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Abstract

Should Lebanon abandon the consociational democratic system? This paper attempts to answer the question by examining the pathologies of the current system and then evaluating its strengths, weaknesses, and potential for reform. Theories of consociational democracy and of conflict regulation are used in this analysis. This paper concludes that there is potential for limited reforms that will make the Lebanese consociational system fairer and therefore more robust to international, regional, and internal disturbances.

Consociationalism in Lebanon

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March 30, 2007

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In the Arab world, identity has always been based on more than the nation-state. Tribal, familial, geographical, and religious identities have historically been more powerful and relevant than national ones. The colonially imposed borders that define Arab nation-states today contribute to conflicts in many Arab countries, and Lebanon is no exception (Dekmejian 1978 263). However Lebanon's situation as home to a collection of minorities has led to the emergence of a power-sharing consociational governing system that is unique in the Arab world (Hudson 1997 106). This system has its roots in the 1943 agreement between then President Bishara al-Khoury and Prime Minister Riad al-Solh. Since then, it has faced a number of crises, the most serious and devastating of which was the fifteen year civil war that began in 1975. Today, a weakened Lebanese government is once again facing a crisis of legitimacy and power as the deadlock which began with the resignation of three opposition cabinet members in late 2006 continues.

In light of what is happening today, it is worth re-evaluating the Lebanese consociational system. This system is based on sectarian divisions, each sect gets a certain amount of representation in the Lebanese government. The share of power to which each sect is entitled is based on a power-sharing agreement reached between the leaders, or *zu'ama,* of the various sects. The first such agreement to be reached in Lebanon was the National Pact of 1943, the second and most recent was the Ta'if Accord, which ended the civil war. Would a secular system be more robust than the current confessional one? Is secularization possible in Lebanon? Will it ever be? To answer these questions it is necessary to examine the pathologies of the current system and evaluate its strengths, weaknesses, and potential for reform. I argue that

secularization has never really been an option for Lebanon, rather, reforms to increase the fairness and equity of the present consociational system must be made if crises like ones that have plagued Lebanon in the past are to be avoided and Lebanon is to become a stable, consolidated democracy.

This paper argues that if Lebanon is to remain one state it can only function in a consociational manner. Therefore, I ask whether Lebanon can have a better consociational system than it has had in the past. I examine the constraints on achieving a better system by outlining some of the major obstacles it has faced in the past, especially the factors that caused the disintegration into civil war. Here I demonstrate that the civil war was caused by a number of internal and external factors, the internal factors formed an inflexible system and combined with external factors to place an unsupportable amount of pressure on Lebanon's consociational government. Thus, the civil war was a failure of consociationalism, not, as some have argued, a result of it. Many of the constraints that hampered effective functioning of the consociational system in 1975 are still problematic today.

Next, I examine the outcomes of the civil war and the lead up to the Ta'if Agreement that ended the war. The war left most of Lebanon's underlying political and social problems unresolved and added new dimensions to the conflict. By 1989 the sectarian militias had replaced the state, which had become completely irrelevant, especially after the division of the army. Another major post war change was the removal of most of the armed Palestinian presence from Lebanon and the PLO's exile to Tunis in 1982. This, combined with the rise of the first Palestinian Intifada in December

1987, took considerable pressure off of Lebanon as it was no longer the forefront of Palestinian resistance (Krayem 1997 419).

Regional Arab politics also played a role in the timing of the agreement reached in Ta'if. Saudi Arabia was interested in strengthening its role in the region, in raising its international profile, and in capitalizing on its excellent relations with the US. Syria, having failed to establish full military control over Lebanon after its 1976 entry into the country, when Syrian troops took part in the Arab League's attempt to regulate the conflict militarily, was willing to bide its time and remain strategically aloof from any attempts at reconciliation. Later, when the international winds changed, Syria could highjack the national reconciliation apparatus to have its way with its ravaged neighbor. Furthermore, a rise in intra-sectarian fighting towards the end of the war, notably, devastating battles between General Aoun, then head of the army and provisional president of Lebanon and Samir Geagea, of the Lebanese Forces and between the Shi'a militias Amal and Hizballah in the south and Beqaa had worn down opponents on all sides and caused huge loss and suffering among the population (Krayem 1997 418). The level of absurdity of a war in which everybody lost but no one had the power to stop fighting was painfully evident. It was clear that there would be no winner in the conflict.

By 1989, the United States had also grown weary of the conflict and, with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, the US was re-evaluating its foreign policy objectives. A solution in Lebanon would help stabilize the region which would be good for attempts to regulate the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as well. All of these factors converged to make a national reconciliation possible. As conflict regulation

efforts continued throughout the duration of the war, Ta'if was built on principles

outlined in the Constitutional Document and the Tripartite Agreement.

Ta'if did attempt to address many of the divisions and factors that had lead to

war, but it did this by renewing and reaffirming the same, rigid system that had collapsed

under internal and external pressure just fifteen years earlier. Ta'if was, in many

respects, an institutionalization of the National Pact made in 1943 (Hudson 1997 106).

Like Ta'if, the National Pact was an arrangement essentially dividing power between the

same confessional groups that had first established the consociational democratic system,

the Maronites and the Sunnis. Ta'if went beyond the National Pact by affirming the Arab

character of Lebanon once and for all. Furthermore, it included specific guidelines

concerning the economic nature of Lebanon and ensuring protection for citizens left

behind by the capitalist economic system. The new power sharing formula ensured more

equal representation of Christians and Muslims, but disproportionately more power was

given to the Sunni than to the Shi'a. The restoration of sovereignty and independence in

Lebanon was affirmed but no credible timetables were offered for the end of the Israeli

and Syrian occupations. I conclude that Ta'if continued to address many of Lebanon's

systemic problems in the same way, with a few important amendments. On some counts,

Ta'if was an improved power sharing agreement, but on other is deviated considerably

from the principles of fair power sharing.

Ta'if did, however leave two very important issues open to future discussion:

first, the future of the Syrian and Israeli occupations of Lebanon, and second, the way

administrative reforms leading eventually away from the sectarian system could be

applied. This open-endedness is the key to establishing a more flexible and more robust

consociational system in Lebanon, but it also created an opportunity for Syria to apply its own interpretation of Ta'if to post war Lebanon. Internal divisions among the Lebanese and the indifference of the United States and the majority of the international community to this Syrian takeover made it possible for Syria to control the country for the fifteen years following the civil war.

The Syrian application of Ta'if interpreted the agreement not as a path to a sovereign and stable Lebanon, but as a war-ending mechanism and a tool to facilitate Syrian hegemony. While the Syrian occupation of Lebanon continued, the avenues of political development opened in Ta'if could not be pursued. Syria cemented its grip on Lebanon through its selective disarmament of militias, its manipulation of electoral laws, and its veto over political developments in Lebanon. This undermined the power-sharing principle. Instead of a pact between Lebanese communities, Ta'if had become a tool to pursue Syrian interests in Lebanon.

The assassination of former Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri brought the Syrian issue to a head. It prompted the resignation of the pro-Syrian Karami government and formation of a new cabinet led by Prime Minister Fouad al-Sinora. Other public figures have been assassinated or attacked include LBC newscaster Mai Chidiaq, *An Nahar* journalist Samir Kassir, Gibran Tueini, member of parliament and editor of that same newspaper, Ministers Marwan Hmedi and Pierre Gemayel, among others. This has resulted in increased tension and anti-Syria sentiment. The ongoing UN investigation into these crimes in preparation for a Special Tribunal for Lebanon is another source of extreme tension. Relations between the two political camps, the government, dominated by the "March 14" forces, and the opposition or "March 8" forces were not improved

despite several rounds of "National Dialogue" talks held in 2006 and 2007 and were

exacerbation by the July 2007 war on Lebanon. Finally, there is now a real concern that

outside forces may once again take advantage of the escalation of this intra-Lebanese

conflict and the continued uncertainty it has created to pursue their own agendas. The

feasibility of any attempt at political, electoral, security, or economic reform must be

evaluated in light of these complex developments.

Some positive change is possible in Lebanon, in fact even limited reform in some

key areas could have a salutary affect on the whole situation. Hassan Krayem argues that

Ta'if ended the war at the price of Lebanese sovereignty (Krayem 1997 421). Now,

"free" from both Israeli and Syrian occupation, Lebanon has the opportunity to grow.

Ta'if did leave a platform, however narrow, for strengthening Lebanese government.

The success of Lebanon's attempt to build a better consociational system will depend on

how well the Lebanese use and develop this space. External factors will, of course,

continue to be crucial in creating an environment conducive to reform. However the

initiative to move towards a stronger and more just consociational system rests with the

Lebanese. A strong consociational system will be one that moves towards greater

equality, fairness, and flexibility. The government can take the first steps toward

realizing this goal by undertaking the limited security, electoral, and economic reform

that are possible even under the present circumstances.

I. What were the factors that led to the 1975 Civil War? What were its results?

Here I will describe the governing system as it is set up in the National Pact and examine its roots in order to isolate the causes of its rigidity. I will then describe the forces that clashed with this system, namely the emergence of counter-elites and increased mobilization among the Lebanese as well as a regional environment that could not tolerate the confused state of Lebanese foreign policy. Finally, I will describe the ways in which the war deepened divisions in Lebanese society and the specific obstacles that it created, making it more difficult to later assemble the pieces of Lebanon into a stable state. This section thus identifies the most salient weaknesses of the consociational system as well as the uniquely Lebanese factors which must be addressed if Lebanon is to graduate from its intermittent crises and become a stable state.

The post independence Lebanese consociational system, like all consociational democracies, was inherently rigid. This rigidity came from sectarian fear of domination by another sect (Crighton 1991 127). This rigid system could not accommodate the dynamic and interrelated domestic political realities emerging at the time. These included: rapid economic modernization, the emergence of counter elites, and rising sectarian mobilization. External factors, especially the presence of Palestinian refugees and their increasing mobilization exacerbated existing tensions.

After fifteen years of war, a rigid government system had been replaced by a group of Lebanese war-lords and their foreign backers and the government was completely marginalized. Sectarian divisions were further entrenched by the brutality of the war and the geographical segregation that it caused. New considerations including

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the fate of sectarian militias and the ethnographic fragmentation of the state had to be confronted against the context of an emasculated state and a ruined economy.

Most scholars agree that Lebanon was a consociational democracy from 1943 until the outbreak of civil war in 1975. Consociational governments are governed by a power sharing formula devised by elites who represent and speak for their communities and are able to reach compromises amongst themselves. Thus a consociational state seeks to unite its citizens as members of the state without asking them to renounce their ethnic, or in the case of Lebanon, sectarian, loyalties. "Instead of promoting a monolithic national identity, the consociational state rests upon distinct ethnosectarian 'pillars' – a confederation of protected identity groups," (Hudson 1997 105). Political elite play a key role in making this system work. In 1943, Lebanon's system was described in an unwritten agreement called the National Pact. In the Pact, Maronite President, Bishara al-Khoury, and Sunni Prime Minister, Riad al-Soloh agreed that Lebanon's political system would be based on the pillars of Maronite, Sunni, and, to a lesser extent, Shi'a, Druze, and Greek Orthodox cooperation. Their motives were diverse but the strongest was to end French dominance of Lebanon. Indeed the 1920 Lebanese Constitution was remarkably similar to that of its colonizer. Thus the strongest ethnic communities in Lebanon united to overthrow French domination. This system, though imperfect, maintained stability in Lebanon with the exceptions of a brief civil war in 1958 (Petran 1987 50) and a failed coup in 1961(Beshara 2005 119).

Was this explicit recognition, indeed affirmation of confessional divisions a wise choice? Some scholars argue that consociational arrangements make conflict regulation in divided societies more difficult because they re-affirm communal divisions (Reilly

1999 30). Indeed, the authors of the National Pact hoped that consociationalism was a temporary solution and looked foreword to a permanent arrangement based on a more united Lebanese identity. However, as one scholar observes, "Neither the political instincts of Islam nor the age-old defensiveness of Christians was ready for the radical secularity of the modern state – and only the possible is politic," (Cragg 1991 207). In any case, the National Pact was Lebanese law as practiced, if not necessarily as recorded. This was a classic example of the gap between Lebanese law in theory and practice

One important source of weakness in the consociational system is that its success depends on cooperation among all communities. Lijphart himself observed that "…decision making that entails accommodation among all subcultures is a difficult process, and consociational democracies are always threatened by a degree of immobilism…" (Lijphart 1969 218). In the case of Lebanon, this immobilism stemmed from the fact that maintaining Maronite and Sunni dominance meant freezing Lebanon in a state of political underdevelopment. Indeed, writing years before the outbreak of civil war, Lijphart noted that "The stability of Lebanon is partly due to its productive economy and the social equilibrium it has maintained so far, but it may not be able to continue its successful consociational politics when the burdens on the system increase," (Lijphart 1969 219). Unfortunately, his prophetic statement proved to be true, social and economic developments in the 1960s and 1970s compounded the propensity of all consociational democracies towards immobilism, resulting in a complete breakdown of the system. Furthermore, as events unfolded, the Lebanese consociational system began to seriously deviate from the model described by Lijphart. The carefully constructed and

balanced consociational government no longer reflected Lebanese society and it could

not accommodate the rapidly changing political dynamics of the state and its neighbors.

The impact of these changes is best understood within the context of some

historical background. The origins of the Lebanese state are largely tied to the Maronite

community. Their experience as a minority in the Middle East has informed the

Maronite approach to governing as well as Maronite attitudes about the state of Lebanon.

Elizabeth Crighton explores Maronite politics as an example of "identity driven"

protracted conflict that is the result of an underlying "fear of extinction." This fear is the

product of a history of being a vulnerable ethnic group with a collective memory of

persecution. Crighton argues that these fears result in the rise of an "inflexible and

exclusive" regime dominated by one ethnic group, a regime that cannot deal effectively

with the social and political mobilization incited by its installation (Crighton 1991 139).

Thus domination is legitimized as self defense. The Maronite dominance of the

Mutasarrifiyya (1861-1981) and later their privileged position in 1920 Grand Liban was

institutionalized among the Lebanese twenty-three years later in the National Pact.

Crighton argues that, in the case of Lebanon, identity related fears *cause* weak and rigid

institutions which are built on an ideology of defensive politics (Crighton 1991 132).

This institutional underdevelopment was compounded by changing political, social, and

economic trends that overwhelmed the system.

Many historians cite the effects of modernization as a key factor that lead to the

1975 civil war. The fast-growing Lebanese economy of the 1950s and 1960s was a

service economy, that is, externally oriented. Lebanon's strategic location between east

and west, its western cultural orientation, its strong banking sector and its bank secrecy

laws were among the many characteristics that made Lebanon, and especially Beirut, a very attractive business environment. Krayem points out that uneven development is inherent in a service-based economy and that it often leads to increased social mobilization (Krayem 1997 414). Uneven growth and development reinforced sectarian divisions geographically, economically, socially, and culturally. This, in turn, altered key relationships on which successful consociationalism depended.

Arend Lijphart identifies several relationships which he maintains are favorable to the establishment and persistence of consociational democracy, these are: the relationships between elites, between masses, and between elites and masses within one subculture (Lijphart 1969 216). All of these relationships began to change in the 1960s, rapid modernization was one reason.

Nordlinger's attempt to theorize the effects of modernization on conflict regulation in divided societies is useful in so far as it deconstructs the effects this modernization might have on non-elites and therefore on conflict regulation. Indeed, the last of the fourteen conclusions he comes to in his 1972 study "Conflict regulation" highlights the negative effects modernization can have on conflict regulation in a deeply divided and unstable society. He argues that rapid development is bad for conflict regulation because it encourages jealousies "…further intensifying such attitudes among individuals who already hold them and by placing individuals in situations which allow or encourage them to act out their antagonistic beliefs and feelings," (Nordlinger 1972 112). The fact that socio-economic divides often re-enforced confessional ones was a source of rising tensions in Lebanese society. A sense of relative deprivation, jealousy, and hostility, inevitably emerged as poor migrants searched for work in the capital, which

was at that time considered the "Paris of the Middle East." Disillusioned groups

questioned the merits of a system that allowed such pronounced inequality and mobilized

to demand change.

Modernization also affected elite-mass relations as people began to look to

successful members of their sect for help in getting a piece of the modernization pie.

