The Eisenhower Doctrine and its Implementation

In Lebanon – 1958

By

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Chapter I – Introduction

In May 1958, President Camille Chamoun of Lebanon sent an urgent cable to U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower requesting military aid under the terms of the Eisenhower Doctrine, to put down civil unrest in Lebanon. Chamoun claimed communist supported, Syrian arms and men were crossing his borders and leading his political opponents in armed insurrection against his pro-American government.

The Eisenhower Administration was wary of committing U.S. troops to Lebanon initially due to the American impression that Chamoun was requesting aid purely in order to support his personal (and illegal) bid for reelection in the upcoming Lebanese elections. Although Eisenhower felt he couldn't justify using American military force at that time under the auspices of the Eisenhower Doctrine, he eventually approved sending U.S. Marines into Lebanon in July 1958, after a bloody revolution in Iraq overthrew the pro-Western government in favor of the socialist Ba'ath Party.

American Marine and Army forces remained in Lebanon until October that year and then peacefully withdrew after presidential elections were held and the civil war had subsided. The Lebanese crisis of 1958 became the one and only time the Eisenhower Doctrine was implemented successfully, although two other situations in Jordan and Syria in 1957

had tested U.S. resolve to support the Middle East from becoming aligned with the Soviet Union.

Considering that the American President initially felt it was unjustified to interfere using the Eisenhower Doctrine in an internal Lebanese struggle, what lead him to the subsequent decision to deploy over 3,000 U.S. Marines and Soldiers into a sovereign nation? Was the Soviet Union actually spreading its influence in the Middle East? Was the spread of Communism fully to blame for Eisenhower's actions or was the fear of pan-Arabism lead by Egypt's Gamal abd al-Nasser more to blame? This paper will examine these issues and try to shed some light on a cloudy U.S. foreign policy initiative.

The Eisenhower Administration

The years of the Eisenhower administration proved to be a difficult time for Middle East policy. Eisenhower was concerned with reversing the impression of Arab leaders that the United States was purely supportive of Israel as it had appeared under Truman. His presidency was less concerned with Israel and more concerned with pushing communism out of the Middle East. Eisenhower coined the phrase 'domino effect' in reference to the idea that if one country in a region fell to Communism, additional nations would fall also, much like a line of dominos after the first is pushed over.

Eisenhower's goal in the Middle East was to convene a number of multilateral and bilateral defense pacts which would serve to encircle and contain the Russians.[1] To assist him in this was his Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles. Eisenhower's administration hoped to use the upsurge in Arab nationalism and the still active British bases along the Suez Canal to implement his policy of containment. Eisenhower was concerned that if the British pulled out of the Middle East the U.S. would not be able to fill the void quickly enough to stop the Soviets from filling it first.[2]

Concerning the Arab – Israeli issue, Eisenhower was concerned the dispute would deflect regional attention from the Soviet threat. Therefore, the administration chose to demonstrate that they would not provide financial support to Israel exclusively. Like his boss, Dulles believed that the Truman Administration had favored Israel and that approaches should be made to the Arabs to right the balance.[3] Eisenhower desired to distance his administration from Truman, who was counseled by pro-Israelis like Clifford, Niles and Jacobson.

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[1] Takeyh, Ray. The Origins of the Eisenhower Doctrine: The US, Britain and Nasser's Egypt 1953 – 57, New York: Saint Martin's Press, 2000.
[2] Ibid, page 10.
[3] Spiegel, Steven L., The Other Arab-Israeli Conflict: Making America's Middle East Policy, from Truman to Reagan, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1985.

> ...under Eisenhower there was no channel for promoting the policies championed by Clifford and Niles during the battles over partition and recognition. Indeed, the options favored by leading pro-Israeli analysts received little consideration.[4]

After the Egyptian Revolution of 1952 in which a military coup overthrew the pro-Western monarchy of King Farouk, the U.S. engaged in talks with the new leadership of Egypt which proclaimed a willingness to have friendly relations with the United States. The U.S. was anxious to offer Egypt economic and military aid to maintain their pro-Western loyalties so Dulles was sent to test the waters to determine how viable a Western sponsored defense pact with Egypt would be.

During his tour of the Middle East in 1953, Secretary Dulles met with Egyptian Foreign Minister Fawzi who informed Dulles that 'there could be no peace or constructive work in Egypt so long as the British forces are on our land'.[5] Meetings with Prime Minister General Naquib reinforced the points made by Fawzi that Egypt wished for the removal of the British presence from Egypt before negotiations could take place. In October 1954, the U.S. led negotiations between Egypt and Britain which led to reducing in number the 80,000 British troops stationed along the Suez Canal.

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[4] Ibid, p. 60.
[5] Takeyh, p. 18.

The Egyptian Revolution

The Egyptian Revolution on July 22, 1952 was initially seen as a promising change of leadership by the United States. General Mohammad Naquib appeared as the leader of the Free Officers who led the bloodless coup, but it was quickly determined that Naquib was merely a front man for Colonel Gamal abd al-Nasser. A lieutenant of Nasser, Ali Sabri was sent to the U.S. Ambassador, Jefferson Caffery to assure the give Nasser's assurances that the new government of Egypt wanted friendly relations with the United States.[6]

> Everything indicated that we now had at the board a new player who was exactly what we were looking for, and that the game we would play with him would have a high percentage of cooperation and a low percentage of conflict. Official Washington was delighted.[7]

But Nasser's policy of Arab nationalism and positive neutrality was quickly to become a thorn in the side of the United States' developing policy in the region. Attempts to placate Nasser typically caused to push his positive neutrality further from the west and closer to the Soviet Union.

Prior to World War II the United States had no major interest in the Middle East as the region was seen as an area dominated by Britain. Like

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[6] Copeland, Miles, The Game of Nations, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1969.
[7] Ibid, p. 75.

other Western powers, the United States relied on Britain and France to represent and protect its vital interests.[8]

After the war, however, the United States found itself in the position of being one of the richest nations in the world, as most western European nations were financially drained by the war. Britain and France were no longer able to maintain the mandates which had given them de facto control of the region after the breakup of the Ottoman Empire and the United States found it necessary to fill the void left by these nations before the Soviet Union did. During his campaign for president, Eisenhower claimed, "As far as sheer value of territory is concerned there is no more strategically important area in the world,"[9] and according to John Foster Dulles, it was "high time that the United States government paid more attention to the Near East and South Asia."[10]

In order to maintain the industrialization process which had transformed it into a world power, the U.S. found it had considerable reason to maintain peace in the Middle East to ensure a steady flow of oil as well as strengthen their strategic presence in the area. The United States further saw that Middle East oil would be of utmost importance to

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[8] Groisser, Philip L. The United States and the Middle East, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1982.
[9] Spiegel, p. 50-51.
[10] Ibid, p. 51.

European countries as well as Japan, to rebuild them after nearly a decade of war.

The Baghdad Pact

From the outset, Eisenhower moved to stop the spread of communism through a series of pacts that would have created mini-NATOs around the world. Although it was successful only in South East Asia and the "northern tier" of the Middle East, this policy demonstrated the administration's preoccupation with thwarting actual and potential Russian designs and its failure to take seriously indigenous nationalist movements.[11] In order to further his plan of Soviet containment, Eisenhower embarked on a multilateral treaty among nations of the northern tier. Eisenhower believed a treaty among the northern tier countries of Iraq, Iran, Turkey and Pakistan with a western power, namely Britain, would solidify the encirclement of the Soviet Union in the Middle East.

