INFORMATION TO USERS

Fanatics, Mercenaries, Brigands ... and Politicians
Militia Decision-Making and Civil Conflict Resolution

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December 1999

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ABSTRACT

When do militias—whose power, riches, and legitimacy depend on the continuation of civil wars—accept negotiated settlements? An unexplored and crucial dimension of militia decision-making is the process of militia institutionalization. Militias create institutions to improve their odds of winning the war and project legitimacy internally as well as externally.

Militia institutions affect the strategic choice of decision-makers. They create financial and organizational interests that modify the preferences of the militia leadership. The modified preferences increase the win-set of militia leaders at the negotiating table. Militia institutions also change the decision-making context. Institutions unleash three dynamics that decrease a militia's ability to withstand fluctuations in the military balance of forces. Institutions can lead to factionalism, increased visibility (and hence vulnerability to attack), and strains in relations with patrons.

Using the logic of two-level games, I argue that leaders evaluate peace settlements with an eye on two boards. Externally, they evaluate their position vis-à-vis other protagonists in the conflict. Internally, leaders are concerned with their positions in power. Institutionalization results in a tension between "raison de la révolution" (ideological motivations) and "raison d' institution" (institutional preservation). Embattled leaders who increasingly find it difficult to withstand changes in the balance of forces find that their institutional interests are better preserved by peace. They agree to compromise on their ideological preferences thus opening a window of opportunity for the attainment of sustainable peace settlements.

Employing the comparative case-study method, the dissertation examines the attitudes of the Lebanese Forces and the Bosnian Serbs respectively toward conflict-resolution schemes that sought to bring the Lebanese and Bosnian civil wars to an end.

By focusing on leaders' incentives to settle, the research allows us to predict a priori which settlements are more sustainable. Theoretically, it refines the concept of "ripeness" for negotiations by specifying both its intra-communal and its extra-communal dimensions. In terms of practical policy implications, the research argues that militias are prime candidates for the role of spoilers. Thus, it is important not only to understand their incentives to settle but also to craft peace agreements that give even such radical factions a vested interest in peace.

RÉSUMÉ

Dans quelles conditions les milices—qui dérivent pouvoir, richesse, et légitimité de la perpétuation des conflits civils—acceptent-elles de négocier la paix? Le processus d'institutionalisation est une dimension cruciale quoique relativement ignorée du procédé décisionnel des milices. Les milices créent des institutions dans le but d'améliorer leurs chances de succés sur le terrain et afin de projeter une impression de légitimité tant au plan national qu'international.

Ces institutions influencent les choix stratégiques des décideurs. Elles créent des intérêts financiers et organisationnels qui modifient les préférences des chefs. Ces nouvelles préférences élargissent le domaine des gains à l'heure de la négociation. Les institutions des milices changent également le contexte décisionnel. Elles déclenchent trois mécanismes qui diminuent la capacité des milices de soutenir des fluctuations dans la balance des forces militaires. Les institutions fractionnent les milices, elles augmentent leur visibilité et donc leur vulnérabilité à l'attaque. Finalement, elles créent des frictions entre milices et patrons.

Je me base sur la logique des jeux stratégiques à deux niveaux pour argumenter que les chefs évaluent tout accord de paix en tenant compte de la situation militaire sur le terrain ainsi que de la situation dans leur zone de contrôle. Le processus d'institutionalisation crée une tension entre raison de la révolution, soit les préférences idéologiques des milices, et raison d'institution, soit la préservation des intérêts institutionnels. Les chefs, qui ont de plus en plus mal à soutenir les fluctuations de la balance des forces militaires, reconnaissent que leurs intérêts peuvent être mieux servis par la paix. Ils acceptent des compromis politiques et permettent ainsi la conclusion d'accords de paix durables.

Cette étude se penche sur deux milices spécifiques, les Forces libanaises et les Serbes bosniaques. Utilisant l'étude de cas comparée, elle examine les attitudes de leurs chefs respectifs vis-à-vis plusieurs accords visant à mettre fin aux guerres du Liban et de la Bosnie-Herzégovine.