This happens in many developing divided societies (Nordlinger 1972 114), and Lebanon

was no exception. Indeed the patron-client relationship within sects was not new to

Lebanon, but the context and location was. Whereas traditional zu'ama were responsible

for all of the political and economic favors in their domain, the mass migration to the

cities brought members of different groups into direct competition with one another.

Furthermore, the underdevelopment of this sort of patronage structure among the Shi'a,

due to the initial lack of well-placed entrepreneurs in Beirut, was another source of

resentment for the Shi'a of Lebanon and re-enforced their marginalization in the new

modernizing economy (Sayigh 1994 162).

Another way that mobilization affected elite-mass relations was in through the

rise of challengers to the traditional political elite. Counter-elites expressed the new

frustrations and desires of the masses. According to Lijphart, two of the most important

characteristics of elite-mass relations in a consociational democracy are that the elite

speak for their people and that the people support their elite leadership (Lijphart 1969

216). Thus, it is not surprising that when this ceased to be the case, "…the mobilization

and countermobilization that occurred in Lebanon, rooted in the process of

modernization, contributed significantly to the breakdown of the regimes in the 1970s,"

(Crighton 1991 137).

The emergence of counterelites is a destabilizing phenomenon. In his theory of conflict regulation Nordlinger concludes that "The structured predominance of elites vis-à-vis nonelites within their own conflict groups is a necessary condition for conflict-regulating outcomes" (Nordlinger 1972 119). The fact that the confessional elites no longer commanded the complete loyalty of their people contributed to the breakdown of the conflict-regulating consociational arrangement.

A prime example of this sort of mobilization and the rise of counterelites is the Movement of the Dispossessed, which later became Amal, and its founder Imam Mousa Sadr. Sadr is a prime example of the active and radicalized Shi'a intelligentsia emerging at the time. He offered an appealing alternative to the disengaged traditional Shi'a elite (Crighton 1991 133). Like other counter-elites, Sadr challenged the political establishment of his sect and gained popularity by being truly attentive to the needs of the people. Neglected by their "representatives" in the Lebanese political establishment, the Shi'a masses welcome the presence of someone who promised to help them realize their aspirations to political participation and economic security (Crighton 1994 134). What makes Sadr stand out among the counterelite at the time is his cross-sectarian appeal.

Unlike those who would lead Amal after his disappearance in 1978, Sadr always emphasized the inclusive nature of his Movement of the Dispossessed. And while The Movement was informed by a uniquely Shi'a Lebanese experience, Sadr insisted that the movement spoke for all those who were marginalized in Lebanese society (Sayigh 1994 175). This led, initially, to a very close sense of identification with the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, something that would change, like many intra-Lebanese alliances, with the shifting balances of power during the civil war.

The newly emerged Shi'a bourgeoisie, most of whom made their fortunes in Africa, also joined this call for political participation. With more money and more experience, they wanted more access and recognition of their emergence as an economic and demographic power in Lebanon. The Lebanese system could not accommodate these demands.

Lebanese counter-elites were often more radical than the traditional leaders or zu'ama they replaced. Thus, when the mobilization and emergence of radicalized counter-elite among the Shi'a re-kindled sectarian fears among the Maronites, they turned to their own new, more radicalized counter-elites for reassurance that their interests and their identities would be protected. Indeed, "…in the face of such threats from groups that seek completely to change the character of the regime, Maronite…intransigence with respect to political reform can be understood within the context of our model of protracted conflict." (Crighton 1991 137). Radical tendencies in one sect sparked fears and encouraged the espousal of radical tendencies in the others, adding fuel to the fire.

To many Maronites, the rise of the Palestinians was simply the age-old Islamic threat in a different guise. Some grounds for this fear may be found in the fact that the Palestinian cause was a point of unity for many Muslim and leftist organizations. The Arab-Israeli conflict and the large number of Palestinians in Lebanon exacerbated Christian-Muslim tensions (Hudson 1997 107). The Maronites felt threatened by both the increasingly Islamicized Shi'a and the predominantly Sunni Palestinian communities. Bashir Gemayel, son of Kataib party leader Pierre Gemayel, was one counter-elite who capitalized on this fear to build support for his party and militia, the Lebanese Forces. Unlike the Shi'a counter-elite, who called for change and reform, the hard line Maronites

mobilized in defense of traditional values. The system was caught between Shi'a demands for more power and the corresponding Maronite fear to even approach the subject, let alone take these demands seriously.

While Maronites may have seen a growing and more assertive Muslim presence as a threat, it is quite possible that the westernization that accompanied modernization was threatening to those with more Islamicized perceptions or hopes for Lebanon's character. "New experiences and the rapidity with which they unfolded heightened those anxieties, insecurities, and fears stemming from the modernization process itself, concomitantly increasing their impact on intersegmental conflict and violence," (Nordlinger 1972 113).

Inter-elite relations and the ability of the elite to compromise suffered in this radicalized political sphere. Challenged within their own communities by the young counter-elites, the ability of the zu'ama to bargain amongst themselves was significantly reduced (Nordlinger 1972 65). Elites could no longer perform the four functions that a consociational system required of them because their ability to accommodate one another was severely diminished as they risked being perceived as weak in comparison with the more radical counter-elites. Developments had put the elite on the defensive, and they withdrew into their own communities, unable to negotiate the systemic changes desperately needed to accommodate new voices and needs.

The force and strength of coutermobilization among these two communities illustrates the dilemma of the rigid Lebanese system. Since the 'pillars' of the system were really personalities with family and clan ties to their communities but with no real ideology independent of the preservation of sectarian identity, there was no room for

evolution or change. Lijphart argues that elite accommodation of subcultures and commitment to maintaining cohesion and stability of the system, elite ability to work with elites from other subcultures to transcend social cleavages, and elite comprehension of the perils of political fragmentation are important to stable consociationalism (Lijphart 1969 216). Challenged within their own communities, elites were unable to perform these functions. They were also unwilling to step aside. This dilemma was exacerbated by outside factors. Counterelites form one connection between internal and external causes of the war can be drawn.

Urbanization, another development that comes hand in hand with modernization, exacerbated inter-confessional tensions. One reason for this may have been that urbanization brought with it increased exposure to modernity, media, and thus improved channels through which to organize and mobilize as a community (Crighton 1991 133). Another may be that speed at which urban centers grew.

Hudson identifies another reason modernization may have contributed to the unraveling of the consociational system. He points out that "Modernization seems to be at least partially responsible for this fragmentation of identities…The impact if Western political penetration – through mandates, protectorates, colonization, and spheres of influence- also seemed to exacerbate divisions…" (Hudson 1997 105). In any case, the Lebanon of the 1960s and 1970s fit the description one scholar gives of an instance in which modernization has a negative impact on conflict regulation, a "…contemporary nonwestern societies characterized by a combination of open regimes, intense communal conflicts, low levels of modernization, and the activism of the modernization process," (Nordlinger 1972 113). Lebanon in the 1960s and 1970s fit this description rather well.

Hudson argues that the civil war transformed Lebanon from its rigid, static state to a Waltzian, "self help" system which was essentially not a state at all. He concludes that, "…what these deviations actually show is that a conscious effort to apply consociationalism failed because changing socio-economic and political conditions and regional tensions would not support it," (Hudson 1997 232). Unfortunately many of these conditions are still present today, among them ancient divisions and insecurity about Lebanese and group identities, minority fear and group identification, power struggles within sects, lack of accountability in the system, social inequality, and group mobilization.

The civil war was caused by a breakdown of the delicately balances consociational system caused by a mix of internal and external political, social, and economic changes that influenced the relationship between Lebanese elites and members of their sects. The stress that these developments imposed on the state caused it to dissolve. When the inflexible system collided with external regional and internal actors, it lost control of the country. It was not because of consociationalism but because of a failure of consociationalism, that war broke out.

As a result of the civil war, the problematic rigidity of the system was replaced by a complete marginalization of the state. Economically, the cost of war was staggering, reconstruction of infrastructure, housing, and private institutions alone amounted to ten billion dollars and the estimated foreign debt reached 600 billion dollars (Picard 1996 141). The structure of the economy also changed dramatically as the role of the state diminished as its capacity to provide for the Lebanese people disappeared. An estimated

forty percent of the work force was unemployed between 1984 and 1987 and in 1987 almost one fifth of the Lebanese population was living in poverty (Picard 1996 145).

The Lebanese social fabric had been completely destroyed. This was reflected in the psyche of the Lebanese people, in the new political logic that had emerged, and even in the changed geography of Beirut. Local city centers had sprung up to replace shopping and other facilities that were inaccessible due to the de facto partitioning of the city by different militias (Picard 1996 143) and haphazard and unregulated construction in the suburbs of Beirut and in the mountains changed the Lebanese landscape. One third of the population of Lebanon had been internally displaced (Picard 1996 147) as they fled their homes to escape the fighting in their neighborhoods or because of policies of expulsion. Those Lebanese who could afford to emigrate did, resulting in a crippling brain drain which, with the ever-depressed job market, continues to afflict Lebanon today. Economic ruin, the internally displaced, and the Lebanese Diaspora were new issue that would need to be addressed in any war-ending settlement.

Fighting was bitter throughout the country but the most intense fighting was in densely populated Beirut. According to Picard, one in every thirty Lebanese died and another one in every thirty Lebanese was wounded (145). In a small country with a population of four million this meant nearly everyone knew at least one person who was killed or injured in the war.

Hizballah emerged as the most important militia remnant from the war and was the only Lebanese militia not to disarm after the war because of its special status as the resistance army to Israel's occupation of Lebanon. Originally very Islamic in its orientation, Hizballah became the most consequential resistance to the Israeli occupation.

They fought in the southern "security belt," the completely isolated southern part of the country.

Another legacy of the war was deepened sectarian resentment because of traitors in the war. Israeli checkpoints guarded the south from penetration by non-resident Lebanese, many Lebanese at these borders and within the occupied territory were subject to arrests and imprisonment in the Khiam prison, which still stands on a hill next to the southern village. Maintained by Hizballah, this site has become a monument to the atrocities committed against Lebanese citizens on their own soil. Near the entrance to the prison is a list of the "traitors" the "dogs of the slave drivers" the Lebanese who worked in this prison. Next to each man's full name is his native town, the overwhelming majority are Maronite. Indeed even in 1992 "One of the bitter harvests of the occupation is the damage to long-term relations between the Maronites and the Shiites, two communities once interwoven into a common fabric, now sundered by a powerful legacy of fear and hatred on both sides," (Beydoun 1992 50).

Faced with the realities of a twelve year occupation, it was not just Maronites who took this path, indeed, while none of the commanders of Major Saad Haddad's South Lebanon Army (SLA), Israel's Lebanese proxy force in Lebanon, were Shi'ite, between forty and fifty percent of the lower level soldiers were (Beydoun 1992 47). SLA soldiers received wages of $150 per month, and later, as enlistment fell, Israel added other benefits including permission for one family member of each SLA soldier to work in Israel for up to $300 per month (Beydoun 1992 45). The fact that at that time, the salary of a Lebanese cabinet minister was $300 per month highlights the enormous scale of the disparity between the resources and power available to the Lebanese state

compared with its occupiers. The complete economic isolations of the south from the rest of the country deprived the state of lucrative tobacco-crop as well as fruits and vegetable for the Lebanese market. Unable to compete with Israeli exports into the south, the southern economy was completely destroyed, adding to the impoverishment of this already war weary people. This alludes to another phenomenon of change from the war, the rise of Hizballah and a feeling of Lebanese-ness among the Shi'a, a development that, while not allowed to flourish under the current Syrian negation of Ta'if, could bode well for the future.

The extent to which the state had been marginalized politically and economically is reflected in the fact that by the end of the war as much as one third of the GDP of Lebanon was linked to militia activity (Picard 1996 143). "Parties without militias, interest groups, professional associations and unions, the intellectuals, public opinion and the press were all relegated to the sidelines, and the formal institutions of government, although present, appeared to float above the fray, irrelevant to it," (Hudson 1997 112). Lebanese civil society is still in the process of a vigorous recovery.

Finally, the position of political elites remained unchanged, save that former militia leaders had joined their ranks. With the end of the war some new types of elites emerged: Notables (Gemayel), heirs, and clergy (Mar Nasrallah Butros Sfeir and Mufti Hassan Khaled) were joined by former warlords (Jumblat, Berri) religious rebels (Musawi, Nasrallah), Syria's clients (Murr), Entrepreneurs (Hariri), Military personnel (Shihab, Lahoud), civil society activist, technocrats, and nationalist rebels (el-Husseini 2004 250). The war created a new channel through which to join the elite.

To Summarize, systemic rigidity bred of fear, inflexible elites open to international influeces, weak party organization, poor economic infrastructure, and a precarious security situation are among the issues Lebanon will have to confront and overcome.

II. Conflict Regulation in Theory: What made a return to conflict regulation possible?

After fifteen years of civil war, conflict regulation in Lebanon was made possible by a combination of external and internal efforts and by a permissive regional climate. Changes in the attitudes of the Lebanese elite certainly played a role as did a deep sense of exhaustion among the Lebanese people. More important, the outside partners of the elites finally had some incentives to force a regulation of the conflict.

During the war, the original Lebanese cleavages were exacerbated by the many regional rivalries between Syria, the PLO, Israel, Iran and Iraq. As Hudson points out, "By the 1980s Lebanon was less a sovereign entity with a constitutional government than a field of largely unregulated contestation between a dozen or so relatively autonomous actors," (Hudson 1997 112). Furthermore, what was taking place in Lebanon was not only a civil war in which identities and the future of Lebanon were at stake, but a reflection of the struggle between the superpowers acted through their regional proxies who in turn acted through their own Lebanese allies. Thus regional and international interests had a large stake in the outcome of the Lebanese conflict.

The Lebanese, for their part, were more than happy to adopt external patrons in the pursuit of military and political dominance. As Krayem observes, "…polarization

among the Lebanese and their efforts to defend or promote their interests invited and facilitated external intervention," (Krayem 1997 419). Eric Nordlinger has argued that elites engage in conciliatory behavior to "fend off external demands" (Nordlinger 1972 118). This may indeed have been true in 1943 when the National Pact ended French rule of Lebanon, however elites responded quite differently during the civil war. In 1943, the Lebanese were untied against the French, in 1989 it took the united efforts of the international community to force the disparate Lebanese groups together. Krayem asserts "…if it was necessary to settle the internal dispute in order to decrease the role of external forces, it was also necessary to have their tacit acceptance or to minimize their capabilities to oppose a settlement in order for such a settlement to succeed," (Krayem 1997 418). This opinion supports O'Leary's views on the feasibility of conflict regulation in Lebanon and the necessity of external powers to facilitate internal compromise (O'Leary 2005 xxxi).

By 1989, Israel and the Palestinians were in less of a position to influence the outcome of a Lebanese settlement. Syria's position, on the other hand, was very strong and Syria's interest in seeing the conflict settled was stronger still. Assad understood the potential threat his chaotic neighbor could pose to his authoritarian regime. As Dekmejian observes, "The manifest unraveling of ethnic coexistence in neighboring Lebanon could well affect the intercommunal peace of the Syrian mosaic," (Dekmejian 1978 262). Syria had an interest in regulating the conflict to its advantage both for its own security interests and as a powerful bargaining chip to be used against Israel. As Kerr observes, "Any Arabisation of the solution to Lebanon's civil war was a direct threat to Syria's strategy to control Lebanon and the Palestinian movement in the regional

conflict," this was especially true after Egypt's Sinai Agreement with Israeli in signed in 1975, an agreement that was viewed by Syria and others as a betrayal (Kerr 2005 146).

A settlement in Lebanon became desirable in the interest of regional security. Arab countries feared an Iraq-Syria confrontation in the wake of Iraq's 1980 invasion of Iran. However, the Arab initiative in the Lebanese conflict was motivated by more than fear of regional escalation. The Gulf States, especially Saudi Arabia, sought to counterbalance Syrian influence in Lebanon (Krayem 1997 420). In light of the Gulf crisis, the Intifada, and the end of the Cold War, the Unites States thought its interests best served by regulation of the Lebanese conflict.