Most backers of creating a Middle East defense organization favored the Baghdad Pact believing that it would eventually lead to Cairo's acceptance of the arrangement. The pact was pushed and in April, 1954 negotiations between Turkey and Pakistan with the U.S. as mediator came to a close with the signing of a Treaty of Friendship.

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[11] Ibid, p. 57.

> The two sides agreed to coordinate defense matters and left open the prospect of ascension by other states. The administration successfully concealed its pivotal role in achieving the agreement giving the impression that the organization was the strict initiative of local powers alarmed about the Communist threat.[12]

The United States worked with Iraq to include them in the Turkey – Pakistan treaty. Iraq agreed to the terms with the enticement of arms sales from the U.S. in December 1954.

Although concerns existed among Zionist lobby groups that Iraq might use its newly acquired weapons against Israel, the U.S. Congress was satisfied that Iraq would not use U.S. made weapons against Israel for three reasons; 1) Iraq did not border Israel, 2) American military advisors would be present in Iraq and 3) Iraq assured the U.S. that it would use any U.S. purchased weapons for internal security and self-defense only. Further, Britain saw the opportunity to reestablish itself militarily in the Middle East region by joining the northern tier countries in what became known as the Baghdad Pact.

Cairo saw the Baghdad Pact as a threat to its own regional aims. Nasser wanted to be the leader of a Pan Arab State and was critical of Iraq's rise in stature among the western states. Nasser felt alienated and took an ever increasing anti-imperialistic posture against the West.

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[12] Grossier, p. 58.

Further, Nasser was led to expect arms by American representatives but when they did not materialize he began to consider looking elsewhere.[13] Further, British influence in Iraq was counter to Egypt's desire to rid the Arab States of British influence. Iraq saw the opportunity to ally itself with the U.S. and Britain whereby it would further its own goals of becoming the leader of Pan Arabism. Through its policy of containment, the U.S. caused a regional Cold War between Egypt and Iraq; both of whom wanted to become the regional power and leader of Pan Arab Nationalism.

The Alpha Plan

Once Eisenhower had met his goal of creating the Baghdad Pact he turned his attention to the Arab – Israeli dispute. The U.S. identified Egypt as the key to establishing a lasting peace between Israel and the Arab States. The U.S. believed the time was right to implement a plan with Egypt because it thought it had Cairo on its side since the mediation of the Suez bases had resulted in the U.S. perception of a positive outcome for Egypt.

The U.S. and Britain together, but without Middle East input, devised a secret plan called Alpha which was designed to end hostilities between Egypt and Israel. The two powers believed that if Egypt could be

[13] Spiegel, p. 63.

persuaded to sign a treaty with Israel the other Arab countries would follow. Alpha proposed that Israel repatriate 75,000 refugees; compensation for the additional refugees would be an international effort. Israel would also be required to give back some of the land acquired during the 1948 war and the holy sites in Jerusalem would be placed under international control. In return for Israel's concessions the Western powers would guarantee Israeli borders and attempt to convince the Arab countries to end their economic embargo of Israel. The Alpha Plan was doomed before it was ever proposed. The U.S. and Britain failed to consider that Israel would be unwavering in its refusal to return territory it considered conquered after an aggressive act by a hostile neighbor. Additionally, Israel would refuse to accept Palestinian refugees back within its borders, creating a minority problem.

In the spring of 1955 Nasser appeared open to discussion on the Alpha Plan while never agreeing to any terms. As an enticement to get his acceptance the United States offered a $40 million aid package which fell short of Egypt's request and requirements; Cairo refused. The U.S. then offered to provide arms to Egypt but the terms of the agreement insisted on U.S. officers to accompany the hardware. As Nasser had just finished getting the British officers out of Egypt he did not wish to invite another imperialist army into the country. As a result, Cairo arranged to

purchase a substantial arms package from Czechoslovakia. The source of the arms was well known to be the Soviet Union however.

The United States remained focused on Alpha through the fall of 1955. After the Czech arms deal the U.S. recognized its blunder and attempted to persuade the Egyptians once again, this time by offering funding for Nasser's Aswan Dam project. The U.S. offered to pay eighty percent of the funds required for construction while the British offered to match the $200 million contribution of the World Bank.[14] The stipulations to receive the aid, however, were still acceptance of the Alpha Plan. Nasser again refused to jeopardize his standing within the Arab community even in return for the funding necessary for construction of the Aswan Dam.

The Omega Plan

Since Nasser would not negotiate with the United States, Eisenhower embarked on another plan. This time U.S. Policy would be to 'bring Nasser back to the fold' and 'lead Colonel Nasser to realize that he cannot cooperate as he is doing with the Soviet Union and at the same time enjoy most-favorite nation treatment from the United States'.[15] The Omega Plan was designed to weaken Nasser's popularity in the Arab countries by eroding Egypt's regional position by weakening its allies and building up

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[14] Grossier, p. 86.
[15] Ibid, p. 110, as quoted Memorandum for the President, 28 March 1956, JFD Papers: White House Memorandum Series (Box 5). DDEL

alternative power centers that supported the U.S.[16] Omega would also encourage alternative arms suppliers to Israel such as the purchase of aircraft from Canada. Another aspect of the Omega plan was to cancel all funding for the Aswan Dam project if Nasser failed to bend to U.S. pressure.

Implementation of the Omega Plan failed to faze Nasser and instead pushed him closer to developing diplomatic ties with the Soviet Union. Further, Nasser began deliberations with Communist China and agreed to recognize the Chinese government in return for arms sales. U.S. policy in the Middle East was now in a tail spin. On 19 July 1956 Nasser dispatched Ambassador Hussein to meet with Secretary Dulles to discuss the funding of the Aswan Dam. Dulles said that developments over the past several months had lead the U.S. to cancel all funding for the Aswan Dam. Britain quickly followed America's lead and rescinded their offer also.

Suez Crisis, 1956

Upon hearing of the revocation of funds Nasser was outraged. His reaction once again surprised the United States and Western powers when on July 26, 1956, Nasser announced his intention to nationalize the Suez Canal. Nasser claimed revenue from the canal would fund the

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[16] Ibid. p. 113.

building of the Aswan Dam. Although the U.S. was willing to stick with Omega to make it work the United Kingdom was tired of the lack of results and concerned about the loss of revenue it would experience from the Suez Canal and the possible restriction of oil which flowed through the canal on its way to Britain. The Omega plan had failed to achieve any of its goals and further polarized the region while pushing Egypt to request communist support.

At the same time Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal he also emplaced an embargo on Israeli shipping through the canal as well as through the Gulf of Aqaba on the Red Sea. The nationalization of the Suez Canal enraged Britain; France issued a proclamation equating the seizure of the canal with Hitler's seizure of the Rhineland during World War II. Britain and France along with Israel signed a tripartite agreement to attack Egypt and regain control of the canal. Training for a military invasion of the canal began on British controlled Cyprus while diplomats attempted to calm the international situation down.

While Eisenhower admitted Egypt's right to nationalize he insisted on the freedom of navigation for all nations and therefore insisted to Nasser that Egypt must demonstrate its ability to operate the canal efficiently and

safely and that the canal must remain open to international maritime traffic.[17]

In Washington, Eisenhower ruled out the use of force because he believed it would fan the flames of western resentment and jeopardize the U.S. policy of containment. The U.S. convinced Britain and France to allow diplomatic maneuvers the time needed to work. But by October, 1956 Britain and France were tired of waiting and the tripartite alliance with Israel was undertaken by attacking the Suez Canal.

