

After Camp David, war over Lebanon?

The grim fruits of the Carter Administration's failure

The worst fighting in Lebanon since the 1975 civil war has plunged that country into total chaos. Backed by Israel, Christian warlord Camille Chamoun and his roving bands of fascist militiamen have triggered the current crisis, by far the most dangerous in Lebanon's beleaguered history.

The deadly situation in Lebanon has arisen from the deliberate failure of the Camp David summit, and in particular of the Carter Administration, to push through a formulation for a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East dilemma. In the absence of such an overall approach, the Lebanon situation has remained dangerously unresolved, a cocked trigger for an Israel-Syria confrontation that threatens to rapidly escalate into a full-blown Middle East war.

Henry Kissinger, the architect of Camp David and the driving force behind the Carter Administration's suicidal confrontationist course, is looking to a war over Lebanon to help stem the accelerating motion toward the consolidation of a new world monetary system to replace the bankrupt International Monetary Fund. Moreover, a Lebanon confrontation would also thwart ongoing Arab diplomatic efforts to unify the Arab world against Camp David and isolate Egyptian President Sadat.

In obstructing Arab unity and the European Monetary System, Kissinger and his cohorts hope to maintain enough leverage in the Middle East to reshape the region into an anti-Soviet, NATO-style Middle East Treaty Organization that would politically ensure the continued economic domination of the region by the IMF and allied financial institutions. Kissinger's strategy would also clear the way for "balkanizing" each country into feuding sectarian camps to weaken various central governments and thus maintain top-down control over the region.

Horror in Lebanon

Chamoun and his Israeli patrons are going for broke.

"We are determined to continue the war until the withdrawal of the last Syrian soldier from our territory," ranted self-avowed Nazi worshipper Chamoun. "If there is no intervention from the civilized world, chiefly the U.S., the fighting will go on."

According to *As Safir*, a Lebanon daily, Chamoun and his henchmen are "trying to accelerate the

announced Carter initiative (for a "new charter" for Lebanon, without Soviet and Palestinian participation — ed.) through the greater deterioration of the situation."

The current Lebanon explosion was ignited by Falange-Chamoun attempts to prevent Syria from carrying out certain tactical evacuations in Beirut buildings, evacuations that, according to Cuba's *Prensa Latina*, would have "prevented a pretext for new (Falange) provocations."

The Chamounists then launched what they called "a fight to the death," carrying out "suicidal

Syrian leader: Kissinger killed Faisal

In 1975, Saudi Arabian King Faisal was assassinated. A leading spokesman for an Atoms For Peace development approach to the Mideast crisis, Faisal had consistently thwarted then U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's plans to separate Egypt from the rest of the Arab world and move towards the partition of Lebanon.

Now Syrian Defense Minister Mustapha Tlass has charged that King Faisal's death was carried out under direct orders from Henry Kissinger.

Then as now, Kissinger was the architect of a separate Egypt-Israel peace and the destruction of the Palestinian population of Lebanon.

The following are excerpts from a statement Tlass made before Syrian military cadets, as reported by the Portuguese daily *O Diario* Sept. 29, 1978:

"Tlass affirmed that the assassination was carried out by orders of ex-State Secretary of the U.S. Henry Kissinger.

"After praising the late monarch for his comprehension of the Syrian nationalistic position,' Tlass then turned to Egyptian President Anwar Sadat asking: "'Do you want me to remind you who killed him? He was killed by the American secret services under orders of his friend Kissinger.' "

provocations" against Syrian peacekeeping forces stationed in Lebanon.

The Syrian response, in the face of this onslaught, was swift and overwhelming, reflecting a strategic decision on the part of the Syrian government to no longer tolerate Chamounist Israeli provocations and to eliminate the rightists' sources of political and military power.

