the French President once, in 1960, asked him 'What are your dreams about the real frontiers of Israel? Tell me (de Gaulle added), I shall not speak of it to anybody.' Ben Gurion then replied, 'If you had asked me that question twenty-five years ago, I would have told you: the river Litani in the north and Transjordan in the east. But you are asking me today. I will tell you then. We have two principal aspirations--peace with our neighbours and large-scale Jewish immigration. The area of Palestine in our possession can absorb many more Jews than are likely to come.'

Even if Ben Gurion secretly longed for the Litani, it is not likely that he would have specified his claim to southern Lebanon in writing to a foreign chief of state.

If Ben Gurion's statement has any relevance at all to the current situation in southern Lebanon, the only two words worth emphasizing are "Christian State."

During the years 1968 through 1975 Israel was aware that her attacks--retaliatory and otherwise--on Lebanon were escalating the fears of Maronite nationalists that "their" Lebanon was being sucked into the Arab-Israeli conflict, and that the Palestinians were responsible for Lebanon's perilous position. Seeing that successive Lebanese governments could only straddle the Palestinian issue, thereby avoiding an inter-Lebanese confrontation over the explosive national identity question, Israel quite naturally hoped that the Maronite nationalists would themselves take on the Palestinians. After all, when rockets landed in Jewish settlements, and fedayeen commandos managed to slip across the border to commit acts of terrorism, the Israeli government was obliged to strike back. It did so with increasing ferocity, and often without provocation. Every encouragement was given to Maronite nationalists to demand Palestinian respect for Lebanese sovereignty. That the accumulated tensions of some seven years of violence should lead to civil war ought to have come as no surprise to Israel.

Until the advent of the Begin government however it could be argued that Israeli policy toward Lebanon, though often destructive, was predicated on the desire to achieve, regardless of the means employed, an acceptable level of

security for the northern settlements. Drawing on the lessons of the past, Israel sought to preempt fedayeen action on Lebanese soil. Eventually the strategy bore fruit. Not only did the Maronite militias engage in open warfare with the armed Palestinians, but in one of the oddest twists of Levantine politics, Syrian forces invaded Lebanon to defeat the fedayeen-Lebanese leftist coalition. By mid-1976 Israel could view with satisfaction the fact that southern Lebanon was free of large numbers of Palestinian commandos.

The character of the entire question of southern Lebanon changed however with the occurence of two developments in 1977. First was the reintroduction of fedayeen and armed Lebanese leftists to the border region. Their presence was a direct challenge to the "good fence program" and represented the potential undoing of Israel's security policy. Second was the election of the Likud government. Beginning in August 1977, with Begin's open embrace of Lebanese Christendom, Israeli policy toward Lebanon gradually made the question of the south subsidiary to the question of Lebanon itself. The invasion of March 1978 represented the last large-scale attempt to clear southern Lebanon of enemy commandos. Events subsequently demonstrated that Israel was more interested in encouraging Maronite separatism than in settling with President Sarkis the age-old security problems of southern Lebanon.

Hirsh Goodman's analysis of Israeli support for Major Haddad's militia, presented in section VI above, probably provides the key for understanding Israel's current policy. If it were simply a matter of border security, Israel would lose nothing by instructing Majors Haddad and Shidiaq to subordinate their forces to the regular Lebanese Army. Such an order would of course be opposed by the Maronite leaders in Beirut and would probably lead to a breakdown in the Israeli-Maronite alliance. Nevertheless, in terms of border security, with Haddad's 3,000 men supplemented by perhaps 1,000 Lebanese regulars the boundary would be patrolled by far more men than had ever previously been the case. Furthermore Syria, struggling to prop up the fragile Sarkis regime, would have every reason to ensure that fedayeen not be given the opportunity to fire on Lebanese soldiers. As Goodman plaintively asserted, support for Haddad is subverting Israel's efforts to finally secure the northern border through active and effective Lebanese cooperation. In other words, a renegade Lebanese Army major is presumably all that stands in the way of a solution to a problem that has concerned Zionists for some six decades.