During secret meetings the three nations agreed that Israel would attack the Suez Canal at which time Britain and France would step in separating the combatants and demanding the two to fall back ten miles on either side of the canal.[18] The United States was left completely in the dark over the plans and the eventual conduct of the operation came as a surprise. As planned, France and Britain issued an ultimatum to the two combatants. When Nasser refused to budge, France and Britain sent military force in to the Canal Zone. The United States immediately sponsored a resolution calling for the immediate end of hostilities and withdrawal of all forces thus ending the Suez Crisis.

> Immediately upon learning of the Anglo-French-Israeli collusion, the Eisenhower administration lashed out at

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[17] Lenczowski, George, American Presidents and the Middle East, Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1990.
[18] Fraser, The USA and the Middle East Since World War 2, page 70.

> Britain, supposedly its closest ally. Eisenhower made it clear that "he did not see much value in an unworthy and unreliable ally and that the necessity to support them might not be as great as they believed."[19]

Eisenhower Doctrine

After the debacle of the Suez Crisis, an ominous vacuum was left in the Middle East. It was believed by the U.S. that if it was unable to maintain a western presence in the Middle East that Nasser, supported by the Soviet Union would triumph as the preeminent power in the Middle East. The U.S. felt that Nasser was leaning more and more toward communism when in fact, his policy of positive neutrality was allowing him to ensure Egyptian sovereignty. Nasser was adept at playing both the United States and the Soviet Union against one another to reach his own aims. However, U.S. intelligence at the time supported the belief by Eisenhower and Dulles that communist forces were at work in Egypt and also in Syria.

Eisenhower decided that hiding behind British foreign policy was poor policy planning on his own behalf. In November 1956 Eisenhower called a meeting of his senior advisors to further discuss policy in the Middle East. U.S. policy at that time still focused on the Containment of Communism in Europe as its number one priority. The Suez situation and Nasser's

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[19] Louis, Wm. Roger and Owen, Roger, A Revolutionary Year: The Middle East in 1958, London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 2002.

increasing popularity in the Middle East, plus his increasing reliance on Soviet aid demonstrated to Eisenhower that Egyptian expansion posed an indirect Cold War threat to Western Europe.[20] The closure of the Suez Canal by Egypt and the destruction by Syria of the oil pipeline running from the fields of Iraq to the Mediterranean Sea brought about serious oil shortages in Europe.[21] The arms deal between Egypt and Czechoslovakia, which was widely known to be brokered by the Soviets, was considered by Eisenhower "the first evidence of serious Communist penetration" in the area.[22]

Although the Suez Crisis had placed a strain on relations between the U.S. Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles and British Foreign Secretary, Sir Anthony Eden, Eisenhower held no hostility against his two staunch European allies. Dulles however, realized that dissociating himself from Britain and France had allowed the Soviets to gain a much more prestigious position in the Middle East.[23]

> As a result of the Soviet intervention against Britain and France at the time of Suez, and of their attitude since, the cry in the Arab countries was 'the Russians have saved us'. Dulles concocted the Eisenhower Doctrine, therefore, for the single purpose of fighting Communism.[24]

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[20] Ibid. p. 81.
[21] Lenczowski, p. 44, and Louis and Owen, p. 81.
[22] Ibid, pp. 46-47.
[23] Gould-Adams, Richard, The Time of Power: A Reappraisal of John Foster Dulles, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1962.
[24] Ibid, p. 249.

On January 5, 1957 Eisenhower addressed Congress and officially revealed the Eisenhower Doctrine, which stated the United States was prepared to aid any Middle East nation requesting assistance against armed aggression by any country inspired or controlled by "international communism".[25] Eisenhower requested Congress to authorize funds for economic and military assistance for the countries of the region. In his address, Eisenhower "reminded" his audience

> ...that "Russia's rulers have long sought to dominate the Middle East" – both the czars and the Bolsheviks. "The reason for Russia's interest in the Middle East," said the president "is solely that of power politics. Considering her announced purpose of communizing the world, it is easy to understand her hope of dominating the Middle East."[26]

After much debate in the U.S. Congress the Eisenhower Doctrine was passed into law on March 9, 1957 and confirmed that Western interests in the Middle East from now on would be the prime responsibility of the Americans.[27] In his comments the president further proposed three types of action:

> 1) to develop economic strength of Middle East nations; 2) to enact programs of military assistance and cooperation; 3) to provide that "assistance and cooperation [would] include employment of the armed forces of the United States to secure and protect the territorial integrity and political

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[25] Lesch, David W. The Middle East and the United States: A Historical and Political Reassessment, Boulder: Westview Press, Inc., 1996.
[26] Lenczowski, p. 52.
[27] Fraser, The USA and the Middle East Since World War 2, page 73.

> independence of such nations, requesting such aid, against overt armed aggression from an nation controlled by International Communism." The president's final comments were that "The proposed legislation is primarily designed to deal with the possibility of Communist aggression, direct and indirect."[28]

When one considers these important guidelines, the Eisenhower Doctrine was implemented only once in the true sense of the word. In May 1958, Lebanese President Camille Chamoun requested that the U.S., Britain and France inform him what would happen if he asked for outside military assistance in putting down an insurrection in Lebanon.

The U.S. weighed the implications of hampering relations further with Arab nations by answering Lebanon's call for assistance, against destroying the credibility of the United States by not acting in support of its pro-Western allies in the region. Following the May 13 meeting, the Eisenhower administration informed Chamoun and made a public announcement indicating that it was prepared to consider dispatching military forces to Lebanon. U.S. combat forces were placed in a state of alert.[29]

As the Eisenhower administration wrestled with the idea of sending U.S. forces into Lebanon it made sure to specify that any request for assistance could not reference the Eisenhower Doctrine because the

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[28] Lenczowski, p. 52.
[29] Fraser, page 154.

administration felt no armed aggression by a country controlled by international communism had occurred in Lebanon to that point.

The U.S. continued to look for diplomatic ways to ease the situation in Lebanon preferring not to use military force as it might jeopardize weak Western support. The United States placed several conditions on Lebanon in its request for U.S. intervention including the requirement to have previously submitted a complaint to the U.N. Security Council and received support for military action from another Arab nation (possibly Jordan or Iraq). Greater detail will be spent discussing this issue in Chapters III and IV.

United Arab Republic

In the fall of 1957 growing influence of the Soviet Union in Syria led to a crisis in which the United States found itself unable to alter the course of events.[30] A CIA backed plot to force regime change in Syria was foiled by Syrian double agents and placed the U.S. administration in the same light the British had formally been in the Middle East. This time the coup was exposed before it ever got started. Syrian army officers assigned major roles simply walked into Colonel Sarraj's G-2 office, turned in their money,

[30] Divine, Robert A. Eisenhower and the Cold War, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981.

and named the CIA officers who'd paid them.[31] The Syrian government declared all Americans associated with the coup as *personae non gratae* and besieged the American Embassy in Damascus. In retaliation for the "unprovoked" expulsion of the American Military Attaché from Syria, Dulles had the Syrian Ambassador expelled from the United States.[32]

Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon and Turkey all stressed to Secretary Dulles that without direct military intervention, Syria would sign a mutual defense treaty with the Soviet Union and become an official "Communist Satellite."[33] The United States supported a military build up of troops from Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey along Syria's borders to weaken Syria's defensive capability and allow for the eventual invasion of Syria by Iraq.

