THE OFFICE OF PRIME MINISTER IN LEBANON

(1943-1963)

by

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ABSTRACT

The object of this thesis is to present a study of the rise of the office of Prime Minister and the development of its powers coupled with an analysis of the relationship of the Prime Minister to the President, Cabinet, and Chamber of Deputies.

To accomplish this task the thesis has been organized as follows:

The historical background of the office is presented in Chapter I which includes a description of how Lebanon was ruled under the Military Administration and a brief historical sketch of the rise of the office and the men who held it between 1926-1943.

The author then proceeds to discuss the relationship of the Prime Minister to the President with emphasis on the location of executive power and the selection of the Prime Minister.

The formation of the cabinet and the relationship of the Prime Minister to his cabinet colleagues are exposed and analyzed in Chapter III.

The cabinet-parliament relations and the role of the Prime Minister and the Speaker of the Chamber in this respect are discussed in Chapter IV.

Having been aware of his limitations because of lack of basic source materials on the topic, the author has resorted

to personal interviews with most of those who held the office of Prime Minister. However, information from this source has been used with special care and accuracy.

The author wishes to extend his gratitude to Professor Adnan Iskandar whose patience and guidance made the accomplishment of this study possible.

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CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE OFFICE OF PRIME MINISTER

Lebanon's political entity in the modern era emerged with the proclamation of the Protocol of 1864. This Protocol provided for Mount Lebanon a self-government under a non-Lebanese christian Mutassarrif appointed by the Sublime Porte.[1] However, it was only in 1920 that Lebanon achieved her geographic and economic dimensions whereby the Mandatory policy was to enlarge Mount Lebanon to include four more districts (qadas) previously administered by Damascus; consequently, Lebanon doubled in size and population giving the newly established state both economic and demographic bases.[2]

The Protocol period was not against democratic principles, in fact Lebanon had an Administrative Council representing the people and helping the Mutasarrif on budgeting and finance.[3] Nevertheless, power was concentrated in the hands of the Mutasarrif who enjoyed all prerogatives of the executive authority so as to keep order, security, and ensure the collection of

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[1] Abdo Oweidat, Constitutional Systems in Lebanon, the Arab Countries, and the World (in Arabic)(Beirut: Manshurat Oweidat, 1961), pp. 442-443.

[2] Ibid., pp. 450-451.

[3] Ibid., pp. 445-446.

public revenue in the country.[1]

I. Mandate Administration

In 1920 the French Mandate was imposed on Lebanon on the basis of a decision made by the San Remo Conference[2] but was confirmed later by the League of Nations on July 24, 1922.[3] This organization requested the Mandatory to frame an organic law for Syria and Lebanon and encourage local autonomy not later than three years from the commencement of the Mandate.[4] Faced with this plain obligation and confronted with the Lebanese consistent demand for self-government, the Mandatory was then compelled to introduce governmental institutions to Lebanon. The transplantation of governmental institutions started with the official proclamation of Greater Lebanon,[5] but progressed very slowly until it was speeded up by the Syrian Revolution of 1925. Alarmed at the increasing opposition to the Mandate in Syria, French authorities hastened to formulate and proclaim the

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[1] Ibid., p. 444.

[2] Great Britain, Treaty of Peace with Turkey Signed at Sevres, August 10, 1920, Treaty Series No. 11, (London: His Majesty's Stationary Office, 1920), p. 26.

[3] Hellen Miller Davis, Constitutions, Electoral Laws, Treaties of States in the Near and Middle East (2nd ed.; Durham, N.C., Duke University Press, 1953), p. 283.

[4] Ibid., pp. 284-285.

[5] Arrêté No. 318 of August 31, 1920, Recueil des Actes Administratifs du Haut Commisareat de la Republic Francaise en Syrie et au Liban, 1919-1920 (Henceforth, Recueil des Actes...), Vol. I, (Beyrouth), pp. 132-134.

long awaited Lebanese Constitution of 1926 as preventive medicine to political unrest.[1]

However, the pre-constitution period was almost an extension of the occupational period which started in 1918 and was supposed to end by the proclamation of Greater Lebanon, (1920). The administration was dominated by military rule headed by a High Commissioner. For three years the war hero General Gouraud, accountable to the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was responsible for the administration of the Mandate and for carrying out vis-a-vis local authorities duties of supervision, initiation, and veto.[2] Next to the High Commissioner was the Governor, a French military officer appointed by the former[3] to preside over eight different Directorates,[4] each administered by a Lebanese official whose appointment (by the Governor) was subject to the approval of the High Commissioner.[5] These Lebanese administrators were supervised

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[1] Iskandar Riyashi, Before and After (in Arabic)(Beirut: al-Hayat Press, 1953), p. 38.

[2] Stephen Hemsley Longrigg, Syria and Lebanon Under French Mandate (London: The Royal Institute of International Affairs, Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 115.

[3] Arrêté No. 366 of September 1, 1920, Recueil des Actes... 1919-1920, Vol. I, pp. 141-152. The Governor was responsible for keeping order and security, drafting the budget, and proposing taxes and duties to be approved by the High Commissioner.

[4] Ibid., According to this arrete the eight Directorates were the following: Interior; Finance; Justice; Public Works; Post and Telegraph; Economics; Public Health; Public Education.

[5] Ibid.

by French advisors whose job was to plan administrative action along lines acceptable to French policy.[1]

Theoretically, the Governor was the head of the administrative hierarchy. All heads of departments, (i.e. Directorates) were supposed to report to him as he was their final administrative resort.[2] On the other hand, that was not the case in practice. Power was concentrated in the office of the High Commissioner where prior approval was necessary for any important administrative decision made. The High Commissioner's control of the administration was exorbitant, for it was carried out through a substantial monopoly of higher technical and financial functions backed by pervasive and authoritative officers of the Services Speciaux.[3]

As to the functions of the Governor's office, this post was divided into five administrative units called Chambers.[4] The First Chamber was responsible for official correspondence, legal advice, government publications and records, and public relations.[5]

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[1] Ibid., See also George Grassmuck and Kamal Salibi, A Manual of Lebanese Administration (Beirut: Public Administration Department, American University of Beirut, 1955), p. 4.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Longrigg, op.cit., p. 260.

[4] Arrêté No. 86 of October 29, 1920, Recueil des Arrêtés et Decisions du Grand Liban (Henceforth, Recueil des Arrêtés...), Vol. II, (Beyrouth), 1919-1926, p. 2.

[5] Ibid.

The Political Chamber was entrusted with press censorship, supervision of political appointments, preparation of political reports, control of expenditure pertaining to political affairs, and maintenance of liaison with the Governor and the Political Chamber of the High Commissioner.[1] The Military Chamber was entrusted with military personnel, military communication and transportation, and maintaining liaison with the various military commands.[2] The Personnel Chamber was entrusted with personnel recruitment and management, collection and compilation of rules and orders, and supervision and maintenance of government property.[3] The fifth administrative unit, Kalam at-Tahrir (private secretariat), was responsible for personal correspondence and official interviews of the Governor.[4]

Attached to the office of the Governor was the newly established office of the Secretary General,[5] which was entrusted to a high Lebanese official. The Secretary General was a deputy-governor in many respects. For example he was authorized to replace the Governor in his absence, represent him before the

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Ibid., p. 3.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid.

Administrative Committee (the only representative body at that time), and when necessary summon the Directors of departments to a meeting to discuss public affairs.[1] Moreover, the Secretary General was in charge of running the administration. In this capacity he was entrusted with the general organization of the administration, controlling local authorities, supervising Prisons' management, fetching monthly and annual reports, organizing questions of personal status, controlling police forces, and drafting the budget of the central administration in collaboration with other Directors. In addition, the Secretary General was supposed to maintain liaison between the Governor and the Administrative Committee of Greater Lebanon.[2]

In March, 1922 the Mandatory made another step in the slow process of democratization.[3] A Representative Council of thirty members with limited jurisdiction (mainly, drafting the budget) was introduced.[4] The Governor and Directors were allowed access to the Representative Council in order to entertain their views;

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Ibid.

[3] The Acting High Commissioner at that time, M. Robert de Caix, was backing all these new developments. See Nafhat Nasr, The Presidency of Lebanon, Thesis (M.A.)(American University of Beirut, 1960), p. 57.

[4] Arrêté No. 1304 of March 8, 1922, Recueil des Actes... 1922, Vol. III, pp. 177-193.

in return members of the Council were allowed to question the government.[1] Should the Representative Council fail to approve the budget, the High Commissioner would be authorized to formulate it in collaboration with a Government Council[2] which is to be consisted of Directors and Departments' Chiefs. Two years later, this Council developed into a permanent institution with a new name - Majlis an Nuzzar (Council of Directors).[3] The Majlis, presided over by the Governor, included the Secretary General, Directors, and Departments' Chiefs.[4] Upon the Governor's request, the Majlis met at least once a week in order to advise on various subjects particularly those pertaining to law-making and appointment of high officials. The Governor, however, was not bound by its resolutions.[5]

A further step in the slow process of political development came about with Arrêté No. 2023 of January 5, 1925. The Repre-

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Ibid., The High Commissioner explicitly reserved his right to take any executive or legislative action in urgent or emergency matters, and to approve or disapprove the action of the Representative council. See Grassmuck and Salibi, op.cit., p. 4.

It is worthwhile noting that these "reforms" were resented by the people and by the Lebanese emigres (especially in Egypt). See Yusef es-Sawda, Between the Old and the New (in Arabic)(Alexandria, 1922).

[3] Arrêté No. 2867 of January 22, 1924, Recueil des Actes... 1919-1926, Vol. III, p. 7.

[4] Ibid., p. 8.

[5] Ibid.

sentative Council can now elect the Governor from a list of three nominees which was to be approved first by the High Commissioner; the Council thereafter selects the Governor from the approved list.[1] The failure of the Council to choose the nominees (due to obstructive manoeuvres attributed to French agents[2]) was shortly taken advantage of by the High Commissioner who abolished[3] the above-mentioned arrete and nominated a French, M. Cayla, for the Governorship. The new Governor, a civilian for the first time, stayed in his position until the Constitution was promulgated in May, 1926.

Such was the administration during the pre-constitution period. The High Commissioner was almost the sole decision-maker and executer. There was an obvious reason for that political phenomenon. Facing increased opposition to the Mandate and being determined to suppress it, the Mandatory resorted to systems of administration that concentrated power in the chief executive.[4] In addition, the French advisors, who were supervising almost every Lebanese official holding an important post,

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[1] Arrêté No. 2023 of January 5, 1925, Recueil des Actes... 1919-1926, Vol. III, p. 11.

[2] Oweidat, op.cit., p. 460.

[3] Arrêté No. 8 of January 16, 1925, Recueil des Actes... 1919-1926, Vol. III, p. 13.

[4] Albert Hourani, Syria and Lebanon, A Political Essay (London: The Royal Institute of International Affairs, Oxford University Press, 1954), pp. 170-171. See also Nasr, op.cit., p. 82.

exercised excessive power and enjoyed a great deal of influence to the extent that the Lebanese administration came to be known by the public as administration by counsellors.[1] However, the French advisors were sometimes overshadowed by their Lebanese secretaries who according to Riyashi formed a sub-state and were implicitly the real rulers.[2] This, in fact, started with Trabaud, the naval captain who was appointed in September 1, 1920, as first Governor of Greater Lebanon and was noted for his kindness and gentleness to the extent that he was almost a laughing-stock for Lebanese politicians.[3]

Trabaud's successor temporarily, M. Privat Aubouard, "who knew how to govern and how to drink also,"[4] used to leave his duties to his Lebanese assistants. These officers were exceptionally capable of handling their shares in everything.[5]

The last of the military Governors, the aged General Vandenberge, was too tired to rule; hence depended a great deal on French lieutenants and Lebanese secretaries.[6]

The last Governor and the only civilian M. Cayla, was different

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[1] Ibid., pp. 171-172. See also Nasr, op.cit., p. 71.

[2] Iskandar, Riyashi, The Presidents of Lebanon as I have Known them (in Arabic)(Beirut, el-Maktab at-Tijari, 1961), p.15.

[3] Ibid., p. 14.

[4] Ibid., p. 16.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid., p. 20.

from his predecessors in many respects. He was credited for being an efficient administrator and a perceptive politician. Although his term of office was short, Cayla did a lot to establish order and fight corruption in the administration.[1]

Most prominent among the Lebanese officials of this period were four: Auguste Pasha Adib, Habib Pasha as-Saad, Musa M'barak, and George Heiymari. The veteran Edib Pasha was the first Lebanese to hold the office of Secretary General.[2] An individual of long experience in financial affairs, previously serving as one of the high ranking officials in Egypt, Adib Pasha was appointed in 1924 president of the newly established Council of State (Conseil d'Etat).[3]

Habib Pasha, for many years president of the Administrative Committee of Mount Lebanon during the Ottoman rule, became also president of the newly established Representative Council of 1922. Known for his "distinguished personality, political flexibility, and loyalty to France,"[4] Habib Pasha was quite promising for another role to come.

M'barak and Heiymari were most influencial leaders among Lebanese officials. The former served for some time as secretary

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[1] Ibid., p. 28.