By supporting Haddad's defiance of Sarkis, Israel is obviously thinking of something bigger than security problems in the Upper Galilee. By permitting Haddad to defy the Lebanese government, Israel appears to be acknowledging

her support for the extreme Lebanese rightwing idea of partitioning Lebanon. An accommodation with Sarkis, even one which adds territory to Israel, would undo the Israeli-Maronite connection. For Israel the support of an emerging "Christian Lebanon" entails few risks. If it succeeds it creates, in effect, another Israel; a homeland for a "persecuted" minority, one which would certainly ally itself with the Jewish State--just as Ben Gurion suggested in 1948. If the partition of Lebanon never comes about, Israeli support for the project will, at the very least, keep Lebanon in a state of constant turmoil. This will have the effect of (1) keeping alive the publicity campaign designed to portray Arab Muslims as practitioners of genocide against oppressed Christians; (2) forcing Syria to keep large amounts of soldiers bogged down in a "Vietnam" of its own; (3) neutralizing Palestinian commandos in Lebanon; and (4) keeping the northern border relatively free of fedayeen harassment. As Markham has noted, "Southern Lebanon is a highly useful pressure point for Israeli diplomacy, and instability in the south keeps both Assad and the Palestinians off-balance..."[337] Added an American diplomat, "Certainly the Israeli position about the poor defenseless Christians about to be slaughtered is more than questionable. Everybody is using everybody else in a most cynical way."[338]

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[337] James M. Markham, "The War That Won't Go Away, p. 52.

[338] Ibid.

The question of the overall political relationship between the exponents of Maronite nationalism and Zionism is beyond the scope of this study. It will be recalled however that in 1919 the two political forces, acting as local clients for French and British imperialism, vied with each other for the title to Upper Galilee. Until recently it appeared to be possible for the two forces--one contained within the state of Lebanon and the other in Israel--to remedy the problems still remaining from the Anglo-French partition of the lands which they both claimed. Yet while Zionism became Israel, Lebanon became much more than Maronite nationalism. Efforts by leading Maronite nationalists to create, in opposition to Arab nationalism, a distinctive "Lebanese" nationalism never took root. The resurgence of pure Maronite nationalism as a force allied with Israel and opposing the official government of Lebanon makes a settlement between Israel and the Sarkis regime all but impossible.

Unless the issue between Lebanon and Israel can be refocused on the security situation in their common frontier region, it must be concluded that much of the information generated by this research project will be of more use to historians than diplomats or military officers. If the West, led by the United States, is able to vigorously oppose the partition of Lebanon and insist upon the restoration of full Lebanese sovereignty in areas contiguous to Israel, then an accommodation can be salvaged. Yet so long as the

central issue remains whether or not Lebanon will continue to be a unitary state, a settlement in southern Lebanon is not possible. It will be impossible because Israel will either wait for a Maronite-dominated state to come into existence, or will regard perpetual turmoil in Lebanon as the solution to her own security problem on the Lebanese border. If Lebanon is eventually partitioned (officially), Israel will no doubt embark upon a close working relationship with the predominantly Maronite state. A Christian Lebanese state (with a significant Druze minority) would probably consist of the old Ottoman Mount Lebanon with the addition of east Beirut. If such a state comes about it will probably join Israel in insisting that a U.N. force continue to occupy southern Lebanon, turning it into an international no man's land. The Maronite-dominated state would welcome Israeli protection for the Maronites of southern Lebanon, perhaps even asking Israel to annex the Christian enclaves.

If however Lebanon remains a unitary state, the historical perspective on the frontier region developed in this study can help guide a settlement. Although it is impossible to say what form such a "settlement" would take--peace treaty, revised GAA, or gentleman's agreement--a historical perspective on the frontier region suggests that lasting stability requires three basic elements: Israeli security, effective Lebanese sovereignty, and a "New Deal" for the people of southern Lebanon.

## A. SECURITY FOR NOTHERN ISRAEL

Strong measures must be taken to secure Israeli settlements from armed attacks originating in southern Lebanon. Suggested guidelines as to how this might be achieved are as follows:

1. The total exclusion of Palestinian armed forces from an area south of the 1949 GAA limited forces line, and east of the lower north-south stretch of the Litani River. This would mean no fedayeen in the districts of Tyre, Bint Jubail, and Merj 'Uyun (all three of which comprise all Lebanese territory south of the Litani), and also no armed Palestinians in the Arqub region (district of Hasbaya). A complete revision of the 1969 Cairo Agreement between Lebanon and the PLO would probably be needed to effect such a program, which would also include the demilitarization of refugee camps south of the Litani. Although many Palestinian elements will reject and attempt to frustrate such an undertaking, the mainstream leaders of the PLO must realize by now that fedayeen attacks on Israeli-controlled territories set into motion a process, fully abetted by Israel, that as (a) encouraged Maronite separatism, (b) alienated the PLO from its chief supporter (Syria), and (c) sharply divided the Arab world. In short, the fedayeen have found themselves fighting other Arabs, a condition rooted in the political unsuitability of Lebanon as a commando base. It is not likely that too

many PLO leaders actually believe that the road to West Bank-Gaza autonomy (or independence) passes through such places as Qiryat Shemona, Maalot, Shamir, or Nahariya. No matter how distasteful it may seem, the PLO can do little more than accept that which the Arab states are able to procure from Israel through the negotiating process.