On September 20, 1957, the Soviet Union stepped in supporting Syria by sending two destroyers into Lattakia harbor. On October 12 Egyptian forces landed in Syria to provide additional military support to the far-stretched Syrian military. After tense negotiations, the United States convinced Turkey to pull back from the Syrian border and the initial crisis was ended. Although the Soviets had supported Syria in this conflict, the feared Communist take over of Syria never occurred. Eisenhower still felt,

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[31] Eveland, Wilbur C. Ropes of Sand: America's Failure in the Middle East, London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1980.
[32] Schultz, Theodore C. Thirty-Months: Arab American Diplomacy between Suez and Lebanon, M.A. Thesis (Texas, 1993).
[33] Ibid, p. 45.

however, "the threat of Soviet penetration of the Middle East remained, and a left-wing regime seemed strongly entrenched in Syria."[34]

The formation of the United Arab Republic on February 1, 1958 between Egypt and Syria ended the Soviet influence in Syria and pointed to the increasing influence of Nasser as the future leader of a Pan-Arab nation. Nasser quickly outlawed the Communist party but created a new threat by putting pressure on Lebanon to join the UAR.[35] It seemed Egypt was indeed becoming the superpower in the Middle East region.

In response to formation of the UAR, King Hussein of Jordan contacted his cousin, King Faisal of Iraq regarding the formation of their own Pan-Arab nation, forming a union of the two Hashemite monarchies. Faisal agreed and on February 14, 1958 Jordan and Iraq signed into being the United Arab Federation as a counter to the UAR.

Iraqi Revolution

In July of 1958 the Iraqi military overthrew the Western oriented monarchy led by King Faisal and Iraqi Premier, Nuri as-Said. Members of the royal family were murdered but Nuri as-Said escaped, only to be captured and killed the following day and his body dragged through the streets of Baghdad. Fears grew for the Hashemite monarchy of Jordan with its large anti-Western, Palestinian minority. The bloody Iraqi

[34] Eisenhower, The White House Years, quoted in Lenczowski, p. 57
[35] Eisenhower and the Cold War, p. 97.

Revolution on July 14, 1958, led by General Abdel Karim Qasim, ousted the pro-Western Hashemite family and put Qasim's Ba'ath Party in power. The United States and Britain assumed Nasser was behind the coup d'etat and this served as an additional indication of Nasser's strong influence within the region.

Chapter II – Buildup to the Crisis in Lebanon

The Lebanese Political System

With the outbreak of World War II the French found it increasingly difficult to maintain their mandate over Lebanon. Lebanon was granted its independence in 1941and emerged as a predominantly Arab country with a population nearly evenly divided between Maronite Christians and Sunni Muslims.[36] In 1943 general elections were held and the new Chamber of Deputies elected Bishara al-Khurri (a Maronite Christian) as president who then appointed Riyad as-Sulh (Sunni Muslim) as prime minister. The Christian and Muslim leaders of Lebanon were united in their desire to end French rule and worked together to lay the foundations of the new Lebanese state.

In 1943, Khurri and Sulh established an unwritten agreement which later came to be known as the National Pact and which was eventually approved and supported by their followers. The National Pact laid down four principles:

> First, Lebanon was to be a completely independent state. The Christian communities were to cease identifying with the west; in return, the Muslim communities were to protect the independence of Lebanon and prevent its merger with any Arab state. Second, although Lebanon is an Arab country with Arabic as its official language, it could not cut off its spiritual and intellectual ties with the West, which had helped

[36] Ibid, p. 97.

> it attain such a notable degree of progress. Third, Lebanon, as a member of the family of Arab states, should cooperate with the other Arab states, and in case of conflict among them, it should not side with one state against another. Fourth, public offices should be distributed proportionately among the recognized religious groups, but in technical positions preference should be given to competence without regard to confessional considerations. Moreover, the three top government positions should be distributed as follows: the president of the republic should be a Maronite; the prime minister, a Sunni Muslim; and the speaker of the Chamber of Deputies, a Shia Muslim. The ratio of deputies was to be six Christians to five Muslims.[37]

The constitution of Lebanon allowed for one, six year term as president. During fraudulent elections in 1947, however, al-Khurri brought in a puppet Chamber which adopted a constitutional amendment enabling him to succeed himself.[38] After al-Khurri's initial six year term as president, he was reelected in 1949 to another six year term in office. Khurri served three of the six years during his second term until a general strike lead by Kamal Jumblatt's Social National Front (SNF) forced him to resign. Camille Chamoun was subsequently elected by the Chamber of Deputies to succeed Khurri on September 23, 1952.

It is important to note that Chamoun's opposition to al-Khurri dated back to 1948 when he resigned his post as Minister of Interior. His principle reason for doing so was stated in his letter of resignation:

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[37] Lebanon: A Country Study, Headquarters, Department of the Army, DA Pam 550-24, 1989.
[38] Qubain, Fahim. Crisis in Lebanon, Washington, DC: The Middle East Institute, 1961.

> ...the projected amendment of the constitution to enable al-Khurri to be re-elected, something which he felt "should never be done lest a precedent of amending the administration for personal reasons be established."[39]

Looking ahead it is also important to consider the response by the Lebanese Army during the civil strikes led by Jumblatt against President al-Khurri. General Fuad Chehab, Chairman of the Lebanese Army made it clear that the army would not support the current administration in armed conflict against Lebanese civilians, but would instead try to keep law and order. Chehab would use the same stance in 1958 against Chamoun.

The elections of 1957 were critical for Chamoun and his party for the political orientation of the deputies elected would indicate the degree of popular support for the pro-Western (actually pro-American) Chamoun regime.[40] Chamoun and Foreign Minister, Charles Malik had aligned themselves with the west, being one of the first Arab governments to ratify the Eisenhower Doctrine. Malik had pushed ratification of the doctrine through parliament by claiming to have Secretary Dulles's personal assurances that the United States would furnish Lebanon with "unlimited" economic and military aid.[41]

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[39] Ibid, p. 22.
[40] Eveland, Wilbur C. Ropes of Sand: America's Failure in the Middle East, London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1980.
[41] Ibid, p. 250.

In support of Chamoun's pro-American, pro-Western stance, the United States became deeply involved in the 1957 elections to assure the election of Chamoun supporters. According to Wilbur Eveland, who was a CIA operative and close confidant of Chamoun, the 1957 elections were rigged with U.S. money to ensure a pro-American parliament would be elected.

> During my meeting with Chamoun, the president explained that it would be extremely expensive to defeat the deputies who'd resigned – their family positions, patronage, or political stature had always allowed them to win handily. Instead, our funds should be used to support candidates in evenly divided districts where winning a hotly contested election could be important in supporting the government's policies, and, he stressed, a victory would be less vulnerable to accusations of Chamoun's own intervention.[42]

Chamoun believed Syrian arms were being smuggled into Lebanon and that much of the violence could be traced to Syrians backed with Egyptian funds.

> Tensions mounted as the elections approached, and in order to prevent interference with the voting, the government closed the borders with Syria and expelled Syrian nationals. Anti-Western riots broke out, with five fatalities in Beirut, and the car of the embassy's army attaché was smashed.[43]

He further believed the ultimate goal of Syria was to influence the elections to promote pro-Nasserist candidates. Chamoun's opponents

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[42] Ibid, p. 251.
[43] Ibid, p. 252.

denied either Syrian or Egyptian backing, especially after their defeat by Chamoun supporters.

