Chapter VI

ISRAEL'S SECOND INVASION OF LEBANON: OPERATION PEACE FOR GALILEE
Barely ten months after the ceasefire, on 6 June 1982 Israel launched a massive land, sea and air invasion of Lebanon code-named 'Mivtsa Shalom ha Galil' (Operation Peace for Galilee). At the beginning of the invasion Israeli spokesmen announced that their aim was to drive the PLO beyond a line twenty-five miles from the border so that according to the Israeli Chief of Staff, 'Israel would no longer be within PLO artillery range'.\(^1\) Within a few days, however, the Israeli army had gone well beyond the twenty-five mile zone. When commando units tried to land on the beaches near Beirut, the original and announced objective was soon shown to be a smokescreen for the real advance to Beirut which had always been in the minds of the military and political planners. The operation was not a limited one like the March 1978 invasion. There were deeper and more fundamental objectives associated with the June 1982 invasion. These were: (a) crushing and destroying the PLO both as a political and military force in Lebanon (b) inflicting a humiliating defeat on the Syrian army in Lebanon so as to effect its total or partial withdrawal (c) installation of Bashir Jumayil as the President of Lebanon and imposition of Lebanese Front control throughout the Lebanese polity; and (d) signing of a peace treaty with Lebanon.

The invasion was ambitiously conceived as triggering a chain reaction, each stage leading logically and inevitably to the next. The destruction of the PLO infrastructure in Lebanon and the defeat of the Syrian army there was expected to pave the way for the reconstruction of the Lebanese state and political system under the hegemony of Israel's allies. The Israelis calculated that once the PLO was crushed and the Syrian military power in Lebanon destroyed, the internal balance of power would tilt in favour of the Christians. The Lebanese Front led by the Phalangists would emerge as the predominant force in the country and with the leverage provided by the IDF's presence it would be in a position to install Jumayil as the President of Lebanon.

The government of Jumayil, dependent as it would inevitably be on Israel, would then sign a formal peace treaty with the latter. This treat would satisfy two long-standing Israeli ambitions with regard to Lebanon. First it would accord Israel full diplomatic recognition and second, it would provide effective Israeli control over South Lebanon.2

The invasion had an extra-Lebanese objective as well. By destroying the PLO in Lebanon, Likud leaders hoped to force the inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza to accept

their Diktat, the autonomy plan offered by Menachem Begin. Begin's autonomy plan for the West Bank and Gaza, a clear attempt to gain full control of the occupied territories by legal means, had been rejected by almost all parties. Israeli officials repeatedly attributed this rejection to PLO incitement and intimidation. The Begin government believed that if the PLO could be destroyed as an organization, Palestinian nationalism, fueled by perception of PLO strength, could be broken and suppressed, and those Palestinians living under occupation would have no choice but to acquiesce in the extension of Israeli sovereignty over all of historic Palestine.

3. The Camp David accords committed the parties, Egypt and Israel, to develop transitional arrangements for the West Bank and Gaza for a period not exceeding five years. The accords spoke of full autonomy to the inhabitants of the territories and the constitution of a self-governing authority. Camp David led to a lengthy diplomatic exchange between the parties on the form and shape that the Palestinian autonomy on the West Bank would take. The Begin government approached the autonomy negotiations with a position compatible with the ideological stance of its head. Begin saw the five year autonomy period as a transition towards annexation of the West Bank and Gaza, not as a transition towards some kind of compromise solution over these territories. He insisted that autonomy should be given to the inhabitants, not to the territory. In effect this meant continuation of Israel's rule in the territories during and after the five year transition period.

(1) Making of the Invasion

Preparations to launch this formidable invasion had started almost immediately after the ceasefire of July 1981. The ceasefire had resulted in a strategic as well as political setback for Israel. The continued deployment of SAM missiles in Lebanon not only extended the range covered by Syrian air-defence but more important constituted a direct violation of the Red Line agreement of 1976. Israel's failure to remove the missile batteries had resulted in a loss of credibility. The Likud government was apprehensive that this failure could be interpreted in Damascus as a sign of weakening resolve and serve as a precedent for further violations. It might even embolden Damascus to increase its military pressure on the Lebanese Front and compel the latter to accept Syria's hegemony in Lebanon. Prime Minister Begin, therefore, became determined to initiate a decisive move against Lebanon, one which would completely redraw the political map of Lebanon.

Within weeks of its formation in early August, the second Begin government began to talk in unequivocal terms of the need to transform the political scene in Lebanon. In September 1981, Philip Habib put forward a plan calling for a withdrawal of heavy weapons by the PLO from South Lebanon in return for the removal of IDF personnel from Haddad's 'Free Lebanon'. Ariel Sharon, the new Defence Minister countered this with a plan of his own which called for the
eviction of all Syrian and Palestinian forces from Lebanon. Addressing party workers of the Herut a little while later Sharon declared that Lebanon was at the top of the list of Israel's national security concerns. "Israel's objective" he said "is to see to it that Lebanon becomes an independent state that will live with us in peace and be an integral part of the free world, as well as solve the problem of the Syrian presence in the country". The crux of his argument was that unless Lebanon had a government that would sign a peace treaty with Israel everything can revert to its former state. And a government of that kind cannot come into being as long as the terrorists control Southern Lebanon and two-thirds of the city of Beirut and as long as the Syrians control whole sections of Lebanon. In other words, it is impossible to deal with this subject without taking care of the Syrians.

Sharon was even more explicit in lectures before military personnel and in one of these professional sessions spelled out in great detail Israel's war plan. He stated:

I am talking about an action that will mean destroying the terrorist organization in Lebanon in such a way that they will not be able to rebuild their military and political base. It is impossible to do this without running into the Syrians. The question is how to preserve [the advantage of] such a new situation, for there is nothing worse than a military action on our part one day and having them renew the shelling of Kiryat Shmoneh the next. It is possible to achieve [a long lasting change] on conditions that a legitimate

regime emerges in Lebanon, not a puppet government; that it signs a peace treaty with Israel; and that it becomes part of the free world. In order to establish a government of that kind. You need sixty-six of the ninety deputies to the Lebanese Parliament, and a list of deputies will be prepared. All this demands extreme caution and waiting for the right moment....

Meanwhile, operational plans for a large-scale invasion of Lebanon, drawn up some time back, were taken out of IDF files, revised and updated. The approaching end of President Sarkis's term of office (23 September 1982) and the need to elect a successor between May and September provided a sense of urgency to the Israeli military planning. The Syrians were trying to replace Sarkis with Suleiman Franjieh, a sworn enemy of Jumayil. If Israel wanted to install Jumayil as the next President of Lebanon, it was imperative that the IDF should be in Beirut at the time of the presidential elections.

In November, Jumayil was informed by Sharon about the impending Israeli invasion. He was told to begin preparations for the forthcoming presidential poll and ready the Lebanese Forces to take part in a full-scale war. In the second week of January 1982, Sharon undertook a secret visit to Beirut to discuss with Jumayil, the role of the

6. Ibid., p.42.


Lebanese Forces in the projected Israeli invasion. Soon thereafter, Chief of Staff Raphael Eitan visited Beirut accompanied by the Commander of the IAF and a host of army specialists to chalk out combat plans centering on the capital. Military planning and consultations with the Lebanese Front continued throughout April and May to the point where Major General Amir Drori, Officer-in-Charge, Northern Command observed that this was one of the most thoroughly planned war ever to be launched by Israel.