[2] Iskandar Riyashi, The Lebanese Days (in Arabic)(Beirut: al-Sharika al Lubnanyya lil-Tiba'a wa an-Nashr, 1957), p. 185.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Riyashi, Before and After, p. 40.

to the High Commissioner's Delegate to the Lebanese government; the latter as secretary to the French Governor of Beirut. Later on both became top officials in the Lebanese administration.[1]

II. The Emergence of the Office of Prime Minister

For the first time the Office of the Prime Minister emerged with the proclamation of the Lebanese Constitution, May 23, 1926. Constitutionally, the Prime Minister had been mentioned in two cases. The first was in Article 53 which clearly defined that "the President of the Republic shall appoint and dismiss Ministers, from among whom he shall designate a Prime Minister;"[2] the second in Article 66 which provided for "the government's statement of policy (that) shall be drawn up and presented to the Chamber by the Prime Minister or by a Minister acting on his behalf."[3]

As referred to in Article 53, the Prime Minister is devoid of any constitutional authority or jurisdiction.[4] He is more of a Chief Minister having ceremonial duties. Even the formality

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[1] Ibid., pp. 32-49.

[2] Department of Political Studies and Public Administration, American University of Beirut, The Lebanese Constitution (Beirut: Khayat, 1960), pp. 21-22.

[3] Ibid., p. 25.

[4] Oweidat, op.cit., p. 525.

of his appointment reflected his secondary status, for Article 1 of Decree No. 4, May 31, 1926 reads as follows:

> Auguste Pasha Adib, the President of the Conseil d'Etat, is appointed Minister of Finance and President of the Council of Ministers.[1]

In spite of that, the constitutional usage, according to Oweidat, introduced an essential alteration in the texts from the first application of the Constitution, for the President of the Republic would customarily select and appoint the Prime Minister first, then he would proceed to appoint the ministers upon the Prime Minister's recommendation.[2]

The Constitution does not mention the Prime Minister's powers and duties except when referring to the government's statement of policy "to be drawn up and presented to the Chamber by the Prime Minister..."[3] This article, according to Oweidat, could be considered an important source of powers that could be entrusted to the Prime Minister.[4] However, the Prime Minister draws a great deal of power from another statute, namely Decree No. 5 of May 31,

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[1] Lebanon, Official Gazette, Vol. I, p. 44. The Prime Minister was given, in addition to his compensation as minister, an allowance for carrying out the duties of the Premiership.

[2] Oweidat, op.cit., p. 525.

[3] Lebanese Constitution, op.cit., Article 66.

[4] Oweidat, op.cit., p. 525.

1926 which organized the ministries of the state and defined its duties.[1] According to Article 2 of the above mentioned decree the Prime Minister is responsible for an over-all control of the various ministries, such as the coordination of activities, maintenance of political and administrative unity among various departments, and supervising the execution of laws and regulations. In addition, ministers were supposed to present to him all bills, drafts of directions, and all publications that concern the government and the administration in general.[2]

The Office of Prime Minister was charged with other duties also. It was responsible for preparing the files of subjects to be discussed in cabinet meetings, recording cabinet minutes, and communicating its resolutions to the concerned ministries.[3] Furthermore, the Office of Prime Minister was to present to the President of the Republic papers ready for signature, to keep original copies, and to supervise the process of communication and publication of orders and regulations.[4]

The first Prime Minister was veteran Auguste Pasha Adib (See Table One) who had a lot to offer in public finance but

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[1] Lebanon, Official Gazette, Vol. I, pp. 44-46.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid.

little in statesmanship.[1] This was to the benefit of his right-hand man Sheikh Beshara al-Khoury, who served as Minister of Interior for eleven months before becoming the Prime Minister (See Table One) on May 5, 1927.[2] In his new post, al-Khoury proved to be a stateman with a lot of talents that enabled him to face the political and financial problems at the time. These acute problems were summarized by Longrigg as follows:

> The Constitution was soon to prove too elaborate for so a small country, and too easily mishandled by politicians to the detriment of good administration... A sense of financial realism was lacking ... and the presence of personal and confessional interests... embarrassed the Administration.[3]

Supported by al-Khoury, President Debbas was able to introduce a constitutional reform on October 17, 1927 the effect of which was to confer increased authority on the President.[4]

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[1] Beshara Khalil al-Khoury, The Lebanese Truths (in Arabic) (Beirut, Awrak Lubnanyya, 1961), Vol. I, p. 141.

[2] Adib Pasha's government fell on May 5, 1927 while representing Lebanon in a conference for public debts held at Paris. Beshara al-Khoury was accused by many politicians for stabbing the Prime Minister during his absence in order to replace him. See Riyashi, Before and After, pp. 61-2. See also, Beshara K. al-Khoury, op.cit., p. 147.

[3] Longrigg, op.cit., p. 171.

[4] The constitutional reform of October 1927 abolished the Senate (Articles 22 and 23) and withdrew from the Chamber its power to increase budget allotments (Article 84). The President was given power to dismiss the Chamber (Article 55), reconsider unwise legislation (Article 57), put into effect urgent bills delayed by the Chamber (Article 58), add to a defective budget (Article 85), and expedite a lagging one (Article 86). Cabinet solidarity was enforced (Article 66), and at least half of its members should be Deputies (Article 28).

As Prime Minister al-Khoury was known for establishing ministerial traditions. He was the first Prime Minister to present the budget to the Chamber at the time specified by the Constitution. Al-Khoury was also the first to introduce the "budget message" which later became a precedent adopted by future cabinets.[1] What was more important, however, was his skill in "robbing" the powers and privileges of French authorites - thus strengthening his office.[2] Moreover, his tactfulness in dealing with the High Commissioner and the President was a distinguished characteristic of his political career at that time.[3]

The fall of al-Khoury's first cabinet was a result of failing "to face the need for immediate economy."[4] Al-Khoury, however, was still needed to form a new cabinet, this time with three members only.[5] His new program was one of "the abolition of unneeded posts, reorganization of the administrative districts, and reduction of the number of deputies."[6] He was successful in reforming the judi-

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[1] Al-Khoury, op.cit., p. 151.

[2] Riyashi, Presidents of Lebanon, p. 128.

[3] Riyashi, Before and After, p. 66.

[4] Longrigg, op.cit., p. 179.

[5] Al-Khoury's three-minister cabinet assumed office on January 5, 1928 and lasted until August 5, 1928.

[6] Longrigg, op.cit., p. 179.

cial body and reorganizing the administrative districts, but failed to face the incessant agitation in the Chamber due to under-representation of the various sectarian communities in the cabinet.[1] Under such conditions, veteran Habib Pasha as-Saad took over (See Table One) and formed a five-minister cabinet on August 9, 1928.[2] Pledged to an attractive program of major irrigation projects, Habib Pasha's cabinet was more or less successful except for its financial problems, as the draft budget of 1929 ran into greater expenditure than before.[3] So al-Khoury was called back to office (See Table One) and soon was forced to resign because of a severe parliamentary attack led by his chief political enemy Mr. Emile Edde.[4]

Unlike his predecessor, Mr. Edde was very obstinate and extremely untactful in dealing with the High Commissioner and the President.[5] Though accused by nationalists of being a servant to French interests, Edde was the first Maronite politician to sound his voice against the French during the pre-

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[1] Ibid., p. 201.

[2] Robert Abella, The Phases of Rule in Lebanon (in Arabic) (Beirut, Manshurat al-Anba', 1943), p. 70.

[3] Longrigg, op.cit., p. 201.

[4] Al-Khoury became Prime Minister for the third time on May 10, 1929 and stayed in power until October 11, 1929. See Riyashi, Before and After, p. 67.

[5] Ibid., pp. 66-67.

constitution period for depriving the Lebanese of becoming Governors.[1] Inspite of his statesmanship he was too stubborn to stand parliamentary quarrels and criticisms or submit to higher controlling authorities.[2] Having pledged to a program of rigid economy with a reduction of administrative units, law courts, officials, and expenditure on government schools,[3] Edde obtained from the Chamber an authorization to reform the administration by legislative decrees. By this device the Cabinet was enabled to issue decrees having the force of law. In other words, the Chamber of Deputies delegated to the cabinet its legislative power for a limited period of time and in regard to certain specified fields. The parliament usually delegates its power (1) in case of extraordinary circumstances that require immediate executive action and (2) in case of its inability or weakness to meet its duties. However, the delegation of legislative power in Lebanon (by the Chamber to the Cabinet) reveals a definite trend towards the strengthening of the Chief Executive at the expense of the Chamber. During the Mandate period "the French were inclined to go along, in fact to encourage, such a trend because of the early difficulties which they experienced with the legislature."[4]

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[1] Ibid., p. 42.

[2] Ibid., p. 67.

[3] Longrigg, op.cit., p. 202.

[4] Adnan Iskandar, Bureaucracy in Lebanon (Beirut: Department of Political Studies and Public Administration, American University of Beirut, 1964), p. 39.

Edde was credited for some of his reforms but failed to withstand the resulting outcry of the Muslims in particular whose interests were severely damaged by reducing the expenditure on government schools.[1] However, Edde brought to government a new dynamic spirit, which seriously lacked, to combine with it wide initiative and intelligence, for in Premiership as well as in Presidency (as seen later) Edde had always interpreted his office as that of an effective Chief Executive.[2]

The Constitution, which was six years old by that time, was suppressed on May 9, 1932 because of a serious fight for the Presidency between Beshara al-Khoury (Maronite) and Muhammad al-Jisr (Sunni Muslim). The executive power was vested in a "Head of the Government" appointed by the High Commissioner and assisted by Majlis al-Mudireen (Council of Directors).[3] This system of government lasted until January 2, 1934, when a restricted Chamber composed of 18 members (2/3 elected and 1/3 appointed by the President) and the office of the Secretary of State were created.[4] Three years later (January 4, 1937) the Constitution was restored[5] coupled with a very important

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[1] Longrigg, op.cit., p. 202.

[2] Ibid., p. 254. See also, Fuad Matar, The Presidents of Lebanon (in Arabic)(Beirut: Kitab an-Nahar, 1964), pp. 115-122.

[3] Decision No. 55/L.R., of May 9, 1932, Official Gazette, No. 2661, 1932, p. 2.

[4] Decision No. 1, of January 2, 1934, Ibid., 1934, pp. 2-5.

[5] Ibid., Vol. XVI, No. 1, 1937, pp. 11-12.

development in the political history of Lebanon, namely, having a Muslim Prime Minister for the first time rise into power. Muslim areas had been always opposed to the Mandate and annoyed of being annexed to Lebanon in 1920.[1] The French thus sought to absorb their mounting unrest by allowing them a share in the government.[2] So the office of Prime Minister was allotted to the Sunni Muslims, being the second largest religious community in the country.

The rise of Sunnis to the Premiership marked a new phase in Lebanon's politics by establishing the duality of the executive power with the President as the chief executive and the Prime Minister as his assistant.

Induced by the High Commissioner, Edde selected Kairuddin al-Ahdab to be the first Sunni Prime Minister (See Table One). Ahdab, who was greatly admired by the High Commissioner, proved to be a talented politician of a high caliber.[3] Surprisingly, he was able to impose himself on the whole country including the Muslim community that was traditionally opposed to any form of collaboration with the Mandate.[4]

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[1] Opposition to the Mandate during the thirties reached its climax in Mu'tamar as-Sahil (Conference of the coast), January 10, 1936, which demanded that Muslim areas of Greater Lebanon be re-transferred to Syria.

[2] Riyashi, President of Lebanon, p. 69.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Riyashi, Before and After, p. 162.

With the outbreak of World War II the constitution suffered a new blow, namely, suspension.[1] What followed was that the executive power was vested in a Secretary of the State (who practically replaced the Prime Minister), a French Counsellor, and an Advisory Council to the Government. The legislative power was vested in the President of the Republic subject to countersignature of the Secretary of the State and the High Commissioner.[2] No significant administrative development took place during the war except that Alfred Naccache, a well known judge who became President in November, 1941, assumed also the powers of the Secretary of the State.[3]

On March 18, 1943 the Constitution was restored.[4] Three months later elections were held and victory went to the nationalists. Beshara al-Khoury was elected President and Riyadh as-Sulh was selected Prime Minister. Lebanon now entered a new phase in political development.

III. Concluding Remarks

The above analysis is incomplete without/[a]brief comment on

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[1] Arrete No. 246/L.R. of September 21, 1939, Official Gazette, No. 3727, 1939, pp. 5214-5215.

[2] Ibid., See also, Oweidat, op.cit., pp. 553-554.

[3] Oweidat, op.cit., pp. 554-555.

[4] Ibid.

the French influence relative to the Lebanese political development. As indicated previously, the High Commissioner was the most, and at times, the sole decision-maker. He could abolish by an arrêté any law passed by the Chamber or could even suppress the Constitution (which he actually did in 1932, 1939, and 1943 respectively). His interference in Presidential and parliamentary elections was paramount. Count Damieu de Martel, who served as High Commissioner from October 13, 1933 until the end of 1936, was a case in point in handling dictatorial power. The dramatic election of Mr. Emile Edde for the Presidency by a majority of one vote and the division of the seats of the 63-member Chamber of 1936 between the Desturi and the Edde groups were typical examples of the overwhelming power and influence of the High Commissioner.[1] The powers of the President of the Republic were overshadowed, even overruled, by the powers and decisions of the High Commissioner. In fact this was the incentive that drove Sheikh Beshara al-Khoury to form the Constitutional Bloc - a parliamentary front which stood for observing the Constitution and the enforcement of laws.[2]

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[1] Riyashi, Before and After, pp. 148-161.

[2] George Farah, The First Lebanese (in Arabic) (Beirut: Manshurat Dar an-Nashr as-Siyasiyya, Semia Press, (No date), pp. 9-15. See also, Munir Taky ad-Din, The Birth of Independence (in Arabic)(Beirut: Dar al Ilm lil-Malayeen, 1953), p. 24.

As for the office of the Prime Minister, its powers and duties expanded as a result of many factors. Personal capacity and confessional necessities being the chief factors which always had an impact on Lebanese politics. This is the subject matter of the next chapter.