Affects of the UAR in Lebanon

Reaction in Lebanon to the union of Egypt and Syria was looked at with mixed feelings. President Chamoun and his supporters considered the United Arab Republic as a probable threat which wished to pull Lebanon into its fold. When Nasser visited Damascus in February, throngs of Lebanese politicians went there to here him speak and returned to Lebanon issuing pan-Arabist slogans. Egyptian and Syrian flags began to be seen in the Lebanese countryside and on large buildings demonstrating the opinions of the people.[44]

Diplomatic statements were issued by various parties upon the formation of the United Arab Republic. Lebanon issued statements recognizing the new Republic and wishing peace and harmony to all its Arab brother nations.

> We pray to God that the unification declared between Egypt and Syria will bring about an increase in the living standard of the peoples of the two countries, and that it may augur well for all the parties bound by the eternal bond of life and death which links the Lebanon with all the countries it loves and serves, whether these countries be called Syria and Egypt or the United Arab Republic, or called Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Jordan, Libya, Morocco, the Sudan, and the Yemen. While the Lebanon – which continues to exist and

[44] Qubain, p. 61.

> intends to continue to exist for ever as a nation (Arabic: ummah) with a standard, a sovereignty, an independence, and a message will continue to play its international role, it will not allow itself to abstain from participation in everything that is good and that affects its partners in the bond of life and death.[45]

Whatever the diplomatic reactions were, Chamoun confided in Wilbur Eveland that he still believed Syria was funneling arms into Lebanon and further claimed that Russian guidance was becoming more evident all the time. Chamoun further criticized the actions taken by the United States, namely our aborted coup in Syria, our use of his country for plotting against other Arab states, and our too visible role in the elections.[46]

Sir George Middleton theorized that eighty-five percent of the Lebanese Muslims "must be counted as ardent supporters of the United Arab Republic.[47] British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan wrote in his diary in May 1958:

> A great crisis is blowing up in Lebanon. Nasser is organizing an internal campaign there against President Chamoun and his regime. This is partly Communist and partly Arab Nationalist. Russian arms are being introduced from Syria and the object is to force Lebanon to join the Egyptian – Syrian combination.[48]

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[45] Abstract of a statement by Mr. Charles Malik, the Foreign Minister of Lebanon, 11 February 1958, from Agwani, M.S. The Lebanese Crisis, 1958, New Delhi: Asia Publishing Company, 1965

[46] Eveland, p. 256.

[47] Farid el-Khazen, "The Communal Pact of National Identities: The Making and Politics of the 1943 National Pact" (Centre for Lebanese Studies, Oxford, Papers on Lebanon 12, 1991), as quoted in Louis and Owen, p. 34.

[48] Macmillan diary, 13 May 1958 as quoted in Louis and Owen, p. 20.

The UAR began a radio attack against Chamoun from Cairo, on one side, to Damascus, on the other. The voices denounced the Lebanese "ruling clique" as puppets of the West and pursuing policies contradictory to the interests of the common Arab course.[49]

[49] Lengyel, Emil, The Changing Middle East, New York: The John Day Company, 1960.

Chapter III – The Lebanese Crisis

Rumblings of a Crisis

Eisenhower greatly desired to contain both Communism and Nasser's nationalist Pan-Arabism. The view commonly shared by the U.S., U.K., and France was that Nasser was like Hitler, aimed at expansion and that he had to be confronted and made to desist, by force if necessary.[50] The formation of the United Arab Republic was viewed as Arab expansion with Communist guidance behind Nasser.

In mid January 1958, Robert McClintock presented his credentials to Chamoun as U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon and immediately found himself embroiled in what was believed initially to be an internal Lebanese situation. As mentioned earlier the landslide 1957 elections were allegedly financed by the CIA. The number of seats in the Chamber of Deputies increased from 44 to 66 and Chamoun supporters won a large number (55) of those seats. The large Muslim minority and even many Maronite Christians began to speak out and protest against Chamoun and his supporters.

Throughout February and March pro-Nasser and anti-Chamoun demonstrations became more and more prevalent.

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[50] Louis and Owen, p. 19.

> On March 16, five persons were arrested in Tripoli for leading demonstrators shouting slogans in favor of the United Arab Republic. On the 19th, school children played truant, because the authorities ordered pictures of Nasser taken down from walls and other public places.[51]

At the onset of tensions within Lebanon President Eisenhower convened his cabinet and began discussion of possible actions regarding the unrest in Lebanon:

> Noted the President's request that the Department of State in consultation with the_Department of Defense, as a matter of urgency, explore what types of U.S. support might be given to the governments of Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and Saudi Arabia if required in the immediate future, and to examine possible actions which the United States might take if requested to give such support.[52]

The Crisis Deepens

In April anti-Government forces united in their opposition to Chamoun when he in-advisedly announced his wish to amend the constitution in order to succeed himself in the elections to be held July 24. On May 8, the spark which truly set the civil war in motion was the murder of Nasib al-Matni, a Maronite Christian and publisher of the Beirut Arabic daily *The Telegraph*. Al-Matni was an outspoken critic of Chamoun, and publicly supported strengthening relations with the UAR.[53] Chamoun and his

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[51] Qubain, p. 63.
[52] "Memorandum for the Secretary," 15 March 1958, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1958-1960, vol XI (hereafter FRUS), ed. John P. Glennon (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1991), p. 6.
[53] Qubain, p. 68.

supporters were immediately blamed for the murder and a general strike was declared by opposition groups as well as demands for Chamoun to resign as president.

Although the strike had little effect in the capital of Beirut, in the countryside opposition groups were mobilizing the people for armed aggression. Kamal Junblat, with his Druze followers, initiated attacks against the presidential palace at Bayt al-Din in the Shuf area of Lebanon and the revolt had begun.[54]

Initial American Response

The American response was that the revolt was lead by Nasser with communist support. As soon as the armed revolt had begun Chamoun made an initial request for U.S. intervention asking what the United States would do if he asked for help.

> On 13 May Eisenhower and Dulles conferred to discuss a cable from Chamoun...The reply was that the sending of U.S. troops to Lebanon would be based on the need to protect American life and property. But the President also took preliminary steps in moving elements of the Sixth Fleet to the Mediterranean.[55]
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> The JCS reaction was to consider a U.S. move into Lebanon as a possible joint action with the British. Military discussions took place, and by the middle of June, an Anglo-

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[54] Ibid, p. 73.
[55] Bryson, Thomas A. American Diplomatic Relations With the Middle East, 1784-1975, New Jersey: The Scarecrow Press, Inc, 1977.

> American intervention plan – "Operation Blue Bat" – had been drawn up.[56]

Eisenhower was hesitant however to involve U.S. troops in a situation which he still felt was internal to Lebanese politics. Allen Dulles, Director of CIA, believed that Communists were playing little to no part in the crisis in Lebanon. However, Chamoun had established a strong pro-Western stance by refusing to sever diplomatic ties with Britain and France during the Suez Crisis and by being one of the first heads of state in the Middle East to accept the Eisenhower Doctrine. The Eisenhower administration believed it was critical to show their support of a pro-Western, Arab government, so as not to loose face with it's other Arab allies, namely Jordan, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

Further considerations in becoming involved in an internal civil war in Lebanon concerned the responses by not only the Soviet Union and Nasser, but by the U.S. Congress and citizens as well. The prospect of becoming entangled in an untenable military action and the danger of flaming anti-American sentiments in the Arab countries were critical considerations. There was also the fear that in retaliation, Nasser would shut down the Suez Canal and Syria would cut off the flow of oil which ran through pipelines of the Iraq Petroleum Company through Syria and into

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[56] Melanson, Richard A. and Mayers, David. Reevaluating Eisenhower: American Foreign Policy in the 1950s, Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1987.

