

In mid-April 1995, former Turkish Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit called for a new military alliance with the United States, replacing Provide Comfort, and expelling British and French forces. According to *Hurriyet*, which interviewed him on April 16, "The British and French forces serving the Provide Comfort force would leave, since the [proposed U.S. defense] agreement pertains only to American forces. With the departure of the British and French forces from Provide Comfort, it will be possible to control the attempts to set up a Kurdish state in the region that would be independent of the central administration in Baghdad. Behind the suggestion that the British and French forces should be left out is the uneasiness Ankara feels in the activities in northern Iraq of the non-governmental organizations. These organizations, benefitting from the security umbrella provided by Provide Comfort, are claimed to be attempting to establish an independent Kurdish state using 'humanitarian relief work' as a pretext."

The Hezbollah

Name of group: Hezbollah (Party of God).

Alias: Hezbollah is a federation of some 13 different organizations, including Jundallah (Soldiers of God) and Islamic Amal (a split-off from Amal, a Shiite militia). It is a political party which currently holds 8 seats in the 128-seat Lebanese parliament; a militia, engaged in combat with Israeli forces occupying southern Lebanon; and a terrorist organization, which operates under the name Islamic Jihad.¹

Headquarters: Hezbollah's political headquarters are in Beirut; its military headquarters are in the northern Bekaa Valley, in Baalbeck and the Hermel district, which is also the center of its opium plantations. It also has important military bases in southern Lebanon, where many of its heroin refineries are located. Historically, Hezbollah has been directed out of its representative offices in Damascus, Syria and Teheran, Iran.

Founded: June 1982, in the aftermath of the Israeli invasion and occupation of Lebanon.

Location of operations, areas active: Lebanon and Israel, with sporadic activity in Kuwait. According to unconfirmed reports, Hezbollah may have also been responsible for

the July 18, 1994 bombing of the Buenos Aires headquarters of the Argentine-Israeli Mutual Association, which killed over 100 people.

Major terrorist actions: Hezbollah has been the primary Syrian-run terrorist group active in Lebanon, targeting U.S. diplomatic and military installations, and kidnapping U.S. diplomatic personnel.

- April 18, 1983: Suicide car-bombing of U.S. embassy in Beirut, killing 63 (including 17 Americans). The dead included R. C. Ames, the CIA's top Mideast expert, and four of his deputies, who had arrived that day from Washington for a meeting with the CIA Beirut station chief and four other CIA officials (who were also killed).

- Oct. 23, 1983: Suicide truck-bombing of U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut, killing 245 and wounding 146.

- Oct. 23, 1983: Suicide truck-bombing of French military headquarters in Beirut, killing 58 and wounding 15.

- January 1984: Saudi diplomat kidnapped (released May 1985).

- Jan. 18, 1984: President of American University of Beirut (AUB), Malcolm Kerr, assassinated.

[February 1984, U.S. evacuates Marines from Beirut.]

- February 1984: AUB professor Frank Regier kidnapped, rescued in April.

- March 1984: CNN bureau chief Jeremy Levin kidnapped (escaped February 1995).

- March 16, 1984: CIA Beirut station chief William Buckley kidnapped, and killed in June.

- May 8, 1984: Rev. Benjamin Weir kidnapped (released September 1985).

- Sept. 20, 1984: U.S. Embassy Annex in Beirut car-bombed, killing 14.

- December 1984: Kuwaiti flight hijacked to Teheran; two USAID officials killed.

- Jan. 8, 1985: Father Lawrence Martin Jenco kidnapped (released July 1986).

- March 16, 1985: AP bureau chief Terry Anderson kidnapped (released December 1991).

- March 22, 1985: Marcel Carton and Marcel Fontaine, consuls at the French embassy, kidnapped.

- March 26, 1985: British journalist Alex Collet kidnapped (killed in April 1986).

- May 28, 1985: AUB professor David Jacobsen kidnapped (released November 1986).

- May 22, 1985: Two French citizens, Kaufmann and Seurat, kidnapped (one killed in March 1986, the other released).

- June 10, 1985: AUB professor Thomas Sutherland kidnapped (released November 1991).