Apart from meticulous planning, the Begin government also acted to mobilise American support for the planned Israeli invasion. In February the Director of Israeli Military Intelligence Yehoshua Saguy was sent to Washington to apprise the Reagan administration regarding Israel's war plans and obtain a tacit approval for a ground operation in Lebanon. Washington had been aware of Israel's intentions during the months preceding Saguy's visit. Like the Israelis, the Americans had come to the conclusion that a fundamental change had become necessary in Lebanon and

11. Schiff and Yaari, n.4, pp.51-54.
12. Ibid., p.67.
13. In October 1981 when Secretary of State Alexander Haig had met Begin at Sadat's funeral, Begin had told him, "that Israel had begun planning a move into Lebanon...." Haig also notes that he knew of Sharon's visit to his Phalangist allies in Beirut. Beyond cautionary abstractions the Reagan Administration never did once try to dissuade Israel from going ahead with its military planning. See Alexander H. Haig, *Caveat: Realism, Reagan and Foreign Policy* (New York, 1984), pp.323-27.
viewed Syria's and PLO's influence on the country's political system as major obstacles to its rehabilitation. The US was nevertheless opposed to a large-scale Israeli invasion directed against Syria and the PLO at that point of time. The US government's principal concern was that a war in Lebanon might jeopardize the completion of Israel's withdrawal from the Sinai and consequently the stability of the Husni Mubarak regime in Egypt. It, therefore, sent a note to begin through Saguy warning against a large-scale military operation in Lebanon.14

With the completion of the Israeli withdrawal from Sinai in April 1982, the mood of the Reagan administration began to change. It became increasingly prepared to condone a large-scale Israeli invasion of Lebanon. The risks inherent in such an invasion seemed to be far outweighed by the opportunities it might produce. Though it was preferable to avoid a war, but if it was bound to happen the opportunities should be seized for bringing about a comprehensive solution to the Lebanese crisis.15 Moreover, since the PLO had become an obstacle to the American-inspired peace negotiations in the region, its destruction could


subsequently enable the US to bring about a comprehensive Arab-Israeli settlement without the PLO. 16

In the last week of May, Sharon undertook a visit to Washington to mobilise support for the forthcoming Israeli invasion. It was during this visit that the Reagan administration seems to have finally given its tacit approval to Israel's war plans. On 25 May Sharon met Haig for two and a half hours and informed the latter that an Israeli invasion was imminent. The American Secretary of State's only response was that Israel would need a clear breach of ceasefire in order to make the action acceptable in the international community. On his return to Israel, Sharon reported receiving Haig's "green light" for the invasion to Begin and the Israeli Cabinet. Within a few days Haig sent a letter to Begin affirming that the substance of Sharon's remarks to him had been conveyed to President Reagan. This letter from Haig was interpreted by Israeli officials as a sign of further encouragement. 17 Subsequently on 28 May in a speech before the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations Haig explicitly stated:

16. Echoing the Reagan Administration's perception about the expected benefits to the US from Israel's invasion of Lebanon Kissinger wrote during the second week of the invasion that the war "opens up an extraordinary opportunity for a dynamic American diplomacy throughout the Middle East... the results are congruent with the interest of the peace process.... The Lebanese crisis creates an opening for American diplomacy to overcome the deadlock in the autonomy talks between Egypt and Israel." See Washington Post, 16 June 1982.

Lebanon today is a focal point of danger... and stability of the region hangs in the balance.... The Arab deterrent force, now consisting entirely of Syrian troops... has not stabilized the situation.... The time has come to take concerted action in support of both Lebanon's territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders and a strong central government capable of promoting a free, open, democratic, and traditionally pluralistic society.

Haig's remarks coming just a week before the Israeli invasion was a clear indication of the fact that the US had given its tacit approval to Israel's military venture in Lebanon.

Assured of American support and with military preparations for the war nearing completion, Israel began to look frantically for a pretext to launch the invasion. From early January 1982, Israel had undertaken an explicit provocation campaign in an attempt to elicit a response from the PLO which would then give Israel an excuse for launching its war. The campaign had begun when four Israeli fighters flew over Syrian missile sites in the Biqa valley. Soon thereafter Haddad's troops (in effect part of the Israeli army) let off 5,000 rounds of machine gun fire and 40,000 rounds of small arms fire during "training exercises" in Yarin. UN observers reported the use of Israeli tanks in these manoeuvres and called the whole action "intensive, excessive and provocative". On 8 February a convoy of Israeli buses


carrying heavily armed troops entered Lebanon and advanced close to PLO positions in Southern Lebanon. This display of force was described by the Israelis as 'a recreational trip'. Further incidents of this nature occurred throughout the spring. On 21 April Israeli finally broke the nine-month old ceasefire with a still more provocative action, bombing PLO centres in Beirut.

None of these actions succeeded in eliciting a PLO response that could serve as a pretext for the planned invasion. The PLO restraint during the spring of 1982 may be attributed to three factors: (a) it did not want to diminish the political and diplomatic advantages of being seen as the victims of Israeli actions (b) it did not want to provide Israel with a pretext for further attacks or a large scale invasion, and (c) it wanted to continue to appear as a responsible party to the ceasefire agreement of July 1981.

The smaller, more radical groups within the PLO, however, were getting restive with the PLO's policy of restraint. The PLO high command knew that if the Israeli provocations continued, it would not be able to restrain these radical elements for long. On 9 May Israel again bombed PLO positions in Beirut and South Lebanon. This time Arafat sanctioned a very mild form of artillery shelling of

the Galilee directed away from settled areas. The shelling was deliberately off-mark in order to avoid casualties.\textsuperscript{22} The mild and ineffectual PLO response must have exasperated the Israelis. Time was running out. The Lebanese presidential elections were fast approaching and the IDF had to be in Beirut during the elections in order to ensure the election of Jumayil. Even as Israel was losing its patience word came on 3 June that the Israeli Ambassador in London, Shlomo Argov had been shot and severely wounded by Palestinian gunmen.\textsuperscript{23} The shooting of Argov finally provided the pretext for which Israel had been on the look out. Begin immediately convened a Cabinet meeting and proposed before it air-strikes against Beirut and South Lebanon. The plan was unanimously approved and on 4 June waves of Israeli jets struck PLO concentrations in the South and in and around Beirut. This time there was a PLO response. Palestinian gunners opened up on Northern Israel killing one civilian and wounding four.\textsuperscript{24} On 5 June the Israel Cabinet approved the launching of 'Operation Peace for Galilee' and the following day the IDP was ordered to cross into Lebanon.

\textsuperscript{22} Ibid., no.7185, 10 May 1982.

\textsuperscript{23} Argov's assailants belong to the Abu Nidal faction which was not a part of the PLO. In fact Abu Nidal's men had tried unsuccessfully in the past to assassinate Arafat and other PLO leaders. The PLO had pronounced the death sentence on Abu Nidal.

\textsuperscript{24} Helena Cobban, The Palestine Liberation Organization: People, Power and Politics (London, 1984), p.120.
(ii) Main Phases of the War

Israel's Northern Command under Major-General Drori committed to battle a total of six divisions in addition to two independent task forces below the division level. Of the six division, four were designated for the western and central sectors. The remaining two divisions and the two task forces were designated for the eastern sector. The objective of the two divisions operating in the western sector was the destruction of the PLO and establishing links with the Lebanese Forces in East Beirut. The two divisions operating in the central sector were responsible for cutting off the Syrian troops stationed in the Biqa valley from the PLO and Beirut area. Once this was achieved the Syrian troops in the Biqa would be faced with the threat of an encirclement from the West. The two divisions and the two task forces earmarked for the eastern sector would then begin their assault on the Syrian army from below i.e., from the south northwards into the Biqa (see Map 7).

For analytical purposes and as a way of ordering the rapid succession of events the invasion can be divided in four distinct phases each with its own particular emphasis.

(a) The First Phase: Sweep Across Southern Lebanon

During the first three days of the invasion Israel's major war effort was confined to the Western and Central

Map 7

The Invasion Routes of 'Operation Peace for Galilee'

Source: P. Lamb, ed., Israel’s War in Lebanon (Nottingham, 1984), p.xvi.
sectors. In the western sector the Israeli army joined by special IDF units landed from the sea rapidly advanced towards Damour, a PLO stronghold. The coastal towns on way to Damour were bypassed, besieged and then captured later on - a strategy necessiated due to the twin requirements of rapid advance and keeping Israeli casualties down to the minimum. The PLO put up only a limited resistance and sought to withdraw as much of its men and material to the north as possible.26

As compared to the western sector, the advance of the Israeli army in the central sector was relatively slower due to the rugged mountainous terrain. The aim was to reach Beirut-Damascus highway and then to cut off the Beirut area and the central sector from the main body of Syrian forces stationed in the east in the Biqa valley. An important landmark of this phase of fighting in the central sector was the capture of Beaufort castle by the men of the elite Golani Brigade. The massive fortress, situated 717 meters above sea level had over the years become a symbol of Palestinian resistance. The IAF had in the past bombed it time and again, but the IDF had never been able to storm the fortress. The Palestinians defending the fortress fought to the last man even though they knew that there was no

hope. Soon after the fall of the Beaufort, Begin and Sharon arrived at the castle and in a brief ceremony handed it over to Haddad. 27

(b) The Second Phase: War with Syria

By the fourth day of the war the whole coastal region of Lebanon had come under Israeli control. The army in the western sector had reached the outskirts of Beirut's southern suburbs and established links with the Phalangists controlling East Beirut. In the central sector, the Israeli army had reached very near the Beirut-Damascus highway though it had yet to take control of this strategic road. The Israeli forces in the eastern sector now began to exert pressure on the Syrian troops stationed in the Biqa valley taking full advantage of the fact that the latter had already been encircled from the west by the advancing Israeli column in the central sector. 28 The aim was to dislodge or at least neutralise the Syrian army stationed here. Once this was done, the Syrian capability to influence political developments in Lebanon would be severely curtailed.

