

IN THE WORLD

LEBANON

Rightist massacre may spark new war

By Our Correspondent

What had begun in mid-June as a battle between two right-wing Christian organizations has threatened to erupt into full-scale war, with more than 100 killed in Beirut in fighting between the Kataeb party and the predominantly Syrian Arab Deterrent Force. But what was the relation between the two earlier intraright battles at Ehden and Baqibeck and the fighting in Beirut? In the following analysis of the Ehden massacre, a veteran Middle East correspondent suggests an answer.

FIFTY THOUSAND PEOPLE ATTENDED the funeral of the more than 20 persons—including Tony Franjeh, son of former president Saïghman Franjeh, his wife and three-year-old daughter—massacred in Ehden in north Lebanon in mid-June by the Kataeb (Phalangists) party's elite and most disciplined troops, the SKS.

Muslims and Christians came from all parts of Lebanon not to pay tribute to the dead scion of the Franjeh clan, an undistinguished and corrupt politician, but to make plain their revulsion over the barbaric crime (the bodies, including that of the child, were riddled with bullets and mutilated) and their rejection of the Kataeb drive to dominate all Christian Lebanon.

Apparently stunned by what even they called "the earthquake" of popular reaction, Kataeb leaders claimed their troops acted without their authorization. But the assault on Ehden came only hours after the Kataeb politbureau met to decide on a plan to deal with the situation in the north; the operation involved 600-800 men, use of heavy artillery, etc., and could not have been executed without the knowledge and consent of Bashir Gemayel, chief of the Kataeb's Military Council, as well as of the United Forces of the Lebanese Front.

The massacre was timed to coincide with Israel's handover of the "security belt" that it established inside Lebanon to the rightist Christian forces in the South rather than to the UN. These forces are composed of some 500 "regulars" of the old Lebanese army and 2,000 or more Kataeb, Chamounist, and other militiamen and have been under the command of Major Saad Haddad of the old Lebanese army. They are allied with Israel, which for over two years has organized, trained and armed them. In handing over the "security belt" to them, Israel made clear it wanted to maintain *de facto* control of south Lebanon.

When the Lebanese government ordered these forces to allow the UN troops to enter the region, Haddad and the "regulars" indicated they would comply. (The Lebanese government has continued to pay the salaries of the "regulars" even though under Lebanese law any trafficking with the Israeli enemy is treason.) But the militiamen refused to allow UN troops to enter.

The day after the Ehden massacre, Bashir Gemayel publicly applauded their defiance, thus underscoring the link between developments in the north and south and confirming a Kataeb plan to establish a Christian Lebanon, stretching from north to south, dominated by the Kataeb and inevitably dependent on the Israelis.

Clashes with Syrians

The Ehden massacre climaxed a succession of armed clashes and assassinations involving constituent organizations of the Catholic Maronite, far rightist Lebanese Front. The Front's three pillars are the Kataeb, former president Camille Chamoun's National Liberal Party (NLP) and until a



The Kataeb party wants to rule Lebanon. As a first step, it must defeat rival Christian factions and drive out the Syrians.

few months ago the Zghorta-based clan headed by ex-president Franjeh. The Chamoun and Franjeh organizations are feudal groupings around a *zaim* (feudal lord and military protector). Although also a clan party dominated by the Gemayel family, the Kataeb is at the same time the largest and most structured Lebanese political party. Wealthy financiers, businessmen, lawyers, university professors and students constitute the party elite; lower middle class people, workers, small struggling farmers of Mountain Lebanon, the "Mountain Boys," provide the bulk of its storm troopers, the base.

The Lebanese Front claims to represent all Christians. It doesn't, but through its military muscle it has frightened any Christian opposition into silence. Its military forces, even the Kataeb's military forces alone, far exceed the government's.

The new army-information was supposed to be built on an equitable balance among the sects, but the Front has succeeded in staffing it from top to bottom with its own adherents and sympathizers. The largely Syrian Arab Deterrent Forces (ADF) remain the government's only recourse, but since the start of the year the Kataeb and the NLP have been engaged in a policy of provoking the Syrians, risking ever more dangerous confrontations to try to force the withdrawal of Syrian troops. After heavy clashes with Syrian troops in February and April, the Front took over security duties in large parts of the Christian zone from which, with Syria's agreement, the ADF was virtually excluded.

During and since the civil war the Front has built its own administration in the Christian zone, a fact underlined by its regular monthly collection of protec-

tion money from residents. Penalty for non-payment has been a car, home, shop or office blown up and sometimes worse.

Once the Lebanese Front assumed responsibility for law and order, Christian smugglers and racketeers operated unchecked. Quarrels among gangs of freebooters, usually attached to one or another of the rightist parties, produced some of the gun battles and bombings that have occurred with growing frequency in Christian areas. Bigger and fiercer battles pitted Maronite rightist parties against each other. In a clash in May, the Kataeb levelled to the ground the NLP party headquarters in East Beirut. Such battles usually close schools, shops and businesses and send residents to their cellars.