- June 14, 1985: A TWA flight from Athens to Rome is hijacked, and flown back and forth across the Mediterranean. A U.S. Navy diver on board is killed. The hijackers demand the release of detainees, mostly Lebanese Shiites, from an Israeli detention camp. Thirty-nine U.S. citizens held as hos-

1. Sources for this report include interviews, Hezbollah literature, and newspaper accounts. Other sources, of varying reliability, include: *Militant Islamic Movements in Lebanon*, by Marius Deeb (Center for Arab Studies, Georgetown University, November 1986); *Terrorism: National Security and the Homefront*, Stephen C. Pelletiere, editor (Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 1995); *Amal and the Shia*, by Augustus Richard Norton (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987); *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?* by John Esposito (London: Oxford University Press, 1992).

tages for 17 days.

- July 1985: Hezbollah claims credit for a bombing of a synagogue in Copenhagen, Denmark.
- Sept. 9, 1985: American educator Frank Reed kidnapped (released in April 1990).
- Sept. 12, 1985: AUB accountant Joseph Ciccipio kidnapped (released December 1991).
- Oct. 21, 1985: American writer Edward Tracy kidnapped (released August 1991).
- April 17, 1986: American hostage Peter Kilburn is murdered.
- Jan. 30, 1987: British “Iran-Contra” intermediary Rev. Terry Waite kidnapped (released November 1991).
- January 1987: AUB professors Jesse Turner, Alan Steen, Robert Polhill, and M. Singh kidnapped (released October 1991, December 1991, April 1990, and October 1988, respectively).
- February 1988: Col. Richard Higgins, a U.S. member of the UN military observers office is kidnapped, and subsequently murdered.
- April 1988: Kuwaiti airliner hijacked; two U.S. hostages murdered.
- August 1990: Hezbollah claims credit for Ankara car-bombing which wounds a Saudi diplomat.
- October 1990: Saudi diplomat in Beirut murdered.
- March 1991: Hezbollah claims credit for Ankara car-bombing which wounds an Iraqi diplomat.

Trademark terror signatures: Suicide bombings and kidnapping supplement its conventional military actions. Since suicide is explicitly condemned as a grave sin in the Koran, Hezbollah’s decision to carry out suicide bombings required a complex exegesis.

Leaders’ names:

Sheikh Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah is its founder and spiritual leader.

Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah is its current secretary general, replacing Abbas al-Musawi, who was assassinated in 1992.

Sheikh Subhi al-Tufayli, one of its founders, left Lebanon for Iran in 1992, because of his opposition to participating in the elections.

Known controllers/mentors/theoreticians:

Hezbollah is a product of the Shiite theological academy in Najaf in southern Iraq, which the British also used to organize the 1979 overthrow of the Shah of Iran. All of Hezbollah’s leaders were trained there, many when Ayatollah Khomeini held court there as the academy’s most prominent theorist. According to Sheikh Tufayli, in an Aug. 20, 1985 interview with the Iranian newspaper *Ettelaat*, “Our relationship with the Islamic revolution [in Iran] is one of a junior to a senior . . . of a soldier to his commander.”

Hafez al-Assad is the other controller of the group. “As long as Hafez al-Assad is the director of the orchestra, Hezbollah does not have to worry,” Hezbollah Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah said in 1993, when the United States was

involved in brokering an Israeli-Hezbollah deal, with Syrian assistance, restricting weapons fire to military targets.²

The primary Iranian coordinators of Hezbollah have been the Karrubi brothers, both of whom have worked with George Bush and company since at least 1980. They have been aided in this capacity by their close associate, Ayatollah Ali Akbar Motashemi.

Ayatollah Hassan Karrubi was a top Khomeini adviser, who had lived with him in exile for 15 years prior to the revolution. He was one of the figures who oversaw the taking of the U.S. hostages at the U.S. embassy in Teheran in 1979. He reportedly met with then-Reagan campaign director Bill Casey, and vice presidential candidate George Bush in October 1980, in Paris, in order to ensure that the hostages would not be released before the elections. Karrubi later was a primary negotiator with the Reagan-Bush administration, over the release of the American hostages seized by Hezbollah in Lebanon. Hezbollah hostage-taking also provided the pretext for constant meetings between Bush operatives and Hafez Assad, and was later used as the pretext to justify arming Iran—allegedly to get the hostages released.