On 9 June at 2 p.m. the IAF went into action attacking the Syrian air defence missile system in the Biqa. The

Syrians responded by sending out scores of interceptors into the sky in a bid to protect their millies from the Israeli attack. "The result was one of the biggest air battles in history: some 200 supersonic jet fighters targetting, dodging and firing at each other over an area of approximately 2,500 square kilometers". The Syrian Air Force was no match to the IAF. The Syrians lost ninety of their Soviet built Mig 23s and 21s with no loss to the IAF and nineteen of the SAM 2, 3 and 6 batteries were destroyed.

The air attack on the Syrian missile batteries was accompanied by a ground attack against the Syrian army stationed in the Biqa. Shorn of its air-support and heavily outnumbered the Syrian army soon found itself in a very precarious situation. In three days of intensive battle, the Syrian army was pushed back several kilometers, lost a large number of T-72 tanks and the IDF was on the verge of taking control of the Beirut-Damascus highway. In this moment of crisis, Assad secretly flew to Moscow and appealed to his Soviet allies for immediate help and protection. This prompted Leonid brezhnev to contact President Reagan on the hotline urging the American President to restrain Israel. On 11 June under American pressure Israel ultimately agreed to

29. Schiff and Yaari, n.4, p.167.


a ceasefire in the eastern sector negotiated by Philip Habib.\textsuperscript{32} The acceptance of the ceasefire was a tactical move on the part of the Israelis. Israel had already inflicted a crushing defeat on the Syrian army in Lebanon. Had it continued its drive against the Syrians, there was a likelihood of the war spreading to the Golan Heights and Soviet intervention. Israel wanted to avoid such unnecessary complications since it had already neutralised the bulk of the Syrian forces in Lebanon.

(c) The Third Phase: Siege of Beirut

Following the ceasefire of 11 June, the IDF began to focus its attention on Beirut. As pointed out earlier, the IDF had already reached the outskirts of Beirut's southern suburbs by the fourth day of the war. Now it made a concerted effort to capture strategic points on the southern fringes of the city and strengthen the link that had already been established with the Lebanese Front in East Beirut. After a fierce battle the IDF captured Khaldeh a strategic point (all roads leading south from Beirut and its suburbs converged at Khaldeh) and set up new positions at the southern end of the runways of Beirut International Airport. By the 13 of June the IDF moved into Baadba, a Christian suburb of Beirut and seat of the Lebanese presidency. From Baadba, the Israeli army moved into East Beirut and took up

positions along the Green Line dividing East and West Beirut thereby completely encircling the Syrian and Palestinian forces in West Beirut\textsuperscript{33} (see Map 8).

There had existed an understanding between the Israelis and the Phalangists that once Israel had wiped out the Palestinians from South Lebanon and effectively neutralised the Syrian army in the Biqa, the Phalangist would move into West Beirut and cleanse it of the remaining PLO and Syrian troops. Following the entry of the IDF into East Beirut Sharon met Jumayil and asked him to send the Lebanese Forces into the Muslim sector. Jumayil was, however, unwilling. During the past few days thousands of Palestinians fleeing from the South had entered West Beirut swelling thereby the ranks of PLO fighters already stationed there. Any attempt, therefore, to storm West Beirut would have proved prohibitively costly in human terms for the Lebanese Front.\textsuperscript{34}

Jumayil's decision not to send his men into West Beirut put the Israelis in a severe dilemma. All the impressive gains of the war made so far would prove futile if Israel failed at this juncture to evict the PLO and the Syrians from West Beirut. At the same time an all out


\textsuperscript{34} Rabinovich, n.26, p.113.
Map 8

The Siege of West Beirut

Source: Middle East Contemporary Survey, vol.6, 1981-82, p.147.
attack on West Beirut was certain to lead to large scale Israeli casualties. After some deliberation Israel ultimately decided not to storm West Beirut but to impose a strict siege on the city involving a complete blockade of food, fuel, water and electricity coupled with heavy land, sea and air bombardment.

Having decided to impose a siege on Beirut, it became imperative for Israel to capture the Beirut-Damascus highway. The ceasefire of 11 June had prevented the IDF from reaching the highway and the Syrian army was still in control of this strategic route. Following the ceasefire the Syrians had brought in reinforcement and were in a position to harass the IDF troops preparing to besiege Beirut. On 22 June, therefore, the IDF moved against the Syrians on a massive scale for the second time. After a fierce three day battle the IDF finally reached the Beirut-Damascus Highway and the Syrian army began to retreat eastward. The following day the IDF seized a long stretch of the highway running from Aley to Bhamdun. The threat to the Israeli troops preparing to besiege Beirut was now removed and the Syrian army was no longer in a position to break the siege by force. 35

While Israel's second offensive against the Syrians was in progress, West Beirut was being heavily bombed from

the land, sea and air. There were four days of air raids on the city which caused heavy casualties and great destruction. The low-income Fakhani area was virtually razed to the ground by IAF jets and blood-stained residents were seen wandering in the streets in a state of shock.36 The large-scale civilian casualties resulting from the Israeli bombings generated a sharp controversy in the US. On 25 June Secretary of State Haig resigned partly because of disputes over policy in Lebanon.37 With Haig's resignation, Israel lost one of its foremost champions in the Reagan Administration. On the same day that Haig resigned, Israel agreed to an American-sponsored ceasefire and for several days after that (till 21 July) Beirut was not attacked from the air.

During the week following the triumphant entry of the Israeli army into Beirut, the entire PLO leadership was in a state of near panic. Immediately after reaching Baadba, Israel demanded that the PLO should lay down its arms and unconditionally withdraw from Beirut. A part of the PLO leadership led by Hani al-Hasan saw no realistic alternative to acceptance of Israel's harsh and uncompromising demand. The very logic of the military situation, they felt


dictated PLO acceptance of the demand for unconditional withdrawal. However, as time passed and it became apparent that the Israelis were in fact reluctant to enter West Beirut, the PLO began to regain its confidence. PLO leaders like Abu Iyyad, George Habash and Nayef Hawatmeh argued that the situation was not as hopeless as it seemed and that the PLO had a good chance of defending Beirut. The Israeli army was best suited for mobile warfare and it would find it extremely difficult to fight in built-up areas with Palestinians. By the third week of June when it became evident that the Israelis were settling down for a siege, a unified PLO position had finally emerged that was mid-way between those who were calling for withdrawal and those who opposed it. According to this position the PLO would try to hold on as long as possible in an effort to wear down the Israelis. At the same time it would consider an honourable withdrawal from Beirut in return for some political gains.  

Thus on 26 June when Habib arrived in Beirut with a proposal calling for the withdrawal of the PLO from Beirut (which was almost identical with the Israeli position) the PLO categorically rejected the US proposal. At the same time the PLO High Command let it be understood that it was not averse to a withdrawal in return for some political gains for its cause. (Negotiations between Habib and the PLO (through the good offices of Lebanese premier Shafik

al-Wazzan) continued and on 2 July Arafat delivered a signed note to Wazzan in which the PLO accepted in principle the idea of evacuation from Beirut. What remained now was the negotiation of the terms for the departure. The PLO's terms formulated into an eleven-point position paper called for a neutralization of Beirut and a disengagement of forces, with a joint Lebanese-UN force under international supervision interposed between the combatants. The first stage was to include a PLO withdrawal to the camps and an Israeli withdrawal of five miles from its positions around Beirut. Finally, the position paper called for devising a formula for the continuation in some form of the Palestinian military presence in Lebanon in accord with Lebanese sovereignty.