Lebanese ports leading to an oil crisis in the west.[57] This scenario had already been observed, of course, in 1956 during the Suez Crisis and had caused considerable worry among the European nations.

Eisenhower met with members of the cabinet on May 15 to discuss intervention in Lebanon and after careful deliberations with his staff, Eisenhower refused Chamoun's request for U.S. intervention and set parameters on possible, future U.S. involvement in the crisis:

> In May, Eisenhower had informed Chamoun that U.S. troops would not be sent to Lebanon to secure him a second term and that a second Arab nation would have to concur in any U.S. action.[58]
>
> In discussion regarding deployment of our forces in the Mediterranean, the President indicated agreement that the Marines should start moving eastward...Secretary Dulles then said there is a basic question as to the mission of our forces if they intervene – on what theory would intervention be based. Our forces could act to protect American life and property. In addition, we could send in military elements to engage in military assistance to the Government of Lebanon, in order to help them preserve their independence and integrity...The President suggested we have our Ambassadors inform Arab countries we have asked as to our position in this matter. He thought we should put a price on our action – if the Arab countries think we should intervene, they must join in requesting us to do so.[59]

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[57] "Memorandum of a Conversation," 13 March 1958, FRUS, vol XI, p. 47.
[58] Melanson and Mayers, p. 207.
[59] "Memorandum for Record," 15 May 1958,FRUS, vol XI, p. 38.

In addition to requesting aid from the United States, Arab states desiring assistance would be required to seek equal assistance from the United Nations Security Council.

Eisenhower wanted to be sure that implementation of the Eisenhower Doctrine would be construed as a positive and justifiable means to containing Communism in the Middle East. Neither he nor Dulles believed at the time that the Soviet Union was directly involved in internal Lebanese politics which is why intervention under the auspices of the Eisenhower Doctrine could not be justified.

It was felt however, that Nasser was heavily involved since the formation of the United Arab Federation between Jordan and Iraq was a stumbling block in his attaining the position as head of a pan-Arab state. Syria wanted Lebanon to join the UAR and in fact, many Lebanese Muslims felt greater loyalty to Syria than to Lebanon due to religious and cultural beliefs. The emergence of Nasser, the Suez crisis and the formation of the United Arab Republic encouraged many Lebanese to speak out in defiance of Chamoun and the Maronite political leadership. It was therefore believed by Chamoun and the West that Nasser was behind the insurrection in Lebanon. Although the UAF never approached Chamoun about joining it as the third member, it was believed by the Eisenhower administration that Nasser was concerned about the UAF

foiling his plans to become leader of a pan-Arab nation. If Lebanon were to ally itself with the UAF rather than his own UAR, his grasp within the region would slip. This unfounded belief served as justification for the possible intervention of the United States to support Chamoun.

For this reason, Eisenhower kept the door to intervention open. Saudi Arabia had succumbed to Nasser on March 23, yielding effective power to Crown Prince Faisal, a man Eisenhower deemed "pro-Nasserite."[60] Eisenhower wished to contain Nasser as much as he wished to contain communism.

After Chamoun was notified of Eisenhower's decision with regard to his request for possible U.S. intervention, Near Eastern Assistant Secretary of State William Rountree sent a telegram from the Department of State to Ambassadors in Baghdad, Amman, London and Beirut. In the telegram Rountree made clear that Chamoun would request U.S. intervention only as a last resort to preserve Lebanon's independence:

> In discussing with Chamoun question intervention of forces, we have emphasized essentiality turning to this means only as a last resort and in genuine threat to independence of Lebanon and not in order to ensure maintenance or installation of any individual in Presidency.[61]

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[60] Melanson and Mayers, p. 207.
[61] "Telegram from DOS to Amembassy Baghdad, Amman, London and Beirut," 14 May 1958, FRUS, vol XI, p. 44.

Relations between Chamoun and Chehab

Although he denied it, it was common knowledge among Lebanese politicians and media alike that General Chehab had no great love for President Chamoun. A Maronite Christian himself, Chehab had been Chief of Staff of the Lebanese army for over fifteen years. He had molded and trained the army himself and had the loyalty of its mixed, Christian, Muslim forces.

Chamoun and Malik did not trust Chehab to defend the government as stated by Malik to McClintock in February 1958:

> During my call at his request on Malik today he said he and Chamoun were concerned over "rough waters" in connection with Presidential campaign. Of security elements which Lebanon possessed he and President were confident of loyalty of municipal police, gendarmerie, surete and courts, but they had a question mark as to attitude of CINC armed forces General Chehab. They felt, said Malik, Chehab had no love for Chamoun nor Prime Minister Solh and in event of civil disturbance directed against President of Cabinet Chehab might deliberately refrain from going to their aid.[62]

Chehab on the other hand denied any dislike for Chamoun and in early April voiced muted support of Chamoun while still condemning any possible attempts at amending the constitution:

> Chehab said he could be wrong but his estimate of situation was that if Chamoun sought to amend constitution and succeed himself there would be severe civil strife in Lebanon, amounting possibly to civil war. General estimated

[62] "Telegram from Beirut to SECSTATE," 14 February 1958, FRUS 1958-1069, vol XI, p. 4.

> Moslem mobs in Tripoli, Saida, Tyre, and Beirut could not be controlled by their leaders once demonstrations were started...General said he was not anti-Chamoun, as had been much advertised by various loyalist politicians. He said, "If Chamoun can pull it off, I am all for him". However, General left no doubt his grave misgivings lest once Chamoun and his tame Parliament had amended constitution and secured re-election, rioting on very wide scale might not get out of hand. In that case, said General, decision on next President would be in hands of mob, and where that would leave Lebanon no one could foresee.[63]

The tone of Chehab's support for Chamoun was becoming less approving by mid May. On May 12, McClintock sent the following message to Secretary Dulles in Washington:

> Chehab has clearly indicated not only to US Ambassador but to many other sources he is opposed to Chamoun's re-election and can be relied upon only to maintain President in office for his constitutional term, expiring September 23. It is therefore not certain Chamoun can rely on Chehab to take action to restore situation. Further factor is Chehab's own reluctance to go all-out in use of his beloved army for that purpose...This being said, Chehab could, if he wanted to, control security situation without outside help unless there were massive intervention from Syria. He has 11,000 well-armed and disciplined troops, in addition to gendarmerie and local police force. Given the will, he could find the way. However, regret to report will seems vacillating at best, and lacking at worst. Chehab's resolution would be strengthened if Chamoun were to declare now his intention not stand for re-election.[64]

The following day, May 13, McClintock had to report that apparently Chehab had withdrawn all support of Chamoun:

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[63] "Telegram from Beirut to SECSTATE," 01 April 1958, FRUS 1958-1960, vol XI, p. 8.
[64] "Telegram from Beirut to SECSTATE," 12 May 1958, FRUS 1958-1960, vol XI, p. 34.