The rift between former president Franjeh and the Front developed over a number of issues. He opposed the "protection money" racket. Cynics said it was because he did not get his cut. Others noted that the modern American gangster-type operations of the Kataeb and the NLP violated deeply rooted traditions of political feudalism, which take seriously the *zaim's* responsibility to his clientele.

Always friendly to Syria and an old personal friend of Syrian President Assad, Franjeh also strongly objected to the Kataeb-NLP efforts to force Syrian withdrawal. He opposed the Kataeb-NLP alliance with Israel, refusing to have anything to do with it. And he could not countenance the Kataeb drive—in its own words—"to replace feudalism in the north with a party regime," that is, to extend Kataeb domination over Franjeh's domain.

Members of the U.S. peacekeeping force move in on the heels of Israeli troop withdrawals. According to the U.S., the Israelis turned over 14 positions to the UN, but left 20 for the Christian right.

The Kataeb drive into the north began during the civil war when it conquered the largely Greek Orthodox district of Kura, just below Zghorta, and "cleaned out" this longtime stronghold of the progressive Syrian Social National Party (SSNP). After the war the Kataeb moved into other northern villages and towns beginning with Basharri near Zghorta in the hope of exploiting traditional Basharri-Zghorta rivalry. (This proved to be a miscalculation: after the Ehden massacre Basharri stood with Zghorta.)

This Kataeb infiltration coupled with Franjeh's warnings that he would quit the Front if it opted for confrontation with Syria provoked the formation of a new political force. The Coalition of Maronite Deputies which included a third of the Maronites in parliament, has as its stated aim speeding national reconciliation and supporting legality as represented by President Sarkis. Its emergence suggested substantial discontent among Maronites with the hardline and provocative policies of the Lebanese Front, although the group was careful to point out that it did not oppose the Lebanese or any other Front.

The Franjeh-Kataeb dispute took a violent turn early in May when a bomb planted in a car parked in the center of Zghorta exploded wounding 40 people. This declaration of war was followed by a Syrian-arranged reconciliation between Franjeh and Rashid Karame, Sunni political boss of Tripoli and former Prime Minister, and by reports of a possible reconciliation between Franjeh and Abdullah Saade, SSNP leader and native of Kura. For the Kataeb this was treachery, a defection from the Front demanding the most severe punishment lest other defections follow.

Although Franjeh himself was hospitalized with a minor heart attack, the Kataeb and the Franjeh clan were soon in-

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CUBA

Childhood exile becomes Castro fan

By Max Gordon

THE LAST TIME I WENT TO Cuba, the group organizer was a young Washington-based travel agent named Alex who was himself Cuban-born. He had been shipped out by his parents in 1962 at age 11 with a large name tag pinned to his clothes, to be picked up by a Catholic refugee society in Miami. A few thousand children had been sent out in this fashion, Alex estimated; Catholic church-inspired rumors had it that the Revolution was going to take the children away from their parents. Many parents left with their children, or sent them to relatives and friends abroad.

Alex spent two years in a miserable, disease-ridden camp in the Everglades with little schooling, and two more years in a foster home. At that point he was joined by his parents. They had left Cuba reluctantly, he told me, but he was their only child and they believed—perhaps mistakenly, Alex opined—that he could not return.

Late in 1976 he learned that he could visit his homeland, and in November made his first trip. What he found—generally and among his relatives—made him an enthusiast of the Castro regime. A formerly ne'er-do-well uncle was now a responsible official of the food distribution apparatus, and his children were receiving a first-rate education. Among other things, he was struck by the apparent elimination of racism and the invisibility of any repressive apparatus, even police. The atmosphere, he found, was marked by relaxation and camaraderie. In Batista's day, he recalled, the armed forces were everywhere, and tension and fear were pervasive.

"I feel now as if I belong to two countries, both of which I love," he said. "I want to do all I can to bring down the barriers separating them." He was especially anxious to assist in reuniting families.

Exile trip.

He has contributed markedly in this direction. This past December, 55 young people—all Cuban-born and all taken out as children not long after the Revolution—returned for a 23-day trip, which Alex was instrumental in organizing. They were the first group of post-revolutionary exiles to go back and were greeted dramatically by the Cubans, including Castro who spent several hours with them in give-and-take discussion which astonished them.

The group was restricted to those who had left between the ages of two and 18, hence presumably not voluntary departees. The one political requirement was at least an open mind regarding the Revolution. A few were strongly socialist-minded, most were sympathetic to the new Cuba but not especially committed, and some were simply open-minded. They came mainly from upper and middle-class families, and from New York and Florida, but also from other states, Mexico, Puerto Rico and one from Spain.

