

Middle East Report by Allen Douglas

Israelis give Gemayel the kiss of death

The early Israeli pullout will leave Lebanon vulnerable to civil war and partition.

The latest step in the process of partitioning Lebanon is the projected near-term collapse of the Lebanese government of President Amin Gemayel, a scenario in which the Israelis have been delegated the leading role. The following developments confirm this Israeli deployment:

Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Arens made a surprise trip to Beirut on Aug. 16, to announce that, contrary to any wishes of the Americans or the Lebanese government, the Israeli army was pulling out of the Chouf Mountains, immediately, not by November as originally planned. "The deployment of Israeli forces, as I'm sure you understand, is motivated primarily, I would say solely, by Israeli defense interests, and therefore we cannot make the movements of our troops contingent upon arrangements that may or may not be reached in the area," he stated. The November date would of course have given the newly formed Lebanese army more training time.

Prior to their leaving, the Israelis have been arming both the Christian and Druze militias, particularly the Druze, sparking civil war. The *London Guardian* commented Aug. 15: "The evidence on the ground has led Western diplomats to the conclusion that in the desperately sensitive Aley and Shouf areas the Israelis are playing both ends—the Druze and the Maronites—against the middle, being the Lebanese army and State."

With the direct intervention of the Israeli army, the Lebanese army lost

five posts in the Chouf to Druze attacks, which prevented Lebanese reinforcements from reaching the beleaguered posts.

The Israelis are mounting a full-scale political campaign for the Gemayel government to share power more equally with the Druze, not for "humanitarian" reasons, but as a purely destabilizing move in the current tense circumstances. Arens in his Beirut press conference made a major point of this, as did Foreign Minister Shamir earlier that week. The Israelis are not only in 100 percent agreement with the Syrians on this, but are also allowing Syrian weapons through Israeli lines to arm the Druze.

Arens and Shamir held a very high profile series of meetings in Israel the second week in August with Dany Chamoun, son of the Orthodox Church controlled Camille Chamoun. The younger Chamoun has returned to politics all of a sudden after an absence of five years. Since his father is a bitter enemy of the Gemayels, this is an omen for the future of the current Lebanese government. From Israel, Chamoun repeatedly called for the Gemayel government to ratify the separate Lebanon-Israel accords negotiated by George Shultz, a move on which President Gemayel has understandably been stalling. The elder Chamoun is a longtime KGB agent of influence, sitting on the Moscow Narodny Bank and the Bulgarian Litex Bank.

A cynical deal was struck some time ago between the Kissinger-dom-

inated U.S. State Department, the Soviet Union, and the Israeli government for the permanent partition of Lebanon.

It must be remembered that the current disastrous geometry would not have been possible without the "back-channel" agreements between U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz and the Soviet Union to scrap the Reagan peace plan.

U.S. Middle East envoy Robert McFarlane is continuing the tradition of State Department treason by "opening up talks with the opposition," a typical maneuver used by the State Department to weaken or get rid of an existing government, à la the Jimmy Carter model of "talking to" the Khomeini opposition before the overthrow of the Shah of Iran. McFarlane met with one of the most outspoken of the Gemayel government's opponents, former Prime Minister Saeb Salem, and, as the *Christian Science Monitor* noted, "The Americans are listening to the voice of Mr. Gemayel's opponents in a way they have not before." In tandem with McFarlane's sabotage in Lebanon, the U.S. press is issuing propaganda to convince U.S. citizens that a government collapse is unavoidable and perhaps not so bad after all. This includes a prominent interview by CBS TV with Soviet-Syrian puppet Walid Jumblatt, the Druze chieftain, and a banner headline in the *Christian Science Monitor*, "A fuse is lit in Lebanon: Observers say the mood of the Gemayel government is like that of the final days of Nixon's presidency."

The Kissinger-Soviet-Israeli scenario is that with the collapse of the Gemayel government, Lebanon will "move more fully into the Arab world." In other words, the Israelis will keep southern Lebanon, and the rest will fall under Syrian control.