> Prime Minister Solh has just sent word through intermediary of his alarm at apparent change of disposition in army. Prime Minister was called upon this morning by Chief of General Staff Colonel Toufic Salem and Colonel Abdel Kader Chehab. They presented demand for immediate resignation of Chamoun, with implication army could not be relied upon to maintain order unless this ultimatum were complied with.[65]

Chehab was concerned that if he were to press the army into service in support of Chamoun, and against Muslim and Christian rebels, that the army would split along sectarian lines and push Lebanon into a true civil war with not only civilian factions but opposing military forces fighting against each other. At the current time, Chehab maintained control of the army but could not guarantee control if forced to interfere in what he considered a political struggle.

Chamoun also was concerned about utilizing military force but was even more concerned about firing Chehab. The General had such ardent loyalty among the officers and soldiers of his beloved army that Chamoun was sure all would be lost if he were to relieve Chehab.

By mid June, Chamoun had realized his bid for re-election was over. Not only had he missed the deadline for a legal amendment, but both the British and the Americans had rescinded their support of him seeking another term.

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[65] "Telegram from Beirut to SECSTATE," 13 May 1958, FRUS 1958-1960, vol XI, p. 37.

We hold strongly to the opinion that possibility that Chamoun can stand for a second term must now definitely be ruled out. Reasons have been explained in correspondence with respective departments but may be summarized briefly as follows: (1) Reelection is impossible without amending the constitution. (2) Such amendment requires two-thirds majority in Chamber of Deputies. (3) Chamoun has not (repeat not) the slightest chance of commanding such a majority. (4) Any mention of reelection at this stage will give substance to opposition claims that they alone stand for "legitimacy" and defense of the constitution. (5) Since Sami Solh has pledged that his government will not (repeat not) seek to amend constitution, saying Chamoun would have to find a new Prime Minister. It is virtually certain that he would never find a Sunni Moslem willing, or able, to form a cabinet for this declared purpose. (6) President himself appears to have weighed the foregoing factors and to have abandoned any idea of reelection.[66]

[66] "Telegraph from Beirut to SECSTATE," 18 June 1958, FRUS 1958-1960, vol XI, p. 121.

Chapter IV – Foreign Involvement in Lebanon

The U.N. Becomes Involved

On May 13, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Charles Malik held a press conference in which he stated that interference by the UAR was the principle cause of Lebanon's plight.[67] Malik cited numerous incidents in which Syrian arms and men had crossed the borders, inciting insurrection and arming Druze rebels along the border. On May 21 and 22, Malik took his case to the United Nations Security Council, which, hoping the Council of the Arab League would settle the differences, postponed any discussion of the situation until after the League had met. Raising the issue of Syrian intervention to the United Nations further served to satisfy the first of Eisenhower's conditions on the use of American military intervention in Lebanon.

The Arab League presented its solution to Lebanon on June 5; Lebanon quickly rejected the resolution, presumably because the administration wanted to be heard at the Security Council and because it was believed the Arab League would be unable to solve the issue. The Security Council then took up the issue on June 6, 1958. The United

[67] Qubain, p. 89.

Nations Observer Group in Lebanon (UNOGIL) was instituted and submitted its first report July 3.[68]

In his telegraph to Dulles, McClintock relayed that the initial feelings of Chamoun, upon learning of the U.N. resolution was elation:

> There is a general feeling of relief among informed Lebanese and particularly in government circles over UN resolution. Chamoun in particular is elated...Ambassadors concur that if UN can provide adequate forces, it should be possible to prevent further infiltration of partisans and arms from Syria...Ambassadors believe Lebanese army and gendarmerie should be able to put down revolt although it will continue to smolder for some time.[69]

The UNOGIL group reported to the Secretary General in a number of reports between 1 July and 25 September that there was no massive intervention by the UAR in Lebanese affairs.[70] Chamoun denounced Secretary General Hammarskjöld calling him "the most conceited man in the world or the most deceitful." Hammarskjöld, a fool to trust Nasser, had become Nasser's boy, Chamoun concluded.[71] Dulles stated to Malik on June 30 that U.S. intelligence agreed with the UNOGIL reports, believing that infiltration from Syria was not as great as Malik and Chamoun had claimed.[72]

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[68] Ibid, p. 92.
[69] "Telegram from Beirut to SECSTATE," 12 June 1958, FRUS 1958-1960, vol XI, p. 89.
[70] Bryson, p. 213.
[71] Louis and Owen, p. 147.
[72] Ibid, p. 155.

The U.S. Becomes Involved

On July 14, 1958, a sudden and unexpected turn of events occurred which completely changed the U.S. outlook concerning military intervention in Lebanon. The Iraqi Revolution, lead by General Abdel Karim Qasim was a bloody coup which witnessed the murder of much of the royal family including Iraqi King Faisal as well as veteran Iraqi Premier Nuri as-Said. The announcement of the revolution sent shock waves through the Middle East and the West. Iraq, which was the only Arab member of the Baghdad Pact and leader of the United Arab Federation with Jordan, was suddenly removed from both capacities. After the murder of Faisal and as-Said, Qasim was named leader of the revolution and head of the government.[73]

Fearful that what happened in Iraq could happen in Lebanon, Chamoun called the ambassadors of the United States, Britain and France and demanded immediate intervention within the next 48 hours.

> He demanded immediate intervention, insisting that unless this took place within 48 hours, he would be a dead man, and Lebanon would become an Egyptian satellite.[74]

Upon receiving word of the revolution in Iraq, Eisenhower called a conference at the White House where the cabinet discussed employing

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[73] Korbani, Agnes G. U.S. Intervention in Lebanon, 1958 and 1982, New York: Praeger Publishers, 1991.
[74] Qubain, p. 115.

military force in Lebanon. General Twining, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, confirmed Secretary Dulles's theory that if the U.S. was to intervene in the Middle East it was now or never. The major concern was over what reaction the Soviet Union would take in response to a U.S. landing in Lebanon. General Twining stated his opinion that the U.S. was better off vis-à-vis the USSR than we would be in the future.[75] Secretary Dulles thought that if the U.S. did nothing, then the Soviet Union would assume that the U.S. would never take the risk. That assumption could lead to possible Soviet expansion in direct opposition to the Eisenhower Doctrine.[76]

> In meetings of key officials with Dulles, general agreement was that if the United States did nothing: 1) Nasser would take over the whole area; 2) the United States would lose influence not only in the Arab states of the Middle East but in the area generally, and our bases throughout the area would be in jeopardy; 3) the dependability of United States' commitments for assistance in the event of need would be brought into question throughout the world.[77]

One point that the U.S. administration had to consider was the Tapline oil pipeline which carried ARAMCO oil from Saudi Arabia to the Mediterranean, transiting Lebanon. As of 1952, "Through Lebanon passed 78 percent of Saudi and Iraqi crude [oil], on its way to Western

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[75] Whitehouse notes, 14 July 1958, FRUS 1958-1960, vol XI, p. 159.
[76] Ibid.
[77] Spiegel, p. 88.