As negotiations continued over the next few weeks, Israel began to tighten its siege over Beirut. At the start of the negotiations Israeli military planes had dropped leaflets over Beirut urging the population to move out and even suggesting two escape routes (through the Beirut-Damascus highway or northwards in the direction of Tripoli). The Israeli message virtually led to a stampede and there was pandemonium on the streets as people tried to enter East Beirut. By the fourth of July supplies of water and

39. Ibid., p.127.
40. Ibid., p.124.
41. Lamb, n.36, pp.30-33.
electricity to West Beirut had been cut off and all traffic into West Beirut was barred. This was followed by the blockade of food and fuel which soon enough led to severe shortage of bread and gas in West Beirut. Even as the siege was being tightened day by day, Israel, in violation of the 25 June ceasefire began an artillery bombardment of West Beirut destroying entire neighbourhoods at times and causing hundreds of civilian casualties. The artillery bombardment ended on 11 July when yet another ceasefire was arranged by Habib. 42

On 22 July Israeli attacks recommenced and marked the beginning of a continuous escalation of violence until the final ceasefire on 12 August. The purpose behind this new round of escalation was to pressurise the PLO to agree to an unconditional withdrawal at the earliest. The Israeli leaders probably did not believe that the PLO would ultimately withdraw from Beirut. In addition they were concerned about the extent of the political concessions that the Reagan Administration might be willing to give the organization. Thus during the following three weeks there were two serious Israeli attempts to advance in West Beirut and the intensity of aerial bombardment surpassed that in any period of the war. This final round of fighting was also marked by a determined attempt to kill PLO leaders with the help of highly sophisticated laser guided bombs.

42. Gammar, n.7, pp.143-45.
On 22 July the IAF renewed its air-attacks on West Beirut which had remained in suspension since the ceasefire of 26 June. The bombings continued for one whole week with gunboats and artillery joining in. On one particular day - 27 June - the air attack was of unparalleled ferocity as IDF jets bombed densely-populated residential areas near central West Beirut for the first time. A ceasefire negotiated once again by Habib could provide the terrified citizens with only three days of respite, as on 1 August Israeli jets resumed their bombing mission. On that day the longest non-stop air-raid of the war - fifteen hours - took place devastating large parts of the besieged capital.\(^{43}\) The IAF also resorted to pin-point attacks in a bid to kill PLO leaders. One such instance was the bombing of a multi-storey building in the Sanaye district where PLO leaders often held meetings with Lebanese officials.\(^{44}\)

Even as the air-strike was on, the IDF began a determined push into West Beirut trying to seize one by one the neighbourhoods located on the fringes. On 3 August an IDF

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44. The basement of a multi-storeyed apartment in Sanaye had been converted into a makeshift conference room where the PLO often held meetings with Lebanese officials. On 6 August minutes after Arafat, Salah Khalaf and Khalil al-Wazir had left the partment an Israeli jet dropped a laser-guided bomb directly on the building. Though the PLO leaders escaped what could have been certain death, two hundred people perished in this attack. See ibid., p.132.
unit under artillery cover crossed the Green Line at the Museum Crossing point while another armoured unit began to make advance on the southern edge of the city. Fierce fighting erupted on both fronts as Palestinians and their Lebanese allies put up a stiff resistance to the Israeli strategy of whittling down the siege parameter. 45

As the military pressure intensified in early August, the PLO leadership came round to the conclusion that there was little point in holding out any further. It began to gradually give in to all Israeli demands. It insisted on only one point - the deployment of a multi-national force before withdrawal commenced. The insistence was a reflection of PLO suspicion that the IDF would not hold its fire during withdrawal. Israel, on the other hand suspected that the PLO would not leave Beirut once a multi-national force had been interposed as a buffer. It, therefore, rejected Habib's suggestion that a multi-national force consisting of French, Italian and US troops take up positions simultaneously with the commencement of PLO withdrawal. 46

During those penultimate days of the siege as Habib shuttled between Jerusalem and Beirut to find a solution to the vexed question of the deployment of a multi-national force, Israel's bombing of Beirut reached apocalyptic dimensions. On 12 August the IAF carried out an eleven hour

45. Gammar, n.7, p.146.
46. Ibid.
non-stop bombardment of the capital. The 220 sorties flown on this day resulted in over 500 deaths. During the day President Reagan telephoned Begin twice demanding an immediate suspension of air-strike. Following Reagan's personal intervention a ceasefire came into effect that evening. Shortly thereafter, Israel declared its formal acceptance of the planned multi-national force deployment and on 19 August the Israeli Cabinet approved the US-backed evacuation plan. This plan which subsequently came to be known as the "Departure Plan" provided the ground rules for the evacuation of Palestinian and Syrian forces in West Beirut and for the deployment of a multi-national force (MNF) under whose auspices the evacuation was to take place.

(The basic goal of the "Departure Plan" was to secure the safe withdrawal of the PLO leadership and combatants from Beirut to pre-arranged destinations. The PLO was made responsible for the organization and management of the assembly and the final departure of the PLO personnel, and for ensuring that departing personnel were accompanied by a proportionate share of the military and political leadership in all stages of the operation. The departing PLO fighters were permitted to carry one sidearm each and all remaining heavy weapons were to be turned over to the Lebanese army.) The PLO was also required to turn over Israeli prisoners captured during the war to the IDF through

47. Lamb, n.36, pp.89-90.
the Red Cross. The plan finally stipulated that if the PLO failed to depart as scheduled, the MNF would be immediately withdrawn from Lebanon. 48

Lebanon made a formal request to US, France and Italy to contribute troops to the proposed MNF. On 21 August a 350 strong advance group of French elements of the MNF arrived in Beirut and took up positions in the port area and the same day the first group of about 400 Palestinian fighters set sail for Cyprus. Over the next few days 800 US Marines and 600 Italian soldiers arrived in Beirut as part of the MNF. (The evacuation of Palestinians and the remains of Syria's mechanised brigade proceeded with clockwork precision and was completed on 1 September. Altogether a total of 8300 Palestinian guerillas and 3600 PLA and Syrian troops left Beirut during the twelve days of evacuation.) 49

(d) The Fourth Phase: Assassination of Bashir Jumayl and the Massacre at Sabra and Shatila

While the evacuation of Palestinians was underway, the Lebanese Parliament was convened on 23 August under the shadow of Israeli guns to elect a new President. Hectic preparations had been going on during the weeks of siege for


the presidential elections. Jumayil's candidacy was opposed by a formidable alliance of Sunni leaders from West Beirut, parliamentary representatives from Tripoli and northern Biqa and deputies owing allegiance to Franjieh. They gave a call to boycott the elections which according to them was being held under conditions of occupation.

In order to be successful Jumayil needed the support of sixty-two deputies (two-thirds of the total strength of the Chamber) which was also the number that constituted a quorum necessary to start the election procedure. Since deputies openly opposed to the holding of elections numbered thirty, it became imperative for Israel and the Phalangists to ensure the presence and support of every one of the remaining sixty-two deputies. Israel began to exert pressure on Shiite deputies from the South not to boycott the election while Jumayil's campaign manager Zahi Bustani sought to mobilise support by offering liberal sums of money as bribe.

The venue of the election was shifted from the Parliament building in West Beirut to the Military Academy at Fayadiya barracks located in firm Christian territory. On the day of the polling Israel and the Phalangists managed to assemble sixty-two deputies. Squads of heavily-armed Phalangists were seen escorting some of them while the IDF airlifted some from the South.50 In the first ballot

Jumayil failed to win the support of all the sixty-two deputies. In the second ballot he required only a simple majority to win and this he got easily. Fifty seven of the deputies voted in his favour while five abstained.51

With Bashir Jumayil elected to the Presidency of Lebanon, Israel was well on its way towards achieving its ambitious goals in Lebanon. Within a few weeks Israel had inflicted a humiliating defeat on the Syrian army, forced PLO to withdraw from Beirut and managed to get its foremost ally elected to the highest office in Lebanon. Later developments however, were to prove that the hopes engendered by these early successes were at best premature.

The first set-back to Israel's elaborately conceived grand design came in mid-September. On the fourteenth of September, the President-elect Jumayil was assassinated in a tremendous explosion in his party's headquarters in East Beirut.52 His murder came as a major shock to the Israelis. There were fears that his death might throw the Israeli position in Lebanon into turmoil and place question marks over all the Israeli success. A situation of uncertainty


52. At the beginning of October, the Phalangists announced that a person responsible for the bomb blast had been detained. His name was given as Habib Tanyus Shartuni. He was identified as a clandestine member of the Syrian Social Nationalist Party ideologically committed to Damascus. A branch of the Syrian intelligence was rumoured to have assisted Shartuni in placing the bomb.
was created. Israel's immediate reaction was to occupy West Beirut so as to be in a position to control subsequent developments. Thus within hours of Jumayil's death, the IDF moved into West Beirut in contravention of the agreement with Habib. Begin and Sharon justified their decision in terms of maintenance of law and order. The Israeli Cabinet subsequently issued a statement claiming that the occupation had been carried out "in order to prevent the danger of violence, bloodshed and anarchy, while about 2000 terrorists equipped with modern and heavy weapons remained in West Beirut, thus blatantly violating the departure agreement." 53

(On 15 September as the occupation of West Beirut was underway a meeting was held between Chief of Staff Eitan and Phalangist officers in Beirut. It was decided that the Phalangists would enter the Palestinian refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila to clear the camps of Palestinian guerillas, capture the PLO headquarters and collect arms. The following day General Amos Yaron Divisional Commander of the IDF coordinated the details of the Phalangist entry into the camps with Elie Hobeika, the Intelligence Chief of the Phalangists and a man with long-standing reputation for violent acts against Palestinians. At night the Phalangists entered the Shatila camp passing through the positions of the IDF.)