Ayatollah Mehdi Karrubi, his brother, oversaw foreign operations of the Iranian Revolutionary Committee, and later became speaker of the parliament. His Martyr’s Foundation, Iran’s largest, was Hezbollah’s primary funder. Mehdi Karrubi also reportedly met Casey, Bush, et al., beginning in 1980.

Ayatollah Ali Akbar Motashemi was the Iranian ambassador to Syria, in the immediate post-revolutionary period, where he oversaw funding of Hezbollah, among other tasks.

According to the Reagan-Bush administration account, as presented before the Congressional “Iran-Contra” hearings, Hassan Karrubi led the “moderate faction” in Iran, while his brother Mehdi was one of the leaders of a centrist faction potentially inclined toward the moderates, and opposed to the “extremists.”

Iran-Contra testimony confirms that the administration considered Hassan as someone with great influence over Hezbollah. On Oct. 27, 1985, Karrubi told U.S. National Security Council official Michael Ledeen that he and his group were ready to commit themselves to halting terrorist actions against the United States, and to put pressure on Hezbollah to release the hostages. The meeting occurred in the context of the spring 1985 Hezbollah hostage-taking spree. Karrubi repeatedly traveled to Lebanon during that period, meeting with Hezbollah, according to contemporary press accounts.³

2. As quoted in *Al Quds* of London, April 25, 1996.

3. Information on the Karrubi’s dealing with the Reagan-Bush administration is found in *Iran-Contra Affair* (Washington, D.C.: Report of the Senate and House Committees [S. Rept. No. 100-216, H. Rept. No. 100-433, and depositions thereto, November 1987]). Also see *A Very Thin Line—the Iran-Contra Affairs*, by Theodore Draper (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1991); and *Profits of War; Inside the Secret U.S.-Israeli Arms Network*, by Ari Ben-Menashe (New York: Sheridan Square Press, 1992).

In 1992, the Karrubi brothers, and Motashemi, were swept from power, with Mehdi Karrubi, then speaker of the parliament, even losing his individual seat in the elections that year. However, in October 1996, after four years of dormancy, Mehdi Karrubi announced the reactivation of his party, the Militant Clerics Society. President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani's term of office ends July 1997, and he is barred by the Constitution from another term. The Karrubi faction is expected to soon regain much influence.

Groups allied to nationally and internationally:

Internally: Hezbollah has allied with (and has also fought with) Amal (Groups of the Lebanese Resistance). Amal was formed in 1974 by Imam Musa al-Sadr, a pro-Syrian operative, who disappeared in Libya in 1978. Al-Sadr's cousin and mentor, Sheikh Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr, was a dominant figure at the Najaf theological academy in southern Iraq, and a decades-long collaborator of Khomeini. Amal played an active role in the first, 1975-76 phase of the Lebanese civil war, acting on Syria's behalf.

Amal split apart in 1982, after al-Sadr's successor, Nabi Berri, advocated limited collaboration with the Maronite Catholic militia, in order to fight the Israeli invasion. Husayn al-Musawi, Amal's liaison officer with Iran, opposed this collaboration, and formed a breakaway group, Islamic Amal, which soon joined Hezbollah.

Rivalry between Amal and Hezbollah broke out into violent clashes in 1988-90. Amal defeated Hezbollah in southern Lebanon, and expelled it from the area. Syria and Iran simultaneously backed both competing organizations, but Syria tilted in favor of Amal at that time. Hezbollah was only allowed to return to southern Lebanon after Iran brokered a cease-fire between the two groups in January 1989. Since then, Hezbollah, with Syrian support, has emerged as the hegemonic Shiite militia in southern Lebanon.

Externally: Hezbollah external allies include: the Islamic Jihad of Palestine (reportedly distinct from the Islamic Jihad of Lebanon), Hamas, and the Palestinian Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC), run by former Syrian Army Capt. Ahmad Jibril. All three groups are part of the Syrian-steered Palestinian rejection front. PFLP-GC cadre joined with Hezbollah in clashes with the Israeli Army in July 1993.

