

Aoun exposes plot to partition Lebanon

This statement was released by Lebanese Prime Minister Gen. Michel Aoun's office, following a press conference at his headquarters on May 2.

1) Prime Minister Aoun favors diplomatic means to continue the liberation efforts. He will cooperate with the Arab [League] initiative, but if it fails he will use other alternatives. The military means is never a goal in itself; it had the effect of attracting the world's attention.

2) The Syrians blockaded the legal ports of Beirut and Jounieh to put the free Lebanese areas under siege. We never closed the legal ports of Sidon and Tripoli and Tyre. All we did was to apply international and Lebanese laws.

Moreover, the Syrians blockaded the land passages between liberated areas and Syrian-occupied areas.

3) As a citizen whose country is occupied, I have the duty and the right to liberate my country. But still I was not the first to open fire. The Syrians opened fire first and we refrained from riposting until it was a matter of self-defense. Then we retaliated against Syrian military targets.

We are a people and an army that will go on resisting Syrian and Israeli occupations.

4) The fruits of any resistance cannot be instantly gathered. It is a long process that we are determined to continue. We have opened a breach in the Syrian wall in Lebanon. We have reintroduced the Arabs into Lebanon after their ouster by the Syrians.

There is no longer a Syrian monopoly in Lebanon.

5) The plot against Lebanon exploded in daylight: It

is the partition of Lebanon between the Syrian and Israeli influences, with the approval of international powers. But an unveiled plot is no longer effective. The Arabs and the world have their attention on the Lebanese dossier. From now on we will be patient and resistant.

6) The port issue is no longer an important one, now that the Syrian presence and the eventuality of a Syrian withdrawal are clearly considered. We also have similar demands to discuss with the Arab envoys, such as Halate airport.

7) The Syrians have always tried to push us into the Israelis' arms, to use this as a pretext with the Arabs for the occupation of Lebanon and the Syrian brutal military reactions to any Lebanese resistance stand. Both Syrians and Israelis agree upon occupying Lebanon. The Arabs will have to go to the U.N. to get the Israelis out, but they have first to get the Syrians out.

8) I always attacked the U.S. administrations, but never the American people. The U.S. is a superpower and has a responsibility, because it leads the free world, and because we are part of the free world, we expect the support of the U.S.

We have the right to see our political and human rights supported by the U.S. and we have the right to influence U.S. public opinion to change the administration's silence.

9) The plot against Lebanon also requires that we tie the issue of liberation to the reforms. They are important, but how can you relate one issue to another? Liberation is not only the Christians' duty. Muslims are starting to participate. Relations between Christians and Muslims must be based upon entente and not hegemony.

I wish all Lebanese could meet at a round table. I will not be there, because I do not foresee a political role for myself in the future. But I urge them:

a) Not to represent a foreign dimension in Lebanon, but a Lebanese dimension abroad.

b) Not to try to impose themselves on the other part.

core of the regime, the Pasdarans (Revolutionary Guards). This has reopened the proposal originally sponsored by the Pasdarans for dismantling or neutralizing the regular armed forces, within the context of the upcoming constitutional reforms, set for late summer.

Internationally, Iran is becoming further isolated. Especially hit is the connection to West Germany, which has traditionally been the major Western outlet for Iranians of all factions. That relationship has survived many crises, allowing the Iranians to keep an open window to Europe and the United States. The closing down of that connection is one

way to corner Iran into a lonely relationship with the East bloc countries. Hence, the West German Embassy in Teheran has been denounced as a "nest of spies" by the Iranian media—a characterization last used in reference to the U.S. Embassy in Teheran in 1979, when the U.S. hostages were seized there. On April 25, Mahmud Vaezi, the director of the European and American department of the Iranian foreign ministry, traveled to Bonn to announce that as a result of Bonn's behavior during the Salman Rushdie affair, as well as Bonn's relations with the "spies," Teheran was going to drastically curtail its trade relations with Germany.