Following the entry of the Phalangists into the camps there were numerous signs that they had become quickly engaged in the killing of civilians. On Friday 17 September General Saguy was notified that the Phalangists were carrying out a massacre of civilians. On the same day Foreign minister Yitzhak Shamir was informed by his cabinet colleague Mordechai Tzipori that the Phalangists had killed a large number of civilians in the camp. Both Saguy and Shamir completely ignored the information. When General Eitan received the same information he not only agreed to the continuation of the Phalangist operation until 5 a.m. the next day but also allowed the entry of another Phalangist until into Sabra. Sharon who was notified by the Chief of Staff by 9 p.m. on Friday that the Phalangists had indulged in large scale killing of civilians also did not order the immediate removal of the Christian forces. By the time the Phalangists were finally ordered to leave the camps about a thousand men, women and children had been slaughtered.  

The news of the massacre at Sabra and Shatila led to a storm of criticism throughout the world. More important, it touched off a tremendous outcry within Israel. Spontaneous demonstrations took place in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Haifa and Eilat. The Labor party accused the government of

54. On the massacre at Sabra and Shatila see Schiff and Yaari, n.5, pp.250-78 and Jansen, n.15, pp.91-107.
indirect culpability and demanded a judicial commission of enquiry. In response to a call by the Labor party a massive demonstration against the Begin government took place in Tel Aviv on 25 September. An estimated 400,000 people participated making it one of the largest protest demonstrations ever to be held in the country.55 Faced with this upsurge of unprecedented public criticism Prime Minister Begin was forced to appoint a commission on 1 October to investigate the responsibility for the massacres in the refugee camps in West Beirut.56

Embarrassed by the massacre and the reactions it had elicited, the Begin government hastened to withdraw the IDF from West Beirut. The MNF which had withdrawn from Lebanon after the evacuation of Palestinians was reassembled and again deployed in various parts of the city.57 Meanwhile presidential elections were held once again in Lebanon to elect a successor to the outgoing President Elias Sarkis. Amin Juamyil, elder brother of assassinated Bashir Jumayil was chosen to be the Phalangist presidential candidate. Unlike his brother, Amin Jumayil had remained untainted by


56. The Commission was chaired by President of the Supreme Court Chief justice Itzhak Kahan. It had two more members: Supreme Court Justice Aharon Barak and Major General (Retd.), Yona Erfat. Judge David Bar-Tor, the Registrar of the Supreme Court was appointed as the Kahan Commission's Secretary. A senior police investigator and two senior advocates were appointed as special investigators.

close relations with Israel. He was, therefore, far more acceptable to the Lebanese Muslims. On 21 September he was elected President of Lebanon by a near consensus vote of 77-3.58

(iii) The May 1983 Agreement

On 28 December talks aimed at normalising relations between Israel and Lebanon opened under US auspices with sessions being held alternately at Kiryat Shmoneh in Israel and Khalde in Lebanon. Several months of arduous negotiations produced an agreement which was signed on 17 May 1983.59

The agreement terminated the "state of war" between the two parties and affirmed the inviolability of the "existing international boundary between Lebanon and Israel." Thus, the 1949 GAA was abrogated. Both sides committed themselves to preventing their territory from being "used as a base for hostile or terrorist activity against the other party" by preventing "the existence or organization of irregular forces... the aims of which include incursions or any act of terrorism... aimed at threatening or endangering the security of the other

58. Olmert, n.51, p.724.

party and safety of its people." This particular provision went on to say that "all agreements and arrangements enabling the presence and functioning on the territory of either party of elements hostile to the other party are null and void." The obvious result was the termination of the 1969 Cairo Agreement between the Lebanese government and the PLO. The agreement further prohibited the entry into, deployment in or passage through either state of the military forces or military equipment of any state hostile to the other. This prohibition applied to any state not having diplomatic relations with both parties, i.e., to all Arab states except Egypt and so required Lebanon's withdrawal from the Arab Defence Pact. The agreement established a "security region" encompassing all Lebanese territory south of line drawn north of Sidon (following the Awwali River) across Jabal Baruk and across the Biqa to a point on the Syrian border northeast of Rashaya. The security region was itself divided into two zones A and B (see Map 9).

Zone B comprised the southern part of the security region, from the border with Israel to the mouth of the Zahrani river and then below an easterly line drawn north of Nabatiya and Marjayoun terminating where the Israeli cease-fire line of the Golan Heights meets the Lebanon boundary. Zone B would have been secured by a Lebanese territorial brigade with a personnel strength of 4,341. The territorial
Map 9

The 'Security Region' in the Israel-Lebanon Agreement of May 1983

brigade would have encompassed the existing local units, i.e., Haddad's forces which had been formed into a near brigade-size unit, along with Lebanese army personnel from among the inhabitants of the security region. The agreement went on to say that all armed representatives of the Lebanese government in Zone B would be subordinated to the brigade commander. Haddad's militia instead of being disbanded was thus made a nucleus of the southern territorial brigade. Israel would be allowed by implication to maintain a surrogate army wearing Lebanese uniforms.

A Lebanese brigade with severe limits on its weapons and equipments was permitted in Zone A. No Lebanese military radar would be allowed to probe into Israel and Lebanon would have to give advance notice of flights of any kind over the entire security area.

Provisions governing the security region clearly revealed Israel's intention to organize a buffer zone in South Lebanon where both its military and political control would be assured - a decisive step towards fulfilling its long-held claim to South Lebanon. Moreover, the May 1983 agreement as a whole was designed in such a way as to remove Lebanon from the Arab World and place it in Israel's orbit. It flagrantly violated the Arab League charter and Arab summit resolutions; it repudiated Lebanon's Arab commitments; it treated all Arab countries except Egypt as
enemies and it established de facto diplomatic relations between the two countries by setting up 'liaison offices' (Full normalization was to be deferred until after the withdrawal of Israeli troops).

(iv) Israeli Withdrawal from Shouf

Even as negotiations were going on for an Israel-Lebanon accord, the keenly awaited report of the Kahan Commission was made public in February 1983. Its findings, based on the oral testimony of fifty-eight witnesses and 180 statements from 163 others, were a sharp indictment of decision making procedures. It exposed acts of omission and commission and found Israel's political and military leadership responsible for what happened in the camps but only indirectly.60

The Commission insisted that the Chief of Staff General Eitan "should have known and forseen" the possibility of Christian vengeance against the camps' residents. His failure to avoid such a danger was described as "tantamount to a breach of duty"; Eitan's resignation was not called for because he was due to retire shortly. Two other officers, Director of Military Intelligence, Saguy and the Divisional Commander in Beirut Amos Yaron were severely reprimanded.

The Commission was unable to accept that Prime Minister Begin had been absolutely unaware of the danger of Phalangist reprisals and cited him for "indifference", "lack of involvement" and a "certain degree" of responsibility. The Foreign Minister Shamir was said to have erred through insensitivity and by not heeding the warning of a Cabinet colleague. The sharpest condemnation was, however, reserved for the Defence Minister Sharon. He had made a "grave mistake" by ignoring the dangers inherent in permitting the entry of the Phalangists into the Palestinian camps. In the opinion of the Commission, Sharon bore "personal responsibility" and was therefore urged to draw the "appropriate personal conclusions regarding the failing revealed in the manner in which he discharged the duties of his office". The implication of this was clear - Sharon should voluntarily resign. Should he fail to do so the Commission suggested that the Prime Minister should exercise his authority to remove Sharon from office.

The debate that followed the publication of the Kahan Commission findings accentuated the divisions within. On the one side were those who insisted that Sharon must resign. On the other were those who felt that the Commission had set extremely high and unrealistic standards for official behaviour and political responsibility.

