

Lebanon

POLITICAL: Internal

Security Measures for Elections

The Internal Security Council, meeting on 1 April under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Saeb Salam, adopted a number of security measures for the forthcoming elections. The council decided that arms permits for night-watchmen and the municipal police would be temporarily waived and that special units would be formed to fight the buying of votes and corruption in any form. The internal security forces would be allowed to use any legal means to prevent the carrying of arms in the vicinity of polling stations. Electoral meetings and processions would require permits. A special office would be set up to co-ordinate the operations of the internal security forces and army units.

Explosions in Beirut

Four bombs exploded in Beirut on 8 April, killing one man and injuring a boy. Seven men were arrested the next day and after a meeting of the Internal Security Council, Prime Minister Saeb Salam told reporters the dead man had been identified as Mahmoud Doha and that he had died while planting one of the bombs. Salam said the explosions were intended 'to frighten peaceful citizens during the election campaign, particularly in this delicate area of the capital (Ras Beirut) where the citizens are not accustomed to violence.' He added that it was likely that those responsible were foreigners.

Salam Denies Accusing Syria

The Prime Minister categorically denied suggestions by the leader of the Progressive Socialist Party, Kamal Jumblatt, and the Communist Party that his remarks about foreigners were meant to refer to Syria.

Non-Lebanese Arrested

The Beirut *Daily Star* reported on 13 April that three non-Lebanese had been arrested on 12 April in connection with the explosions 'as they were coming out of the Jordanian Embassy in Beirut.'

Clash in Jezzín

Fifteen people were wounded on 8 April in a clash in Jezzín between supporters of deputy Jean Aziz and Dr. Farid Sirhal, rival candidates in the general election.

Baalbek Declared Military Area

After a clash in the village of Fikya near Baalbek on 11 April between rival factions of the Dandash family, the Prime Minister, Saeb Salam, called a special cabinet meeting on 13 April and declared the area a military zone under army supervision. The clash, which occurred in an atmosphere of pre-electoral tension, resulted in the death of three people and the wounding of a fourth.

Foreign Affairs

Yugoslav Foreign Minister's Visit

A Yugoslav delegation, led by the Foreign Minister, Mirko Tepavac, visited Beirut from 4 to 7 April for talks with Lebanese ministers on a wide range of subjects including the Middle East crisis. After a meeting on 5 April the Lebanese Foreign Minister, Khalil Abu Hamad, said the talks had dealt with relations between the two countries in the economic and

political fields, which were based on 'firm friendship'. Both sides affirmed their wish to establish closer relations in all spheres. Tepavac spoke of Yugoslav efforts to achieve a settlement of the Middle East crisis and condemned recent Israeli attacks on Lebanon (see *ARAB AFFAIRS*).

French Minister in Beirut

The French Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Jean de Lipkowski, returning home after a visit to the Gulf (see *BABA*), stopped briefly in Beirut on 14 April for talks with President Franjiya and Foreign Minister Khalil Abu Hamad, the Beirut *Daily Star* reported on 15 April.

Relations with East Germany Discussed

The Director-General of the East German Foreign Ministry, Horst Grunert, arrived in Beirut on 1 April for talks on establishing diplomatic relations with Lebanon, the Beirut *Daily Star* reported on 5 April.

The visit came two days after Lebanon had announced its intention of re-establishing relations with West Germany, which were broken off in 1965 (ARR 142). East Germany has maintained a trade mission in Lebanon since 1955.

Diplomatic Relations with Qatar

It was announced in Beirut on 10 April that Lebanon and Qatar had agreed to establish diplomatic relations.

Exchange of Ambassadors with UAE

The first Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates to Lebanon, Said Ahmad Ghabash, arrived in Beirut on 10 April. The Lebanese Ambassador to the UAE presented his credentials to Shaikh Zayid on 3 April.

Indonesian Ambassador Presents Credentials

The new Indonesian Ambassador to Lebanon, Muhammad Sharif Padmadisastra, presented his credentials to President Franjiya on 11 April.

Defence

Lebanon Requests Increase in UN Observers

Lebanon has asked the UN Security Council to increase the number of observers on the Lebanese-Israeli border as a result of the Israeli raids in February (ARR 86) (see *ARAB AFFAIRS*).

Israeli Troop Concentrations on Border

Israeli troop concentrations on the border and violations of Lebanese airspace were reported on several occasions during the first half of April, in addition to the establishment of 15 Israeli observation posts inside Lebanese territory (see *ARAB AFFAIRS*).

ECONOMIC: Foreign Aid

World Bank to Aid Water Projects

The Minister of Hydro-Electric Resources, Jaafar Sharafuddin, held talks with a World Bank delegation on 13 April on irrigation projects for the south Bekaa region and a new water network for Beirut. The south Bekaa project involves the irrigation of 23,000 hectares of land at a cost of £Leb 130 million (about \$16 million) over a 10-year period. The World Bank agreed to contribute 60 per cent of the cost of this project, the Beirut *Daily Star* reported on 14 April.