The 1989 Intifada brought the focus of the Palestinian struggle back to Palestine, relieving some of the pressure on Lebanon as the most active front in the Palestinian struggle. By this time, the PLO's power in Lebanon, guaranteed in the Cairo Agreement and modified in the Marlkart Agreement, had been significantly diminished with the exile of the PLO leadership to Tunis and the disbanding of its heavy armed forces in Lebanon in 1982. The end of the Palestinian – Christian war also reduced tensions on this front. On the other hand, the intra-sectarian war between General Michelle Aoun and Samir Gaegae provided a propitious moment for anti-Christian or pro-Syrian forces to bargain for a new agreement against a divided and weakened opponent.

Aoun's "War of Liberation" in March of 1989 and then his war against the Lebanese Forces in the winter of 1990 put the Maronites in a very weak position, especially as it became more clear what an important role his Syrian enemies would play in reaching a settlement. "This inter-Maronite war was militarily indecisive, yet politically decisive because it eroded the two capacities of both forces, singly or together,

to effectively reject or alter the political compromise, represented by the Ta'if Agreement…" (Krayem 1997 418). The two Shi'a groups, Amal and Hizballah were also engaged in an intra-sectarian battle during the lead up to Ta'if, fighting each other in the Bequaa and the south.

The Lebanese people were ready for a compromise, exhausted by war, it was clear to them that there would be no victor, indeed, according to Krayem, public intolerance for the civil war and opposition to the sectarian division of cities and the country were high and "The marginalization of the militias and the rebuilding of the Lebanese state was viewed as the only rational way out of the civil war system…" As with most consociational settlements, this one was reached because "…there was no alternative to a new compromise ensuring the continuity of Lebanon as an entity having a united central political system," (Krayem 1997 418). Picard affirms this sentiment noting that there was no consensus in Lebanon in the late 1980s, "Only the desire to preserve the country withstood all the rifts of war…" (149), this was eventually reflected in Ta'if.

Despite this regional climate and a strong desire to end the war among the Lebanese people, a conflict regulating agreement was not easy to reach. Ta'if built off of other Lebanese and regional attempts to regulate the conflict. Most notable among these were the Constitutional Document of 1976 and the Tripartite Agreement of 1985.

Initiated by Syria with American support, the Constitutional Document, like the Document of National Accord, did not include any program for radical reform. Rather, it was a deal whereby the Christians would accept closer relations with Syria in exchange for the promise of a reduced Palestinian influence in Lebanon. Other features of the Constitutional Document that would re-emerge in Ta'if include institutionalizing the

division of the three executive offices between the Maronite, Sunni, and Shi'a sects. Of the limited reform that the Constitutional Document did propose, some were aimed at creating more equality between the Christians and Muslims. The number of parliamentary seats was to be expanded from ninety-nine to one-hundred and ten, with the newly created seats being evenly divided between Christians and Muslims. Proportionality in government jobs was to be abolished except at the highest level, and the prime minister was to be elected by a simple majority of parliamentarians, not appointed, a charge that would strengthened his position vis-à-vis the president (Kerr 2005 147).

This agreement failed for two reasons (Kerr 2005 147). First, the Document maintained the political domination of the Maronites if not in practice at lest symbolically. The proposed reforms were not enough for more radical reformers like Jumblat, who still believed that a military settlement was possible. The fact that Ta'if, with its limited reform, was later accepted reflects the realization of the Lebanese leaders that no one would be able to impose his will on the rest. Second, the Constitutional Document failed because Syria was not yet in a position to control the PLO in Lebanon and therefore could not force all parties to accept this, its favored deal. This would change over ten years later at Ta'if, when the Palestinian influence had been effectively curbed and, with the blessing of America, Syria was able to reign in most of the Lebanese militias. This time, when the Christians objected, they were essentially excluded from the settlement process.

Even though it was not ultimately the agreement that ended the conflict, another attempted deal, the Tripartite Agreement of 1985, was indicative of Syria's influence

among the Lebanese militias. It foreshadowed the importance of Syrian cooperation and the inclusion of militia leaders in Ta'if. This agreement was made between the leaders of the three strongest Lebanese militias, Elie Hobeika of the Lebanese Forces, Walid Jumblat of the PSP, and Nabih Berri of Amal and completely excluded the Sunnis, who had no Lebanese militia to speak of and had considered themselves represented by the PLO. This agreement offered more serious steps towards de-confessionalization, and emphasized the special relationship with Syria, a feature that would re-surface at Ta'if. The Lebanese President Gemayel was not summoned to Damascus to approve the agreement until after it had been finalized. American acceptance of strong Syrian influence reflected their hopes that granting Syria relative freedom in Lebanon would make Assad more willing to compromise in any settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian question.

It is not surprising that the Agreement did not hold, as it completely excluded the Lebanese government and a significant portion of its population. However, it did pave the way for the Ta'if accords in so far as it established some points of agreement under the close direction of Syria. By this time it had become clear that no settlement would be possible without Syrian support, and that Syria would not support any agreement that emphasized Lebanese sovereignty. In 1987 under Rashid Karami and Salim el-Hoss, the Lebanese and Syrian governments pursued talks to find an alternative to the Tripartite Agreement. They eventually agreed on the broad outlines of political reform, relations between Lebanon and Syria, and a position vis-à-vis the Israeli occupation of South Lebanon. Many of these points would later appear in the Ta'if Agreement (Krayem 1997 417).

The degree to which the final war-ending agreement, the Document of National Accord, reflects the lowest common denominator is evident in a telling observation made by Prince Saud al-Faisal who set a sobering tone for the meeting at Ta'if, "He reminded [the delegates] of the rejection of the United Nations plan for the partition of Palestine in 1947; the Palestinians were still searching for a bit of land. The Lebanese, too, were in danger of becoming a homeless people," (Hanf 1993 589). As it happened, the ultimate regulation of the conflict did not leave the Lebanese homeless, but as the implementation of Ta'if continued, it became clear that they were perhaps in even less control of their fate than their unfortunate brothers. This was not because of the agreement itself, but rather in spite of it, as a Syrian interpretation of Lebanese reconciliation was allowed to prevail in post-war Lebanon.

The "Arabization" of the solution for Lebanon began with the Arab summit conference in Casablanca in May of 1989. It was at this meeting that the "troika" of the heads of state of Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and Algeria were appointed and given a mandate to "…prepare a comprehensive settlement of Lebanon's domestic and foreign political problems…" (Hanf 1993 578). Initial efforts failed in the face of strong Syrian opposition manifested in continued bombing and a more strictly enforced blockade. However, as the intensity of Syrian attacks continued, international attention was once again captured and Iraqi calls for another Arab summit were joined by calls for a cease fire from the UN, Saudi Arabia, and the European Community, and Jordanian and PLO demands for a Syrian withdrawal. This international pressure isolated Syria and made it more willing to entertain the possibility of peace, all the while maintaining the option to return to war. Furthermore, the troika had accepted that no solution could be reached

without Syrian approval, and had adjusted the conditions of the agreement accordingly (Hanf 1993 582). On October 1st, 1989, sixty-two surviving parliamentary deputies were shut together in a room in the Saudi Arabian city of Ta'if, and emerged twenty-three days later with a National Reconciliation Agreement, the Ta'if accords. "Fifty-six of sixty-two deputies were in favor; two were in favor on condition that a date was set for Syrian withdrawal; three put on record that they favored the complete abolitions of confessionalism. Four deputies abstained." (Hanf 1993 590). The new coexistence pact was passed.

It is important to note that Ta'if was essentially imposed on the Lebanese, who had a very small role in the writing and realization of the agreement. The Lebanese deputies were not allowed to modify the final section describing the "special relationship" with Syria and, with much effort, finally managed to gain two small "concessions" from Assad. "It was not for the deputies to negotiate these issues: they could either accept or reject this diktat. The likely consequence of rejection was the immediate resumption of shelling," (Hanf 1993 589). Furthermore, Ta'if paved the way for the Treaty of Brotherhood and Cooperation as well as seventeen other treaties legitimizing and institutionalizing Syrian hegemony (el-Husseini 2004 242). This fact supports O'Leary contention that consociational solutions are realist arrangements and that "great and regional powers may be more willing to impose on small powers arrangements they would not dream of implementing themselves," (O'Leary 2005 xxxiii). Syrian intransigence, Lebanese divisions, and strong international desire to reach some regulation of the conflict made the return to a consociational system with special Syrian privileges the only possible solution.

III. How consociational was Ta'if?

The Lebanese refer to the outcome of the war as "No Victor, No Vanquished." While this is true, it is also true that some communities emerged more victorious than others. The Document for National Reconciliation approved in Ta'if, Saudi Arabia on October 2, 1989 ended fifteen years of civil war in Lebanon, its underlying principle is a re-affirmation of the consociational system that was first established in the 1943 National Pact. Ta'if is a packaged deal of three connected parts, it forces every side to make concessions in exchange for the maintenance of desired "victories" elsewhere. As one member of the committee that approved the accord remarked, "everyone was dissatisfied, but almost everyone found it acceptable," (Hanf 1993 584). Thus while the balance of power between the different communities and their representatives shifted, the political system remained the same. This meant that the Third Lebanese Republic was vulnerable to the same systemic rigidity and abuse that had lead to the outbreak of civil war (el-Husseini 2004 239).   In fact, the 'Pact of Co-existence' is implicitly a reorganization of the National Pact in all of its elements: Arabness, independence, inter-communal solidarity," (Maila 1992 18). Below I evaluate each section of Ta'if separately to understand how well it supports the principles of consociationalism and how well it addressed the problems that led to the war.

The first section, I. General Principles, affirms the sovereignty and independence of Lebanon, the sovereignty of the Lebanese people, and state's commitment to economic and social justice and reform. One of the greatest shortcomings of Ta'if is that it does not provide a practical process leading to the restoration of Lebanese sovereignty. Another important theme in Ta'if is the explicit recognition of confessionalism as the regulating

principle of political organization. The Agreement claims that any arrangement that "contravenes the "Pact of Co-existence' or that 'desire to live together'" is illegal. Ta'if therefore, "determines the nature of Lebanese society as a society of communities welded by their desire to live together," (Maila 1992 17). The construction of the system of government reflected the explicitly defined character of the Third Republic. For example, the insistence on the "democratic and parliamentary character of the Lebanese republic," highlights the secular, and more specifically, non-Islamic character of the state.

Ta'if did address some of the underlying causes of the war very specifically. For example, the question of Lebanon's identity (Arab? Islamic? Western?) was answered definitively in the first section of the agreement which defines Lebanon as having an "Arab face" and as being the final homeland of its citizens. This means she is an independent country and therefore by implication, not at the time or in the future, part of any pan Arab or pan Syrian homeland. This wording symbolizes a very delicate balance, a compromise exchanging "Arabness" for non-Syrian non-Islamic independence. "For the Christians, this role consists in 'conceding' the Arab character of Lebanon every time the Muslims 'confessed' to the independence of the country. In short, Lebanon was as Arab as it was independent." Did this compromise succeed in finally putting the issue to rest? "According to this 'game' the issue of identity would never be fully settled but would be brought up every time the Christians felt the independence of the country was in danger," (Maila 1992 13).

Furthermore, provisions for a more inclusive political economy were made as Ta'if asserted that the basic social security needs of all Lebanese should be taken into account in the face of a sometimes harsh capitalist system. The fact that Ta'if refers to

'personal initiative' and 'private property' highlights the new importance attributed to stable economic growth, it is also a reflection of the priorities of the economically liberal deputies who approved Ta'if (Maila 1992 16). Other parts of Ta'if indicate a recognition of the socio-economic causes of the war. For example, decentralization with the aim of economic development is given new priority (Maila 2005 17).

The second section, II. Political Reforms, outlines the powers and duties of the various government institutions, notably the president, the prime minister, the cabinet, the speaker of parliament, and parliament as well as the electoral institutions. It is also in this section that the "abolition of political sectarianism" is described as a "fundamental national objective," (Ta'if II G). An evaluation of the political reforms will reveal how consociational the renewed system is and what the Lebanese and their sponsors hoped to achieve in the long run.

The political reforms recommended in Ta'if can be seen as part of an attempt to strengthen Lebanon by "right shaping" it. Oren Yiftachel argues that in order for a state to be "right shaped" it must be supported by proper geopolitical boundaries. Furthermore, in plural societies, public policy and ethnogeography are the tools for maintaining a stable state. His contention is that public policy in a "right shaped" state must be based on a proportional system and be an "enlightened public policy which would accommodate the periphery," (Yiftachel 2000 382). Placing limits on majority power vis-à-vis the minority are important for "right-shaping" Lebanon. Since the territorial boundaries of Lebanon are not likely to be changed, and since, as demonstrated earlier, there is at least some sense of "Lebaneseness" among all Lebanese, "right sizing" the state to accommodate certain ethnic geographies is less important than "right shaping"

the state by shaping a legitimate the central regime therefore stabilizes the "core" and the "periphery." Right shaping, done correctly and fairly, would lend much needed legitimacy to the Lebanese government, this remains a key part of the solution to Lebanon's recurring systemic weakness.

One attempt at right shaping was made in the re-distribution of power among the executives on a confessional basis that was, at least, more proportional than its predecessor and thus a step towards a more consociational power arrangement. The political reforms reflected more than just the positions of the parties at the bargaining table at the time, the distribution of power also reflected the political realities in Lebanon and the region.

The Maronites came to Ta'if from a relatively weak position militarily as well as politically. Split between the camps of General Aoun and Samir Geagea, their bargaining power was significantly diminished. As the political and military losers of the war, the Maronites made some major concessions at Ta'if, allowing most presidential powers to devolve to the prime minister and cabinet, and agreeing to a 50:50 distribution of parliamentary seats between Muslims and Christians to replace the 6:5 distribution of the pre-Taif system (Krayem 1997 424). Parliamentary seats would be distributed according to equality for communities, proportional distribution within the two confessional blocks, and proportional distribution between regions (Maila 1992 21).

The biggest Maronite concession was the reduction of the presidential powers. Joseph Malia argues that "The prerogatives on the President of the Republic granted to him by the Constitution of 1926 have formed the Gordian Knot of the project of reform." In his opion, "The Ta'if document solved this impasse by declaring itself in favor of a

compromise in which the President would not be excluded from any constitutional procedures, where his role as Head of State would be respected, but whose authority would seem to be almost non-existent," (Malia 1992 41). The reforms to the office of the president thus made the system more consociational in so far as it put limits on presidential prerogatives such as the dissolution of parliament and the appointment of government officials by forcing him to cooperate with the prime minister. These initiatives require joint signatures of both the president and the prime minister. Indeed the president was left with very few independent powers after Ta'if transferred them to the Council of Ministers and its president, the Prime Minster (Malia 1992 41). The Maronites certainly felt that their powers and security assurances were unfairly reduced, but the alternative was a return to war.

Viewed from this perspective, Ta'if "corrected" two major weaknesses of the National Pact. The first is that the President could dismiss the Prime Minister, the symbolic representative of the Christian and Muslim community. Second, the President had special executive powers and privilege which he could invoke whenever he saw fit. By divesting the President of most of these powers, Ta'if forced him onto more equal footing with the two other "presidents," the President of the Cabinet (the Prime Minister), and the President of the Parliament (the Speaker). This is one point on which Ta'if was successfully consociational.

The Sunnis emerged from Ta'if considerably empowered, their symbolic representative in the government, the Prime Minister, was now arguably the most important person in the system. The Shi'a also saw an increase in the power of their executive representative, the speaker of Parliament. His term was increased from one to

four years, making him immune to much of the presidential pressure he may have been vulnerable to before. The Shi'a were strengthened but not to a point that reflected their demographic superiority. On this count, Ta'if was actually a step away from equality and proper representation. The term of the speaker of parliament was extended from one to four years, a significant change, but Shi'a representation in Parliament did not reflect their demographic weight as the agreement was on Christian-Muslim distributions and did not require balance amongst Muslim and Christian sects. Furthermore, the two strongest representatives of the Shi'a community, Amal, and Hizballah were calling for and end to confessionalism and the establishment of an Islamic state alternatively (Malia 1992 20). Ta'if did increase parity between the Muslim and Christian communities as a whole, however it did this by giving the Sunnis, not the Shi'a, significantly increased power.

The smaller communities, the Greek Orthodox, Druze, Armenian, etc. benefited in so far as the powers of the cabinet and the parliament had increased. According to some, the new distribution of power agreed upon at Ta'if and then confirmed in constitutional amendments was "…an expression of a balanced confessional formula and…the elimination of confessionalism was relegated to a rather distant future," (Krayem 1997 425).