The national debate took a violent turn on 10 February. Towards the end of a Peace Now demonstration
demanding Sharon's resignation opposite the Prime Minister's office, a hand grenade was thrown into the midst of the demonstrating crowd. A Peace Now activist Emile Grunzeig was killed and several others injured. 61

In this charged atmosphere the Begin government considered how best to deal with the crisis that had erupted following the publication of the Kahan Commission's findings. In an attempt to defuse the crisis the Cabinet ultimately resolved to endorse the Commission's report including its recommendation that Sharon resign. Sharon refused to shoulder the sole blame or resign. Sharon's intrasigence threatened to topple the government but it was saved at the last moment by a compromise formula: on 13 February Sharon relinquished his Defence portfolio but continued to remain in the Cabinet as a Minister without portfolio. 62

The repercussions over the Sabra and Shatila massacre were only one aspect of Israeli concern over Lebanon. The other was an upsurge of protest over the growing casualties being suffered by the IDF, particularly in the Shouf.

One of the gravest errors Israel had committed in the Summer of 1982 was to allow the Lebanese Forces to send

62. Ibid., 14 February 1983.
advance parties to the Shouf. The Lebanese Forces moved in under Israel's protective canopy and began to forcibly eject Druzes from their homes and villages in an effort to impose its control over the Shouf. The Druze are a warlike community and they reacted violently. In the initial stages of the Maronite-Druze conflict, the Lebanese Forces had the full backing of the IDF.\(^{63}\) The Israeli support for the Lebanese Forces, however, led to severe criticism from the highly respected Druze community in Israel. There are about 60,000 Druzes in Israel, primarily concentrated in the vicinity of Haifa and the Galilee. The community is well known for its loyalty to the Israeli state and a large number of Druze serve in the Israeli army.\(^{64}\)

The events in the Shouf prompted the Israeli Druzes to stage demonstrations and petitions and there were reports that some Israeli Druzes had deserted the IDF and volunteered for service with Walid Junblatt's militia.\(^{65}\) Concerned with these developments Israel hastened to adopt a more neutral position in the Druze-Maronite confrontations. Taking advantage of the change in Israeli attitude the Druze began a systematic campaign aimed at driving out the Lebanese

\(^{63}\) See Schiff and Yaari, n.4, pp.242-45.

\(^{64}\) For an in-depth study of the Israeli Druze Community see Gabriel Ben-Dor, The Druzes in Israel (Jerusalem, 1979).

\(^{65}\) Jerusalem Post, 20 July 1983.
Forces. The result was violent Druze-Maronite conflict throughout the region during the first half of 1983. The IDF whose role was reduced to unpopular policing functions often found itself caught in the crossfire. More Israeli soldiers were being killed or wounded in the Shouf than in other parts of Lebanon. The growing IDF casualties soon led to demands in Israel for the withdrawal of the Israeli troops from Lebanon. In May, 2500 demonstrators assembled near the Knesset under the banner of 'Parents against Silence' to protest Israel's continued presence in Lebanon. This wave of protest reached a peak with a massive rally in Tel Aviv held on 4 June 1983. Sponsored by Peace Now it brought together nearly 150,000 people, supporters of disparate groups formed to oppose the war such as the Reserve Soldiers Peace Movement, Yesh Guvul (there is a limit), Parents against Silence, and the Committee to End the War in Lebanon.

As the inter-communal situation in the Shouf deteriorated, the pressure on the Begin government to withdraw the IDF from this troubled region mounted. On 6 July the Cabinet signalled its intention to withdraw the Israeli army

68. Ibid., 5 June 1983.
from the Shouf and the adjacent Beirut area.\textsuperscript{69} On 20 July the Ministerial Defence Committee unanimously approved the IDF's plan to withdraw to a line corresponding roughly to the contours of a security zone 45 kilometers north of the Israeli border along the Awwali river.\textsuperscript{70} The building of a new line along the Awwali, just north of the town of Sidon began soon thereafter and continued over the next few weeks. On 4 September 1983 in a swift and casualty-free move, the IDF withdrew from the Shouf and Beirut area and took up positions along the new line of deployment (see Map 10).\textsuperscript{71}

(v) Aftermath of the Withdrawal

The Israeli withdrawal immediately precipitated a Christian-Druze war in the Shouf as the Lebanese Forces and Druze started to seize positions vacated by the IDF. The Lebanese army entered the Shouf through Meshref the main Lebanese Front headquarters and assisted the Lebanese Forces in assaults on a number of Druze villages and towns. Large numbers of Druzes were massacred in Kafrmatta, Binnai and Bayh. The Druze community-hitherto divided between the clan of Majid Arslan, the rightist parliamentarian from Aley and the PSP - united around Junblatt to face the Lebanese Forces - Army onslaught. Fierce fighting took

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext{69. International Herald Tribune, 7 July 1987.}
\footnotetext{70. Jerusalem Post, 21 July 1983.}
\footnotetext{71. Ibid., 4 September 1983.}
\end{footnotes}
Map 10

IDF Withdrawal, September 1983

place in the strategically important town of Bhamdoun which straddles the Beirut-Damascus highway and overlooks Beirut. The Druze were supported by pro-Syrian Palestinians and Druze members of the Syrian army who had arrived in large numbers. On 6 September Bhamdoun fell to Junblatt's forces and there was a counter-massacre of Christians. Within a week the bulk of the Shouf was captured by the Druze with the help of Syria. Thousands of Christians fled from the mountain and the Shouf became almost exclusively Druze except for the Christian town of Dayr al-Qamar which was besieged by Junblatt's militia.\(^{72}\)

The war soon spread to Souk al-Gharb fifteen kilometers south-east of Beirut as Junblatt's forces tried to take control of this town. Inhabited primarily by Greek Orthodox Christians, Souk al-Gharb commanded the road from the mountains to the Presidential Palace, Defence Ministry and East Beirut. Army positions on a ridge near Souk al-Gharb were held to be the key to the defence of Beirut. When the fall of Souk al-Gharb became imminent, President Amin Jumayil appealed to the US for help.\(^{73}\) The US responded to his appeal by sending 200 Marines to Lebanon to reinforce the 1,200 stationed in Beirut as part of the MNF. US Army officers stationed themselves in Souk al-Gharb besides

\(^{72}\) Yossef Olmert, "Lebanon" in Legun, ed., n.59, pp.682-83.

the Lebanese army to pinpoint targets and direct Lebanese return fire against Druze and Syrian positions. As the Druze attack intensified, Souk al-Gharb was declared vital to the security of the Marines stationed at Beirut International Airport. The US warships present near the Lebanese coast were ordered to fire on Druze positions. 74 It was only on 25 September and after indefatigable Saudi efforts that a ceasefire could be arranged. The ceasefire negotiated by Saudi Arabia left the Druze in control of the Shouf. It also assured Syria a part in any discussion for a settlement. 75

The decision of the US government to help Amin Jumayil conquer the dissident factions in his country was viewed by the Druzes and their allies as a desertion of neutrality. Over the past one year President Amin Jumayil had gradually lost the sympathy and support of the Muslim community in Lebanon. His government's attempt to extend its authority in West Beirut had led to violent clashes between the army and the Shiite Amal in early January 1983 and again in August. The Lebanese army was seen by the Shiites as merely a surrogate for the Lebanese Forces, a view not entirely unjustified given the background of many of the officers in senior positions and the fact that


the first action undertaken by the reconstituted army had been a harsh campaign of demolishing the Shiite slums on Beirut's periphery. 76 The signing of the Israel-Lebanon Agreement in May 1983 had also generated a great deal of resentment among the various Muslim sects. Several Muslim leaders and parties of the left had come together in a front called the National Salvation Front (NSF) to oppose the concessions given to Israel in the May 1983 Agreement. 77

Given this background of strained relations between Amin Jumayil and the Muslim community, the US military support to the Lebanese army could not but have been construed as an act of hostile intervention by the Lebanese Muslims. The Marines, as the most visible symbol of American policy suddenly came under fierce attack, verbal and literal by the opponents of the Lebanese President. On 24 October, early on a Sunday morning, a suicide commando drove a truck laden with explosives into Marine headquarters near the airport; the explosion killed 241 Marines. Only minutes later, a similar operation demolished the French battalion's main centre near Beirut's southern suburb.