Delegates from all four organizations attended a conference in Teheran, Iran, in October 1991, whose purpose was to organize a common front against the upcoming Madrid Israeli-Palestinian peace conference which began later that month. The conference was chaired by Ayatollah Mehdi Karrubi, then speaker of the parliament. Ayatollah Ali Akbar Motashemi, then head of the parliament's Defense and Revolutionary Guard committee, also played a prominent role.

Islamic Jihad, Hamas, and Hezbollah also teamed up in the spring of 1996, to launch rocket attacks against northern Israel, and bus bombings in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, which ensured Benjamin Netanyahu and the Likud's election vic-

tory. The Islamic Jihad of Palestine has its main offices in Damascus, London, and Tampa, Florida; Hamas is controlled out of London, England and Amman, Jordan; the PFLP-GC is merely a Syrian Army front.

Motivating ideology: Liberation of Lebanon from Israeli occupation, and the ultimate creation of a Lebanese Islamic Republic modeled after Iran.

The group explains its origins in the 1982 Israeli invasion and the "Zionist-Phalange [Maronite militia] coordination" that betrayed the country. It calls for military and terrorist actions to end Israeli occupation, and Phalangist domination.

"Our people could not withstand all this treason, and decided to confront the imams of infidelity of America, France, and Israel. The first punishment against these forces was carried out on April 18, and the second on Oct. 23, 1983," the group has said, referring to the bombing of the U.S. Embassy and Marine barracks, respectively.

It lists its objectives as: "Israel's final departure from Lebanon as a prelude to its final obliteration . . . ; The final departure of America, France, and their allies from Lebanon . . . ; Submission by the Phalange to just rule, and their trial for the crimes they have committed."

Hezbollah endorsed mujahideen operations in Afghanistan, then run by Britain, the United States, France, and Israel: "We stand against any western or eastern imperialist intervention in the affairs of the oppressed. . . . While denouncing America's crime in Vietnam, Iran, Nicaragua, Grenada, Palestine, Lebanon, and other countries, we also denounce the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the intervention in Iran's affairs, the support for Iraqi aggression, and so forth."⁴

Current number of cadres: An estimate of a militia base of 5,000 (whether or not including reservists) is standard. The Hezbollah militia is lightly armed, with automatic rifles, mortars, rocket-propelled grenades, and Katyusha rockets.

Training: The Iranian Revolutionary Guard's Zabadani base in western Syria, and its Sheikh Abdullah Barracks in the Bekaa Valley, have been Hezbollah's main training centers.

Evidence of Hezbollah's training by Israel, using Russian nationals, emerged in 1993. On Feb. 11, 1993, the Algerian newspaper *Liberté* reported that a group of Russian officers who trained Hezbollah forces in Lebanon, was executed in the fall of 1992, after it was established that they were working for the Israeli intelligence service, with the aim of establishing mole cells inside Hezbollah, and assassinating its leaders. The paper said the officers arrived in Lebanon via Teheran, and that Hezbollah is now recruiting former East German officers for the same purpose. It said the Iranian authorities, who

4. The complete text of the Hezbollah document, entitled "Open Letter Addressed by Hezbollah to the Downtrodden in Lebanon and the World," dated Feb. 16, 1985, is reprinted in Norton, *op. cit.*



Ruins of the Roman Temple of Bacchus in Baalbek, in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley (photo taken before the Lebanese civil war). Today, the military headquarters of Hezbollah is located in Baalbek, which is also the center of the region's opium plantations. In Lebanon's long history, Baalbek has often been a center of oligarchism: from the Phoenician cult of Baal, to the Roman cult of Bacchus, to the lunatic narco-terrorists today.

strictly control the passage of equipment to Hezbollah and examine each new recruit, approved of the recruitment of the officers.

According to a statement in the Israeli Knesset (parliament) by former Israeli Deputy Defense Minister Mordechai Gur, Hezbollah also has training camps in the trinational Iguazu national-park region on the borders of Brazil, Paraguay, and Argentina.

Drug connections: Hezbollah has been heavily involved in opium and marijuana cultivation, and heroin refining, since its inception.