The Council of Ministers is considerably empowered in Ta'if. While theoretically, this means more power sharing, as the primary sects are all represented in the Council, its confessional construction creates the possibility for deadlock. This is because a sect can resign from government.

Section III on other reforms covers a variety of domestic concerns including administrative decentralism, courts and education. This section also addresses the spread of Lebanese sovereignty over all Lebanese territories. It is in this section that the armed forces and the Israeli and Syrian occupations are addressed. This section also calls for the disbanding of all militias, Lebanese and foreign.

The Syrian occupation is essentially legalized. Syrian troops entered Lebanon in May 1976 and later became part of the Arab Deterrent Force created at the Cairo Arab Summit of November 1976. This force remained in Lebanon until 1979, at which time all but the Syrian forces withdrew (Malia 1992 83). In Ta'if, the Syrians are given two years until their "redeployment" in the Beqaa. International guarantees to supervise this redeployment and the eventually restoration of Lebanese sovereignty were not written into the agreement and subsequently abandoned. The procedure for the withdrawal of Syrian troops was not specified. This allowed the international community to abandon Lebanon to fend for itself against Syria when humoring the al-Asad regime became a strategic priority for the west and especially the United States (Maila 1992 85).

The mutual security assurances between Syria and Lebanon are unbalanced and unfair. They allow Syria to infringes on Lebanese sovereignty, which undermines efforts to create a stable consociational system. "Lebanon's commitment is a classic obligation of non intervention in the affairs of others. Syria's commitment, on the other hand, is based on the right to intervene in the affairs of third states," (Maila 1992 97). In effect, the Ta'if accord sanctioned the Syrian "abduction" of Lebanon (Maila 1992 98). The dilemma of the Syrian "brother" helping Lebanon defend itself from Israel further entraps Lebanon because it justifies one occupation with another. "…by formally

devoting two distinct sections to the process of extending Lebanese sovereignty, the Document clearly draws a distinction between the different status of the two regional powers involved in the procedure," (Maila 1992 89). The "coordination and cooperation" (III section 4) between Lebanon and Syria is very different than the "liberation" (III section 3) sought from Israeli occupation. In the section, "liberating Lebanon from the Israeli occupation," Ta'if calls for the enforcement of UN Security Council resolutions concerning the Israeli presence in Lebanon, especially resolution 425. Furthermore, Ta'if commits the Lebanese and their sponsors to "Taking all the steps necessary to liberate all Lebanese territories from the Israeli occupation…and making efforts to reinforce the presence of the UN forces in South Lebanon to insure the Israeli withdrawal and to provide the opportunity for the return of security and stability to the border area." (Ta'if section 2-3). Thus Ta'if irrefutably affirms the illegality of the Israeli occupation while leaving the ending of the Israeli occupation mostly in the hands of the UN. To anyone who is aware of Israel's abysmal record in respecting UN resolutions, as the architects of Ta'if no doubt were, it is clear that faith in a UN-enforced end of the occupation was "unreasonable and unrealistic optimism" (Maila 1992 91).

How thoroughly does Ta'if express the characteristics of a strong conflict regulating tool? Nordlinger identifies six conflict-regulating practices which are likely to be present in a successful conflict regulation arrangement, they are: a stable governing coalition between political parties, the principle of proportionality as opposed to 'winner takes all,' mutual veto, purposive de-politization, compromise, and concession (Nordlinger 1972 ch. 2). All of these were to some extent present in the National Pact and were reaffirmed in Ta'if. Though this is a positive outcome, the fact that these

practices failed the first time raises doubts about their potential for success the second time around. There is an overwhelming consensus among scholars that the Ta'if accords simply 'ratified' the confessional system of the national pact of 1943 however Krayem insists that the flexibility to move beyond this arrangement is indeed present in the Ta'if accords. He asserts, rather sarcastically, that "In Lebanon, transforming the provisional decisions into permanent ones has become a tradition, reaffirmed most recently with the Ta'if Agreement." Krayem's fear that "The error committed in the preservation of the inadequate 1943 National Pact might be repeated with the Ta'if Agreement," is well grounded in the text of the agreement. But Krayem offers hope when he insists that "Such a position contradicts the establishment of a strong political system that 'provides for legal and peaceful ways for its own amendment, for its adjustments to change in society'," (Krayem 1997 423). True success from Ta'if is contingent on the emergence of a strong government that is willing to meet the challenges of reform.

Was Ta'if on paper a strong tool for conflict regulation? The answer to this question depends very much on how we define conflict regulation. Ta'if was perhaps least controversial in its opening section. That "Lebanon is Arab in belonging and identity," the famous "Arab face" of Lebanon, was conceded by the Christians in exchange for assurances that "Lebanon is a sovereign, free, and independent country and a final homeland for all its citizens balanced by assurances that Lebanon (Ta'if I C, A). The affirmation of Lebanese sovereignty and identity is a positive step towards stable consociational government. As far as political reform goes, Ta'if had its strengths and its weaknesses, correcting the imbalance between Christians and Muslims by widening the imbalance between Sunnis and Shi'a. Lebanon now has a more cooperative executive

branch, but confessionalism is still deeply entrenched in the system. The final section is likewise mixed, especially because it leaves the *eventual* return of Lebanese sovereignty dangerously out of Lebanese hands.

Nordlinger has left his definition of conflict regulation sufficiently broad to require some interpretation. He defines conflict-regulating practices as "decision-making procedures, political arrangements, and behavioral rules which are potentially capable of accommodating antagonistic groups to one another…" (Nordlinger 1972 20). I argue that these are indeed present in Ta'if. Furthermore, for Nordlinger, conflict regulation applies to regulating the "powerful centrifugal impulses" of conflicts at a "high level of intensity," (Nordlinger 1972 15). If one considers the warring militias as the impulses, then yes, it was, eventually successful. Were the many other factors leading up to the war - inequality, fear, and weak government - regulated? Here one must answer with a qualified yes, these impulses were indeed "regulated" in the short term, and Ta'if put in place plans for long term change. However, if these concerns are once again overlooked, they will re-emerge as major sources of division.

The real question to ask when evaluating Ta'if is can Ta'if extend beyond simply regulating the Lebanese conflict to form a foundation for long term political stability? This is the question that Hassan Krayem tackles, (Krayem 1997 413) he concludes that the Ta'if accord is not an end in and of itself but rather can potentially be a means to greater stability in Lebanon. The key word is "potentially," he points out that while Ta'if may be an effective mechanism for ending the war, it is not, necessarily, the best way to launch Lebanon onto a course of political stability. "In effect, the Ta'if Agreement emerges as a process rather than a final and inflexible settlement. Preserving it in its

intitial form would lead to further conflict in the future because the Agreement embodies an unstable and contradictory formula. The solution that Krayem prescribes for this dilemma is "…creative interpretation of the basic document making the formula flexible enough to permit its own transformation," (Krayem 1997 422).

Krayem also expresses concern that two important reforms were intentionally underdeveloped, providing Syria with the legal space necessary to manipulate the accords to the point of non-implementation. First, the process of re-establishment of complete Lebanese sovereignty in Lebanon. "This issue is related to the resolution of the regional conflict through the peace negotiations between Israel and Lebanon on the one hand and Syria and Lebanon on the other hand." Lebanon faced a unique predicament in the fact that both Israeli and Syrian troops used the presence of the other to justify their own occupations of Lebanese territory. Therefore "…at least part of the implementation of the Ta'if Agreement is linked to Israeli actions in the south and a comprehensive settlement in the region," (Krayem 1997 423). Lebanese initiative would be fruitless in the absence of these conditions.

The second set of issues relevant to the examination of Ta'if as an agreement on which political reform can be modeled in 2007 and beyond is the issue of internal political reforms and their implementation. Although thirty-one Ta'if-related amendments were made to the constitution in 1990l, the fundamental principle of confessionalism has remained in tact. "Both in 1943 and in 1989 an 'interim' proved the suitable form of compromise between dream and socio-political reality," (Hanf 1993 588). The effectiveness of Ta'if as a conflict regulating mechanism is directly related to how thoroughly, promptly, and under what circumstances and what interpretations it is

implemented. These are also the most important issues when it comes to establishing firm political footing for Lebanon on the regional level and internally.

While it was a moderately consociational document, with certain steps towards more accurate representation, Ta'if maintained the inflexibility of the National Pact and "… actually enshrined communal privilege and religious segregation by its continuation of unwritten customs," (Kerr 2005 175). The elites who had survived the war and the militias leaders who had joined their ranks maintained their importance. The elites who agreed on the Ta'if accord were well aware of the problems outlined in section one, but nonetheless, Ta'if left many of its provisions for dealing with important issues toothless and in the hands of the same elites who had allowed and perpetuated the destruction of the first consociational system. "In a sense…the Taif Accord is an alliance between the militias and the notability," (Maila 1992 23). Hudson concurs, conceding that the Ta'if Accord "…notes some institutional improvements" but expressing an understandable skepticism as to whether the provisions that call for the gradual eliminations of political confessionalism will be implemented (Hudson 1997 1).

Ta'if may hold as a conflict regulator in the short term, but it provides only a hint of the foundation of a sovereign, stable Lebanese state. This will ultimately depend on the interpretation of Ta'if that is applied, especially on the twin issues of sovereignty and political reform highlighted by Krayem. Unfortunately, the circumstances under which the agreement was reach and the degree to which outside forces had a role in the contents and implantation of the agreement did not bode well for the prospects of a Lebanese implementation of their own interpretation of Ta'if (Hudson 1997 114).

IV. How was Ta'if Applied? Was a better consociational system established?

If the text of Ta'if formed a weak consociational base with room for much improvement and interpretation, its application rendered the carefully negotiated principles completely meaningless. Instead of marking the first steps towards the establishment of a more stable consociational system, Ta'if became a cover for Syrian rule over Lebanon. The Syrian interpretation of Ta'if undermined the premise of the entire document, as power sharing between representatives of different Lebanese communities was replaced by a system of power sharing among Lebanese representatives of Syrian interests. The Christian community was intentionally marginalized and Syrian manipulation put moderate Christians who had supported Ta'if in a particularly difficult dilemma. In sum, Ta'if was not applied as a consociational remedy to unite Lebanese society but rather as a tool to divide and rule Lebanon while providing Syria with political cover. It was applied in accordance with a uniquely Syrian agenda and thus further entrenched Lebanese sectarian divisions and institutional impotence.

While the Ta'if accord was technically an agreement to return to the consociational pre-war status quo, key questions involving the sovereignty of Lebanon and the way political order was to be re-established were left unanswered. Most notably, in the final agreement, concrete steps towards political reform were not linked with the withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon. Evidence of Sytian manipulation of Ta'if can be found in nearly every aspect of post-war political life. On the security front, Syria did not have to manipulate the text of Ta'if in order to justify its occupation of Lebanon, it had already written its military control into the text of the agreement. However the dismantling of the militias was completed selectively, leaving the Christians with the

impression that they were held to more strict standards than their Muslim and foreign counterparts. Manipulation of electoral law though gerrymandering, stacking lists, and other techniques ensured the victory of candidates who would allow Syria to cement its grip on Lebanon. In the rare instances that anyone raised an objection, he was quickly silenced.

Two developments, one local and one regional, had decisive roles in weakening resistance to this emerging status quo and made it possible for Syria to impose its interpretation of Ta'if on Lebanon. First, internal division among the Lebanese Maronites rendered their position in opposition of a Syrian implementation of the Accord useless. The Christians would pay for this opposition in their significantly diminished role in government under Syrian hegemony. Second, the outbreak of the Gulf war in 1991 gave Syrian enhanced importance as a key strategic ally of the west against Iraq, putting it in a position to assert itself in Lebanon. "By invading Kuwait, Saddam Hussein undermined…the regional equilibrium that was crucial for any resuscitation of Lebanese democracy," (Kerr 2005 169). Guaranteeing Lebanon's sovereignty became much less important to the Troika than securing Syria's support. Furthermore, the troika's guarantees to oversee this process were verbal, rather than written into the agreement and they were abandoned when regional developments including the Gulf War and the outbreak of the second Intifada put establishing Lebanese sovereignty low on the list of international priorities.

Thus the internal and external will that could have given Lebanon a favorable start were shattered by political circumstances. "There was a glimmer of hope for the Lebanese at Ta'if to regain control of their state but, as so often in the past, their own

divisions meant that they failed to seize the moment and external political events conspired against them, allowing Syria to consolidate its position," (Kerr 2005 176). The Lebanese had no choice but to accept Syrian hegemony and the relative stability it brought them. Writing in 1997, Krayem observed that "…the Ta'if Agreement was and is still being implemented within a different balance of internal forces as well as a different balance of regional, Arab forces, than originally intended," (Krayem 1997 426). He cites the very strong Syrian influence in Lebanon as well as the imbalance in internal political representation because of the Christian boycott of the 1992 parliamentary elections.

Syria had the most success interpreting vague provisions in Ta'if, capitalizing on the gaps between what was agreed and the practical process of reaching certain goals. For example, Ta'if requires the "redeployment" of Syrian troops two years after the ratification of the agreement, but it does not link the withdrawal of Syrian troops with developments in political reform in Lebanon. This leaves the withdrawal date vague, as there is no timetable for the complete withdrawal of Syrian troops and no explicit link between the rehabilitation of the Lebanese system (and subsequently the ability to function as a sovereign state free of occupation) and the withdrawal. This was, in fact, one of the main contentions of the Christian, and especially the Maronite, community. Indeed "…the redefinition of the relationship after the civil war was exactly the sort of association [bound to Syria] the Christians strove to avoid when forging the National Pact in 1943 and, in this sense, they lost the most at Ta'if," (Kerr 2005 168). Because it left the question of Syrian influence open ended, Ta'if lended itself to a Syrian interpretation that translated into a legalized occupation of Lebanon and "…the non-implementation of

Ta'if restored the mismanagement of consociationalism to Lebanese politics," (Kerr 2005 175) only with a maximized and legalized Syrian role.

Further legalization of Syrian infringements on Lebanese sovereignty were quick to follow. Signed on May 22, 1991, the "Treaty of Brotherhood, Cooperation and Coordination" between Lebanon and Syria deepened and strengthened Syrian influence in the country. As the power behind the efforts to disarm the militias, Syria also had evident physical power over the success of peace. As Khazen points out, "The truth is that foreign intervention in Lebanon's internal politics in the pre-war periods…relied on a certain amount of popular support, influenced by a given Arab regime…Today [1993], foreign intervention does not rely upon a popular base…" (Khazen 1993 35). The regional and internal circumstances in 1990 forced the Lebanese to choose security over sovereignty. These developments did not bode well for the reconstruction of Lebanese democracy.

It was clear from the start that the Syrian implementation of Ta'if was not concerned with establishing the democratic foundations of a strong and independent Lebanon. Indeed, the first step in re-assembling the Lebanese government was the Syrian-approved appointment of deputies to fill the empty seats. This set the tone for the "political reform" following Ta'if. It was clear that Syrian approval would be necessary for any progress. When examined from this angle, Ta'if in practice was not consociational at all. Syrian power and influence essentially rendered any inter-sectarian arrangements meaningless, there were no rival sects in government, just pro Syrian and anti-Syrian.

By boycotting the first two parliamentary elections in 1992 and 1996, the anti-Syrian camp, mostly Christian, effectively excluded itself from the government, making it even easier for the Syrians to take control. But even before the elections, Lebanese politicians quickly adapted to the reality of the new political order. The spirit of the reform was completely ignored by president Hrawi who refused to cede any of his presidential power to Prime Minister Selim al-Hoss, who subsequently resigned. When Karami was appointed to replace him he created a decidedly pro-Syrian cabinet. "Consequently, while the administration was divided equally between Christian and Muslim ministers, the cross communal consociational element was hallow, for the majority of Christians were not represented by the pro-Syrian Christian ministers in the cabinet…" (Kerr 2005 172).