The group's make-up, the time they spent with family and in a work group, precludes a charge that they were only shown "the good side." What, then, did the group find? I interviewed a pair of siblings—Armando and Ana Maria Garcia—as attractive and sharp a couple of young people as I've ever met. The church-inspired rumors had led their mother to flee with them late in 1960; Armando was 11, Ana Maria 7. The father, a businessman, had remained behind confident that Castro would not last long. After the Bay of Pigs, he joined his family. After a year in Tampa, they lived for a decade in Puerto Rico. The anti-Vietnam war campaign had introduced the children to social struggles, and they then became associated with a Cuban socialist youth group based in the U.S.

"Everyone was transformed by the trip," they told me. "The main thing is



A family reunion in Santiago between an exile and the relatives she had not seen for 22 years.

the way the people work in unity. They are so optimistic, so sure of themselves. They seem to feel that they have such strength, and are so inspired, that they can do anything. They have such a sense of power because they feel themselves so much a part of the society and contribute to its direction. Everybody talks in terms of 'we' built this new factory, 'we' did this and that, and they always put their activity in a social context: 'I do this or study that to help build the country.' This

is even true of the kids whose maturity is impressive."

The Garcias were impressed, too, by the intense popular participation in the planning process. Each work center has its plan which is reviewed monthly by the workers' assembly, freely criticized and often revised—in the main, upward. Workers described to them in detail not only the operations of their own work center, but how these fitted into the entire economy. They have "a total sense of

their part in the economic process," of their influence on that process, and this gives them the feeling that it is theirs.

Cultural activities.

While the workers' assembly discusses collectively problems of production, the union shop organization sees to working conditions. "Part of every shop committee is responsible for safety and health in coordination with the administration,"

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MIDDLE EAST

Poor get poorer in Sadat's Egypt

By T.D. Allman

CAIRO, EGYPT

THE TRAFFIC JAM ON THE CORNICHE—once an elegant boulevard beside the River Nile—was typical of the paralysis persisting from early morning to late night that has come to afflict the capital of Egypt since President Anwar Sadat began a program to "liberalize" this country's creaking economy.

Amid the potholes an aging bus packed with more than 200 Egyptians stood motionless, mired like a camel struggling in quicksand. The bus was entrapped by a honking horde of new air-conditioned, chauffered limousines carrying single passengers.

Cairo's traffic jams may afflict the high and low in Egyptian society equally these days, but that is about the only result of President Sadat's economic policy that does. Elsewhere there is an increasing separation. The poor continue to grow poorer as the pressure of population growth outstrips the capacity of the narrow Nile valley to feed them. But the rich are growing richer in a highly visible way under Sadat's economic policy.

"Second revolution."

It was very different under his predecessor, Gamel Abdel Nasser. The privileged classes—especially big landowners and businessmen—were a persecuted elite. State economic policy emphasized bread for the poor, not new automobiles for the rich. While Nasser failed to revolutionize Egypt's often feudal economy, mil-

lions of peasants were given land, and massive housing developments were built for the urban poor.

Since Sadat succeeded Nasser in 1971 and launched what he terms Egypt's "second revolution," the priorities have been almost reversed. New highways plough through Cairo slums while plans for a mass transit system gather dust. Luxury

In the first of two parts, T.D. Allman exposes the seamy side of Egypt's "second revolution."

apartments rise on sites once slated for state-owned factories. Every night opulently gowned Egyptian women, escorted by husbands in tuxedos, crowd Cairo's sumptuous new hotels. Open parkland along the Nile is being steadily eroded by private clubs, discotheques and "casinos"—outdoor restaurants where those with the money to pay drink Egyptian wines served by white-coated waiters under the cool night sky.

These lands, under the Egyptian constitution, officially belong to "the people." But even still undeveloped parks are now often sealed off by barbed wire, awaiting development by speculators who have won leases on them.

Economic liberalization has been a dream come true for affluent Egyptians, but it is more like a nightmare for the

poor. Government subsidies that once assured stable prices for such essential commodities as bread and cooking oil are being steadily removed. For most Egyptians, life today is more difficult than ever before. These growing privations early last year led to the worst riots in Cairo in a quarter of a century.

While the country is calmer today, the conspicuous consumption of a rich minority provides a constant contrast to Egypt's prevailing poverty. The growing inequality of wealth is part of what Sadat calls his effort to make Egypt "cross the Canal" economically, just as the country five years ago went on the offensive against Israel and crossed the Suez Canal militarily. Sadat argues that if Egypt is to gain ground economically, it must create new incentives for the production of wealth.

Special relation with U.S.

Key economic indicators, however, show that Egypt still misuses what meager resources it has. In several recent years, the value of agricultural production—the backbone of the economy—declined, while industrial production showed little or no growth. The country's balance of payments is one of the most alarming in the world. Foreign debt is soaring; foreign investment remains insignificant. Government expenditures under Sadat often exceed government revenues by 50 percent. Last year imports exceeded exports by 400 percent.

The new affluence is not coming from increased production. It is financed by

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