Europe, and approximately 22 percent going to the United States and Canada."[78]

In the meeting the president said that his mind had been made up long ago. We had to act or get out of the Middle East. The President further stated that Congressional leaders should be invited to the White House and told that we felt there was no choice.[79]

> The President conferred with leaders of Congress who gave the President mixed reactions. One senator doubted that the Eisenhower Doctrine was applicable because he did not feel that there was a communist conspiracy. Speaker of the House, Sam Rayburn said it looked like a civil war to him and that the U.S. should avoid intervention. The President also spoke with Prime Minister Harold Macmillan, who announced that Britain would dispatch troops to Jordan to support the unsteady regime of King Hussein.[80]

Jordan's King Hussein, who had entered a pact with Iraq's now dead monarch, to form the United Arab Federation, found himself in dire straits. Hussein believed that Egypt was behind the revolution in Iraq as well as the civil strife in Lebanon. He further believed that if Lebanon were to fall into the hands of the UAR, that he would be unable to maintain his own sovereignty in Jordan. He therefore concluded that western military intervention was necessary in both his own country and in Lebanon.

Chamoun had now met Eisenhower's criteria for U.S. intervention; he

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[78] Louis and Owen, p. 118.
[79] Whitehouse notes, 14 July 1958, FRUS 1958-1960, vol XI, p. 159.
[80] Bryson, p. 214.

had renounced his plan to run for a second term as president, Jordan concurred with Lebanon that intervention was now necessary, and the United Nations had already become involved in the form of the UNOGIL mission.

The Marines Land

At 1723 hours on 14 July, the order was issued by Chief of Naval Operations to the United States Naval Forces to land military force on the beaches of Lebanon:

> Land Marines at 1500 [3:00 p.m.] Bravo time 15 July. Do not notify Lebanese you are landing prior to 1200 Bravo time but notify ALUSNA prior to this if you desire. Join your flagship now. Sail all Sixth Fleet eastward earliest.[81]

U.S. Marines landed at 1504 Local time amid sunbathers and vendors on the beaches of Lebanon. Chamoun and Chehab were both made aware of the impending landing. Chehab was worried that the arrival of foreign troops may provoke his army, however, the first day of the landings proved uneventful.

The following day the Marines began their march on Beirut. Lebanese forces were told to intercept them and fire on any U.S. troops attempting to enter the city. Soon after the march began the lead force of Marines encountered the armed Lebanese army blocking the road to Beirut.

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[81] "Telegram from CNO to CINCUSNF," 14 July 1958, FRUS 1958-1960, p. 231.

McClintock and Chehab arrived on the scene and struck a compromise with American General Wade. Wade agreed to advance with a smaller force of Marines under Lebanese escort. Chehab, Wade and McClintock led the convoy together in the lead vehicle.[82]

With the arrival of U.S. Marines in Lebanon and 2,200 British Paratroopers in Jordan, tensions began to settle in the region. It is interesting to note that prior to the Iraqi Revolution, Nasser had proposed a three part plan to stabilize the situation in Lebanon. Nasser's plan was that: 1) Chamoun would serve out his term as president; 2) General Chehab would become president; 3) the opposition would be granted amnesty.[83] Because Chamoun utterly refused to deal with Nasser his plan was rejected. Incredibly, Nasser's plan proved to be prophetic when a later deal, brokered by U.S. Special Envoy Robert Murphy settled the situation by deeming that Chamoun would serve out his term until September 23, the Chamber of Deputies would elect Chehab as president, and the new regime would pursue a policy of conciliation.[84]

Chamoun surprised everyone by announcing that elections would go ahead as planned:

> After communicating to President contents DEPTEL 204 which he took calmly Chamoun surprised me by saying he

[82] Qubain, pp. 117-118.
[83] Melanson and Mayer, p. 209.
[84] Melanson and Mayer, p. 209.

> intended to go ahead with elections July 24. He said he would give instructions to Chehab as his commander in chief to be a candidate.[85]

On July 31 an election in Lebanon resulted in the selection of General Chehab as president. Chehab was acceptable to the United States as well as Lebanese citizens due to his restraint in deploying the Lebanese army during the civil war.[86] Once the political situation was stabilized the U.S. began its withdrawal from Lebanon and by October of that same year all U.S. military forces had been removed from Lebanon.

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[85] "Telegram from Beirut to SECSTATE," 15 July 1958, FRUS 1958-1960, vol XI, p. 177.
[86] Lenczowski, pp. 62-63.

Chapter V – Conclusion

Although the Eisenhower Doctrine was designed to combat international communism, it rapidly became an instrument against Nasserist Arab nationalism.[87] Eisenhower continued to see Nasser as a problem through the end of the 1950s and into the 1960s, although he (Eisenhower) admitted that Nasser's "exact political leanings were still something of a mystery."[88]

After the Lebanese crisis, the American administration took a more relaxed stance on the area. Whether or not Nasser was actually contained, Eisenhower was comforted by having finally acted decisively toward the Egyptian leader.[89]

Eisenhower's foray into Lebanon was considered a successful employment of the Eisenhower Doctrine although it didn't completely fit the Joint Resolution approved by the U.S. Congress.

> The resolution spoke of "overt armed aggression from any nation controlled by International Communism" and of "Communist aggression, direct and indirect." There was no overt armed aggression from the UAR, but there was covert military infiltration and active assistance from Syria to the Lebanese rebel guerrillas. This could perhaps qualify for the term "direct or indirect aggression."[90]

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[87] Spiegel, p. 87.
[88] Ibid, p. 87.
[89] Ibid, p. 89.
[90] Lenczowski, p. 63.

We know now that the Soviet Union had very little involvement in either Lebanon or Iraq in 1958. Additionally, we know that Nasser was not a communist. Quite the opposite, Nasser worked to put down communist and socialist parties in Egypt and to hold the Soviet Union at bay, while at the same time using them for economic and military gain. In fact, although Nasser would receive Soviet financial and military aid, he would never align himself fully with the communists. In the long run the Eisenhower Doctrine, developed to contain communism from spreading in the Middle East, was used successfully, not to contain communism, but rather to contain Nasser.

The defense of Middle East oil was another important factor in implementing the Eisenhower Doctrine. The oil pipelines which began in Iraq and Saudi Arabia ended in the Lebanese Port of Tripoli. Eisenhower and Dulles were extremely cautious over Soviet influence gaining a foothold in the Middle East and replacing U.S. and European oil companies with Soviet companies. Had the oil fields fallen into the hands of the Soviet Union or Soviet supported nations the west would have been at their mercy.[91] As it ended up in Iraq, Qasim was exceptionally responsive to U.S. and Western interests in its oil and continued where the previous government had left off.

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[91] Korbani, p. 40.

At the time the Eisenhower Doctrine was implemented the Lebanese crisis was seen as a battle between pro-communist (UAR) and pro-western (Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq) forces. Further a move by the Soviets into the Middle East region could have jeopardized shipping through the Suez Canal as well as choked vital oil interests.[92]

Eisenhower had greatly wished to not use military forces in any area of the world during his presidency if at all possible. However, the fear of Arab nationalism under the leadership of Nasser, and the perceived presence of Soviet influence in Syria and Iraq forced his hand and enabled him to make his mind up to intervene in Lebanon.

Although he was initially skeptical that intervention in Lebanon would meet the criteria established by the Joint Resolution, in the end intervention was justified and implemented quickly and efficiently, with no loss of life to American personnel or any acts of aggression directed at U.S. forces by Lebanese factions. In fact, U.S. forces provided a boost to the sagging Lebanese economy which had gone into a deep slump following the initial strikes which led to the civil war.

The intervention in Lebanon was a successful use of the Eisenhower Doctrine. The goals of regional stability, short term military action and containment of the spread of communism and Pan-Arabism were met in a

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[92] Ibid. p. 40.

matter of three months. Although Lebanon would find itself in civil war again in the seventies and eighties, they enjoyed nearly twenty-five years of relative peace.

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