CHAPTER II

THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE PRESIDENT

Unlike some Parliamentary Democracies where presidents are mere ceremonial figures,[1] the President of the Republic in Lebanon holds executive power and authority.[2] It may be inaccurate to assume that "there are deeply rooted socio-historical factors collaborating over the last four centuries... to make out of the Presidency the center of power in Lebanon,"[3] but the assumption is partly true and not without historical evidence.[4]

Obviously, the Constitution does not provide distinct authority that can be called the office of Prime Minister as the case in the Presidential office. It is, therefore, difficult to study the new emerging office of the Prime Minister without a thorough study of the Presidency, and its relationship to other governmental authorities.

I. Location of the Executive Power

Constitutionally, executive power is "entrusted to the Presi-

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[1] The French Fourth Republic is a good example of this idea. See Daniel Wit, Comparative Political Institutions (New York; Henry Holt and Co., 1953), pp. 132-134.

[2] Lebanese Constitution, op.cit., Article 17.

[3] Nasr, op.cit., p. 4.

[4] Mohammad Majdhub, The Crisis of Democracy and Arabism in Lebanon (in Arabic)(Beirut: Dar Mnaymni, 1957), pp. 15-16.

dent who shall exercise it assisted by the Ministers in accordance with conditions laid down in the Constitution."[1] An analysis of this article clearly points out that the President is apparently (a) the chief executive, (b) the exerciser of executive power only when collaborating with ministers, and (c) his implementation of power is regulated by specific conditions.

As to the duties of the President, these are clearly stated in the oath of fidelity as follows:[2]

a) Observe the Constitution and laws.

b) Maintain the independence of Lebanon and its territorial integrity.

These are the two ultimate duties of the President[3] which he is supposed to carry them out through ways and means provided by the Constitution. Chief among these are the following:

a) Appoint and dismiss ministers (Article 53).

b) Propose laws (Article 18) and request reconsideration of approved legislation during the period prescribed for its promulgation (Article 57).

c) Dissolve and adjourn the Chamber of Deputies with the approval of the Council of Ministers (Articles

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[1] Lebanese Constitution, op.cit., Article 17.

[2] Ibid., Article 50.

[3] Oweidat used the word "mission" when referring to the two above mentioned duties of the President. Oweidat, op.cit., p. 571.

55 and 59).

d) Preside over the Council of Ministers (inferred from Article 53).

e) Negotiate and ratify international treaties except those involving the finances of the state (Article 52).

f) Appoint top officials (Article 53) in collaboration with the Council of Ministers.

g) Preside over official ceremonies (Article 53).

It is important to note that the President's initiative in handling some of these duties is assisted by the ministers, individually, or by the Council of Ministers as a collective body whereby Presidential decisions (decrees) are countersigned by the minister(s) concerned, with the exception of matters relating to appointments and dismissals of ministers.[1] The President, moreover, cannot dissolve the Chamber of Deputies before the expiration of its mandate unless the Council of Ministers approves of the proposal with the reason specified.[2] The President should also secure the approval of the Council of Ministers before issuing a decree putting into effect any bill which previously had been declared as urgent and not being acted on by the

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[1] Lebanese Constitution, op.cit., Article 54.

[2] Ibid., Article 55.

Chamber.[1]

Other than the above mentioned means of power, the Constitution clearly defines that ministers shall administer the application of laws and regulations, each within his department and in so far as he is concerned.[2] The exercise of power whether by the President or by the ministers is regulated by specific conditions. For example, the President cannot promulgate an urgent bill unless forty days expire after its communication to the Chamber.[3] By the same token the right of the President to adjourn the Chamber is limited to a period of one month.[4]

Inspite of these limitations, the President remains the chief executive. And the fact that his office manages to be one of the most stable ones compared to other high public authorities in the state ensures his power and influence.[5] The six-year term of the President's office enables him to outlive both the Chamber and cabinet. The stability of the office as a source of excessive power in a country that lacks effective political parties, is

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[1] Ibid., Article 58.

[2] Ibid., Article 64.

[3] Ibid., Article 58.

[4] Ibid., Article 59.

[5] Bahij Tabbarah, "Democracy and Legislative Power in Lebanon," Democracy in Lebanon (in Arabic)(Publications of the Lebanese Political Science Association, Vol. 2, No. 4, 1959), p. 24.

noteworthy particularly in view of the colorlessness of parliaments and instability of cabinets.

Unlike the President, the Prime Minister is hardly mentioned in the Constitution. As pointed out previously, the Constitution mentions the Prime Minister in two cases only. The first in Article 53 defines the President's power to appoint ministers and designate a Prime Minister; the second in Article 66 entrusts the Prime Minister to draw up and present to the Chamber of Deputies the cabinet's statement of policy. This task, however, is of crucial importance as it has endowed the Prime Minister with power and authority. The fact that the Prime Minister is the one who draws up the cabinet's statement of policy and presents it to the Chamber makes him responsible for its implementation - a responsibility which logically necessitates an over-all control and coordination of governmental activities to be executed by ministers whereby each minister administers the services of the state and ensures the application of laws and regulations within his department.[1] The over-all control and coordination of governmental activities was confirmed by two basic developments. The first was the constitutional usage which altered constitutional texts from the outset by selecting the Prime Minister first and then appointing the ministers that he chooses to cooperate with. This usage, according to Oweidat, created

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[1] Oweidat, op.cit., p. 572.

for the Prime Minister constitutional authority coupled with considerable influence but not to the extent of granting him full power and independent status.[1]

The second development was the promulgation of the Regulatory Decrees[2] defining the duties of the Prime Minister and his office. According to these regulations the Prime Minister was supposed to control governmental activities, observe the application of government policy, coordinate and supervise ministerial work, and defend the cabinet before the Chamber. These duties are considered the basic and essential aspects of the concept of executive power.[3]

In the light of the above analysis one can deduce that the powers of the Prime Minister are:[4]

a) Maintaining liaison between the cabinet and the Chamber on one hand, and between the ministers and the President, on the other hand.

b) Controlling the activities of the various ministries and coordinating them in such a way so as they are

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[1] Ibid., p. 573.

[2] The most important of these decrees is Decree No. 5 of May 31, 1926, Official Gazette, Vol. I, pp. 44-46.

[3] Oweidat, op.cit., p. 573.

[4] Subhi Mahmasani, Constitution and Democracy (in Arabic) (Beirut: Dar al-Ilm Lil-Malayeen, 1952), p. 210. See also Hassan al-Hassan, Constitutional Law and the Constitution of Lebanon (in Arabic)(Beirut: Dar Maktabat al-Hayat, 1959), pp. 234-235.

in harmony with the general policy of the cabinet.

c) Receiving draft laws and decrees prepared by the various ministries to be studied and transmitted to the Council of Ministers.

d) Presiding over cabinet meetings,[1] leading its discussions, and implementing its resolutions.

e) Representing the cabinet in official ceremonies not presided over by the President.

As shown earlier, theoretically, the Prime Minister holds a powerful position which gives his office a distinct authority characterized by constitutional, political, and administrative duties. On the practical level the powers of the President overlap with the powers of the Prime Minister. This conflict has been a vivid issue in Lebanese politics. In fact it dates back to President Debbas who was accused by the succeeding Premiers of monopolizing power and encroaching upon other posts.[2] The issue did not develop, however, into a hot public struggle during the Mandate Administration. Perhaps because the President was not the final decisive authority after all. Following Lebanon's independence it was first raised by Mr. Abdul-Hamid Karami when he resigned his position as a Prime Minister in August, 1945.

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[1] The difference between the "Cabinet" and the "Council of Ministers" will be discussed in Chapter III.

[2] Oweidat, op.cit., p. 576.

This ex-Prime Minister complained about the President's powers that overlapped with those of the Prime Minister and demanded a basic modification of the Constitution by a committee of specialists.[1] Later on, the issue received substantial support from other politicians to the extent that Mr. Riyadh as-Sulh (then Prime Minister) thought it was necessary to support the President who was at stake. Shortly after, Sulh declared in the Chamber that the President had the full right to receive, visit, and summon anybody at any time for the sake of public interest.[2]

Karami was not the only discontented Prime Minister; Abdullah al-Yafi followed suit. The latter petitioned the President, in 1951, requesting immediate modification of the Constitution to limit the basic powers of the President. The petition was accompanied by a heated debate in the press and the Chamber, but none of the deputies proposed any modification of the Constitution in that regard.[3]

The complaint about the powers of the President was led mainly by Sunni leaders who became Prime Ministers. Possibly, on the basis of previous experience, these leaders discovered that the Prime Minister's powers were only nominal, or perhaps secondary to those of the President. But what they asked for

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[1] Khoury, op.cit., Vol. 3, p. 9.

[2] Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 67.

[3] Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 10.

was a redistribution of the powers of the executive authority. Ex-Prime Minister Yafi assures that this modification was the aim of his 1951 memorandum,[1] an aim which has been consistently refused and rejected by President Khoury to the extent that he preferred resignation (September 1951) to a probable reduction of the Presidency's powers.[2]

Though the President's powers are far more greater than the Prime Minister's, there are certain evidences that this was not always the case. For example, Riyadh as-Sulh never complained about the President's powers. On the contrary, he not only advocated the President's way of exercising his powers, but was so confident in exercising his powers to the extent that it was universally believed that Sulh shared the powers and duties of the chief executive. The reason behind that may be partly personal. President Khoury was almost in full agreement with Sulh.[3] The attempt of the latter to rule and exercise executive authority did not provoke the President. One may speculate further that Riyadh as-Sulh's strong personality coupled with his prestige and popularity as a national leader might have restrained the President to openly clash with Sulh.[4] That was not the case

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[1] Interview with ex-Prime Minister Abdullah al-Yafi, February 10, 1963.

[2] Khoury, op.cit., Vol. 3, p. 477.

[3] Majzub, op.cit., pp. 18-19.

[4] Ibid., p. 19.

with Abdullah al-Yafi who was not as strong and popular as Riyadh as-Sulh.

The issue of "President's excessive powers" took another phase in Chamoun's regime. Accused of extreme authoritarianism, the problem was not only a constitutional one. It developed into a sectarian crisis. Critics of Chamoun were both against the excessive powers that he wielded, and against him personally. So they strived not only to curtail his authority but to force him out of office.[1]

The first complaint which Prime Ministers usually direct against Presidents is the question of overstepping ministers by direct informal communication with high administrative officials. Ex-Prime Minister Sami as-Sulh, although considered by many as a very submissive person in his relations with the different Presidents in order to prolong his stay in office,[2] complained in his Memoirs about this particular question, and came to the conclusion that power has always been divided between the Presidential Residence and the Saraya.[3] Apparently, other ex-Prime Ministers com-

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[1] Kamal Jumblat, The Truth About the Lebanese Revolution (in Arabic)(Beirut: Dar an-Nashr al-Arabyya, 1959), pp. 85-91.

[2] Khoury, op.cit., Vol. 3, p. 444. Almost all the ex-Prime Ministers that I interviewed agreed with Beshara al-Khoury that Sami as-Sulh was very submissive to the President so that he would not lose his post.

[3] Sami as-Sulh, Memoirs (in Arabic)(Beirut: Dar al-Fikr al-Arabi, 1960), Vol. 2, p. 225.

plained about that problem too, and Riyadh as-Sulh at one time found it necessary to defend President Khoury in the Chamber. Nevertheless, it is almost universally accepted that Khoury was far more tactful than any other President in his relationships with Prime Ministers, ministers, and high officials.[1]

Contrary to Khoury, Chamoun was untactful in handling his powers. Hamid Franjiah, who was once the opposition's candidate for the Presidency against Chamoun, states that the President "wields almost dictatorial powers and takes advantage of the cabinet's weakness."[2] In one of his editorials the editor of internal affairs in daily "Jaridah," aired the same view while commenting on the paralysis of governmental activities in the absence of President Chamoun (visit to Iran). He described the Lebanese political system as that of one-man regime.[3] Chamoun's authoritarian character was obvious. Not only did he legislate for the whole reorganization of the administration,[4] but also replaced the cabinet in activities considered basically of the latter's duties, namely, negotiating alone with a petro-

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[1] Interviews with ex-Prime Ministers Khaled Shehab, Abdullah al-Yafi, and Saeb Salam, December 12, 1962, February 10, 1963, and February 23, 1964 respectively.

[2] As-Siyasa (Beirut), March 9, 1957.

[3] Antoine Nepti, "One-man Regime," al-Jaridah (Beirut), October 18, 1956.

[4] Camille Chamoun, Crise au Moyen-Orient (Paris: Gallimard, 1963), pp. 446-448.

leum company (I.P.C.) in order to increase Lebanon' share in its royalties.[1]

With General Fuad Chehab the executive role of the President became greater and publicly recognized. Prior to Chehab it was politically unwise to publicize executive activities of the President lest it might reflect encroachment on the Prime Minister's jurisdiction. During Chehab's regime the participation of the President, his administrative and technical assistants in ordinary and extraordinary issues became an accepted tradition and a matter for publicity.[2] A newly established news agency was responsible now for covering news of government activities. It was reported, for example, on March 13, 1964 that:

> ... the President (Chehab) presided over a meeting in the Presidential Residence, attended by the President of the Civil Service Commission, Head of the Central Inspection Board, and other high Administrative officials for discussing proposed schemes to reorganize some ministries and fill its vacant posts.[3]

On November 13, 1963 it was reported that the Civil Chamber of the Directorate General of the President's office "requested all qaimaqams to provide it with lists of projects executed by

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[1] Majdhub, op.cit., p. 18.

[2] Interview with ex-Prime Minister, Saeb Salam, February 23, 1964.