76. Olmert, n.66, pp.673-74.

77. The National Salvation Front comprised of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rashid Karami, Walid Junblatt, the Lebanese Communist Party, the pro-Syrian Baath Party the Syrian Social Nationalist Party, the Arab Democratic Party, the Arab Socialist Union and the Organization of Communist Action in Lebanon. Although Amal did not join the Front it extended its support from outside.
killing fifty-seven French paratroopers. Within hours of
the twin blasts, an organization calling itself Islamic
Holy War claimed responsibility for the bombings and
demanded that the American troops leave Lebanon or face the
bloody consequences. Western intelligence agencies suspect-
ed the Islamic Amal led by Husain Musawi - an offshoot of
Amal - of having masterminded the attacks. 78

An immediate consequence of the October bombings was
to further deepen the US involvement in the ongoing conflict
between the Phalangist-dominated Lebanese government and the
Muslim-leftist opposition. In early December the US carried
out heavy air attacks against Druze positions in Syrian-held
territory. The Syrians had numerical superiority and result
was that two US Navy planes were shot down and one pilot
taken prisoner. 79 Two days after the unsuccessful air-
strike, a five-hour bombardment of Marine positions near
Beirut International Airport by militiamen allied to
Junblatt killed eight Marines. In retaliation the Americans
for the first time activated the battleship New Jersey
which opened fire on Syrian and Druze positions with its
sixteen-inch guns.

78. Wilhelm Dietl, tr.by Martha Humphreys, Holy War (New York
1984), pp.174-75.

The captured pilot was subsequently released by Presid-
ent Assad in response to the initiatives of the black
American leader Jesse Jackson.
The US decision to employ the impressive fire-power of New Jersey led to further escalation of violence. There was a rash of suicide attempts on the Marines and ominous threats poured daily. The deepening American involvement and the loss of American lives led to voices being raised in the Congress for a prompt withdrawal from the Lebanese quagmire. Opinion polls conducted in early 1984 showed a dramatic decline in approval for the foreign policy performance of the Reagan Administration. The percentage of Americans who favoured a withdrawal of the Marines from Beirut also registered an increase from 35 per cent to 59 per cent. Throughout January there were rumours of an imminent withdrawal. On 7 February the White House formally announced the decision to withdraw and by the end of February most of the Marines had been redeployed to warships off Beirut.

In February 1984 as the Marines were being withdrawn, Amal and its Druze allies swept into West Beirut reinstating the Green Line between East and West Beirut. In conjunction with the seizure of West Beirut Nabih Berri, the leader of Amal called upon Shiite soldiers in the army to disobey combat orders. The American-trained army of

80. See Wright, n.73, pp.98-100.
81. Hudson, n.74, p.222.
President Amin Jumayil swiftly disintegrated as predominantly Shii units defected to Amal. Amin Jumayil sent an urgent appeal to Israel to intervene and save his government from collapse. Israel refused. The mood in Israel and in the army was clearly opposed to any further involvement in Lebanese domestic politics. On 23 February a much weakened Lebanese President gave in to persistent Muslim and Syrian demand to abrogate the controversial May 1983 Agreement. Six days later a beleaguered Amin Jumayil travelled to Damascus to work out the details of the abrogation process and on 5 March the Lebanese cabinet formally announced the abrogation of the hapless May 1983 accord. Soon thereafter the Lebanese government demanded that Israel close down its legation in Beirut. At first Israel resisted and tried to bargain with the Lebanese government but in view of the security risks involved in operating a mission in an hostile environment, finally gave in. The shortlived Israeli mission located in the Beirut suburb of Dbeiyeh was closed down in July.

84. Haddad, n.75, pp.
The Shiite Resistance in Southern Lebanon

During the first few months of the Israeli occupation of Southern Lebanon, relations between the Shi'ite community and Israel remained cordial. Although the Shiis had lent their manpower to the PRM in Lebanon before the 1982 invasion, the Shi'ite community had tired of paying the cost – in blood, sorrow and wealth – of the armed guerilla presence in their midst. Buoyed by its cordial reception in June 1982, Israel set about attempting to enlist the existing Amal organization in the South as an adjunct to Haddad's militia, particularly in areas where Haddad had no influence. While the southern leadership of Amal did not eschew a quiet dialogue with Israel, they were unwilling to follow Haddad's example of an open patron-client relationship. As Ajami observes:

The peculiar Shia relationship to the larger Arab world – they were of it, but not fully-rendered them unable to come to terms with Israel. Like Caesar's wife they had to be above suspicion. They were sure that they would not be forgiven a close association with Israel. 87

Israeli efforts during June and July 1982 to coopt Amal, therefore, failed. Nevertheless there was no outward display of hostility towards the Israeli presence during 1982 and there were a number of cases of small-scale collaboration.

87. Ajami, n.82, p.201.
Having failed to enlist the cooperation of Amal; Israel sought to emasculate the movement. It launched a campaign aimed at recruiting individual Amal members and other Shiis into a network of village militias that would operate under Israel's directions. The militia plan based on West bank Village League prototype envisaged setting up a committee of five to eight members which would act like the Israeli local council assisting the mukhtar in running local affairs. In addition every village was expected to mount a sixty-man militia that would be armed and trained by the IDF. 88

Israel's village-based militia plan also proved to be a dismal failure as both political and religious leaders in the South warned their followers not to collaborate with the Israelis. The few village militias that were created were led by men who for one reason on the other were held in disrepute by their fellow villagers. Residents of the South noted that, in may cases, the very men who were recruited to serve in the militias were the social dropouts and toughs who had been terrorizing the South for years. 89

Having failed to elicit a voluntary response from the populace to its militia plan, Israel began to use pressure and intimidation against the Shiis. On 18 March 1983, the IDF arrested Sheikh Rajib al-Hahreb, the Imam of Jibshit, a

fiery orator and highly respected religious leader. Sheikh Rajib was about to deliver a fatwa (an authoritative interpretation of religious responsibility) calling upon the Shiites not to have any dealings with the Israelis. The arrest of Sheikh Rajib sparked a wave of protests in village after village under Israeli occupation and even in Baalbek in the Biqa. Other popular religious figures like Sheikh Abd al-Karim, Shams al-Din of Arab Salim and Sheikh Said Ali Mahdi Ibrahim of Adlun soon began an active campaign against the Israeli occupation. Very quickly the IDF came close to an all-out confrontation with the most important and indeed the most powerful segment of the Shi community – the clergy.90

Shii-Israeli relationship deteriorated further after the signing of the May 1983 Israel-Lebanon Agreement. The May 1983 Agreement was interpreted by the Shiis as amounting to the ceding of the South to Israeli control. Having begun to throw off the shackles of the PLO presence, the Shii community was unwilling to tolerate domination by any foreign power – Arab or Israeli. The summer of 1983, therefore, saw a rising militancy among the Shiis of the South. The crucial turning point, in more than one respect, was October 1983 when the IDF committed a major blunder. On 16 October, the Shiis were celebrating Ashura, the tenth

90. Yaniv, n.2, p.238.
day of the Muslim month of Muharram. In Lebanon, the most important place for the remembrance of Ashura is Nabatiya in the South. On this great day of spiritual significance, an Israeli military convoy tried to make its way through the streets of Nabatiya which was crowded with thousands of people. The Shiites saw the IDF trucks as a degradation of Ashura and reacted with great hostility. The convoy was stoned and trucks were overturned. Panicked, the Israeli soldiers started firing on the crowd killing two and injuring many.

The incident was widely viewed by the Shiis of Lebanon as a great sacrilege and became a rallying cry against the Israeli occupation. It dripped with evocative symbolism, and the obvious connection between the commemoration of Husain's martyrdom and the Israeli transgression were quickly noted by Shi'i religious leaders. Mufti Muhammad Mahdi Shams al-Din, Imam Musa's designated clerical deputy and Vice-Chairman of the Shi'i Higher Council issued a fatwa calling on all Shiis to conduct "civil disobedience" and "resistance to the occupation". The Shiis were warned that those who had any dealing with the Israelis would go to hell.

91. Ashura commemorates the AD 680 martyrdom of Husain, the grandson of Prophet Muhammad, and it is the most important holy day of the year for Shi' Muslim. It is a day of great emotion, a day on which the Shiites share the suffering and the bravery of Husain's struggle against injustice and superior forces.

92. Jerusalem Post, 17 and 18 October 1983.

Sham al-Din's fatwa as well as similar ones rendered by the Shii ulama in various parts of the country seem to have sealed the fate of the Israelis in Southern Lebanon. The Nabatiya incident served as a call to arms for many who had so far avoided active resistance. Even Amal which had hitherto avoided direct confrontation began to act aggressively against the IDF.