2. Israel should accept the presence of a sizeable Arab security force stationed along the boundary. The "red line" policy adopted by the Rabin government and continued by the Begin administration has had disasterous consequences for the inhabitants of southern Lebanon and for Lebanon itself. Israel is aware that Syria's June 1976 invasion of Lebanon was designed to prevent the emergence of a militant leftist regime in Beirut, one that could easily drag Syria into an unwanted war with Israel. Had Syrian forces been permitted to garrison southern Lebanon--perhaps without entering the Christian enclaves--Israel's security on the northern border would have improved dramatically. Surely Israel did not seriously entertain the notion that Asad would strip his Golan defense line, thereby leaving Damascus itself open to attack, in order to strike Israel from southern Lebanon. The lessons of the past, drawn from the Arab uprising in Palestine of 1936-1939 and from the fedayeen activity of recent years, suggest that the absence of conventional armed forces in southern Lebanon constitutes a vacuum that is rapidly filled by commandos, marauders, and terrorists. Israel's security

would be enhanced greatly by the presence of regular army personnel--be they Lebanese, Syrian, Arab League, or a mixture--in southern Lebanon and along the border. Specific weapons limitations (medium and long-range artillery, rocket launchers, surface-to-air missiles) and the possibility of mixed Arab-Israeli patrols can be addressed. However the provision in the Annex of the 1949 GAA restricting Lebanon to 1,500 soldiers in the limited forces zone should either be ignored altogether or else a much higher limit--perhaps 10,000--should be set. If southern Lebanon could support a population of 10,000 armed Palestinians and leftists, there is no reason for Israel to object to the region being policed by 10,000 trained soldiers.

3. Minor adjustments in the boundary line, facilitating the placement of Israeli observation posts on favorable terrain, should be considered. This however will not be possible in the Arqub area, where the final disposition of the occupied Golan Heights awaits determination. Given however the severe terrain disadvantage inflicted upon Palestine by the 1923 boundary accord, it would be reasonable to permit Israeli outposts to be established at various points within what is now Lebanese territory. Whether or not this need entail minor boundary rectifications ought to be left to the parties themselves. Hopefully the issue of village and individually-owned lands will receive careful consideration if boundary changes are made.

## B. THE RESTORATION OF LEBANESE SOVEREIGNTY

This issue, which must be resolved in any kind of a settlement, is a double-edge sword. On the one hand Israel must be prepared to disassociate herself politically from the affairs of her sovereign neighbor to the north. On the other hand however, Lebanon must be prepared to do that which she has never tried before: to govern her southern districts.

Israel must be induced to withdraw her support for the militia of Majors Haddad and Shidiaq. This indeed is a fundamental prerequisite for discussing the frontier issue with the duly constituted Lebanese government, for Israel's support of the militia is the most blatant manifestation of her support for Maronite separatism. Inasmuch as Haddad and Shidiaq would probably forgo re-integration with the Lebanese Army at this point--they would in all likelihood face disciplinary action and perhaps execution--Israel should be permitted to extend asylum to them and their associates. The disposition of Christian villages which have become virtually attached to Israel since 1976 is an issue that will be discussed in the next subsection.

Once Israel agrees to allow Lebanese authorities unlimited access to the southern districts, the central government of Lebanon must be prepared to govern. One theme that ran continuously through this research effort was the unwillingness and inability of the Lebanese governing

elite to provide basic services to the poverty-striken south. France procured for Lebanon a portion of the Upper Galilee after listening to many pleas concerning the "historic frontiers" of the Lebanse "nation." Once in possession of the land, however, the French and their Lebanese friends found the south too poor and too Muslim to be worth caring about. This attitude continued through the Arab-Israeli era, with the Lebanese elite inventing the additional excuse that Zionism planned to seize the land anyway, so why invest Beirut's capital in such a losing proposition? Beirut's attitude toward the south made it an ideal place for armed Palestinians and their Lebanese allies to build an infrastructure capable of both harassing Israeli settlements and resisting Lebanon's crumbling central authority. If the Lebanese state is again permitted to raise the cedar flag in the villages of southern Lebanon, it must demonstrate the willingness and ability to both police the area and provide basic, reliable governmental services such as health clinics, schools, roads, electricity, and water. The return on the investment may not at first seem as lucrative as a new Beirut high-rise luxury apartment building, but by stabilizing the south such an investment may help preserve the Lebanese state.