[3] El-Kifah (Beirut), March 13, 1964, p. 4.

the Municipalities, and of what have not been executed yet, etc..."[1]

These are just few examples among many others showing the increased authority of the President in Chehab's regime. In order to explain that development one has to account for two phenomena. The first is a political one emanating from the uprising of 1958 and the election of General Chehab as President, namely, that of considering the President, perhaps for the first time, as an arbiter between various religious communities.[2] In this capacity, the President was "allowed," sometime even requested to take action on controversial issues.

The second phenomenon was the reorganization of the Presidential apparatus into a Civil and a Military Chamber, with additional duties entrusted to both of them.[3] The Civil Chamber became responsible, in addition to ceremonial and secretarial duties, for studying subjects presented by various ministries to be submitted to the President.[4] On the other hand, the Military Chamber was entrusted, over and above ceremonial duties, with studying subjects concerning national and civil

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[1] Ibid., November 13, 1963, p. 4.

[2] Interview with ex-Prime Minister Saeb Salam, February 23, 1964.

[3] Decree No. 2041 of August 27, 1959, Collection of Legislative and Regulatory Decrees (Beirut: Sader Press, 1961), p. 2.

[4] Ibid., p. 3.

defence, army and security forces, etc.[1]

The reaction of the Prime Ministers toward these recent developments followed two courses depending, of course, on the personality of the Prime Minister. Saeb Salam claimed that he consistently resented the increasingly growing interference of the President in matters of public affairs, particularly the intervention of his advisors. Salam's response to this situation was the appointment of technical, economic, and Press advisors to the office of Prime Minister.[2] Contrary to Salam, Rashid Karami (the youngest among Prime Ministers) was not annoyed. He even declared that he was for the adoption of the Presidential system, and supported the urge to modify the Constitution for that purpose.[3]

II. Selection of the Prime Minister

The selection of the Prime Minister is not a simple job for the President. Unlike Britain where the candidate for the post is usually the leader of the party commanding the support of a majority of the House of Commons,[4] the candidate for the

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[1] Ibid., pp. 3-4.

[2] Interview with ex-Prime Minister Saeb Salam, February 23, 1964.

[3] "Premier Karami propagates for the Presidential System," al-Hawadis (Beirut), November 24, 1961, p. 5.

[4] Byrum E. Carter, The Office of Prime Minister (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1956), p. 42.

premiership in Lebanon is not necessarily a leader of a political party or a chief of a parliamentary bloc. What is perhaps striking when asked to form the cabinet is that he does not necessarily command the support of a majority of the Chamber. Although it is a strange situation, the paradoxical political life of Lebanon makes this procedure inevitable and consequently accepted.

It is difficult to understand the real reasons behind that phenomenon without studying the process of parliamentary elections, as will be seen in Chapter IV. It suffices at this point to know that the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies is usually constituted of members having no political ties among themselves.[1] Being a mosaic body, no majority or a majority leader is usually expected to show up. Faced with this reality on the one hand, and required by the Constitution to form a government on the other hand, the President finds himself compelled to interfere personally in order to form a government supported by an artificial majority,[2] i.e. a majority based on political compromise and personal interests. This, according to Oweidat, explains the increasing influence of the President. The fact that the parliamentary support for the cabinet is a presidential creation encourages him to exercise tremendous power in such a way that

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[1] Oweidat, op.cit., p. 575.

[2] Ibid.

he becomes practically the sole holder of executive authority. Hence the inevitable collision with the Prime Minister who finds it difficult to act as a mere facade.[1] When both the President and the Prime Minister are Christian, the problem becomes predominantly personal; but when the Prime Minister is Sunni Muslim, the dispute soon develops into sectarian crisis.[2]

Unlike Britain, therefore, where the king has only the right of formal selection of the party leader commanding the support of a majority in the House of Commons, the President of Lebanon has a wider discretionary power in selecting the Prime Minister. The source of that power is the mere fact that he has to manage the artificial majority which is supposed to support the future cabinet.

Traditionally the President seeks parliamentary consultation as an initial step in the process of cabinet formation.[3] He usually meets every Deputy and every head of the parliamentary blocs, thus providing the chance for everybody to disclose in privacy his candidate for the post. If a particular candidate happens to enjoy at the end of his consultations a clearcut majority, the President is expected to ask him formally

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[1] Ibid., p. 576.

[2] Ibid., p. 575.

[3] Khoury, op.cit., Vol. 2, p. 19.

to form the cabinet.[1] However, if consultations reveal no reasonable majority behind any candidate, it is the President's task to reconcile the different views, pressure groups, and personal feuds. In other words, he is compelled to reach a compromise which makes possible the formation of a cabinet. That compromise should be reached every time a cabinet is formed as the President rarely faces a clear-cut majority supporting a particular candidate. The Deputies often leave the whole matter to the President's discretion, or air their views without insistence, leaving the final decision to the President's discretion.[2]

The task as one may gather is not simple to handle. The President should consider many factors before deciding upon his appointee. Chief among these factors are religious affiliation, parliamentary support, regional considerations, and political background.[3]

The question of religious affiliation is of significance for it has become almost a rule since 1937 to have a Sunni Muslim for the office of Prime Minister.[4] Originally this

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[1] Interview with ex-Prime Minister Abdullah al-Yafi, February 10, 1963.

[2] Interview with ex-Prime Minister Sa'di al-Munla, January 14, 1963. See also, Oweidat, op.cit., p. 575.

[3] Almost all the ex-Prime Ministers that I interviewed approved this classification.

[4] Riyashi, Presidents of Lebanon, p. 69.

was a French device to calm down the Muslims who favored Syrian unity,[1] a practice which became a tradition and later received strong confirmation in the National Pact. The Pact characterized the newly independent Lebanon of 1943 with Beshara al-Khoury (maronite) as President, Riyadh as-Sulh (Sunni Muslim) as Prime Minister, and Sabri Hamadeh (Shii) as President (speaker) of the Chamber of Deputies. Since 1943 only Sunni Muslim leaders[2] held the office of Prime Minister except once when General Chehab was entrusted with all executive responsibilities following the resignation of President Khoury, September 1952. Being a transitory government, Chehab's cabinet stayed in power twelve days only to give way to a new one as soon as the new President is elected.

The parliamentary support behind a candidate is quite important for selecting him as Prime Minister. However, this is at times overlooked if the President is interested in a particular appointee regardless of his parliamentary status.[3] In September 1952 President Chamoun appointed Emir Khaled Chehab as Prime Minister without any regard to the parliamentary support which he would command personally. Parliamentary support

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[1] Interview with Emir Khalid Chehab (ex-Prime Minister) December 12, 1962.

[2] The President's choice is practically limited to half a dozen of Sunni leaders coming from well-known and wealthy families in Beirut, Tripoli, or Sidon. See Table Four.

[3] Interview with Prime Minister Husayn Oweini, February 18, 1963.

is also overlooked in unusual circumstances such as elections which necessitate the presence of an "independent" personality at the office of Prime Minister. In May 1960 President Chehab appointed Mr. Ahmad Daouk Prime Minister as he was the convenient "neutral" Sunni Muslim to supervise the general elections.[1]

Regional considerations are not forgotten in the process of selecting the Prime Minister although they are not of much importance in ordinary circumstances. It is believed, therefore, that since the Prime Minister is a Sunni Muslim and must have substantial political following, then it is preferable to have the Prime Minister selected out of Sunni leaders residing in Beirut, Tripoli, and Sidon as these cities include the largest Sunni population. All Sunni leaders who held the office of Prime Minister came either from Beirut or Tripoli except for Riyadh as-Sulh and Khaled Chehab who came from South Lebanon.

The question of background is a relevant criterion but not to a great extent. Prime Ministers are usually expected to be trained politicians or capable administrators; for this reason the Chamber of Deputies often supplied Prime Ministers. Although the Constitution does not confine Premiership to Deputies only, it has become almost a rule to select Prime Ministers from Deputies as the latter usually carry political support of varia-

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[1] Interview with ex-Prime Minister Ahmad Daouk, January 17, 1963.

ble strength. Few of those who held this post had never been Deputies at one time (See Table Three). On the other hand, only under unusual circumstances would a Prime Minister hold this office without necessarily having been a Deputy in the past. For example, Mr. Nazim Akari, a high official, was appointed Prime Minister because of the political unrest of the summer of 1952 (See Table One).

Holding a ministerial post is not a prerequisite for premiership although many Prime Ministers get their experience and training through previous service as ministers. Auguste Adib, Habib as-Saad, Emile Edde, Khairuddin al-Ahdab, Abdullah al-Yafi, Ahmad Daouk, Sami and Riyadh as-Sulh, and Abdul-Hamid Karami never held ministerial posts prior to becoming Prime Ministers (See Table Two). Unlike Britain where a Prime Minister is likely to have been the Chancellor of the Exchequer or the Foreign Secretary,[1] no particular ministerial post in Lebanon eventually leads to the office of Prime Minister. The reason for that is quite obvious. In Britain political parties shape ahead (while in the opposition) their "shadow cabinets." In Lebanon the absence of an effective party system renders the whole question irrelevant.

The criterion of education has never been a barrier to

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[1] Carter, op.cit., p. 64.

ambitious candidates for the premiership. Customarily, most of those who held the post enjoyed higher education, (See Table Four) but that particular factor is generally not considered in the process of selection. Beshara al-Khoury was a man of high intellectual caliber, especially as a judge and lawyer. With this exception, none of those who held the post were particularly distinguished as intellectuals.

The occupation of the Prime Minister is of minor importance although most Prime Ministers have been professional politicians a longtime before holding the post (See Table Four). Khoury and Sami as-Sulh were at one time presidents of higher courts, and later became lawyers; Edde was a well-known lawyer as Yafi nowadays; Ahdab was a journalist; Saeb Salam and Husayn Oweini were successful businessmen. All those leaders came from well-known wealthy Christian and Muslim families (See Table Four). It is worth mentioning, however, that Riyadh as-Sulh, although not well-to-do, came from a distinguished family in politics. His father, Ridha Bey, was a high Ottoman official and a minister in the Faysalite government of Damascus (1920). Outstanding family background has always been a very important asset in the process of selecting a Prime Minister.

The question of age is of secondary importance. Most of the Prime Ministers were above forty when they first held the

post, but that did not reveal any rule or tradition regarding the age of the Prime Minister. Beshara al-Khoury became Prime Minister at 37 whereas Rashid Karami was only 32, the youngest among Prime Ministers to hold the post.

CHAPTER III

THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE CABINET

For the sake of understanding the nature of the relationships between the Prime Minister and the cabinet there are two levels of operations that ought to be discussed, namely, the Prime Minister and the formation of the Cabinet, and the Prime Minister as the leader and coordinator of the cabinet.

I. The Prime Minister and the Formation of the Cabinet.

When the President finally decides on his appointee, the latter is formally asked to form a cabinet. Usually the Prime Minister is not officially appointed until he is through with his consultations. The President then issues two decrees: the first appointing him as Prime Minister, and the second appointing those whom he chose to cooperate with him as ministers. One can easily notice from the above procedure that the Prime Minister nominates and the President appoints. The question now is whether the President is bound by the recommendations of the Prime Minister?

Constitutionally the President can obstruct a Prime Minister's recommendation, as he himself appoints the ministers (Article 53). However, the Prime Minister may threaten to be

relieved of his duties.[1] In this case the President has to choose between giving way or looking for somebody else to form a cabinet. Unlike Britain where the Prime Minister can always have his way inspite of his disagreement with the king about the merits of an appointment, the Prime Minister in Lebanon is rarely lucky in this respect. The reason is quite obvious, for the Prime Minister in Britain has the support of a majority of the House of Commons while in Lebanon the Prime Minister relies on the artificial majority which the President creates or helps to establish.[2] It is important to note that disagreement of that sort rarely reaches a deadlock for both the President and the Prime Minister often have the intention and the means to settle it down. The fact that the President helps a lot in establishing the parliamentary majority that supports the Prime Minister in the Chamber entitles him to express some views concerning certain appointments.[3] If the Prime Minister is weak, the President will not have much trouble in having his way; however, if the Prime Minister is strong, i.e. having a clear-cut majority of his own, he (Prime Minister)

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[1] Ex-Prime Minister Mr. Abdullah al-Yafi claimed that he once gave up forming a cabinet because the President refused to appoint Mr. Alfred Skaf a minister upon Yafi's recommendation.

[2] Oweidat, op.cit., pp. 578-579.

[3] Almost all the ex-Prime Ministers that I interviewed subscribed to this idea, especially Messrs. Husayn Uwaini and Khaled Chehab.

will inevitably impose his will if he is determined to do so.[1]

The whole question depends therefore on two factors, (1) the size of the parliamentary support which the Prime Minister personally enjoys, and (2) the kind of personality he has. Emir Khaled Chehab for example confesses that the Mandatory Power used to insist on the consideration of its viewpoints in regard to certain appointments to which he had to give way. Similarly, President Chamoun asked him in 1952 to limit his cabinet membership to government officials which he also did.[2]

The general consensus of the ex-Prime Ministers was that the President of the Republic often interfered in cabinet formation and in imposing his appointments.[3] To Sami as-Sulh, Ahmad Daouk, Husayn Uwaini, and Khaled Chehab the President had the right and the power to impose his views. That was their reaction to the idea. Conversely, Munla, Yafi, and Salam agreed that the President interfered, but they made it clear that submission or objection to his will depends on the Prime Minister's personality. In other words, they denied the President's "right" to interfere, a denial which reminds us of the traditional dis-

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[1] Ex-Prime Minister Mr. Saeb Salam claimed that he insisted in 1960 on including Jumblat and Gemayel in the cabinet, and he succeeded inspite of President Chehab's opposition.

[2] Interview with ex-Prime Minister Emir Khaled Chehab, December 12, 1962.

[3] This was based on extensive interviews with most of the ex-Prime Ministers of Lebanon after the Independence.