An examination of the 1992 and 1996 elections and the way in which they were manipulated shows both the tools of Syrian hegemony and the result of their work. It also highlights some of the obstacles to political reform which are still present in the system today. For example, the system still relies on personalities at the expense of institutional development. Syria also changes the electoral laws, gerrymandered, and changed the number of deputies to disadvantage opponents of Syria, especially the Christian communities. Khazen argues that the way that the 1992 elections were prepared for and implemented aggravated the political crisis in Lebanon (Khazen 1993 2). "Whether they are measured by any local or regional criterion, the 1992 elections were the source of differences and divisions which previous post-independence elections had never brought about…Lebanon's tenth parliament was accompanied by a high degree

of sectarian polarization the like of which the country had only seen during periods of crisis," (Khazen 1993 1).

Syrian influence manifested itself in many ways both in the preparation for the election and in its execution. The Lebanese system was weakened rather than strengthened in the process. One way in which the process was manipulated was through gerrymandering. Electoral districts were not divided into large. "In mixed electoral constituencies, where the numerical majority belongs to a certain sect, the candidates of smaller sects submit to the electoral majority of the majority sect," (Khazen 1993 12). In preparation for the 1992 elections, Lebanon was divided into electoral districts in such a way that "…nine Christian deputies are in effect elected by Christian voters (five in the south and four in the Beqaa), while three Muslim deputies are in effect elected by Christian voters (one in Jubayl and two in Zahle) (Khazen 1993 12). "The net result is that 24 Christian deputies were elected to the 1992 parliament by voters from other sects; this was 35.93% of parliament's Christian deputies, and 17.96% of its total," (Khazen 1993 13). Between the districting and the Christian boycott and the demographic changes and the decline of the zu'ama, the Christians were sorely under-represented in the 1992 parliament.

Syria also influenced the composition of the electoral lists. Khazen asserts that Syrian influence in staking the lists with candidates it supported was decisive in determining the outcome of the election. Competition between lists was minimal and in the cases where there was some competition, all parties involved had good relations with Syria (Khazen 1993 23). Essentially, everyone involved in the election with any chance of winning had some level of understanding with Damascus. This shaped the entire

process, "If it had not been for these election settlements prior to the elections, the alliances and competition would have been different," (Khazen 1993 24). Indeed, in the formation of coalitions, the most important issue was agreement on a proportional division of seats," (Khazen 1993 23).

The resulting lack of vigorous competition added to the sense that the results were illegitimate. "The total number of those who ran unopposed or without real competition was 54, or about 42% of parliament's deputies. In a sectarian breakdown, these winners represented 69% of Christian deputies, and 16% of Muslim deputies." (Kahzen 1993 24). Establishing a representative parliament would have been an important first step in re-establishing state sovereignty, but instead the electoral process was completely distorted and became a tool for the institution of Syrian hegemony which played off of the divisions within Lebanese society rather than patching them up. The contradictions within these lists is affirmed by the fact that in the 1992 election, many Lebanese did not vote for lists in their entirety but rather resorted to "al-tashtib," – ' choosing a mix of list candidates and independent candidates, or from a competing list," (Khazen 1993 36).

The timing of the 1992 election was another major source of contention, with some arguing that rather than supporting the growth of democracy in Lebanon, government insistence on quick elections in the summer of 1992 was detrimental to the process. "…the state insistent on holding elections and the people either opposed, or unenthusiastic—was to a great extent the 1992 round's most prominent feature," (Khazen 1993 2). Khazen argues that the stabilized security situation in Lebanon in 1992 did not correspond to a parallel improvement of the political situation (Khazen 1993 4). Most Lebanese were still recuperating from the war, "Would the average Lebanese citizen

consider the election of new representatives a priority, while he is deprived of basic services that the state should theoretically provide…" asks Khazen (Khazen 1993 14). Khazen argues that the 1992 elections were held because of Syrian demands, and that, as opposition to the elections mounted, the Syrians became more and more committed to their execution as a matter of principle, "Whatever Damascus' calculations were in the beginning, as the elections approaches this issues turned into one of Syrian influence, and Syria's role in Lebanon (Khazen 1993 14).

Khazen is not alone in his interpretation of the timing of the 1992 election. According to some Christians, the timing of the election, so soon after the end of armed conflict (two/ three years) capitalized on the fact that many of those who fled the country and had not yet returned, where Christians. "So, from the beginning, the consociational elements of the Ta'if Agreement were rendered hallow through Syrian manipulation," (Kerr 2005 174).

Khazen uses an examination of the various and varying positions of those who did not take a clear stand for or against the elections until very close to their occurrence to show the Syrian role in helping these politicians form their opinions. He outlines a range of seven positions in this fluctuation camp with various degrees of discomfort with the principle and the process combined with varying degrees of realpolitik (Khazen 1993 8, 8.5) He concludes that "…the multiplicity of stands, the hesitations, and the inability of politicians to make a decisive decision one way or another are attributable to a principal factor: decision-making at the state level and the accompanying levels of this process along the Beirut-Damascus axis," (Khazen 1993 8-9).

The elections were widely criticized among Christians for the blatant manipulation of electoral law that preceded them and for their early timing, before electoral rolls were updated. The Maronite leadership called for a boycott of the elections, with ultimately only five percent of the Christians of Beirut participating and only twenty percent of Christians in the north (Kerr 2005 174). Lack of a coherent position by those who opposed the holding of the elections was another problem, "…this was due, on the one hand, to differences among some of the principal boycott leaders, and on the other, their various differing positions on the Ta'if Agreement, and the current regime," (Khazen 1993 9). The close relationship between Ta'if and the holding of the first elections proved problematic for some Christians. Unlike Aoun, Raymond Edde (National Bloc), Amin Gemayel, and the National Liberals Party, who had opposed Ta'if, the Kata'ib, the Lebanese Forces, and Patriarch Sfayer were faced with a loose-loose situation. By boycotting the elections, these groups were excluded from the same system that they had paid in both political and military terms to create when they agreed to participate in the Ta'if process (Khazen 1993 9). It was a loose-loose situation, "if participation would mean the loss of a popular base, staying out of the process would mean the loss of a share of power in the regime," (Khazen 1993 9). "The partial implementation of the Taif Agreement and the contravention of its 'spirit' distanced those Christian leaders who had supplied its urgent need of political cover against vehement popular opposition..." (Khazen 1993 9).

While many Christians chose to boycott the elections, some "…felt that going along with the election was the best-case scenario, being less of a defeat than losing one's seat in parliament," (Khazen 1993 5). For example, after initial rejection of election and

postponement in Kisirwan, citizens went to polls to support their traditional leaders.

"Like the candidate, the voter participated in the elections to close the door on what were called the 'infiltrators.' (Khazen 1993 25).   Either way, Christians still lost. The majority of Christian representatives were not representing their communities but rather Syrian interests. This reinforced the atmosphere of distrust that already clouded the post Ta'if government. Furthermore, Christians were not being included in the decision making process on issues with particular salience for their communities such as the political participation of Lebanese residing outside the country and other non-electoral matters. (Khazen 1993 11). Thus the mis-implementation of Ta'if actually worked against any process of national reconciliation for the Christians.

The electoral law passed on July 16, 1992 in anticipation of the Parliamentary election ensured a pro-Syrian majority. The timing of the election as well as the law that governed them were protested by many Christians as unfair.   and Maronite Patriarch Mar Nasrallah Butros Sfeir called for boycott of the elections. Accordingly, only five percent of Christians in Beirut and twenty percent of Christians in the north of Lebanon votes (Kerr 2005 174). However it is unclear that they would have succeeded in electing more opposition into the government even if they had voted.   Sfeir's political marginalization was complete, "Thus Rashid al-Solh, the prime minister at the time, went to Bkirki to 'consult' with Sfeir about the content of the electoral law, on the day following its passing in parliament," (Khazen 1993 10). Christians feel have been treated unjustly and also fear (Khazen 1993 10).

Many irregularities surrounded the actual execution of the election were another problem in creating credible electoral outcomes. Among these, the presence of militias,

especially in the south and the Beqaa. The nonexistence of any opposition considerably diminished the credibility of the 1992 parliament, one among a host of signs that political reform of the kind Lebanon desperately needed was not on the Syrian agenda. "In reality, the 1992 round stood out from previous rounds because, practically speaking, it constituted two elections: one which was concluded prior to election day, through the passing of the new electoral law…and the other which took place on election day," (Khazen 1993 2). Khazen argues that the 1992 election was essentially a set up.

By hurrying through the first election, Syria forced the Lebanese to waste an important opportunity to discuss electoral reform. The initiation of this sort of dialogue would be immensely beneficial to a state still struggling to establish the new ground rules (Khazen 1993 31). The elections also indicated the clear resignation of political actors to the fact that important decisions concerning Lebanon's fate were going to be decided by outside players in the context of greater regional struggles. "There was a clear absence of fundamental national issues, such as those connected to the implementation of Ta'if, Lebanon's participation in the Arab-Israeli peace talks, economic problems, and government performance in general," (Khazen 1993 31).

The 1996 election confirms that the Syrian interpretation of Ta'if would continue to dominate, extinguishing any possibility of any real attempt at a consociational solution for Lebanon. Under the Syrian implementation of Ta'if, as we see through these examples of elections, the Lebanese had effectively exchanges sovereignty for security. "Here we see the Lebanese predicament's dual nature. It seems that Lebanon, at least at present, is unable to provide itself with both [security and political situations] simultaneously. It is either security, i.e. the halting of military operations in return for a

particular situation and increasing influence for those groups providing this security, or collapse and chaos for a besieged and disintegrating state. This negative exchange has dominated Lebanon's post-Ta'if political environment and created the framework that brought about the new electoral law and all of the elections' preparatory procedures." (Khazen 1993 4). The elections of August-September 1996, therefore, took on particular significance. Voting participation rose to forty-four percent, still well below the 1972 level, the last election before the war, although the Interior Minister claimed that the "real" figure might have been sixty-six percent when the number of absent and dead voters still on the electoral rolls are taken into account (Lebanon Report 1996: 24). The 1996 election brought in the Rafiq al-Hariri and further entrenching the Syrian-dominated system. Continued marginalization of Maronites and traditional elites. Lahoud "The ascendancy of Lahoud to the presidency in 1998 signaled an increase in military interference in Lebanese politics in 1998 signaled an increase in military interference in Lebanese politics and a new phenomenon, military involvement in the judiciary. This militarization seems to comes with Syria's blessings and with a tendency towards authoritarianism," (el-Husseini 2004 251).

It was not only in electoral politics that Syrian influence undermined the principles of Ta'if, selective disarmament of militias is indicative of the limits of the Syrian commitment to re-establishing Lebanese sovereignty. The case of Hizballah is one particularly complex instance of selective disarmament. Hizballah was in a slightly privileged position, even in the minds of most Lebanese, because it was resisting Israel. It's position with respect to Ta'if is ambiguous. In fact the strengthening of Hizballah over time could even be justified as fulfilling the penultimate section of Ta'if, "Liberating

Lebanon from the Israeli Occupation." Under this section, Lebanon is committed to "Taking all the steps necessary to liberate all Lebanese territories from the Israeli occupation…." On the other hand, the final goal of this liberation is "…to spread state sovereignty over all territories, and to deploy the Lebanese army in the border area adjacent to Israel," (Ta'if III C).

In its Syrian interpretation, Ta'if neglected internal reform. The system that was put into place empowered people, not institutions. Personalities, therefore, not institutional relationships, dictated how smoothly, effectively, and efficiently the government apparatus functioned. As one scholar points out, "This contradicts the fundamental purpose of the Agreement which was to replace the rule of the individual by the rule of the institutions," (Krayem 1997 426). For example, the Hariri government brought relatively new blood into the system, and Hariri's international and business connections were seen by some as a welcome change from the national economic and socio-political interests that dominate Lebanon (Krayem 1997 438). However, instead of reforming the existing system, Hariri created his own, parallel one.

Another testament to the continued importance of patron-client networks in the post-Ta'if order was the distribution of key portfolios among the zu'ama, who in turn, used this capacity for individual or communal political ends, either to further their own power or reward their own constituencies. The Council of Development and Reconstruction and the Higher Commission for Relief were both Hariri's exclusive domain. The Council of South Lebanon were run by Berri, and the Fund for the Return of the Displaced and Refugees is administered by Walid Junblatt (Krayem 1997 431).

In conclusion, it is evident that the post-war elections the Syrian interpretation of Ta'if, an interpretation that enforced and re-affirmed some of the worse aspects of the Lebanese consociational system including electoral manipulation, division, paralysis, and compromised Lebanese sovereignty. The elites played an important role in making this possible. The traditional hierarchies that constitute the internal democratic arrangement are still there. Selective disarmament and conspicuous sabotage of those opposed to Syria as well as international politics aided Syria in this conquest.

Might all this damage be undone? "As Syria was granted quasi-tutelage over Lebanon in exchange for its siding with the multinational forces in the 1991 Gulf War, its perceived siding with Iraq in the 2003 war might lead to a termination of its influence in Lebanon…This perceived pressure is already having an impact on Lebanese incumbents, who are starting to get on the defensive, while anti-Syrian activists such as Aoun's FPM are gaining hope," (el-Husseini 2004 262). The next section considers this possibility and the potential steps that can be taken towards establishing sovereignty in Lebanon.

V. Should Lebanon abandon the sectarian system? Where do we go from here?

Today there are three options for the development of the Lebanese political system: cantonization or federation, secularization, or improved consociationalism. The first, the most extreme and the least plausible, is a "cantonization" of Lebanon. This would mean dividing the country into states dominated by autonomous religious communities that would be bound together by a federal authority. This solution is explicitly rejected in the first section of the Ta'if Accord, "Lebanon is a sovereign, free, and independent country" (Ta'if I A). Furthermore, based on the demographics of

Lebanon today, this would most likely mean a the formation of a Shi'a state in the south and the Bequa, and Sunni state along the coast, and a Christian state in the north and perhaps part of Mount Lebanon, and finally a Druze state in Mount Lebanon. Practically, this, or any other division of Lebanon into separate and semi-autonomous states, is impossible because Lebanese of different confessional identities live as neighbors throughout the country. Sectarian inter-mixing is even more complete in the cities, especially Beirut. As O'Leary points out, even though Beirut is segregated both residentially and territorially, it is not "…segregated at a level of aggregation that makes territorial federalism an option," (O'Leary 2005 xxii).

Furthermore, popular attitudes do not indicate any desire for cantonization among the Lebanese. Writing in 1988, Barakat claimed that Christians, especially those loyal to the Lebanese Forces, preferred modification of the status quo to cantonization. In 1996, almost a decade later, a survey of 917 students, 13.5 percent of whom were Maronite, found "…low support for a Christian autonomous entity and overt preference for a unitary political system," (Haddad 2002 27). This survey also found "…positive intra-group attachment, strong group preference for Maronite leaders and at the same time dislike for some of them, with a feeling of pride and distinctive Lebanese nationalism," among Maronites "…the answers point to low support for a Christian autonomous entity and overt preference for a unitary political system," (Haddad 2002 1). This data indicates that Maronites have indeed realized that pluralism is inescapable and that a purely Christian 'nationalism' will never be realized. Christians learned to "…overcome the psychological separatisms that are even more persistent than the doctrinal ones" (Cragg 1991 228).

On a political level, Maronite willingness to accept a reduction of presidential powers in Ta'if signaled a grudging recognition that their dominance institutionalized in the National Pact was no longer possible. There seems to be a shift in the political attitudes of other sects as well. Kerr suggests that in 2005, the Shi'a may have a new sense of Lebaneseness as they are willing to fight to protect the territorial integrity of Lebanon, something they may not have been willing to do at an earlier time.

A second, equally impossible option is the political secularization of Lebanon. Social secularization would mean the complete de-confessionalization of ever aspect of Lebanese life including, for example, personal status laws, this is impossible. Lebanese confessional communities are enormously sensitive on this topic and the maintenance of confessional autonomy on issues of social matters is perhaps the one aspect of the consociational system that most sects (with the exception of the Druze under Kamal Jumblatt) are entirely committed to maintaining.

In Lebanon, sectarian identity is too deeply entrenched to overcome even in the medium to long term. Indeed, "Internationists and assimiliationists too easily presume that a nation of individuals is in existence, or that one should be built…It is dangerously transformative and dystopian when antagonistic communities are instructed to fuse" (O'Leary 2005 xx). The vehement reaction to proposals to de-confessionalize personal status laws proves that Lebanese are far from willing to renounce sectarian privilege in the social sphere. Under the present law, Lebanese of different faiths may register a civil marriage, conducted abroad, in Lebanon. When former President Hrawi proposed a draft law to be studied by the Parliament to allow the option of civil marriage to those who would get married abroad anyway, his proposal was attacked by all religious groups and

did not even find its way to the parliament to be studied. Opening debate on such politically and socially charged issues would engender more division than could be offset by the limited benefits a secuarlization of Lebanese society.