## C. THE PEOPLE OF SOUTHERN LEBANON

The historical perspective on the Israeli-Lebanese frontier zone offered in this study also suggests that in addition to the issues of Israel's security and Lebanon's

sovereignty, a good settlement will provide benefits for the long-suffering residents of southern Lebanon. It has been suggested above that a serious Lebanese effort to govern the region would constitute a good beginning. There are other elements of a settlement however that would entail a measure of Lebanese-Israeli cooperation.

1. The "good fence program" developed by Israel in mid-1976 should be converted into an "open border" arrangement similar to that agreed upon by Palestine and Lebanon in 1926. Village and individually-owned parcels of land severed by the imposition of the 1949 GAA should either be returned, or the owners granted adequate compensation. A policy which allows residents of southern Lebanon reliable access to Israeli jobs, goods, markets, and services will aid Beirut in alleviating the chronic poverty of its southern districts. In return Israelis should be permitted to sell goods duty free within the border districts of Lebanon. It may even prove possible for the two governments to agree upon a limited program of cross-border land purchases and private, profit-seeking enterprises. Unlike the 1926 agreement however, a new "good neighbourly relations" accord would, for an indefinite period of time, be subjected to stringent security precautions. Nevertheless an expanded "good fence program," one stripped of its military civic action aspects, may even permit a gradual repatriation to Israel of some Palestinians now living in refugee camps near the Mediterranean coast south of the Litani River.

2. Inquiries should be made as to the desires of Lebanese Christian villagers in the immediate border area with regard to their own future nationality and that of their villages. The apparent willing collaboration of several Christian border villages with Israel has raised fears of retribution should the villages be returned to Lebanese control. It is impossible to know at this point just how many of the permanent Christian residents of the border area willingly collaborated, and how many were coerced by gunmen imported by Israel from other parts of Lebanon. It appears though that the behavior of some southern Lebanese Christians paralleled that of their fathers and grandfathers during the 1925 Druze uprising. Furthermore it would appear that the "good fence program" has indeed linked several Christian villages to Israel in terms of public services and economic interactions. As part of a general settlement therefore it might be wise for neutral observers, perhaps from the U.N., to conduct referenda in each "security belt" village to determine if the inhabitants wish themselves and their villages to be part of Lebanon or Israel. The referenda should be conducted on the basis of pre-civil war official voting lists in order to preclude outsiders from taking part. If certain Lebanese villagers desire formal integration with Israel, a joint Lebanese-Israeli boundary commission should be formed to demarcate a new border.

3. Israel should be prepared to assist in the reconstruction of southern Lebanon. Although the word "reparations" should probably be avoided because of its implication of guilt, there is no doubt that Israel has a moral obligation to help (as does the PLO for that matter). Israeli military actions in southern Lebanon, particularly the March 1978 invasion, have been characterized by a combination of massive civil destruction with relatively little damage to the opposing military force. Although it might be possible, in theory, to justify the destructive Israeli tactics as being necessary to either (a) punish civilians for aiding the commandos, or (b) warn them in advance against offering such aid, it is clear that the civilians of southern Lebanon suffered losses of life and property totally out of proportion to whatever assistance they may have rendered to the enemies of Israel.

## D. CLOSING OBSERVATIONS

Returning finally to the thoughts and assumptions that provided the genesis of this thesis project, several closing observations are in order. First, it is clear that an analysis of the Israeli-Lebanese border region from the perspective of six decades of alternating conflict and cooperation does indeed yield data that can be usefully employed in a settlement process. Second, it is obvious that such a settlement would help to unravel the extremely

tangled Lebanese political situation, thereby freeing Arabs and Israelis to expand the negotiating initiative of Egyptian President Sadat. Third, a fundamental change in Israeli policy toward Lebanon is needed before serious consideration can be given to settling the frontier problem.

Israel is not, as some pro-Arab propagandists would allege, intent upon seizing Lebanese territory as part of a final, calculated effort to undo the consequences of the post-World War I Franco-British compromise and fulfill the territorial specifications of the 1919 Zionist Statement. As Israeli Defense Minister Weizman stated on 21 March 1978, "The case of Jerusalem does not resemble the case of Ar-Rashidiyah [in southern Lebanon]. There is no reason to fight the entire world."[339] Israel does not covet the Litani, or the Hasbani, or the port of Tyre. Yet she is intent at present upon using southern Lebanon to destabilize the rest of Lebanon and encourage Maronite separatism. Only when Israel's attention is refocused on the problems of the Lebanese border region as such will a settlement be possible, and only then will this historical perspective on that troubled region be of use. Until that time it must be concluded that Israel will try to "solve" the problem of its northern frontier by encouraging Lebanese partition and chaos.

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[339] Jerusalem Domestic Service, 21 March 1978. (Foreign Broadcast Information Service, 22 March 1978, p. N3.)

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