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[3] This was based on extensive interviews with most of the ex-Prime Ministers of Lebanon after the Independence.

pute over the "President's excessive powers."

The Prime Minister may be interested in a particular office and is usually able to select it. Rarely was any Prime Minister satisfied with the Premiership only.[1] This could be attributed to the Prime Minister's feeling that the Premiership alone does not enjoy distinct and vast powers. So lack of power is supplemented for by grasping the powers of another office. It could also be explained in a different way, namely, that the Prime Minister's desire was to put a key office under his direct control. Moreover, it might be the Prime Minister's capability in a particular branch of knowledge or occupation which induces him to be in charge of the office pertaining to it. However, there is no particular office considered as key office although some offices are considered more important than others.[2]

The Prime Minister, as previously indicated, is usually in a position to select the office that he desires. Riyadh as-Sulh was mostly interested in the Ministry of Interior, Yafi in the Ministry of Justice, Sami as-Sulh in the Ministry of

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[1] Riyadh as-Sulh was the first to do that in his cabinet of December 1946. The cabinet was enlarged (9 members with Sabri Hamadeh as Deputy Prime Minister) in order to secure a strong leadership for supervising the "hot" elections of May, 1947. See Khoury, op.cit., Vol. 2, p. 278.

[2] The three Ministries of Interior, Finance, Public Works, and Foreign Affairs are publicly considered the most important among the fourteen ministerial offices.

Planning,and Rashid Karami in the Ministry of Finance.[1] These choices may reflect, partly, the personal qualifications of the above mentioned Prime Ministers or their mere personal inclinations. To ex-Prime Minister Yafi, a well-known lawyer, the Ministry of Justice is interesting and compatible with his education and profession.[2] As for Sami as-Sulh, who has always tried to picture himself as the champion of development and reconstruction, the Ministry of General Planning is the right job.[3]

The distribution of portfolios among ministers is determined mostly at the end of the consultations made by the Prime Minister. The Speaker of the Chamber is usually the first that the Prime Minister consults as his position enables him to have a clear conception of the parliamentary forces (a conception of which the Prime Minister is badly in need).[4] Next come the leaders of parliamentary blocs and regional groups. The Prime Minister's objective is primarily that of an arbiter to reconcile divergent interests. His efforts are often opposed by a

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[1] It is believed that Karami is interested in the Ministry of Finance because it enables him through its role as a coordinating agency to be in control of other Ministries.

[2] Interview with ex-Prime Minister Abdullah al-Yafi, February 10, 1963.

[3] Interview with ex-Prime Minister Sami as-Sulh, March 11, 1963.

[4] Interview with Mr. Adel Osayran, ex-Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies, May 28, 1964.

wide variety of clashing demands, severe conditions, and special interests which he should be able to reconcile. Compromise is the golden rule of the game which often results in mutual concessions. For example: allocating ministerial offices to a particular group in return to its support in the Chamber. Nevertheless, the Prime Minister is unable to satisfy the power-hungry Deputies alone. So the President always has to rush for help. Ahmad al-Daouk emphasized that "it is almost impossible for the Prime Minister to form a government without the President's help." To him "Le Jeu Parlementaire is nothing but a device to destroy the government for every Deputy is in fact longing for a ministerial post."[1]

The participation of the President in the formation of a cabinet is not confined to mere imposing of one minister or two for sometimes he might insist upon a particular pattern of cabinet composition. In December 1946 President Khoury believed that an ordinary government would not be able to supervise the first general elections after 1943, so he made fervent efforts to form a strong cabinet consisting of prominent leaders.[2] Riyadh as-Sulh was for the idea. Not only did he preside over that cabinet (See Table One) but he strived through extra-

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[1] Interview with ex-Prime Minister Ahmad Daouk, January 17, 1963.

[2] Khoury, op.cit., Vol. 2, pp. 278-279.

parliamentary consultations to convince those who would add weight to the cabinet to join it.[1] In 1952 President Chamoun was tired of parliamentary manoeuvres, so he turned to a cabinet of high officials. Emir Khaled Chehab, who was then ambassador to Jordan, was called to power on this basis and accepted the post (See Table One).

In addition to suggesting appointments to the cabinet, the Prime Minister is supposed to determine the size of the cabinet. That usually depends on two factors, (1) the conflicting demands of the various parliamentary groups and (2) the particularity of certain circumstances which require special types of cabinets in quality and quantity. It is accepted that in order to secure a parliamentary majority, the Prime Minister is often forced to expand his cabinet so that more parliamentary groups are represented.[2] Although the number of ministries is defined by law to be fourteen,[3] the cabinet normally consists of eight ministers

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[1] Emir Adel Arslan, a prominent Arab nationalist and Druze leader, made many efforts, upon the request of President Khoury and Premier Sulh, to convince both Kamal Jumblat and Majid Arslan to join the coalition cabinets [sic].

[2] Malcolm H. Kerr, "Political Decision-Making in a Confessional Democracy," Paper read before the Conference on Lebanese Democracy, University of Chicago, May 27-31, 1958, p.3.

[3] According to Legislative Decree No. 111, June 16, 1959 (See Collection of Legislative and Regulatory Decrees, op.cit., Vol. 1, pp. 17-20) the fourteen ministries are the following: Justice; Foreign Affairs; Interior; Finance; Public Works; Defence; Education; Public Health; Economics; Agriculture; Post, Telegraph, and Telephone; Labour and Social Affairs; Information; and General Planning. The Department of Tourism was later combined with the Ministry of Information.

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(two Sunnis, two Maronites, one each of Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholics, Shiites, and Druzes) or ten (by adding one Maronite and one Sunni). In August 1960 Saeb Salam formed the largest cabinet on record: 18 members. This was due not only to clashing parliamentary demands and interests but also to the unprecedented membership of Parliament (99). According to Professor Malcolm Kerr, the cabinet composition is supposed to reflect a balance which

> ... must also be struck geographically and among the small parties and blocs to which perhaps half of the Deputies belong: and this is complicated by the refusal of some Deputies to sit in the same cabinet with certain others, or their insistance on a particular portfolio.[1]

The particularity of certain circumstances may influence the size of the cabinet to a large extent. The four-member cabinet of Khalid Chehab, following the bloodless coup of 1952, was a direct result of the failure of two nominees (Yafi and Karami) to form a government that would satisfy the restless and unsatisfied Chamber. Chamoun resorted to a cabinet of high officials and threatened to dissolve the Chamber in case of a no-confidence vote.[2] Likewise, the acute repercussions of the bloody uprising of 1958 made it difficult for Karami to form a

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[1] Kerr, op.cit., p. 9.

[2] Interview with ex-Prime Minister Emir Khaled Chehab, December 12, 1962.

cabinet that would satisfy the antagonistic religious communities, and so President Fuad Chehab resorted to a four-member cabinet consisting of two Sunnis and two Maronites pledged to a program of appeasement.

The Prime Minister's discretion is not limited by making his selections from the Deputies.[1] Although most of the ministers do usually have seats in the Chamber, departure from this "rule" is often practiced. The participation of non-parliamentary members in a cabinet is at times a way-out of a particular difficulty. The dispute over the direction of foreign policy, which was one of the underlying causes of the 1958 uprising, necessitated the presence of an unbiased personality in the Foreign Office capable of commanding respect from all communities. This may explain why Mr. Philip Taqla served as Foreign Minister in seven consecutive cabinets since 1958 without having a seat in the Chamber.[2]

Selection of ministers from outside the Chamber may also reflect a wish to strengthen the cabinet by including men who have acquired public stature and political leadership upon their own merits. Salam insisted in 1952 on Charles Malek's partici-

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[1] Article 28 of the Constitution reads: "Ministers may all or in part be selected from among the members of the chamber or from persons outside the chamber."

[2] Mr. Philip Taqla, a prominent leader of President Khoury's Desturi Party, is publicly considered as a "neutral" statesman, capable of pleasing different political groups.

pation as a condition to accept forming a cabinet. It is believed also that the inclusion of Charles Hilou, George Naccache and Fuad Najjar was primarily meant to strengthen the cabinet they joined. This reveals that the factor of merit and ability is sometimes taken into consideration although not on a large scale due to the complexity of the parliamentary forces.

In addition to the above considerations the Prime Minister is faced with other factors which limit his choice. Obviously one of the most important limiting factors is confessionalism.[1] The Premier is not free to choose anybody he deems capable of handling a ministerial post. He has always to be alert lest the balance between different religious communities is disturbed. Failure to observe the balance may lead to serious trouble. Saeb Salam, for instance, was subjected in 1953 to severe criticism from the Greek Orthodox Archbishop because he overlooked the question of appointing a Greek Orthodox to the post of Deputy Prime Minister, a post which has been considered a cherished right of that community.[2] However, except for the two posts of Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister which go to the Sunnis and Greek Orthodox respectively, no other particular ministerial post is claimed by any religious community.

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[1] Majdhub, op.cit., p. 27.

[2] Ibid.

Another problem that faces the Prime Minister-designate at times is the inevitability of including all wings in a particular community. In December 1946 Riyadh as-Sulh was forced to include both Kamal Jumblat and Majid Arslan, leaders of the Jumblati and Yazbaki groups respectively, in order to secure the satisfaction of the Druze community. Similarly, Saeb Salam faced the same situation in 1960 and behaved likewise.

Regional representation is another limitation to the Premier's choice. What adds to its acuteness is the fact that parliamentary factions are usually overlapping with regional groupings. For instance, is the inclusion of Kamal Jumblat and Pierre Gemayel a mere representation of the Chouf and Beirut districts respectively, or does it reveal a far deeper political connotation?

Prior membership in the cabinet may also limit the choice of the Premier in case of a cabinet reshuffle. It is difficult for him to shift a prominent minister to another office without causing friction and facing problems. Saeb Salam, for example, wanted Jumblat to stay in his new cabinet of 1961 but not as Minister of Education. Salam had a difficult time with Jumblat before he was able to convince the latter to shift to the Ministry of Public Works.[1]

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[1] Jumblat was subjected to severe criticisms from clerical circles due to his reforms in the Ministry of Education.

The coalition government is rather unusual in Lebanon due to the absence of the party system.[1] Only when the public opinion is divided into two opposing fronts that coalition governments emerge. The first case took place in 1938 when the public opinion was divided between the Desturi faction and the Edde faction. Emir Khaled Chehab (Dasturi) was asked to form a coalition government in which the Edde group was represented by four ministers and the Desturi by three.[2]

The second coalition government emerged in December 1946 when President Khoury asked Mr. Riyadh as-Sulh to form a coalition government of outstanding leaders in the Chamber so as to be able to supervise the first general elections that would take place during the Independence period.

The difficulties that the Prime Minister faces in forming a coalition government are naturally multiplied as he is usually concerned with appointments that would satisfy all parliamentary factions, a task of immense difficulty in a country like Lebanon where almost every Deputy is a faction by himself.

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[1] A cabinet formed out of different parliamentary groups is hardly called a coalition government for the simple reason that these groups are in continuous change seeking their regional and personal interests without a clear program.

[2] Interview with ex-Prime Minister Emir Khaled Chehab, December 12, 1962. Apart from Chehab the other Desturi Ministers were Camille Chamoun and Salim Taqla. The Edde Ministers were Ahmad el-As'ad, Hikmat Jumblat, Yusef Istfan, and Khalil Ksayb. See also Riyashi, Before and After, op.cit., pp. 179-181.

II. The Prime Minister as the Leader and Coordinator of the Cabinet.

"A Cabinet," wrote Subhi Mahmasani, "plays an important role in the parliamentary system. It is a hyphen which joins the Parliament to the President of the Republic, and consequently it is the tool to balance the legislative power with the executive power."[1] The first part of this description is true and workable, for the cabinet maintains liaison between the Chamber of Deputies and the President who is not responsible before it. As to the second part of the description, it is doubtful to consider the Lebanese cabinet a tool of balance for it is used often as a tool of pressure by the Chief Executive, i.e. the President of the Republic.[2]

The Constitution does not enumerate the powers of the cabinet, or define its structure, jurisdiction or its operation. However, the Constitution requires the cabinet's pre-approval in each of the following four cases. The first (Article 55) in connection with the President's right to dissolve the Chamber before the expiration of its mandate; the second (Article 58) in connection with putting into effect urgent bills on which the Chamber has not given its decision within a period

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[1] Mahmasani, op.cit., p. 208.

[2] This idea will be elaborated in the coming chapter.

of 40 days; the third (Article 85) in connection with opening extraordinary or supplementary credits or transfering appropriations in the budget; the fourth (Article 86) in connection with issuing a decree giving effect to the budget estimates when the Chamber fails to settle them by the end of January. In addition to the above, the Constitution entrusts to the Council of Ministers the exercise of the executive power in case of a vacancy in the Presidency for any reason whatsoever (Article 62).[1]

These prerequisites, along with the conception of collective responsibility of the ministers before the Chamber, could be considered the constitutional basis on which the cabinet was built. It soon developed through constitutional usage and organizational practice, to include within its jurisdiction the following:

a) Appointment of high officials (first category) of the State.[2]

b) Appointment of members of the Conseil d'Etat and members of the Administrative Councils of the Autonomous Services.

c) Enactment of legislative and organizational decrees, and

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[1] I should note also that the right to propose laws, which the Constitution (Article 18) grants to the President, is practically exercised by the Council of Ministers and by the Premier. Oweidat subscribes to this idea, op.cit., p. 572.

[2] Other officials could be appointed by decrees bearing the signatures of the Ministers concerned. Their appointment might not necessarily need the cabinet's prior approval.

proposition of laws to the Chamber.

d) Drawing out the government's statement of policy.

e) Conferring on common administrative affairs and discussion of general issues concerning the State.