Political secularization, on the other hand, may indeed be desirable in the long run. Lebanese exhibit a wide diversity of sentiments on this issue. Barakat asserts that Muslims would prefer the end of secularism in public life. Some Shi'a claim that secularism is not compatible with Islam, while some more radical Druze, including, in his time, Kamal Jumblatt, favor full secularization throughout the entire Arab world. The real question is, having reviewed the history of conflict and conflict regulation in Lebanon, always in the form of a confessional power sharing system, can we identify any point when secularization was really an option? Who called for it? Why and under what circumstances? Answering these questions will help us put Lebanese expectations and realities into perspective.

According to Kamal Salibi, the call for secularization has always been part of a game played between Christians and Muslims in their sectarian posturing. The way this issue has played out time and again can be displayed in the example of the continuous debate over the need for a new census. The last complete census of Lebanon was taken in 1932. Ever since, Muslims have called for a new census upon which to base a more accurate power sharing formula, this census would prove that the majority of Lebanese are Muslims. Christians have conditioned the fulfillment of this request on the inclusion of all Lebanese living abroad in the census. The majority of the Lebanese Diaspora is Christian. Both communities can be sure that their calls will not be answered with real action and therefore can make demands all the more ardently, with the assurance that

they will not loose anything and may indeed gain popular sympathy within their sect. El-Husseini exposes the elite view on de-confessionalizing the system: Theoretically, the political elites are united in the idea that the system should be de-confessionalized sometime in the distant future, but in reality, "Confessionalism is a cover for clientalism and for a parochial mentality," (el-Husseini 2004 260). Elite interests in the maintenance of the status quo far outweigh their desire for reform.

A middle ground between separatist cantonization and Jacobian secularization may be found. Hanf suggests an ideology of "syncretistic nationalism" (Hanf 1993 29). This is the type of nationalism consociational systems are meant to foster, "…it does not seek to destroy already existing social and cultural formations. Instead, syncretistic nationalism regards existing, organic communities as the building blocks of a transcending nation," (Hanf 1993 29). Like the consociational system that could reflect it, syncrestic nationalism strikes a precarious balance between a hope that eventually, divisions will become less salient, and a realistic conscession that any attempt to force this process would be impossible because of the social and cultural costs. "Given these insights, syncretistic nationalism aims neither for unity nor for diversity at any cost, but for unity in diversity." (Hanf 1993 29). This is indeed the ideology that is closest to the consociational ideal and brings us to the final option for Lebanon, the only one that is plausible today - an improvement on the present system.

The final option, and I argue, the only possible option, is to maintain the sectarian system but modifying it so that it facilitates better power sharing. If Lebanon is to develop into a consolidated democracy, then it must be based on a just and accurate representation of the Lebanese people. In order for this to happen, the law must be

enacted and plausibly enforced and maintained. Indeed, we cannot condemn the current confessional system, imperfect as it is, because, as demonstrated above, the system described in Ta'if has yet to be tested. Implementation of Ta'if in its consociational interpretation, however flawed, would be a step towards a fairer, transparent, and thus more stable Lebanese system. What reforms can take Lebanon from the present system to a better consociational arrangement? When considering possible steps towards reform, one must consider both which reforms are most necessary and which are most possible. Lebanese political culture presents deeply entrenched obstacles to reform and has proven remarkably resistant to efforts thus far.   The kinds of reform that might strengthen the government and eventually lead to secularization include: judicial reform, change in personal status laws, uniform and fair electoral law, and the creation of political parties based on ideologies rather than on personalities. All of these are important reforms irrespective of whether the system remains confessional or not. The question is, can these reforms be implemented?

In his book, *The Precarious Republic,* published in 1968, that is before the outbreak of the civil war, Michael Hudson identifies several "formidable barriers to greater innovation and adjustment," (Hudson 1968 248). These include: the exclusion of non-traditional politicians from the political process by careful districting, corruption (he cites in particular the May 1947 elections), the high cost of running for elections (Hudson 1968 225), and the lack of country-wide parties, in particular a "left –of-center social-democratic party," (Hudson 1968 329). Nearly forty years later, these same obstacles are still hindering the development of a robust and stable consociational democracy in Lebanon. We can add to this list the persistence of a closed system and the low

circulation of elites, poor security situation, lack of accountability among politicians and

other consequences of weak institutions, continued economic inequality and massive

international debt. Unfortunately, these factors will remain a part of Lebanese political

life in the short and medium term. In the meantime, the Lebanese must recognize that the

limited reforms that are possible are also the only alternative to continuous deadlock.

The political elites and their patronage networks are still at the heart of the

Lebanese system and the logic of patronage plays an important role in dictating what is

accomplished in government and how. For example, in the early summer of 2007, the

new Government of Seniora attempted to make good on one of the promises he had made

when he entered office, judicial reform. He decided to ask the highest sitting court, the

high court of justice to study the needs of the Judiciary, laid a plan for the reallocation of

judges to courts, and made detailed recommendations to the Minister of Justice on how to

improve the performance and guarantee the integrity of the judiciary. The Minister

studied the details with the Court for over a month and then submitted the finding to the

cabinet, who approved the recommendations. These recommendations were then passed

on to the President so that he could issue the necessary decree, which he declined to do

claiming that the recommendations were not satisfactory and probably biased. Many

Lebanese believe that the president's real motives were to protect judges loyal to him and

to Syria, some of these judges were recommended for dismissal. Judicial reform has yet

to be implemented.

International and regional factors will also play an important role in creating the

right environment for reform. Indeed, as always, the internal and external obstacles to

reform are very much connected, the dispute over the International tribunal is a case in

point. This tribunal is an endless source of conflict which pundits on both sides have simplified to support biased summaries of the other side's political position. It is inextricably linked with regional and international concerns and will most likely be settled on this level, as part of a wider deal that is, to a great extent, beyond Lebanese control. It remains the most important concern for the present Lebanese crisis, however, because it is both the source of accusations and rhetorical posturing. Furthermore, the tribunal has the potential, if allowed to function at its fullest capacity, to cause a major shakedown in the region. If the court is given political reach to convict not only the perpetrators of the crime but also their superiors, regional stability would be put into serious jeopardy. Both Syrian President Al-Assad and Lebanese President Lahoud would most likely be implicated, the former having considerably more consequence than the later. The debate over the tribunal, with all of its regional implications, is at the heart of the current political crisis. Lebanese politicians are keenly aware that international and regional politics will play a central role in allowing or impeding any reform. As recently as March 6, 2007, former Prime Minister Salem al-Hoss observed that a local deal in Lebanon will not survive without a regional accord**.** He went so far as to say that any solution to the political deadlock in Lebanon would not "live on" unless it was coupled with "a sort of accord between Saudi Arabia and Egypt, on one hand, and Syria and Iran on the other," (Hoss: Local deal won't survive 2007).

In an article published in January 2006, Julia Choucair of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace outlined realistic priorities for reform in light of the political changes that took place in Lebanon after the Syrian withdrawal. She argues that any political reform must take into account the flaws of the confessional system while

realizing that in the short run, there will be no secular reform in the state. enumerated so clearly and publicly is a step in the right direction. Choucair proposes that reform is possible in three areas: security, electoral institutions, and the economy. Reforms in these areas also speak to ameliorating the conditions that lead to the civil war of 1975 and fit very much within the spirit of Ta'if. Until the end of the Syrian occupation, the primary obstacle to political reform was Syrain rule. While ideally, measures will be taken to promote national and civic consciousness through programs like an integrated educational system and a curriculum that reflects a shared history and values the contributions of all communities to Lebanese history, in reality, plausible reforms must be aimed at making the sectarian system fairer and less of a zero-sum game. She suggests that two effective ways to make this happen may be through a strengthening of government authority and through an increase in merit-based hiring.

Strengthening of government authority is without a doubt what the Lebanese system needed the most in 2006 and government authority is what is at stake in the most recent developments of the internal conflict. Indeed much of the dialogue, both Lebanese and international, surrounding the July 2007 war focused on the existence of a Hizballah "state within a sate" and among the priorities of the National Dialogue, to which the war put an effective end, was the disarmament of military groups, especially Hizballah and Palestinian groups. This group also discussed the selection of a new president to replace Emile Lahoud, thereby restoring legitimacy to the executive and strengthening the state. Uniting government to strengthen its authority was the overarching goal of the National Dialogue initiated by Speaker Berri in 2006.

The national dialogue started in February and ended in March 2000 it was the result of the sum of the efforts of all the parties in Lebanon to review the problems facing each of them and the country at-large. This dialogue brought together all of the political elite representing the various Lebanese sects. The problems discussed in the national dialogue can be summarized as: the election of a new President, the approval of the international tribunal, subject of a resolution of the UN Security Council to investigate and later bring to justice all those involved in the assassination of Rafiq al-Hariri, later expanded to look into all the crimes committed as of First of October 2004 (the attempted murder of Marwan Hamadeh) and until the last of the crimes, the murder of Pierre Gemeyal. This was also extended in a recent Resolution to cover the assassination of Pierre Gemayyel, the need to go through an early re-election of parliament, the disarmamanet of Hizballah on completion of the regaining of all lands occupied by Israel, namely Shiba Farms, by integrating the resistance in the army, so that arms will only be available to the army.

The group immediately approved the formation of the international tribunal and settled other minor issues but delayed the decision on the election of the President. The main point of disagreement was the disarming of Hizballah. This sensitive issue was not discussed in depth. In many ways, the Hizballah issue was the lynchpin that bound the most contentious issues, including the election of a new president, together. Replacing President Lahoud would have weakened Hizballah's hand in the arms issue, so for them, his continued presence was non negotiable. The leaders continued to avoid the most important questions in order to sustain the National Dialogue.

It is not clear whether the talks would have been successful on these issues because their efforts were interrupted by the July war, which reshaped the political landscape in the region. However, the difficulty these leaders experienced in reaching agreement, as evident by the repeated stalling of talks, as well as the ease with which Syrian political considerations penetrated the Lebanese dialogue does not give much cause for hope. However, the fact these talks were even held, and that the problems facing Lebanon were.

In the post-Syria era, many obstacles remain. Among them the security question - Hizballah and Palestinian groups are still very much armed, externally international concerns also remain crucial, and reform would be slow. After the July war and in the context of ensuing political developments, these three obstacles are still very much present, in fact they are more entrenched than before. Any steps towards building trust or understanding between the leaders of the different sects has certainly been undermined by the very public mud slinging and accusations made across the board as the level of political discourse has deteriorated. This means that political change will happen even slower, and will require even more patience as groups must first re-establish a civil rapport before they can even begin to delve into the issues, especially high-stakes questions like the future of Hizballah's military.

The security situation remains as unstable as ever. The opposition's attempt to topple the Sinora government by staging a sit, although kept tightly under control by Hizballah security, created an atmosphere of confrontation that needed only a slight provocation. Small fights particularly one in early December 2006, in which a boy was shot in a Beirut neighborhood attest to the fragility of the situation. Bomb threats to various restaurants and clubs as well as the explosion of a passenger bus in late February

in the mountain town of Bikfaya in which tens of Lebanese were killed and injured, and the discovery of significant quantities of TNT under a bridge in east Beirut have brought security concerns to a very personal level for Lebanese civilians. The discovery of an unexploded bomb at the American University of Beirut on March 23, 2006 is another example.

Thus security, is perhaps the most politically charged and immediately salient issue. Any discussion of disarming Hizballah is out of the question while the situation remains so tense. With the poor state of relations between the government and the opposition, discussion of this highly charges issue would only deepen tensions, mutual suspicions, and fears. Indeed as recently as March 8, 2007, Prime Minister Sinora, in a marked change from before the war, stated that the disarmament of Hizballah would not be open to discussion before the issue of the Israeli occupation of Shebaa Farms and Kufr Shuba was resolved. These issues are unlikely to be resolved in the near future. Syria is unlikely to relinquish this remaining bargaining chip it still holds after its evacuation and Hizballah has taken on much more significance than simply defending Lebanese territory from Israeli occupation. Future dealings with Hizballah will have to follow the model of militia leaders during the civil war. Hizballah will have to be co-opted and given a significant stake in the government. Indeed the reason the Shi'a ministers were able to resign in the face of the Hariri tribunal vote is that they thought they could gain more through conflict than discussion, five months later, they are rapidly loosing what is left of the political capital they gained in the July war. Thus a reconciliation will have to be reached with tact and include face-saving measures for Hizballah and the rest of the opposition.

One positive sign on the internal security front is the success with which the army, under the leadership of General Franjieh, has exhibited through the post-war period of national crisis. Not only has the army managed to avoid confrontation with Hizballah in the south, it has adhered to its mandate to protect Lebanon from Israeli incursion and attack, not to disarm Hizballah. The mutual tolerance between these armed forces and the fact that they have so carefully avoided a conflict is a very positive sign in terms of internal security in Lebanon. In Beirut, the sit in and the various mass protests for and against the government have, on the whole, been peaceful and in the rare cases where they erupted into violence, they have been contained. The degree of integration in the army, which was rebuilt with strong Syrian support, is another very positive sign.

Security must also be improved with respect to the refugee camps which continue to be havens for those who would like to stir up trouble in Lebanon. Internal Palestinian divisions and Syrian interests continue to threaten national security. For example, the two bus bombings in Ain Alaq on February 13, 2007 were planned and carried out by four Syrians who were alleged members of Fatah al-Islam, a group based in the notorious Nahr al-Bared camp (PLO chief heaps more pressure on Fatah al-Islam). There is no single body representing the refuges in their dealings with the Lebanese. Changing this would be a significant step in getting the Lebanese security situation under control because it would increase Palestinian accountability. Current tensions between Fatah al-Islam and the PLO are bad for Lebanese security. Some efforts towards cooperation between the Palestinian groups and Lebanese government has been initiated, A Higher Coordination Committee is expected to be formed soon to "interact and hold negotiations" with the Lebanese government. Intra-Palestinian relations among the

various groups, which include the Fatah, the PLF, Hamas, and the PFLP, will also have implications for Lebanese security Representatives from these groups met in March to discuss how they could "preserve and protect the rights of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and demarcate the boundaries of Palestinian activity in Lebanon." (PLO chief heaps more pressure on Fatah al-Islam).   The fact that representatives of this group have said in the past that any agreement on Palestinian weapons and disarmament will be "strictly tied with the issue of the right of return" shows how inextricably the fate of Lebanon is tied to the fate of Palestine.

Electoral reform must lead to a more fair and representative system. Reforms can be pursued within the framework set out in Ta'if and have a reasonable chance of success because a fairer and more stable system is in the interest of all Lebanese. Electoral districts could be redraw with larger mohafazat that include a large confessional mix. A return to a more fair formation of electoral lists with real platforms would also improve the system. When the Lebanese are convinced that the system is not rigged against them, they will be encouraged to participate, precipitating a more vigorously competitive system. In every election since Ta'if, and likely in every election before as well, the parliamentary election season has been precipitated by the modification of electoral law in an effort to guarantee re-election to incumbents from the ruling coalition. For example, despite the Syrian withdrawal in 2005, that year's elections were held using the unfair law passed to ensure victory to Syria's allies. This law brought the current Hariri block into power along with General Aoun (recently returned from exile in France) and Hizballah and Amal. A fairer electoral law and an end to blatant gerrymandering would

bring much needed legitimacy to the government. This would mean ending the blatant

gerrymandering that has taken place in the past.

Other measures that might be taken to improve the electoral law and the fairness

of elections in general might be the end of the staggered voting system currently in place

whereby elections in different districts take place on different days. With the current

method, it is quite possible that knowledge of the results of elections in other districts

may influence voters' decisions when it comes time for them to vote. Another reform to

consider in the long term is take measure to decrease the exorbitant cost of running for

office in Lebanon. This is a problem even in advanced and well developed democracies

like the United States, but one that is worth takling. The fact that the UN investigator

Brammertz hinted at a possible link between plans for electoral law reform and Hariri's

assassination shows how contentious electoral reform will be (Brammertz 2005). Once

again, the tangled mess of interests and concerns means that takling any one issue means

confronting a host of related ones, each with its own contraints and reprecussions.