The first major shock to the Israelis came on 4 November when a truck loaded with explosives crashed through the entrance to an Israeli headquarters compound in Tyre and detonated near the main building killing twenty nine Israelis. Following this incident there was a marked increase in resistance activities. The target in most cases were those Shiites who had dared to collaborate with the Israelis in contravention of the fatwa of the ulema. The inevitable result of this was the collapse of the village militia system that Israel had set up over the past one year. There were large scale desertions. Israeli failure was demonstrated when the Shii who had been designated the Commander of the village militias held a press conference in Beirut to announce that he had been misled by the Israelis and that he would now seek to join Amal.

In January 1984 Haddad died of cancer. His death confronted the Israelis with a new problem - finding a successor of any real stature at this crucial juncture.

95. Ibid., 1 December 1983.
After some difficulty, the Israeli coordinator for Lebanese affairs Uri Lubrani, arranged with the cooperation of senior Lebanese military officers for a retired Lebanese general, Antoine Lahad to replace Haddad. Under Lahad, Haddad's militia was turned into a regular army known as the South Lebanon Army (SLA). The SLA was also slated to take over the functions of the village militias which had disintegrated in the aftermath of the Nabatiya incident. In the long run, the Israelis hoped that the SLA would form the territorial brigade that the Annex to the May 1983 Israel-Lebanon Agreement envisaged for the Zone B of the security belt. 96

The SLA was, however, no more successful in eliciting Shiite cooperation than earlier Israeli efforts. There were hardly any Shiis who were willing to risk their lives by joining the SLA. As the occupation of the South wore on, moderation was discredited and extremism was validated. In 1984 there were over nine hundred attacks on the IDF in Southern Lebanon taking a heavy toll of Israeli soldiers. 97

As the resistance became ever more punishing, Israel stepped up its counter measures and loosened control over Shin Beth agents operating in the area. At the same time Israel began to isolate the South from the rest of the country by completely sealing off the brigades on the Awwali river.

96. Yaniv, n.2, pp.242-43.
97. Ajami, n.82, p.203.
This made crossing into the Israeli controlled sector an arduous and time consuming process and seriously hampered commerce. The inevitable result was that it further incensed the Shiites. Demonstrations and strikes against the Israelis erupted all over the South. "Sermons by the clergy became increasingly anti-Semitic. The faithfuls were reminded of the massacre of Jews in the Arabian Peninsula in the seventh century AD and promised that the Israelis were destined to meet a similar fate in Lebanon." 98

By the end of 1984 it became clear that there would be little respite by getting out of the swamp that South Lebanon was in the danger of becoming. On 18 February 1985 Prime Minister Shimon Peres succeeded in getting the cabinet to approve a staged withdrawal from Lebanon. The first stage which was to be completed in five weeks envisaged an IDF withdrawal from the Sidon area to a line on the Litani. In the second stage the IDF would withdraw from the Jabal Baruk and reposition itself in the Hasbaya area. In the third and final stage the IDF would withdraw from the area between Tyre in the west and Hasbaya in the east. The phase was, however, dependent, on the ability of the SLA to take charge of the security belt. Even if the SLA proved effective, the IDF would maintain its presence in the form of advisers and intelligence installations.

98. Yaniv, n.2, p.244.
inside Lahad's territory. Thus instead of complete withdrawal Israel intended to maintain control of a border strip, somewhat larger than that under its control from 1978 to 1982.

The first two stages of the withdrawal were completed by March 1985. Throughout the two stages Israeli officials attempted to come to an agreement with Amal. With Amal's demurral, frustration rose in Israel with disastrous effect for the Shiis who felt the brunt of the Israeli object lesson called 'Iron Fist'. With little subtlety, Israel embarked on a spiteful campaign to demonstrate to the people how the South would suffer if used as a launching pad for forays into the Israeli-controlled border strip or into Israel proper.

By the third anniversary of the Israeli invasion the bulk of the IDF had withdrawn from Lebanese territory. The SLA remained in control of the border strip buttressed by two Israeli mechanized battalions with supporting artillery. Even as the humiliating Israeli withdrawal was underway, the commander of the Lebanese Forces Eli Hobeika declared in May 1985 that the Forces would sever all links with Israel.


101. For details of Israel's "Iron Fist" policy see, Scott MacLeod, "Israel's 'Iron Fist' - Deterrence or Revenge?" Middle East International, no.245, 8 March 1985, pp.14-15.
Shortly thereafter, the Lebanese Front closed down its legation in Jerusalem and its representative Pierre Yazbek was ordered to return home.\textsuperscript{102} In a symbolic way, this incident demonstrated the final failure of Israel's grand design for Lebanon.

Conclusion

Barely ten months after the July 1981 ceasefire, in June 1982, Israel launched a massive land, sea and air invasion of Lebanon. The operation was not limited one like the March 1978 invasion. There were deeper and more fundamental objectives associated with this second Israeli invasion of Lebanon. These were (a) crushing and destroying the PLO both as a military and political force in Lebanon (b) inflicting a humiliating defeat on the Syrian army in Lebanon so as to affect its total or partial withdrawal (c) installation of Bashir Jumayil as the President of Lebanon and (d) signing of a peace treaty with Lebanon.

The invasion can be divided into four phases each with its own particular emphasis. In the first phase, the IDF conquered the bulk of the South without meeting any significant resistance. The PLO put up only a limited fight and sought to withdraw as much of its men and material to the north as possible. In the second phase the IDF moved against the Syrian army stationed in the Biqa. This

stage also involved a massive Israeli-Syrian air war during which the IAF destroyed most of the Syrian missile batteries in the Biqa.

The third phase of the invasion which was the longest involved the siege of Beirut. The siege led to intricate Israeli-Syrian-Lebanese-American interactions culminating in the withdrawal of the PLO and Syrian forces from Beirut and the deployment of the MNF. During this phase Bashir Jumayil was elected President of Lebanon in a largely Israeli manipulated election.

The fourth and final phase began with the assassination of President elect Bashir Jumayil. Israel's immediate reaction was to occupy West Beirut so as to be in a position to control subsequent developments. The assassination also triggered the infamous massacre of Palestinian civilians in Sabra and Shatila by the Phalangists. The news of the massacre led to a storm of criticism worldwide. Embarrassed by the massacre and the reactions it had elicited, the Begin government hastened to withdraw the IDF from West Beirut.

The assassination of Bashir Jumayil was a great setback for the Israelis. He was the linchpin of the elaborately conceived grand design for Lebanon. Israel had no candidate to replace him who would combine the ability to govern Lebanon with a pro-Israeli disposition. Furthermore, as a result of the Sabra and Shatila massacres, the
military campaign which had begun with the support of a broad segment of Israeli opinion, turned into Israel's most controversial and divisive war. Its initiators were subjected to the scrutiny of a commission of inquiry whose findings had a profound impact on their political futures.

Amin Jumayil, who succeeded his brother to the Lebanese Presidency was not as strong-willed as the latter. Though he went along with the Israeli connection and signed the Israel-Lebanon Agreement of May 1983, he came under tremendous pressure from the Muslims to sever all ties with Israel. Meanwhile the IDF itself gradually got sucked into the inter-communal strife in Lebanon. The growing Israeli casualties led to an Israeli withdrawal from the Shouf and Beirut area in September 1983. Within a week of the IDF withdrawal the bulk of the Shouf was captured by the Druze. Shortly after the Israeli withdrawal the American Marines stationed in Beirut as part of the MNF also withdrew. This left Jumayil in a helpless position. With no foreign power to defend his regime, Jumayil gave in to persistent Muslim demands for the abrogation of the May 1983 Israel-Lebanon Agreement and broke off all relations with the Jewish state.

The IDF which had withdrawn to a line on the Awwali river in September 1983 was soon confronted with a new challenge. The Shiites of the South rose up in revolt
against the continuing Israeli occupation. Israel at first tried to quell the Shiite revolt by unleashing a reign of terror in the South. But Israel's repressive policies only served to strengthen the determination of the Shiites to throw off the yoke of foreign domination. By the end of 1984 it became clear that there would be little respite except by getting out of the swamp that South Lebanon had become. In February 1985 Prime Minister Peres succeeded in getting the cabinet to approve a staged withdrawal from Lebanon. By the third anniversary of the invasion the bulk of the IDF had withdrawn from the South save for a thin strip of territory on the border. Born of a flawed understanding of Lebanese politics, Israel's Lebanon war was bound to end in a total disaster.