The Prime Minister plays an important role in the cabinet for he maintains liaison between the President and the Ministers. What is more important however is the fact that the Prime Minister ensures an over-all control of state activities by supervising and coordinating ministerial work. Moreover, all draft laws and decrees are passed to the Prime Minister who decides whether or not to put them on the cabinet's agenda.

Compared to the ministers, the Prime Minister is really more than primus inter pares. The fact that he is the chief speaker for the government in the Chamber entitles him to play a great role in drawing out its policies and in coordinating the ministerial activities to ensure harmony with the cabinet's general policy. Moreover, constitutional usage increases the Prime Minister's influence by "requiring" his signature on every decree bearing the signature of the President.[1]

Unlike the American President, the Lebanese Prime Minister is not stronger than his cabinet, not only because the ministers

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[1] Professor Pierre Dagher, once head of the Legislation and Consultation Department at the Ministry of Justice and a well-known authority on Lebanese administrative law, subscribes to this idea; Interview, May 29, 1964.

are not mere secretaries (as in the Presidential system) that could be dismissed at any time but mainly because the executive power is constitutionally vested in the President of the Republic. The Prime Minister's share in executive power is thus dependent on two factors: (1) the degree of power that the President allows him to exercise and (2) the degree of parliamentary strength that he enjoys. Even when the Prime Minister enjoys vast parliamentary strength his success is not guaranteed when not reaching an agreement with the President, for the latter has the final weapon of dismissing the cabinet.[1]

Inspite of the above considerations, it is still safe to say that the Office of Prime Minister varies with the personal ability of the Prime Minister, circumstances at the time, and the character of the Prime Minister's colleagues. For example, Riyadh as-Sulh was a strong Prime Minister, a capable and popular one, and was also in full agreement with President Khoury. Moreover, the fact that Sulh was one of the few prominent leaders who claimed a real national reputation for achieving Independence, made it possible for him to rule with confidence and even to match the President.[2] Saeb Salam on the other hand,

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[1] Article 53 of the Constitution. However, the President of the Republic never exercised this power except once (September 18, 1952) when President Khoury promulgated a decree in which he considered the government as having resigned after the resignation of all Ministers except the Premier (Sami as-Sulh). See Oweidat, op.cit., p. 527.

[2] Kerr, op.cit., p. 31.

had the personality and capacity, and at one time the opportunity to rule strongly.[1] Others were lucky too (especially Ahdab), but for a short time.

The Prime Minister is assisted in carrying out his administrative duties by twenty three-member apparatus headed by a director-general who also serves as the secretary general of the Office of Prime Minister. Chief among his duties are the following:[2]

a) Attending the meetings of the Council of Ministers and keeping its minutes and records.

b) Observing the execution of the resolutions of the cabinet.

c) Supervising the studying and preparation of draft laws and decrees before being presented to the cabinet.

d) Preparing the agenda of the cabinet meetings for the Prime Minister.

e) Maintaining liaison between the cabinet and the Chamber by transmitting parliamentary questions and interpellations to the Ministries concerned, studying the answers thereto, and finally transmitting them back to the Chamber.

Three of the most important departments of the central

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[1] Riyashi, Presidents of Lebanon, op.cit., pp. 154-155.

[2] Decree No. 2870 of December 16, 1959, Collection of Legislative and Regulatory Decrees, op.cit., Vol. 1, p. 6.

administration are directly attached to the Office of Prime Minister, namely, the Court of Accounts, the Central Inspection Bureau, and the Civil Service Council.[1] As indicated previously, the heads of these three departments are appointed by the Council of Ministers reporting directly to the Prime Minister. Needless-to-say, considerable power is being exercised by the Prime Minister through these departments by supervising and directing administrative and financial activities.[2] However, it is important to note that these Agencies are not staff agencies only for they basically perform a great deal of line functions in their capacities as autonomous bodies entrusted with definite duties.

The cabinet meets in two forms. When the President presides over, the meeting is called Majlis al-Wuzara' (Council of Ministers); when the Prime Minister presides over, the meeting is Majlis Wizari; (Cabinet meeting).[3] The kind of meeting depends on the subjects to be discussed. Important issues necessitate the presence of the President to enable the cabinet to

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[1] See Legislative Decrees No. 114 and 115 and 118 of June 12, 1959, Ibid., Vol. 1, pp. 193-279.

[2] Messrs Ahmad al-Ahdab, President of the Court of Accounts, and Abdul-Rahman Tayyarah, President of the Central Inspection Board, stressed their Agencies' autonomy without denying the tutelary role of the Prime Minister (Interview, January 12, 1965). On the contrary, Mr. Farid ad-Dahdah, President of the Civil Service Council, rejected the existence of any tutelary "rights" for the Prime Minister (Interview, January 15, 1965).

[3] Mahmasani, op.cit., pp. 208-209.

draw a general policy or take the necessary decision that will bind the whole executive authorities. Moreover, we find that the Constitution and laws in force require conferring in the Council of Ministers as a prerequisite for the validity of certain decrees. The President for example, cannot put the budget into effect without the approval of the Council of Ministers if the budget has not been passed by the Chamber.[1] Similarly, the President cannot appoint members of the Conseil d'Etat unless the matter is discussed and approved in the Council of Ministers.[2] Majlis al-Wizari is not as important as a Majlis al-Wuzara because its resolutions do not have the power of law, i.e. the effect of valid decrees that can be enforced. The Prime Minister usually resorts to a Majlis Wizari for discussing and handling ordinary affairs and for coordinating the activities of the various Ministries. In short, the difference between Majlis Wuzara and Majlis Wizari is the following: the presence of the President in Majlis al-Wuzara enables it to discuss matters and take decisions in the form of decrees fulfilling the provisions of the Constitution, and decrees that can be enforced directly. Conversely, the absence of the President from Majlis al-Wizari renders all discussion legally ineffective

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[1] Article 86 of the Lebanese Constitution, op.cit., p. 30.

[2] Legislative Decree No. 119 of June 12, 1959, Collection of Legislative and Regulatory Decrees, op.cit., Vol. 2, p. 649.

because it is not transformed into laws or decrees.

The Prime Minister is usually entrusted with the responsibility of drawing up the government's statement of policy with the assistance of one or two ministers. Then the statement is presented to the Council of Ministers for approval. The President does not directly participate in drawing up the government's program but he usually introduces some viewpoints which are surely adopted. President Chehab used to let the cabinet have its own way with few important ideas which he might contribute on special occasions. Contrary to Chehab, President Khoury used to have a large say in the cabinet's statement of policy.[1]

The agenda for the meetings of the Council of Ministers is mostly the responsibility of the Prime Minister. Naturally the Premier is in a position not only to control the whole cabinet activities but also receive from the various Ministers draft laws which they like to discuss in the Council of Ministers. This helps the Prime Minister to determine the agenda of the meetings in cooperation with the Secretary-General who heads the administrative apparatus of the Office of Prime Minister. The President also has a say in determining the agenda as he is the head of the Council of Ministers. Mr. Saeb Salam observed

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[1] Kerr, op.cit., pp. 37-38. See also Khoury, op.cit., Vol. 2, pp. 17-21.

that during the Chehab Administration the cabinet agenda became the responsibility of the Director-General of the Civil Chamber of the Presidency.[1] If this statement is true, it clearly reveals the increasingly important role that President Chehab played as a chief executive.

Usually the Council of Ministers meets at least once a week at the Presidential Residence.[2] The meeting might be preceded by an ordinary cabinet meeting for purposes of coordination. No particular procedure is followed in either kind of meeting except that the President who presides over Majlis al-Wuzara acts as a discussion-leader. Divisions are scarcely taken for no decision is taken unless it enjoys the unanimous support of Ministers. In other words, when there is no unanimity on a particular issue, it is postponed for further discussion till agreement is reached. If votes are taken it is only on minor issues.[3] When the Council

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[1] Interview with ex-Prime Minister Mr. Saeb Salam, February 23, 1964.

[2] The Council of Ministers is summoned by the President after consulting the Premier. Mr. Husayn Uwaini made that clear to the Deputies while discussing the question of renewing President Chehab's term of office. See an-Nahar (Beirut), May 29, 1964, p. 2.

[3] Interview with ex-Prime Minister Mr. Saeb Salam, February 23, 1964. It might be important to note that cabinet proceedings should remain a secret. Only approved decisions and decrees are released to the press. However, this "rule" is often violated by the Ministers themselves who intentionally uncover their disputes before the public. See Kerr, op.cit., pp. 11-17.

of Ministers is divided into a majority and a minority including the President, the latter, theoretically, is supposed to respect the will of the majority in the Council of Ministers. If he fails to do so the cabinet is supposed to resign. But in case the cabinet enjoys the support of a majority of the Deputies, then the President is compelled to dismiss both the cabinet and the Chamber of Deputies.[1]

Absence of taking divisions in the Council of Ministers is the direct result of the absence of decision-making from Lebanese politics. In a country where national consensus is practically non-existent due to factional and confessional struggle, "democracy is not the rule of the demos, but simply the distribution of guarantees to the recognized factions coexisting... of the means to defend their minimum interests."[2]

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[1] Anwar al-Khateeb, an eminent jurist and deputy, subscribed to this idea in a press statement. See Lissan al-Hal (Beirut), May 29, 1964, p. 2.

[2] Kerr, op.cit., p. 2. Prof. Kerr summarizes his theory about the absence of decision-making in Lebanon's cabinet politics in the following (Ibid., p. 6):

> In short, it is the nature of the executive to avoid decisions that are political in the full sense. The government's function might be said to be judicial: it adjudicates claims and petitions in accordance with an established set of unwritten rules. Alternatively its function may be called administrative: it maintains the flow of services to which each segment of society is traditionally entitled. It is paradoxical that although the spirit of political

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The absence of decision-making in the full sense of "competition for the power to create and impose new policies"[1] renders the whole discussion about the Prime Minister's leadership almost irrelevant. True, the Prime Minister is more than primus inter pares, but only in daily administrative work[2] and in minor political activities. The Prime Minister is practically the captive of the artificial parliamentary majority which the President creates in order to back the government. When the Prime Minister strongly wishes to have his way against the President, there is only one course that he can freely take: resignation. The Prime Minister's weakness is further displayed by his incapacity to dismiss ministers for they are appointed by the President who is consequently the competent authority for dismissing or accepting minister's resignation. In case of a dispute with a particular minister,

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(Cont'd.)

> controversy reaches everywhere, and the politicians' invasion of the spheres of competence of bureaucrats and magistrates is commonplace, the paralysis of the highest centers of political authority signifies the absence of true politics from the system. There are no political decisions, but only super-impositions by politicians of their own informal criteria of adjudication and administration on to the formal criteria which judges and bureaucrats are nominally supposed to follow.

[1] Ibid., p. 6.

[2] In his capacity as chief of the Administration, the Premier can issue administrative circulars تعاميم having the force of law for regulating minor aspects of administrative work.

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the Prime Minister can get rid of him only by cabinet reshuffle, a step which can be taken when the Prime Minister is in full agreement with the President.

CHAPTER IV

THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES

The supremacy of the parliament is considered as one of the most important pillars of Parliamentary Democracy. Theoretically, the assumption is true for the parliament has the power to make and unmake laws. Moreover, it can bring down any government by a simple vote of no-confidence. Legislation and controlling of the government are therefore believed to form the means by which representative assemblies ensure their supremacy over the executive. This is the theory. Does its practice in Lebanon confirm or refute its assumptions?

Unlike most of the Parliamentary Democracies, Lebanon's Chamber of Deputies is not based on a familiar kind of a party system. The existence of divergent confessional and regional interests makes it difficult for political parties to transcend its boundaries with much success.[1] The Chamber is doomed therefore to a mosaic composition of members having nothing in common except their forced, although much hated, allegiance to the regional leader on whose ticket they ran for the election. One could easily discover that since the application of the 1926 Constitution up to 1948 not a single Deputy was elected

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[1] Kerr, op.cit., pp. 24-25.

on a basis of party candidacy. By 1953 only six Deputies were party members, though none of them were elected on this assumption.[1] Inevitable, as one would expect, was the emergence of short-lived parliamentary blocs that could almost match the total number of the Deputies with nothing politically in common except temporary personal interests. One would also notice that, in their search for fostering and protecting their interests, the Deputies were usually drawn to the President who practically represented the most stable power in the state and who was the pole of attraction among the government institutions.[2] Faced with these weak and mosaic chambers on one hand, and compelled by the Constitution to form a government, on the other hand, the President was actually forced to form, from among the Deputies, an artificial majority that could support his government.[3] That was exactly how the executive power, i.e. the President, started to dominate the legislature, a domination which originated in 1926 and went on eversince. Mr. Ghassan Tueni has aptly termed that situation the "orphan complex" of the Chamber of Deputies. Professor Kerr explained this complex as:

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[1] Tabbarah, op.cit., pp. 22-23.

[2] Ibid., p. 24.

[3] Oweidat, op.cit., p. 575.

> the tendency of its members to seek a patron in the President of the Republic and his advisors or Ministers, ...and to assume the position of the President's clients, rather than to form and impose an independent policy consensus of their own in accordance with the substantial powers at least nominally granted them by the Constitution. A skillful President (or, with the President's cooperation, a skillful Premier) can amplify this complex and turn it substantially to his advantage, by manipulating patronage, public expenditure, personal favors to the Deputies' constituents, electoral favoritism, and other devices; and the Chamber, meanwhile, lives hopefully, but passively, in anticipation of these.[1]

In the light of the above analysis one could deduce the following result: not only was the mosaic nature of the Chamber responsible for the chronic instability of Lebanese cabinets,[2] but it was, in addition, a weakening factor that rendered difficult the imposition of the Chamber's control, not to say supremacy, on the cabinet. This could be best illustrated by the frequent granting of legislative powers to the executive, which the Chamber did four times.[3] The first beneficiary was the government of Emile Edde (on January 17, 1929 and for a period not exceeding July 1, 1930) which was pledged to a program of administrative, judicial, and financial reform. The second beneficiary was the government of Emir Khaled Chehab (on October 15, 1952 and for a period not

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[1] Kerr, op.cit., p. 28.