The electoral system of a divided society is usually a symptom of those divisions,

not a cause of them (Reilly 1994 44). The Lebanese electoral system is based on what

Reilly and Reynolds call "explicitism." It explicitly recognizes the different sectarian

groups and makes them the unit of electoral representation. This is good in deeply

divided societies like Lebanon, where the divisions are there whether people chose to

recognize them or not. However explicitly recognizing and institutionalizing divisions

hurts democratic consolidation in the long run. Lebanon's system reflects the transitional

character of her cosociational democracy. Like consociationalism in general, this

electoral system is good for transitional peace keeping, for stopping the violence, for

ending the war, but it is inflexible. Eventually, Lebanon should shift from using

ethnically mixed lists to a more truly consociaitonal electoral system like list PR system,

however using the mixed list system fairly is a more feasible option in the medium term.

O'Leary has remarked that the Lebanese system is "… unusual in trying to

achieve proportionality by organizing quotas by seats, rather than by leaving voters to

exercise full freedom," (O'Leary 2005 xxvii) the ethnic composition of the entire

parliament as well as the executives is predetermined in the constitution. Is it possible to

abandon the quota system and the Lebanese system of ethnically mixed lists? While this

may be something to consider in the long term, it would be unrealistic to try to move to

this system before a fair election using the present one has been tried. As with many of

the consociational provisions that have been re-affirmed in Ta'if, the electoral

engineering system has not yet been tested honestly and without manipulation. The

execution of electoral reform is directly related to the application of Ta'if at its

consociational best.

Economic reform seems to be the platform on which the government has the most

leverage and ability to act. The fact that the Paris III donor conference took place as

planned despite the best efforts of the opposition shows that the government is not

completely paralyzed. Furthermore the success of the conference, shows that in

December, the international community had not given up on Lebanon yet.

What would economic change look like? Choucair suggests advances in privatization

and in dealing with the public debt. I argue that under the present conditions, dealing

with the public debt must be a financial priority while privatization may have to wait.

Because of the war, Lebanon is now in even deeper debt than it was before, it has

borrowed seven billion more dollars to help pay for repairs to infrastructure and to rebuild after the war. In light of all of this, it will be of singular importance that the Lebanese government proves to the people that this money is going towards serving their best interests and not into corrupt government pockets.

Lebanon cannot abandon the sectarian system, but it can take steps to establish a stronger, more secure, and more accurately representative consociational state. Security, electoral policy, and economic reforms will face institutional and cultural obstacles. Many of the forces impeding Lebanese growth and development stem from the current sectarian arrangement. The system itself, while susceptible to the clannish manilpulation of those who dominate it, is not entirely at fault. As demonstrated in this paper, it is possible to interpret Ta'if and the sectarian government it supports differently. If Ta'if is impleneted properly, and if the Lebanese government is willing to push reform in the areas where it can, especially to remedy the social-economic inequality in the country, then sectarianism need not be abandoned just yet.

Conclusion:

Even with current indications that the regional and international environment may create a positive atmosphere in which to come to a solution to end the deadlock, development could still change the scene. Ultimately, however, the Lebanese Shi'a and their disgruntled allies will reach some understanding with the government. This will allow consociationalism to come back into effect in theory. However, Lebanon will still be a flawed consociational system, as flawed as it was in 1943 and 1975. If the National Dialogue is resumed, it could help create the internal environment of goodwill and trust

in which reforms leading to greater equality in the system could be implemented. These issues will take years to resolve, and they are particularly sensitive and therefore they are particularly vulnerable to being used by outside powers to gain access to the Lebanese arena through fearful, pragmatic, or overly ambitious Lebanese elite. That is why it is vital that the government take some steps to show that it is reforming and improving, to increase people's faith in the government and its potential to represent them and work in the interest of all Lebanese.

The most direct way to establish this trust is through providing clear and substantial improvements in the economic situation of all Lebanese. Economic insecurity is at the forefront of peoples' minds. While the government should continue its program for macro-economic adjustment, especially its attempt to get the massive government debt under control, significant funds should go towards programs with clear short and medium results, especially in the effort to relieve some of the devastation of the war.

The issue that must be addressed most immediately is equality and fairness in representation. Eventually, the development of parties based not on sectarian identity but on real practical or ideological platforms, would be a desirable in Lebanon, but in the meantime, making a fairer sectarianism, a return toward true consociationalism, might be necessary in the medium to long term. Lebanon's elite have a long history of horse-trading and political pragmatism, perhaps the problem has been too much shrewdness when looking after the interests of their own community. Now, with all that has happened in Lebanon, the Lebanese are in a unique position to finally move on to a next stage, a new era in Lebanon. They have experienced the worst of national breakdown, they know what they have the potential to do to each other and they do not want to see

another civil war. Indeed now more than ever, even in their deep division, the political elite are acutely aware of the dangers of systemic collapse, an important factor for consociational success, according to Nordlinger. Thus there has emerged a clear desire to protect Lebanon and to be Lebanese, something that was not necessarily true in earlier periods. The consociational system is the only one that can accommodate the social and political needs of a country with such deeply rooted and closed confessional communities as we find in Lebanon today.

Furthermore, the true positions, the strengths, and the weaknesses of all the political elites and players have become clear. The assassination of Hariri and the July War forced Hizballah to specify where it stands between Lebanese and regional loyalties, and it seems, for the time being, that Lebanese loyalties will prevail. The international environment seems to be headed towards the opening of diplomatic channels between the United States and Iran and Syria, a development that can only mean more tolerance in Lebanon.

This means that the Lebanese can take the next step. The government must take the lead with patience, time, and not too much environmental disaster, Lebanon can begin to chart a modest Lebanese path towards building national strength, one that is within its means and capabilities.

Several scholars of conflict regulation and consociationalism have pointed out that consociationalism is a system that is based on the least common denominator, on basic realist principles, on guaranteeing security. Therefore, for all the reasons described and illustrated in this paper, consociationalism, while it serves the purposed of conflict regulation, it is not the ideal tool for democratic consolidation in Lebanon. The extra

push must come from those who know how to move on and use the system as a springboard for future development. Unfortunately for Lebanon, external factors have always dictated against this possibility being taken advantage of. Politics in Lebanon has been a constant struggle to hold the polity together while at the same time creating extra benefits for one's own community. In the present circumstances, Lebanon may soon have a brief respite form this and it is vital that the Lebanese elite use this time to take good firsts steps towards making the system more representative and offer proof of an economic endgame.

Historically, consociationalism in its special Lebanese version has been the only system that has worked in Lebanon. This system has indeed been necessary to contain the conflict inherent in a nation of minorities surrounded by unstable and sometimes aggressive neighbors. In 1943 the National Pact provided "growing time" for the newly independent Lebanese state. In 1989 the Ta'if accord "bought time for the embattled and embittered sects to reconstitute a viable unified state. But in both cases, the power-sharing solution outlived its usefulness and in fact impeded what might have been the transition to a more inclusive political order that would provide not just for sectarian participation but the growth and integration of a larger, more complex civil society into the body politic," (Hudson 1997 121). Is there a possibility that this might eventually change? Perhaps we would be best advised to take the attitude of Sheikh Mohammad Qabbani of the Future movement who commented recently in a radio interview on the possibility of a speedy resolution to the most recent crisis, "I am fifty-one percent optimistic."

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Appendix A:

THE TAIF AGREEMENT

First, General Principles and Reforms:

I. General Principles:

  A. Lebanon is a sovereign, free, and independent country and a final homeland
     for all its citizens.

  B. Lebanon is Arab in belonging and identity. It is an active and founding
     member of the Arab League and is committed to the league's charter. It is
     an active and founding member of the United Nations Organization and is
     committed to its charters. Lebanon is a member of the nonaligned movement.
     The state of Lebanon shall embody these principles in all areas and
     spheres, without exception.

  C. Lebanon is a democratic parliamentary republic founded on respect for
     public liberties, especially the freedom of expression and belief, on
     social justice, and on equality in rights and duties among all citizens,
     without discrimination or preference.

  D. The people are the source of authority. They are sovereign and they shall
     exercise their sovereignty through the constitutional institutions.

  E. The economic system is a free system that guarantees individual initiative
     and private ownership.

  F. Culturally, socially, and economically-balanced development is a mainstay
     of the state's unity and of the system's stability.

  G. Efforts (will be made) to achieve comprehensive social justice through

fiscal, economic, and social reform.

H. Lebanon's soil is united and it belongs to all the Lebanese. Every
Lebanese is entitled to live in and enjoy any part of the country under
the supremacy of the law. The people may not be categorized on the basis
of any affiliation whatsoever and there shall be no fragmentation, no
partition, and no repatriation [of Palestinians in Lebanon].

I. No authority violating the common co-existence charter shall be legitimate

II. Political Reforms

A. Chamber of Deputies: The Chamber of Deputies is the legislative authority
which exercises full control over government policy and activities.

1. The Chamber spokesman and his deputy shall be elected for the duration
of the chamber's term.

2. In the first session, two years after it elects its speaker and deputy
speaker, the chamber my vote only once to withdraw confidence from its
speaker or deputy speaker with a 2/3 majority of its members and in
accordance with a petition submitted by at least 10 deputies. In case
confidence is withdrawn, the chamber shall convene immediately to fill
the vacant post.

3. No urgent bill presented to the Chamber of Deputies may be issued
unless it is included in the agenda of a public session and read in
such a session, and unless the grace period stipulated by the
constitution passes without a resolution on such a bill with the
approval of the cabinet.

4. The electoral district shall be the governorate.

5. Until the Chamber of Deputies passes an election law free of sectarian
   restriction, the parliamentary seats shall be divided according to the
   following bases:

   a. Equally between Christians and Muslims.

   b. Proportionately between the denominations of each sect.

   c. Proportionately between the districts.

6. The number of members of the Chamber of Deputies shall be increased
   to 108, shared equally between Christians and Muslims. As for the
   districts created on the basis of this document and the districts
   whose seats became vacant prior to the proclamation of this document,
   their seats shall be filled only once on an emergency basis through
   appointment by the national accord government that is planned to be
   formed.

7. With the election of the first Chamber of Deputies on a national,
   not sectarian, basis, a senate shall be formed and all the spiritual
   families shall be represented in it. The senate powers shall be
   confined to crucial issues.

B. President of Republic: The president of republic is the head of the
   state and a symbol of the country's unity. He shall contribute to
   enhancing the constitution and to preserving Lebanon's independence,
   unity, and territorial integrity in accordance with the provisions of
   the constitution. He is the supreme commander of the armed forces which

are subject to the power of the cabinet. The president shall exercise

the following powers:

1. Head the cabinet [meeting] whenever he wishes, but without voting.

2. Head the Supreme Defense Council.

3. Issues decrees and demand their publication. He shall also be entitled

   to ask the cabinet to reconsider any resolution it makes within 15

   days of the date of deposition of the resolution with the presidential

   office. Should the cabinet insist on the adopted resolution, or should

   the grace period pass without issuing and returning the decree, the

   decree of the resolution shall be valid and must be published.

4. Promulgate laws in accordance with the grace period stipulated by the

   constitution and demand their publication upon ratification by the

   Chamber of Deputies. After notifying the cabinet, the president may

   also request reexamination of the laws within the grace periods

   provided by the constitution, and in accordance with the articles of

   the constitution. In case the laws are not issued or returned before

   the end of the grace periods, they shall be valid by law and they must

   be published.

5. Refer the bills presented to him by the Chamber of Deputies.

6. Name the prime minister-designate in consultation with the Chamber

   of Deputies speaker on the basis of binding parliamentary

   consultation, the outcome of which the president shall officially

   familiarize the speaker on.

7. Issue the decree appointing the prime minister independently.

8. On agreement with the prime minister, issue the decree forming the cabinet.

9. Issue decrees accepting the resignation of the cabinet or of cabinet ministers and decrees relieving them from their duties.

10. Appoint ambassadors, accept the accreditation of ambassadors, and award state medals by decree.

11. On agreement with the prime minister, negotiate on the conclusion and signing of international treaties which shall become valid only upon approval by the cabinet. The cabinet shall familiarize the Chamber of Deputies with such treaties when the country's interest and state safety make such familiarization possible. As for treaties involving conditions concerning state finances, trade treaties, and other treaties, which may not be abrogated annually, they may not be concluded without Chamber of Deputies' approval.

12. When the need arises, address messages to the Chamber of Deputies.

13. On agreement with the prime minister, summon the Chamber of Deputies to hold special sessions by decree.

14. The president of the republic is entitled to present to the cabinet any urgent issue beyond the agenda.

15. On agreement with the prime minister, call the cabinet to hold a special session whenever he deems it necessary.

16. Grant special pardon by decree.

17. In the performance of his duty, the president shall not be liable
    unless he violates the constitution or commits high treason.

C. Prime Minister: The prime minister is the head of the government. He
   represents it and speaks in its name. He is responsible for implementing
   the general policy drafted by the cabinet. The prime minister shall
   exercise the following powers:

1. Head the cabinet.

2. Hold parliamentary consultations to form the cabinet and co-sign with
   the president the decree forming it. The cabinet shall submit its
   cabinet statement to the Chamber of Deputies for a vote of confidence
   within 30 days [of its formation]. The cabinet may not exercise its
   powers before gaining the confidence, after its resignation, or when
   it is considered retired, except within the narrow sense of disposing
   of affairs.

3. Present the government's general policy to the Chamber of Deputies.

4. Sign all decrees, except for decrees naming the prime minister and
   decrees accepting cabinet resignation or considering it retired.

5. Sign the decree calling for a special session and decrees issuing laws
   and requesting the reexamination of laws.

6. Summon the cabinet to meet, draft its agenda, familiarize the
   president of the republic in advance with the issues included in the
   agenda and with the urgent issues to be discussed, and sign the usual
   session minutes.

7. Observe the activities of the public departments and institutions, coordinate between the ministers, and issue general instructions to ensure the smooth progress of work.

8. Hold working sessions with the state agencies concerned in the presence of the minister concerned.

9. By law, act as the Supreme Defense Council's deputy chairman.

D. Cabinet:

[No item 1. as published]

2. Watch over the implementation of laws and regulations and supervise the activities of all the state agencies without exception, including the civilian, military, and security departments and institutions.

3. The cabinet is the authority which controls the armed forces.

4. Appoint, dismiss, and accept the resignation of state employees in accordance with the law.

5. It has the right to dissolve the Chamber of Deputies at the request of the president of the republic if the chamber refuses to meet throughout an ordinary or a special session lasting no less than one month, even though it is summoned twice consecutively, or if the chamber sends back the budget in its entirety with the purpose of paralyzing the government. This right may not be exercised again for the same reasons which called for dissolving the chamber in the first instance.

6. When the president of the republic is present, he heads cabinet

sessions. The cabinet shall meet periodically at special headquarters.
The legal quorum for a cabinet meeting is 2/3 the cabinet members.
The cabinet shall adopt its resolutions by consent. If impossible,
then by vote. The resolutions shall be adopted by a majority of the
members present. As for major issues, they require the approval of
2/3 the cabinet members. The following shall be considered major
issues: The state of emergency and it abolition, war and peace,
general mobilization, international agreements and treaties, the
state's general budget, comprehensive and long-term development plans,
the appointment of top-level civil servants or their equivalent,
reexamination of the administrative division, dissolving the
Chamber of Deputies, the election law, the citizenship law, the
personal status laws, and the dismissal of cabinet ministers.

E. Minister: The minister's powers shall be reinforced in a manner
compatible with the government's general policy and with the principle
of collective responsibility. A minister shall not be relieved from his
position unless by cabinet decree or unless the Chamber of Deputies
withdraws its confidence from him individually.

F. Cabinet Resignation, Considering Cabinet Retired, and Dismissal of
Ministers:

1. The cabinet shall be considered retired in the following cases:

    a. If its chairman resigns.

    b. If it looses more than 1/3 of its members as determined by the

decree forming it.

c. If its chairman dies.

d. At the beginning of a president's term.

e. At the beginning of the Chamber of Deputies' term.

f. When the Chamber of Deputies withdraws its confidence from it on
an initiative by the chamber itself and on the basis of a vote of
confidence.