After only three days of intense fighting, the Syrians had dealt the Chamounists a heavy blow. The two bridges linking East Beirut to the port of Junieh, the source of supplies for the rightist forces, were taken by the Syrian troops. The Christian stronghold of Ashrafiyeh in East Beirut was bombarded by Syrian shells, while the Syrian navy shelled Falangist-Chamounist coastal positions.

While the Kissinger-allied press is running commentaries about "Syrian genocide against the Christians," Chamoun and his allies are responsible for the murder of Lebanon's Christian population. The Oct. 3 *Washington Post* quoted a Chamounist militiaman, who had admitted to receiving two years of military training in Israel. "It's them (the Syrians) or us," he said. "We want the Syrians to try to come to get us, but they won't. They're scared they'll be killed."

This astonishing admission that the Chamounists want thousands murdered to further their own feudal-warlord aims was confirmed by Chamoun himself. Following an appeal to the Lebanese nation by Lebanese President Elias Sarkis to stop the fighting and to cooperate with him in putting together a peace plan, Chamoun declared, "The only thing left for Sarkis now is to resign." All of Chamoun's actions are tailored to force Sarkis's resignation, and to bring about the "internationalization" of the situation through Israel and-or U.S. intervention.

The insistence of the diehard Chamounists to wage war has all but destroyed what still remained of Beirut after the civil war. One-third of the capital city lies in ruins, and thousands are dead. Water, electricity, and telephones are all cut off. Hospitals, packed full with the wounded and dying, are turning away patients.

The city, once the jewel of the Middle East, is gone.

Arabs reject Camp David

Spurring the Chamounists on is the refusal of the entire Arab world to buy the Camp David deal worked out at the summit last month. All hopes that Jordan or Saudi Arabia will get involved in the Camp David "step-by-step" approach have been shattered. Despite U.S. diplomatic efforts through Secretary of State Cyrus Vance and his understudy Alfred Atherton to convince them otherwise, both Jordan and Saudi Arabia have made it clear that Camp David was and is not the framework for a Middle East peace.

Similarly, West Bank Palestinians have refused to be wooed into supporting the Camp David accords. Following a meeting in Jerusalem, 100 leading West Bank Palestinian mayors, civil administrators, pro-

fessionals, and intellectuals announced "total opposition" to the Camp David agreements, declaring them to be in "blatant" contradiction with the will of the world and the national rights of the Palestinians." None of the leaders will participate in the local governing councils that the Camp David accords call for. The leaders reiterated that only the Palestine Liberation Organization can be considered the legitimate representative of the Palestinians.

Franco-Arab diplomatic offensive

A double-pronged offensive led by France, Saudi Arabia, and Iraq is currently underway to stabilize the Lebanese powderkeg and at the same time pull Sadat and Egypt out of the Camp David quagmire. This coordinated Franco-Arab strategy is aiming at the nullification of the Camp David separate peace agreement between Egypt and Israel as the immediate precondition for a resolution of the Lebanese crisis.

The manner in which the Arab world has chosen to resolve the Mideast crisis is based on a war-avoidance perspective of economic development. This approach is somewhat mirrored in the latest call from the Iraqi government — a proposal which is supported by Saudi Arabia — to offer the Egyptian government a whopping \$5 billion yearly for a period of five years, if Sadat renounces Camp David. Calling for massive Egyptian development programs, Iraq and Saudi Arabia are presently organizing an Arab summit around such a development outlook. So far Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Bahrain have officially supported the Iraqi summit initiative.

The transformation in Iraq's Mideast strategy is key in this light. Shedding its ideological isolation, Iraq is moving back into the Arab fold, and calling for joint action to unify Arab ranks. At a meeting of the Arab Economic and Social Council, the Iraqi Trade Minister along with Arab League head Mahmoud Riad stressed the need for joint Arab action in fighting underdevelopment in the region. Linking the struggle against backwardness to the Palestinian question, the Trade Minister said, "Economists combatting backwardness in Mauritania and Sudan are fighting for the liberation of the Palestinian people."