[2] "Lebanon has lived under some 46 cabinets in 28 years of constitutional government, or an average of less than eight months per cabinet," Kerr, Ibid., pp. 9-10.

[3] Anwar al-Khateeb, Parliamentary Procedures in Lebanon and the Arab Countries (Beirut: Dar al-Ilm Lil-Malayeen, 1961), pp. 265-266.

exceeding six months) which was pledged to a program of reform regarding the laws and organization of elections, municipalities, publications, administration, judiciary, court of account, economic planning and development, export and import, etc. The third beneficiary was the government of Sami as-Sulh (on October 18, 1954 and for a period not exceeding three months) which was supposed to reform the legislative decrees issued by the second beneficiary. The fourth beneficiary was the government of Rashid Karami (on November 12, 1958 and for a period not exceeding six months) which was pledged to an intensive program regarding economic and financial legislation, security forces, administrative and judicial reform, autonomous services, budget legislation, weapons, traffic organization, etc.

Being so mosaic in composition and weak in authority the Chamber of Deputies aroused doubts concerning its representation of the people's wishes and interests. Pierre Rondot, a student of Lebanese Politics, believed that true representation had always been outside parliament instead of being inside it.[1] Dr. Bahij Tabbarah thought likewise.[2] The reason was quite obvious: most of the crises that Lebanon sufferred took place outside the Chamber and ended up in a manner contradictory to the trend of

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[1] Pierre Rondot, "Quelques Reflixions sur les Structures du Liban," l'Orient, Vol. 6, 1958, pp. 23-36.

[2] Tabbarah, op.cit., p. 24.

the majority of the Deputies.[1] This was best illustrated by the two crises of 1952 and 1958. In both cases the Presidents of the Republic (Khoury and Chamoun) were forced to give in despite enjoying a clear-cut majority of the Chamber that assured them unconditional support. Ridiculously, this overwhelmingly "loyal" majority of both Presidents almost unanimously elected their political enemies in 1952 and 1958 respectively as soon as they were out of office, and shortly afterwards granted legislative powers to the newly appointed cabinet in each case.

Although dependent on the President in general, the Prime Minister has, nonetheless, to be on good terms with the Chamber. This can be achieved in two ways. The first one is to see to it that the strong and effective blocs of the Chamber are properly represented in the cabinet;[2] the second is to satisfy the various heads of parliamentary blocs by distribution of favors and allocation of public expenditure on projects that will benefit their constituents.[3] According to Mr. Adel Osayran, the second is usually the most effective device to guarantee the support of the Deputies whom

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[1] Ibid.

[2] The use of this device has been admitted by most of the ex-Prime Ministers that I interviewed.

[3] Interview with ex-Speaker of the Chamber, Mr. Adel Osayran, on May 28, 1964.

he described as having mostly weak personalities and looking only after their own personal interests. Osayran did not deny, however, that the Prime Minister's appeal to the Deputies' national conscience was occasionally useful and effective. But still the Prime Minister could not give up his "final weapon" - patronage and favoritism.

As previously indicated, the Prime Minister considers a vote of no-confidence a blow to his personal and political integrity. So he does not ask the Chamber for a vote of confidence unless he is sure of victory. This usually takes place when a newly formed cabinet is presented to the Chamber with a supposedly new statement of policy. It is worthwhile noting that cabinets' statements of policy are mostly similar in content. They are more of a list of promises than a defined program of action. This may explain why the Deputies do not take them seriously.[1] According to Mr. Bashir al-Awar,[2] the cabinet statement of policy is nonsence for it is a mere accumulation of promises and projects. Mr. Ghassan Tweini[3] entertains the same opinion

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[1] Copies of the Cabinet's statement of policy are distributed and discussed in the same parliamentary meeting. Mr. Abdullah al-Hajj's (Deputy of Beirut 1953-1957) request for postponement of the discussion for some time in order to enable the Deputies to study the statement was refused: Lebanon, Minutes of the Chamber of Deputies (in Arabic) Eighth Session, Second Irregular Session, Sixth Meeting, March 5, 1954, p. 151.

[2] Ibid., First Irregular Session, First Meeting, September 28, 1954, p. 1526, Mr. Awar was Deputy of B'abda district 1951-1964.

[3] Deputy of ash-Shuf district 1951-1953, and of Beirut 1953-1957.

but adds:

> We, in Lebanon, grant governments a vote of confidence not for the programs and projects they present, but for those persons in power and in respect of their potentialities and capacities.[1]

It is not difficult for those who grant a particular cabinet a vote of confidence to provide reasons for their support. They may praise the Prime Minister personally or support the cabinet's composition and program. As for the opposers (who never brought down a cabinet since 1943), there are a diversity of reasons for a vote of no-confidence. Let us take Yafi's cabinet of March 1, 1954 as an example. A careful study of the parliamentary meeting of March 5, 1954 reveals the following result:[2]

a) Three Deputies based their opposition on the fact that the new Cabinet was exactly the old one except for two replaced ministers.

b) Three Deputies withdrew their support because their parties were not represented in the new cabinet.

c) One Deputy believed that it was difficult for the Prime Minister to rule because his powers were overlapping with those of the President.

d) One Deputy believed that the country was suffering a

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[1] Ibid., Fourth Meeting, July 14, 1955, pp. 1140-1143.

[2] Ibid., Eighth Session, Second Irregular Session, Sixth Meeting, March 5, 1954, pp. 149-172.

crise de regime (regime crisis) which could not be solved by a simple cabinet reshuffle.

These are some among several political, personal, sectarian, and regional factors that explain the phenomenon of cabinet instability in Lebanon.

The speaker of the Chamber plays a very important role in the cabinet-parliament interrelations. As an outstanding public figure, the Prime Minister always keeps him informed about cabinet activities in order to enable him to reconcile the government's disputes with the Deputies.[1] What is equally important is that he is the first advisor to the President of the Republic in the process of forming a cabinet for his position enables him to understand the prevailing trends in the Chamber and to act as an arbiter between its conflicting blocs.[2]

Theoretically, the Speaker of the Chamber avoids alignment with any parliamentary bloc lest he weakens his role as an arbiter. In presiding over the meetings of the Chamber, leading its discussions, observing its procedure, supervising activities of parliamentary committees, and speaking publicly in its name, the Speaker of the Chamber is supposed

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[1] al-Khateeb, op.cit., p. 57.

[2] Ibid.

to be neutral and objective in order to command respect. However, this does not take place in practice. Mr. Adel Osayran confessed that the President of the Chamber is often "in harmony" with the President. This means that he usually backs the government, supports its policies, and fights its opponents. What follows is a sharp disorder in the balance of power for the benefit of the Executive. Osayran considered this as one of the main factors behind the decline of the Chamber's power and authority.[1]

A prejudiced Speaker of the Chamber is therefore an asset of great help to the Prime Minister as he keeps him informed about the various parliamentary trends, the strength of the opposition, and the ways and means to keep the Chamber satisfied. His help is badly needed during debates and when votes are cast; the Speaker of the Chamber is usually in a strong position to speed up the discussion or stretch it out, prolong the time of debates or cancel it out, obstruct the opposition's speakers, and adjourn the meeting of the Chamber if the government is likely to lose in case of voting.[2]

The Prime Minister is considered the principal speaker of the cabinet. He answers all questions presented to the

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[1] Interview with ex-Speaker of the Chamber Mr. Adel Osayran on May 28, 1964.

[2] Ibid.

government, clarifies any point raised in parliamentary debates, and airs out the cabinet's stand on any issue. The Prime Minister may entrust this task, fully or partly, to a particular member of his cabinet. Sami as-Sulh would ask his Foreign Minister (at one time Dr. Charles Malik) to bear the responsibility of his government's foreign policy before the chamber; the late Riyadh as-Sulh used to do the whole job himself.

The question period usually enables the Prime Minister to explain and defend his policies. What the Prime Minister does mostly in the Chamber is, in fact, answering questions and rebutting charges. Mr. Osayran assures that the Chamber spends most of the time on endless discussions and oratorical debates plagued by personal ostentation.[1] This remark received further evidence by Mr. Anwar al-Khateeb who noticed that whenever the question period was over, the Deputies would start slipping out of the room, and those who stayed paid lip service to the discussion of the bills at hand.[2]

There are, in fact, two types of questions presented to the cabinet. The first is the oral question, usually concerning a minor issue, which the Prime Minister may answer imme-

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[1] Closely associated with the question period is the thirty-minute period allocated for brief commenting on documents, petitions, and all sorts of papers that are communicated to the Chamber, for the Deputies are accustomed to turn it into a long debate. See al-Khateeb, op.cit., pp. 385-386.

[2] Ibid., p. 386.

diately or postpone it to the following meeting; he may even ask for it to be presented in writing.[1] The second type is the written question which the government is supposed to answer within a period of ten days after officially receiving it.[2] Usually few questions are answered within the time limit; they are accumulated from one meeting to another till they amount at times to hundreds. Mr. Rashid Karami signed and delivered all at once 112 answers to questions that were presented to his cabinet several months before.[3] Apparently Mr. Saeb Salam was the only Prime Minister who tried to reform that practice by appointing a "parliamentary advisor" whose responsibility was to follow up the answering of questions that were presented to the government. His successor, Mr. Rashid Karami, abolished that job shortly after he was back in office, satisfied apparently by his administrative assistants.

Questions could be transformed into interpellations in two cases:[4]

a) If the government fails to answer.

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[1] Lebanon, Chamber of Deputies, Internal Rules of Procedure, Article 68.

[2] Ibid.

[3] An-Nahar (Beirut), January 12, 1964, p. 2.

[4] al-Khateeb, op.cit., p. 387.

b) If the answers are unsatisfactory to the interrogators.

Theoretically, an interpellation entails a vote of confidence. This is rather unfrequent in the Lebanese Chamber, for interprellators are often "satisfied" by the cabinet's answers and explanations. However, if voting is to take place the cabinet can always manage to win the day. In Fact, it will resign rather than face the Chamber if it is not sure about the result beforehand. A vote of no-confidence is considered a blow to a Prime Minister's political and personal integrity. This may explain why since Independence no Lebanese government was ever brought down by a vote of no-confidence. Even before Independence only once did a Lebanese government lose confidence before the Chamber. Resignation has always but wrongly been considered the safest way to escape humilation.

The Prime Minister need not be worried about the fate of his introduced bills as he can always manage, through heads of parliamentary blocs, to get them approved or slightly modified by the parliamentary committees.[1] Occasionally, some bills are "fought" outside the Chamber and are consequently "adopted" and passed by the committee concerned and the Chamber respectively. This could be best illustrated by the two bills of "Teaching in

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[1] As for private member's legislation, Mr. Adel Osayran assures that the Deputies rarely use their right to propose laws.

Private Institutions" and the Rent Law. In both cases the cabinet as well as the Deputies were subjected to a wide pressure from certain sectarian and interest groups that resulted in drastic modification of the original draft of the bill. However, since 1960 the Prime Minister became less worried about the fate of his bills in the Chamber as the enlarged parliament (99 Deputies) which was elected in that year rarely bothered itself with discussing introduced bills. Realizing its weakness and indifference, the cabinet resorted to what is known in parliamentary affairs as "urgent bills." By means of a decree issued with the approval of the Council of Ministers, the President of the Republic may promulgate as law any bill which has previously been declared to be urgent by the cabinet when transmitted to the Chamber and on which the latter has not given a decision within the forty days following its communication.[1] The failure of the 1960 Chamber to discuss and give a decision on government-ordinarily-transmitted-bills induced the cabinet to flood the Chamber with urgent bills. Since the Chamber was naturally incapable, as it has always been, to act on these bills within so short a time (forty days), the cabinet soon put them into effect after the expiration of the specified period. Although constitutionally authorized to do so, the cabinet misused its right by

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[1] Lebanese Constitution, op.cit., Article 58.

transmitting to the Chamber "urgent bills" whose subjects need not be urgent at all.[1] The opposition accused the government of purposely paralyzing the Chamber in order to impose its policies without the slightest change. It was even accused of asking the members of the majority to boycott the meetings to render quorum impossible.[2] In the course of defending the cabinet stand on the issue Mr. Pierre Gemayel, then Minister of Public Works, accused the Deputies of laziness and indifference and justified "urgent bills" on the following basis:[3]

a) Quorum was rarely achieved, thus making parliamentary discussion rather impossible.

b) Incapacity of certain Deputies to meet their duties.

c) The nonexistence of active parliamentary committees. The draft law of social security remained for a whole year in the Chamber without being discussed.

The weakness and incapacity of the 1960 Chamber was a widespread conviction. So at the opening of the first session of the 1964 Chamber, the eldest among its members urged his colleagues in his traditional speech to attend the meetings and

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[1] One of the bills that were declared "urgent" was concerning an indemnity of L.L. 50,000 to the family of the late Deputy Yusef Az-Zein. Obviously, this bill could wait because the rich Zein family was not starving! See An-Nahar (Beirut), December 4, 1963, p. 2.

[2] Ibid., December 5, 1963, p. 2.