Hezbollah's headquarters in Baalbeck and the northern Bekaa Valley, are in the traditional center of Lebanese marijuana cultivation, and, since 1983, the center of Syrian-Lebanese opium cultivation and heroin refining.

According to Lebanese Narcotics Agency 1990 reports, Hezbollah ran extensive opium plantations in Nabi Chit, Hermel, and Qasr in the Bekaa Valley, operating under the protection of Rifaat Assad's private militia. According to a 1992 report by U.S. Rep. Charles Schumer's (D-N.Y.) office, Hezbollah's "income from drug trafficking reportedly exceeds \$100 million a year."⁵

The Hezbollah remains headquartered in the Hermel dis-

trict in the northern Bekaa, cultivating and refining opium-heroin. Its product is shipped to Europe by the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK).

In addition to refining Lebanese opium, Hezbollah is also a primary refiner of Central Asian and Afghani opium, shipped there via Iran and Turkey.

Arms suppliers: Iran, via Syria; and Syria.

Funding: Its funds are derived mostly from narcotics sales, but Iran also reportedly provides it about \$60 million annually. Iranian funds for Fadlallah, used to establish Hezbollah militias, were channeled through the Martyr's Fund, run by Ayatollah Mehdi Karrubi, George Bush's "Iran-Contra" negotiating partner.

By 1987, Hezbollah was reportedly receiving \$120 million annually from Iran. Some Lebanese officials say Iranian aid to Hezbollah has been as high as \$300 million per year.

Because of these funds, Hezbollah has been able to deliver social services, unlike the paralyzed Lebanese government. Its hospitals, schools, discount supermarkets, and so on, are an important basis for its 1992 electoral victory, and popularity in general. Some of these latter functions are also funded by Saudi Arabia.

Known political supporters, advocates: Hezbollah has broad popular support within the Islamic world. Unlike many other regional organizations, however, it is not prominently supported, in an overt way, in the non-Islamic world.

Thumbnail historical profile: Hezbollah was one of a number of Islamic-formatted military and terrorist organiza-

5. Syria, President Bush, and Drugs—the Administration's next Iraqgate, staff report of the Subcommittee on Crime and Criminal Justice of the Committee on the Judiciary, chaired by Rep. Charles E. Schumer (D-N.Y.), issued on Nov. 23, 1992, p. 14.

tions that emerged in Lebanon in 1982, in the aftermath of the Israeli invasion, and the expulsion of the Palestine Liberation Organization. Prior to 1980, there were no Islamic-formatted political organizations in Lebanon of importance, except for Amal.

The origin and proliferation of Hezbollah, and related sects, is based on several factors:

- *The Israeli invasion of Lebanon:* The June-September 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon, and its subsequent occupation of the southern half of Lebanon (until 1983), was the major factor in the creation and growth of Hezbollah.

Most importantly, the Israeli Army selectively obliterated the PLO's infrastructure, and forced its leadership, and some 10,000 cadre, to leave Lebanon that summer. Syria finished off the job by the end of 1983. According to eyewitness accounts, the southern Lebanese Shiite population initially welcomed the Israeli invasion, thinking it would clean out the PLO, which then dominated the region.

The elimination of the PLO also broke the back of the Lebanese National Movement (LMN), the coalition of secular leftist anti-Syrian parties which had been hegemonic among Lebanese Muslims prior to the invasion. The Syrian- and Iranian-funded and -armed fundamentalists of Hezbollah sprung up in their place, rising to prominence in the same areas that had been the PLO bases of power, notably: Beirut, Tripoli, Baalbek, Sidon, and Nabatiyya.

- *The Islamic Revolution in Iran:* The rise of Khomeini's regime inspired many Lebanese Shiites, and served as their model. Hezbollah was formed in same Bekaa region where 1,500 Iranian Revolutionary Guards (Pasdaran) were based. Hezbollah's leaders were all clerics trained at Najaf. The Iranian embassy in Damascus, then run by Ali Akbar Motashemi, coordinated Hezbollah operations, working closely with Gen. Ali Dubah, head of Syrian military intelligence. Its leaders regularly traveled to Iran.⁶

- *Syrian intervention:* Syria invaded and occupied the Bekaa Valley of Lebanon in 1976, under the pretext of stabi-

6. On June 8, 1981, the Iranian parliament approved legislation authorizing "volunteers" to go and fight Israel in southern Lebanon. In November, Khomeini established an Islamic Revolutionary Council assigned to oversee Shiite revolutionary activities in Lebanon, Iraq, and the Gulf states.