Iraq is also focusing on mending fences with its traditional enemy — Syria. At the above-mentioned Arab Economic Council meeting, the Iraqi spokesman declared that Israel has for too long fanned rivalries in the Arab world as a lever of control. On October 4, the Iraqi News Agency (INA) announced that Iraqi President Bakr sent a message to his Syrian counterpart, Assad, praising his "positive stance on confronting the common danger in Lebanon," i.e., Israel and the Falange.

In the last 48 hours the French government of Giscard d'Estaing has moved decisively to intervene into the Lebanon bloodbath. Seen within the overall context of a UN initiated peacemaking role, France's initiative has received the support of UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim. The French plan, which calls

for an immediate ceasefire and the expansion of the Syrian-dominated Arab Deterrent Force with Saudi and Sudanese troops, also provides for a mixed Christian-Muslim Lebanese army unit to act as a buffer between Falangists and Syrians in East Beirut. Already Radio Israel is reporting the French plan as the "Franco-Saudi" proposal, because of d'Estaing's meeting with Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saudi in Paris on Oct. 4.

In an interview on CBS on October 5, U.S. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance warned that it was increasingly difficult to restrain Israeli intervention into Lebanon and called for an immediate implementation of the French plan. In addition, Vance called for an Arab summit of the Arab members of the Arab Deterrent Force (United Arab Emirates, Sudan, Saudi Arabia and Syria) to discuss the French strategy.

France criticizes Camp David, proposes its own plan

In an editorial published in Le Figaro Oct. 3, foreign affairs analyst Paul-Marie de la Gorce places the current events in Lebanon in the context of the separate deal worked out at Camp David:

Let us take things as they now stand. The fact is that the Syrian army will not tolerate on its rear flank the existence of Maronite militias, whose leaders — no one ignores — have been in contact with Israel since the civil war began. . . . They are pressed into action to the extent that President Sadat's policy has brought about the near-disappearance of the "southern front" of the Israel-Arab theater and that Syria remains almost isolated on the "northern front."

It was thus predictable that they would want to put an end to the existence of the Maronite militias, suspected of links with Israel. This is what's happening. . . . But what the patriarchs — Maronite, Greek Catholic, Greek Orthodox — fear is that the fate of the Christian communities as a whole will be linked to that of the troops of Camille Chamoun and the Gemayel family. . . .

President Carter — perhaps made over-confident by his experience at Camp David — thinks that a general conference on Lebanon could settle the affair. The truth is that it could not, without taking into account the context in which it takes place: either the Lebanese will agree together to organize coexistence between their different communities and with the Palestinians, who will inevitably stay on their territory until their problem has been settled; or Lebanon will remain a closed camp of forces confronting each other in the interminable Israeli-Arab conflict.

In an interview with French radio correspondents at the United Nations Oct. 3, French Foreign Minister Louis de Guiringaud outlined his proposal for a cease-fire arrangement in Lebanon in the following terms:

On the basis of the conversations that I have had with officials (from Kuwait, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syria and others — ed.), I suggested last night a process to try to reach a cease-fire in Beirut, an effective and lasting cease-fire. Because, before trying to deal with the problem of Lebanon, we have to stop the fighting, stop the massacre. And this process would be the following: it would consist of a redeployment of the Arab deterrence forces in Beirut, and the interposition between this Arab force and the Christian militias of elements of the Lebanese army made up equally by Christians and Muslims in the hope that this would permit an end to the fighting.

I have even proposed that the French Ambassador in Lebanon and some of his collaborators take part, as witnesses, in the talks between military commanders in order to guarantee that there be no future disagreement over the interpretation of what would be decided. . . . This (proposal) was immediately accepted by the Lebanese authorities. . . . Before being able to talk about a conference which would discuss the future of Lebanon (President Carter's proposal for a conference — ed.), we must first stop the fighting, this is what we are committed to for the moment. . . . What I am proposing is a French initiative, which would not involve United Nations intervention. . . .