2. A minister shall be relieved by a decree signed by the president of
the republic and the prime minister, with cabinet approval.

3. When the cabinet resigns or is considered retired, the Chamber of
Deputies shall, by law, be considered to be convened in a special
session until a new cabinet is formed. A vote-of-confidence session
shall follow.

G. Abolition of Political Sectarianism: Abolishing political sectarianism
is a fundamental national objective. To achieve it, it is required that
efforts be made in accordance with a phased plan. The Chamber of Deputies
elected on the basis of equal sharing by Christians and Muslims shall
adopt the proper measures to achieve this objective and to form a
national council which is headed by the president of the republic and
which includes, in addition to the prime minister and the Chamber of
Deputies speaker, political, intellectual, and social notables. The
council's task will be to examine and propose the means capable of
abolishing sectarianism, to present them to the Chamber of Deputies and

the cabinet, and to observe implementation of the phased plan. The

following shall be done in the interim period:

a. Abolish the sectarian representation base and rely on capability and

   specialization in public jobs, the judiciary, the military, security,

   public, and joint institutions, and in the independent agencies in

   accordance with the dictates of national accord, excluding the

   top-level jobs and equivalent jobs which shall be shared equally by

   Christians and Muslims without allocating any particular job to any

   sect.

b. Abolish the mention of sect and denomination on the identity card.

III. Other Reforms:

  A. Administrative Decentralism:

   1. The State of Lebanon shall be a single and united state with a strong

      central authority.

   2. The powers of the governors and district administrative officers shall

      be expanded and all state administrations shall be represented in the

      administrative provinces at the highest level possible so as to

      facilitate serving the citizens and meeting their needs locally.

   3. The administrative division shall be recognized in a manner that

      emphasizes national fusion within the framework of preserving common

      coexistence and unity of the soil, people, and institutions.

   4. Expanded administrative decentralization shall be adopted at the level

      of the smaller administrative units [district and smaller units]

through the election of a council, headed by the district officer, in

every district, to ensure local participation.

5. A comprehensive and unified development plan capable of developing the

provinces economically and socially shall be adopted and the resources

of the municipalities, unified municipalities, and municipal unions

shall be reinforced with the necessary financial resources.

B. Courts:

[1] To guarantee that all officials and citizens are subject to the

supremacy of the law and to insure harmony between the action of the

legislative and executive authorities on the one hand, and the givens

of common coexistence and the basic rights of the Lebanese as

stipulated in the constitution on the other hand:

1. The higher council which is stipulated by the constitution and whose

task it is to try presidents and ministers shall be formed. A special

law on the rules of trial before this council shall be promulgated.

2. A constitutional council shall be created to interpret the

constitution, to observe the constitutionality of the laws, and to

settle disputes and contests emanating from presidential and

parliamentary elections.

3. The following authorities shall be entitled to revise the

constitutional council in matters pertaining to interpreting the

constitution and observing the constitutionality of the laws:

a. The president of the republic.

b. The Chamber of Deputies speaker.

c. The prime minister.

d. A certain percentage of members of the Chamber of Deputies.

[2] To ensure the principle of harmony between religion and state, the heads of the Lebanese sects may revise the constitutional council in matters pertaining to:

1. Personal status affairs.

2. Freedom of religion and the practice of religious rites.

3. Freedom of religious education.

C. To ensure the judiciary's independence, a certain number of the Higher Judiciary Council shall be elected by the judiciary body.

D. Parliamentary Election Law: Parliamentary elections shall be held in accordance with a new law on the basis of provinces and in the light of rules that guarantee common coexistence between the Lebanese, and that ensure the sound and efficient political representation of all the people's factions and generations. This shall be done after reviewing the administrative division within the context of unity of the people, the land, and the institutions.

E. Creation of a socioeconomic council for development: A socioeconomic council shall be created to insure that representatives of the various sectors participate in drafting the state's socioeconomic policy and providing advice and proposals.

F. Education:

1. Education shall be provided to all and shall be made obligatory for the elementary stage at least.

2. The freedom of education shall be emphasized in accordance with general laws and regulations.

3. Private education shall be protected and state control over private schools and textbooks shall be strengthened.

4. Official, vocational, and technological education shall be reformed, strengthened, and developed in a manner that meets the country's development and reconstruction needs. The conditions of the Lebanese University shall be reformed and aid shall be provided to the university, especially to its technical colleges.

5. The curricula shall be reviewed and developed in a manner that strengthens national belonging, fusion, spiritual and cultural openness, and that unifies textbooks on the subjects of history and national education.

G. Information: All the information media shall be reorganized under the canopy of the law and within the framework of responsible liberties that serve the cautious tendencies and the objective of ending the state of war.

Second, spreading the sovereignty of the State of Lebanon over all Lebanese territories: Considering that all Lebanese factions have agreed to the establishment of a strong state founded on the basis of national accord, the national accord government shall draft a detailed one-year plan whose objective

is to spread the sovereignty of the State of Lebanon over all Lebanese territories gradually with the state's own forces. The broad lines of the plan shall be as follows:

A. Disbanding of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias shall be announced. The militias' weapons shall be delivered to the State of Lebanon within a period of 6 months, beginning with the approval of the national accord charter. The president of the republic shall be elected. A national accord cabinet shall be formed, and the political reforms shall be approved constitutionally.

B. The internal security forces shall be strengthened through:

1. Opening the door of voluntarism to all the Lebanese without exception, beginning the training of volunteers centrally, distributing the volunteers to the units in the governorates, and subjecting them to organized periodic training courses.

2. Strengthening the security agency to insure control over the entry and departure of individuals into and out of the country by land, air, and sea.

C. Strengthening the armed forces:

1. The fundamental task of the armed forces is to defend the homeland, and if necessary, protect public order when the danger exceeds the capability of the internal security forces to deal with such a danger on their own.

2. The armed forces shall be used to support the internal security forces

in preserving security under conditions determined by the cabinet.

3. The armed forces shall be unified, prepared, and trained in order that they may be able to shoulder their national responsibilities in confronting Israeli aggression.

4. When the internal security forces become ready to assume their security tasks, the armed forces shall return to their barracks.

5. The armed forces intelligence shall be reorganized to serve military objectives exclusively.

D. The problem of the Lebanese evacuees shall be solved fundamentally, and the right of every Lebanese evicted since 1975 to return to the place from which he was evicted shall be established. Legislation to guarantee this right and to insure the means of reconstruction shall be issued. Considering that the objective of the State of Lebanon is to spread its authority over all the Lebanese territories through its own forces, represented primarily by the internal security forces, and in view of the fraternal relations binding Syria to Lebanon, the Syrian forces shall thankfully assist the forces of the legitimate Lebanese government to spread the authority of the State of Lebanon within a set period of no more than 2 years, beginning with ratification of the national accord charter, election of the president of the republic, formation of the national accord cabinet, and approval of the political reforms constitutionally. At the end of this period, the two governments -- the Syrian Government and the Lebanese National Accord Government --

shall decide to redeploy the Syrian forces in Al-Biq'a area from Dahr

al-Baydar to the Hammana-al-Mudayrij-'Ayn Darah line, and if necessary,

at other points to be determined by a joint Lebanese-Syrian military

committee. An agreement shall also be concluded by the two governments

to determine the strength and duration of the presence of Syrian forces

in the above-mentioned area and to define these forces' relationship with

the Lebanese state authorities where the forces exist. The Arab Tripartite

Committee is prepared to assist the two states, if they so wish, to

develop this agreement.

Third, liberating Lebanon from the Israeli occupation: Regaining state authority

over the territories extending to the internationally-recognized Lebanese

borders requires the following:

  A. Efforts to implement resolution 425 and the other UN Security Council

    resolutions calling for fully eliminating the Israeli occupation.

  B. Adherence to the truce agreement concluded on 23 March 1949.

  C. Taking all the steps necessary to liberate all Lebanese territories from

    the Israeli occupation, to spread state sovereignty over all the

    territories, and to deploy the Lebanese army in the border area adjacent

    to Israel; and making efforts to reinforce the presence of the UN forces

    in South Lebanon to insure the Israeli withdrawal and to provide the

    opportunity for the return of security and stability to the border area.

Fourth, Lebanese-Syrian Relations: Lebanon, with its Arab identity, is tied to

all the Arab countries by true fraternal relations. Between Lebanon and Syria

there is a special relationship that derives its strength from the roots of

blood relationships, history, and joint fraternal interests. This is the concept

on which the two countries' coordination and cooperation is founded, and which

will be embodied by the agreements between the two countries in all areas, in a

manner that accomplishes the two fraternal countries' interests within the

framework of the sovereignty and independence of each of them. Therefore, and

because strengthening the bases of security creates the climate needed to

develop these bonds, Lebanon should not be allowed to constitute a source of

threat to Syria's security, and Syria should not be allowed to constitute a

source of threat to Lebanon's security under any circumstances. Consequently,

Lebanon should not allow itself to become a pathway or a base for any force,

state, or organization seeking to undermine its security or Syria's security.

Syria, which is eager for Lebanon's security, independence, and unity and for

harmony among its citizens, should not permit any act that poses a threat to

Lebanon's security, independence, and sovereignty.

Appendix B: The National Pact of 1943

Source : http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Pact

The National Pact is an unwritten agreement that laid the foundation of Lebanon as a multi-confessional state, and has shaped the country to this day. Following negotiations between the Shi'ite, Sunni, and Maronite leaderships, the National Pact was born in the summer of 1943 allowing Lebanon to be independent. Among the following key points of the agreement are:

- the Maronites to not seek foreign intervention and accept Lebanon as an "Arab" affiliated country, instead of a "Western" one.
- the Muslims (Shi'ites and Sunnis) to abandon their aspirations to unite with Syria
- the President of the Republic to always be a Maronite.
- the President of the Council of Ministers (prime minister) to always be a Sunni.
- the President of the National Assembly to always be a Shi'ite.
- the deputy speaker of the Parliament has to always be a Greek Orthodox
- Parliament members to be in a ratio of 6:5 in favour of Christians to Muslims (Binder 1966:276).

A Christian majority in the 1932 census was the underpinning of a government structure that gave the Christians control of the presidency, command of the armed forces, and a Parliamentary majority. However, the generally poorer Muslim population has a higher growth rate than the Christian population. Additionally, the Christians emigrated in large numbers, further eroding their only marginal population edge, thus over time, the Christians began to wield a disproportionate amount of power. As years passed without a new census, dissatisfaction with the government structure and sectarian rifts increased, eventually sparking the Lebanese civil war (Randal 1983: 50).

Appendix C: Electoral Law
Source: Maurice Khoury, Vice President al-hakawati.net, Arab Cultural Trust

In the Number of Members in the Parliament, the Electoral Districts
Calling for the Elections, and Conditions for the Nomination:

Article No.1:
The Parliament consists of 128 members of whose ruling period lasts for four years.

Article No.2:
The structure of the Electoral Divisions complies to the following:

Beirut Province, District No.1 includes the following Areas:
Achrafieh - Mazraa - Al Saifi.

Beirut Province, District No.2 includes the following Areas:
Msseitbeh - Bachoura - Rmeil.

Beirut Province, District No.3 includes the following Areas:
Dar El Mreisseh - Ras Beirut - Zkak El Blat - Mdawwar - the Port - Mina El Hosson.

Mount Lebanon Province, the First District includes the two Casas:
Jbeil - Kesserwan.

Mount Lebanon Province, the Second District includes one Casa:
El-Metn.

Mount Lebanon Province, the Third District includes the two Casas:
Baabada - Aley.

Mount Lebanon Province, the Fourth District includes one Casa:
El Chouf.

North Lebanon Province, the First District includes the three Casas:
Akkar - El Dennieh - Bcharreh.

North Lebanon Province, the Second District includes 5 Casas:
Tripoli - El Minieh - Zghorta - Batroun - Koura.

South Lebanon Province, the First District includes the four Casas:
Saida City - Zahrani - Tyre - Bint Jbeil.

South Lebanon & Nabatieh Provinces, the Second District includes the four Casas:
Marjeyoun - Hasbaya - Nabatieh - Jezzine.

Bekaa Province, the First District includes the two Casas:
Baalbeck - Hermel.

Bekaa Province, the Second District includes one Casa:
Zahleh.

Bekaa Province, the Third District includes the two Casas:
West Bekaa - Rachaya.

Article No.3:
The Deputy Members' number for each Sect is defined in each Area, District or Casa of the Electoral Divisions, and the nomination takes place according to the Chart No.2 (attached to this Law).

Article No.4:
All voters of all sects vote to the candidates of a Division.

Article No.5:
Voting will take the form of generality and secrecy at the same level.

Article No.6:
Not any Member in the Parliament should be elected unless he is Lebanese, is registered in the Voting List, finished his twenty five years old, enjoys his civil and political rights, and is educated. It is not allowed to elect any who acquired the Lebanese nationality less than ten years period.

Article No.7:
The Electoral Organisations are called by a Decree. The period between issuing this Decree and the Electoral Organisations' meeting should be at least thirty days.
The general elections take place within sixty days proceeding the ending date of the present Parliament, except the condition where this Parliament is dissolved.
A one-day time elections shall occur for all the Districts, except for security reasons, there may be defined a special appointment for one District or more, on condition that all the elections shall occur for all the Districts within the periods mentioned in the previous paragragh.

Article No.8:
If any Seat is vacant for death reason or resignation or any other reason, then elections take place to replace the vacant Seat during sixty days starting from the date of vacancy. The Seat is considered vacant from the date of death, or from the date of the Parliament's Decision regarding the other situations or from the date of the issuance of the Constitutional Board's Decision in the Public Newspaper, in case this Board abolishes the election of any Deputy Member. The vacancy of any Deputy Member will not be filled if it occurs before the Parliament's ending date by six months or less.

Electoral Districts:
http://www.libanvote.com/lebanese9296/elections2000

North Lebanon First District: Akkar, Dennieh, Bsharreh

     5 Sunni, 3 Maronite

North Lebanon Second District: Tripoli, Menieh, Zghorta, Batroun, Koura

     6 Sunni, 6 Maronite, 4 Greek Orthodox, 1 Alawite

South Lebanon First District: Sidon, Zahrani, Tyre, Bint Jbeil

     2 Sunni, 9 Shi'a, 1 Greek Orthodox

South Lebanon Second District: Marjeyoun-Hasbaya, Nabatieh and Jezzine

     5 Shi'a, 1 Sunnis, 1 Druze, 1 Greek Orthodox , 2 Maronite, 1 Greek Catholic, 5 Shi'a

Mount Lebanon First District: Jbeil, Kesrouan

     1 Shi'a, 7 Maronite

Mount Lebanon Second District: North Metn

     4 Maronite, 2 Greek Orthodox, 1 Greek Catholic, 1 Armenian Orthodox

Mount Lebanon Third District: Baabda, Aley

     2 Shi'a, 3 Druze, 5 Maronite, 1 Greek Orthodox

Mount Lebanon Fourth District: Chouf

     2 Sunni, 2 Druze, 3 Maronite, 1 Greek Orthodox

Bequaa First District: Baalbek, Hirmel

     6 Shi'a, 2 Sunni, 1 Maronite, 1 Greek Catholic

Bequaa Second District: Zahle

     1 Shi'a, 1 Sunni, 1 Maronite, 1 Greek Orthodox, 2 Greek Catholic, 1 Armenian

<u>Bequaa Third District:</u> Rashaya, West Bequaa

       1 Shi'a, 1 Sunni, 1 Druze, 1 Maronite, 1 Greek Orthodox

<u>Beirut First District :</u> Achrafieh, Mazra, Saifi

       1 Maronite, 1 Roman Catholic, 1 Greek Orthodox, 1 Evangelist, 2 Sunni

<u>Beirut Second District :</u> Mussaitbeh, Bashoura, Rmeil

       2 Sunni, 1 Shi'a, 1 Greek Orthodox, 1 Armenian Orthodox, 1 Minority

<u>Beirut Third District:</u> Ain Mreissi, Ras Beirut, Zukak Blat, Medawar, Beirut Port and Mina El-Hosn

       2 Greek Orthodox, 1 Armenian Catholics, 2 Sunnis, 1 Shi'a, 1 Druze,

       2 Armenian Orthodox

Appendix D: Map of Lebanon

Source: http://www.theinterpretersfriend.com/indj/dcoew/lebanon.html