The day after Israel invaded Lebanon, a high-level Iranian delegation, led by Col. Sayyed Shirazi, traveled to Damascus. On June 10, Iranian Prime Minister Mir Hussein Mussavi called for "war until victory in el-Quds [Jerusalem]," and asked parliament to budget funds for the war. In the aftermath of these events, 1,300 Revolutionary Guards, led by Sheikh Emami, established a base in Baalbek. Eventually, Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Hossein Zadeh was de facto made high commissioner for Lebanon, acting in coordination with Gen. Ghazi Kanan, a Syrian intelligence officer stationed in Beirut. Others involved included the Iranian ambassador to Damascus, Ayatollah Ali Akbar Motashemi, and Mahmoud Nurani and Issa Tabatabai, who had been appointed by the Revolutionary Guards to oversee Palestinian refugee camps in the Tyre and Sidon regions. See *The Iranian Triangle: the Untold Story of Israel's Role in the Iran-Contra Affair*, by Samuel Segev (New York: The Free Press, 1988).

lizing the country, and ending the civil war. Since that time, until it finalized its control of Lebanon in 1990, Syria pursued a policy of arming and deploying numerous ethnically or religiously based militias, most notably the Shiite minorities. From its inception in 1982, in the Syrian-controlled Bekaa Valley, Hezbollah has opposed any collaboration with Christian militias, even in limited pacts directed against Israel. It has also fought Muslim-based groups advocating such collaboration.

Najaf origins

The idea of creating Hezbollah reportedly goes back to the first phase of the Lebanese civil war in 1975-76. Already at that time, Sheikh Fadlallah, its future founder, complained about the ascendancy of the Lebanese National Movement secular parties, and called for Muslims to organize their own, religiously based, party. Fadlallah's importance within Lebanon was based on his position as general representative of Abu Qasim al-Khui, one of the leading Shiite clerics of his day. Al-Khui, Fadlallah's former teacher, was then the leading Shiite cleric in Najaf, Iraq, together with his close friends, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and Sheikh Muhammad Baqir-Sadr. Fadlallah was also the Lebanese representative of Islamic Call, a Najaf-based covert organization involved in preparing the Khomeini coup.

Fadlallah, Hezbollah's founder, was born in Najaf in 1934 to a family of Lebanese clerics. He studied under Khui as a youth, and moved to Lebanon in 1966. He founded Hezbollah in 1982. By 1984, he was reportedly considered one of the three most prominent Shiite clergymen in Lebanon.

Hezbollah's other co-founders were also trained at Najaf. These include:

- Sheikh Subhi al-Tufayli, who was born in 1948 in Baalbek, in the northern Bekaa Valley. He studied theology at Najaf for nine years, as a student of al-Sadr. He also studied at Qum. Tufayli objected to Hezbollah participating in the Lebanese elections, and now resides in Iran.

- Abbas al-Musawi (deceased), who was born in 1952 in Nabi Chit in the northern Bekaa Valley. He studied religion in Tyre, and then in Najaf for eight years, where he was also a student of al-Sadr. He returned to Baalbek in 1978.

- Ibrahim al-Amin, who was born 1953 in the northern Zahleh region of the Bekaa Valley. He also studied theology in Najaf, but mostly at Qum, the Iranian holy city south of Teheran. He was Amal's representative in Teheran, until he broke with them in 1982.

- Sheikh Hasan Nasrallah, the current head of Hezbollah, who visited Khomeini when he was teaching in Najaf. Nasrallah is from southern Lebanon, and later served as Hezbollah's chief mobilization officer in the Bekaa. He was also Hezbollah's representative in Iran.

Other Hezbollah leaders included Sheikh Muhammad Ismail Khaliq, who was Ayatollah Montazeri's representative in Lebanon.