[3] Ibid., December 11, 1963, p. 2.

study the bills introduced by the cabinet. He also urged the cabinet not to flood the Chamber with "urgent bills."[1] Hardly 15 days elapsed before the cabinet resumed its previous course. Not less than forty bills, declared "urgent," were transmitted to the Chamber.[2] The reaction was soon to come. Mr. Kamel al-Asa'd, Speaker of the Chamber, publicly attacked Prime Minister Husayn Uwaini for flooding the Chamber with bills that could not be discussed within forty days, thus providing an excuse for the cabinet to put them into effect.[3] Alarmed at the diminishing role of the Chamber in the field of legislation, the Parliamentary Committee for Internal Procedure was soon to set a rule by which the parliamentary committees were forced not only to give "urgent bills" priority of discussion but to transmit the latter back to the general assembly of the Chamber to act on them in case the committees fail to do so within a time limit.[4]

Since the Chamber is mostly preoccupied with debates, it is relevant to discuss briefly what makes a good parliamentary speaker. To Adel Osayran, a good speaker must be bold, well-

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[1] Ibid., May 9, 1964, p. 2.

[2] Ibid., May 29, 1964, p. 3.

[3] Ibid., May 31, 1964, p. 3.

[4] Ibid., June 6, 1964, p. 2.

informed, convincing, cool-headed, self-restrained, impressive, and skilled in oratory. None, as one would expect, possessed all of these qualities although Riyadh as-Sulh possessed a pretty good number.[1] In this connection it is noteworthy to differentiate between public oratory and parliamentary oratory. A successful public speaker is not necessarily a successful parliamentary speaker, and vice versa. Riyadh as-Sulh was more of a public speaker although successful in the parliament as well. Rashid Karami is also a successful parliamentary speaker. Abdullah al-Yafi is considered a good debator and well-informed in legal affairs. Although fluent and quick-witted, Sami as-Sulh suffers from a Turkish accent. Saeb Salam is well-informed, logical, and impressive but lacking in self-restraint.

By and large, Riyadh as-Sulh was considered the best speaker among those who became Prime Ministers. He enjoyed a diversity of talents that were well exploited by a very impressive personality. Although fond of intrigue, his inherent political genius was the final trump card that decided his triumphant parliamentary battles.

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[1] Information about the personal qualities of the Prime Ministers was obtained from extensive interviews with most of those who held the post and with several contemporary Deputies and journalists.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Having discussed the development of the office of Prime Minister and analyzed its relationships with the Presidency and Chamber, the author proceeds now to draw some concluding remarks.

Unlike the Presidency,[1] the office of the Prime Minister is relatively a new institution in the political history of Lebanon for it dates back only to 1926 when the Constitution was put into effect. True, some of its powers and duties can be traced back to the pre-Constitution period as they were divided between the office of the Governor and the office of the Secretary General, but by 1926 these powers and duties together with additional ones were concentrated in one agency having a constitutional authority, namely, the office of Prime Minister.

The creation of this office meant to some people a sort of duality in the exercise of executive power with the President of the Republic and the Prime Minister as its two pillars.[2] But in practice the Prime Minister has been the underdog in this respect.

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[1] By Presidency is meant the office of the Head of the State, whether a Prince, or a Mutasarrif, or a High Commissioner, or a President of the Republic.

[2] Oweidat, op.cit., pp. 570-571.

The supremacy of the President can be attributed to the stability of his office and weakness of the Chamber. The six-year term of the President's office enables him to outlive both the Chamber and cabinet. This stability is a source of excessive power in a country that lacks effective political parties for it makes out of the President a pole of attraction and a patron for the non-partisan Deputies who seek their personal interests.

Being so mosaic in structure with no significant political ties among its members, the Chamber faces the President with a dilemma, namely, a lack of a parliamentary majority on one hand, and a constitutional obligation of forming a government on the other hand. Such being the case, the President seeks a solution in creating an artificial majority from among the Deputies to back the Prime Minister that he designates. The Prime Minister depends, therefore, from the outset on the President to stay in power. But as the Prime Minister exercises power he discovers that he is almost constantly overshadowed by the President who is practically the leader of the parliamentary majority. This discovery may lead some Prime Ministers to complain of what they call "the excessive powers of the President."

In the light of the above analysis one can deduce that the relatively secondary position of the Prime Minister vis-a-vis the President can be attributed in the first place to the former's parliamentary weakness and not to his limited

constitutional powers. Prime Ministers who enjoyed a considerable parliamentary support never complained of "the President's excessive powers." Riyadh as-Sulh was a case in point. His popularity and prestige as a nationalist leader gave him a considerable parliamentary support which enabled him to share with the President the powers of the chief executive.[1]

Inspite of the secondary position of the Prime Minister compared with that of the President, the office of the former developed into an agency having distinct authority characterized by constitutional, political, and administrative duties. This, in fact, came as a result of three factors, namely, the constitutional usage, the greater responsibilities and obligations that a changing world has brought to the holder of the office, and the personal initiative. The first factor enabled the Prime Minister to have a larger say in the formation of his cabinet. The second factor increased the powers and duties of the Prime Minister especially through the new important agencies that were attached to his office. The third factor asserted the authority of the office through the activities of those Prime Ministers who correlated the influence of their religious community (Sunni Muslim) with the power of the post.

Being the "creator" of the artificial majority that backs the Prime Minister, the President has usually a large say in

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[1] It is important to note that Riyadh as-Sulh's strong position vis-a-vis the President was not only the direct result of the parliamentary support he enjoyed. Other factors, such as his close friendship with the President, similarity of their outlook toward internal and foreign issues, internal circumstances prevailing at that time, etc. had to do in that respect.

in the formation of the cabinet. The President's interference may take the form of imposing particular ministers or determining the size and kind of the cabinet. If the Prime Minister-designate is weak, he will give in; if he is strong with a substantial parliamentary support, he will have his way if determined to do so. However, in forming his cabinet the Prime Minister meets many confessional, regional, political and personal difficulties to the extent that at times he is unable to satisfy the conflicting and power-hungry Deputies without the President's helping hand.

As chief executive the President presides over the meetings of the Council of Ministers which is responsible in general for planning, directing, and implementing government policies. The Prime Minister has a great role to play in the cabinet system for he ensures over-all control of government activities, maintains liaison between the President and the ministers, supervises and coordinates ministerial work, and countersigns every decision (decree) bearing the signature of the President and the minister concerned. For these reasons the Prime Minister is considered more than first among equals in regard to his colleagues (ministers).

The Prime Minister needs not worry about his bills in the Chamber as far as he enjoys the confidence of the President for the latter is the real leader of the majority. But as soon

as the Prime Minister loses the support of the President, it becomes very difficult for him to stay in power. In such a case the Prime Minister prefers resignation to an inevitable vote of no-confidence in the Chamber.

Concluding we may say, therefore, that the shortest way to a strong cabinet system in Lebanon is the way that starts with developing the party system so that the Prime Minister becomes the leader of a parliamentary majority pledged to a definite program.

APPENDIX

TABLE ONE

Prime Minister of Lebanon 1926-1964

Name	Date	President of the Republic at that time
Auguste Adib	May 31, 1926-May 5, 1927	Charles Dabbas
	March 25, 1930-May 9, 1932	Charles Dabbas
Beshara al-Khoury	May 5, 1927-August 5, 1928	Charles Dabbas
	March 10, 1929-Oct. 11, 1929	Charles Dabbas
Habib as-Saad	August 9, 1928-May 9, 1929	Charles Dabbas
Emile Edde	Oct. 12, 1929-March 20, 1930	Charles Dabbas
Kairuddin al-Ahdab	January 4, 1937-March 19, 1938	Emile Edde
Khaled Chehab	March 21, 1938-Oct. 24, 1938	Emile Edde
	Sept. 30, 1952-April 30, 1953	Camille Chamoun
Abdullah al-Yafi	Oct. 31, 1938-September 21, 1939	Emile Edde
	June 7, 1951-February 11, 1952	Beshara al-Khoury
	August 16, 1953-Sept. 16, 1954	Camille Chamoun
	March 19, 1956-Nov. 18, 1956	Camille Chamoun
Ahmad al-Daouk	December 21, 1941-July 27, 1942	Alfred Naccache
	May 14, 1960-August 1, 1960	Fuad Chehab

TABLE ONE (CONT'D.)

Sami as-Sulh	July 27, 1942-March 18, 1943	Alfred Naccache
	August 22, 1945-May 22, 1946	Beshara al-Khoury
	Feb. 11, 1952-Sept. 9, 1952	Beshara al-Khoury
	Sept. 16, 1954-Sept. 19, 1955	Camille Chamoun
	Nov. 18, 1956-Sept. 24, 1958	Camille Chamoun
Ayyub Tabet	March 18, 1943-July 21, 1943	Ayyub Tabet
Riyadh as-Sulh	Sept. 25, 1943-Jan. 9, 1945	Beshara al-Khoury
	Dec. 14, 1946-Feb. 14, 1951	Beshara al-Khoury
Abdul-Hamid Karami	Jan. 9, 1945-Aug. 22, 1945	Beshara al-Khoury
Sadial Munla	May 22, 1946-Dec. 14, 1946	Beshara al-Khoury
Husayn Uwaini	Feb. 14, 1951-June 7, 1951	Beshara al-Khoury
	February 20, 1964-	Fuad Chehab
Nazim Akari	Sept. 9, 1952-Sept. 14, 1952	Beshara al-Khoury
Saeb Salam	Sept. 14, 1952-Sept. 18, 1952	Beshara al-Khoury
	April 30, 1953-Aug. 16, 1953	Camille Chamoun
	Aug. 1, 1960-Oct. 31, 1961	Fuad Chehab
Fuad Chehab	Sept. 18, 1952-Sept. 30, 1952	-
Rashid Karami	Sept. 19, 1955-March 19, 1956	Camille Chamoun
	Sept. 24, 1958-May 14, 1960	Fuad Chehab
	Oct. 31, 1961-Feb. 20, 1964	Fuad Chehab

TABLE TWO

Ministerial Positions Held Prior to First Appointment as Prime Minister

Name	Position	Date
Auguste Adib	-	-
Beshara al-Khoury	Ministry of Interior	May 31, 1926-May 5, 1927
Habib as-Saad	-	-
Emile Edde	-	-
Kairuddin al-Ahdab	-	-
Kaled Chehab	Ministry of Finance	May 5, 1927-January 5, 1928
Abdullah al-Yafi	-	-
Ahmad al-Daouk	-	-
Sami as-Sulh	-	-
Ayyub Tabet	Ministry of Interior	January 5, 1928-August 5, 1928
Riyadh as-Sulh	-	-
Abdul-Hamid Karami	-	-

TABLE TWO (CONT'D.)

Sa'di al-Munla	Ministry of Justice Ministry of Interior	August 22, 1945-April 11, 1946 April 11, 1946-May 22, 1946
Husayn Uwaini	Ministry of Finance	July 26, 1948-February 14, 1951
Nazim Akari	-	-
Saeb Salam	Ministry of Interior	May 22, 1946-December 14, 1946
Fuad Chehab	-	-
Rashid Karami	Ministry of Justice Ministry of National Economy	June 7, 1951-February 11, 1952 August 16, 1953-September 19, 1955

TABLE THREE

Years of Parliamentary Service Prior to First Appointment as Prime Minister

Name of Prime Minister	Approximate Number of Years in Parliament
Auguste Adib	-
Beshara al-Khoury	-
Habib as-Saad	6
Emile Edde	4
Kairuddin al-Ahdab	3
Khaled Chehab	16
Abdullah al-Yafi	1
Ahmad al-Daouk	-
Sami as-Sulh	-
Ayyub Tabet	12
Riyadh as-Sulh	-
Abdul-Hamid Karami	2
Sa'di al-Munla	3
Husayn Uwaini	4
Nazim Akari	-
Saeb Salam	5
Fuad Chehab	-
Rashid Karami	4

TABLE FOUR

Background of Lebanese Prime Ministers

Name	Religious Sect	District	Education	Profession	Family Background
Auguste Adib	Maronite	Dair al-Qamar	Higher Educ.	Govt. official	Wealthy
Beshara al-Khoury	Maronite	Rishmayya (ash-Shuf)	Higher Educ.	Lawyer	Well-known and Influencial
Habib as-Saad	Maronite	Ain Trez (Aley)	Sec. Educ.	Govt. official	Well-known and Influencial
Emile Edde	Maronite	Edde (Jbeil)	Higher Educ.	Lawyer	Wealthy
Kairuddin al-Ahdab	Sunni	Tripoli	Higher Educ.	Journalist	Well-known
Khaled Chehab	Sunni	Hasbayya	Sec. Educ.	Land owner	Noble
Abdullah al-Yafi	Sunni	Beirut	Higher Educ.	Lawyer	Well-known
Ahmad Daouk	Sunni	Beirut	Higher Educ.	Businessman	Well-known and Wealthy
Sami as-Sulh	Sunni	Beirut	Higher Educ.	Lawyer	Well-known
Ayyub Tabet	Protestant	Beirut	Higher Educ.	Physician	Well-known
Riyadh as-Sulh	Sunni	Sidon	Higher Educ.	Part-time Journalist	Well-known
Abdul-Hamid Karami	Sunni	Tripoli	Sec. Educ.	Mufti	Well-known
Sa'di al-Munla	Sunni	Tripoli	Higher Educ.	Businessman	Wealthy
Husayn Uwaini	Sunni	Beirut	Sec. Educ.	Businessman	Middle Class
Nazim Akari	Sunni	Tripoli	Sec. Educ.	Govt. Offic.	Middle Class
Saeb Salam	Sunni	Beirut	Higher Educ.	Businessman	Well-known and Wealthy
Fuad Chehab	Maronite	Gazir(Kisrwan)	Military	Army Officer	Noble
Rashid Karami	Sunni	Tripoli	Higher Educ.	Lawyer	Well-known

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