En mettant l'accent sur les raisons qui portent les chefs à accepter les compromis, cette recherche nous permet de prédire à priori quels accords sont plus à même de perdurer. Théoriquement, la thèse élabore le concept de maturité selon lequel certains conflits atteignent un seuil qui permet leur résolution. Cette élaboration se fait à deux niveaux, ceux des relations intra- ainsi qu'inter-communautaires. Sur le plan pratique, la thèse indique que les milices sont parfaitement situées pour saboter les accords de paix. Il est donc important, non seulement de comprendre les raisons qui portent les chefs à accepter les compromis, mais aussi de concevoir les accords de paix de telle façon que toutes les parties, même les plus radicales, investissent dans la paix.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

pursuit of my dream. To my brothers, Jean-Ralph, Jean-Pierre, and Serge, for supporting me even when they did not really understand what I was after. To my family for the love and support that allowed us to survive fifteen years of civil war in Lebanon without losing hope.

I embarked on this journey because I was concerned about the manner in which 'peace' was being implemented in my country. Wars are not something that one wishes upon others. Though my conclusions are not as optimistic as I would have wanted them to be, I still hold dear the hope that a lasting peace can be reached and that Lebanese, and Bosnians, of all stripes will relearn the virtues of coexistence. I dedicate this research to my two nieces, Marion and Camille. I hope that their Lebanon will learn from its past and that they will be proud to call it their country

I. BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION

They have been referred to as protracted ethnic conflicts, and bloody civil wars. Their protagonists were said to be fighting on the "fault-lines of civilizations;" they were soldiers of Islam and Christianity. Their histories are stained with massacres of civilians. The avowed aim of at least one of the protagonists was the creation of an "ethnically-pure" political entity. Yet, the guns have been silenced in both Lebanon and Bosnia-Herzegovina. And in spite of the total war images perpetuated by academic analyses and journalistic accounts, the outcome of the conflict was a negotiated solution, not the victory of one side over another. How did peace come about in those two countries? Why did the parties to the conflict accept a negotiated solution? How committed are they to the 1989 Ta'if Accord and the 1995 Dayton Agreement, the two peace agreements that brought the war to an end in Lebanon and Bosnia respectively? Are there lessons here to be learned?

This dissertation examines negotiated peace settlements that purport to bring civil violence to an end and resolve the political issues that sparked the conflict. It focuses on the decision-making of one important set of actors in civil wars, militia groups. I define militias as armed groups competing to gain or protect political power either against or in the state.[1] The dissertation asks *why and under what set of conditions do such groups accept political settlements?* Why do militias—whose political salience and mere existence depend on the continuation of civil wars—agree to negotiate? Militia acceptance of peace settlements is a fact that cannot

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[1] This definition includes paramilitaries, guerrillas, insurgency movements and revolutionary armies. It excludes state actors with the exception of situations when the state is collapsed or highly personalized. It is developed further in chapter III.

be fully accounted for by existing theories. If we concur with descriptions of militias as extremist fanatics, then they should consistently refuse to engage in political compromise. This, however does not hold consistently, as demonstrated by the—albeit grudging—consent to peace settlements by the likes of Radovan Karadžić and Samir Ja`ja`.[2] If militia leaders act as "generals" they should only accept negotiated peace when faced with an impending military defeat. But during negotiations leading to the Tripartite Agreement, Ilyas Hubeiqa made numerous concessions that were not warranted by the military position of the Lebanese Forces.[3] Likewise, if these groups are exclusively driven by considerations of financial gain,[4] then militia leaders should attempt to maintain the conditions that ensure the continued inflow of benefits. The acceptance of peace settlements would, in many cases, be detrimental to their interests. In its current state, the literature does not possess satisfactory answers to the questions that guide this study.

I argue that militias are rational actors who make strategic choices. However, an understanding of these choices requires prior understanding of their interests, which are not as uniform as proposed by current analyses of these groups. This dissertation demonstrates that, much like all decision-makers, militia leaders engage in a cost-benefit calculus. I develop an argument about the conditions under which militias are willing to compromise

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[2] Radovan Karadžić was leader of the Bosnian Serbs at the time of the Dayton Accord while Samir Ja`ja` was leader of the Lebanese Forces at the time of the Ta'if Accord.
[3] Ilyas Hubeiqa was leader of the Lebanese Forces at the time of the Tripartite Accord.
[4] There are two versions of this argument that I develop at length later in this introduction. Militias can be described as mercenaries of foreign powers who have a stake in the outcome of a given internal conflict. Alternatively, they have been described as bands of armed looters taking advantage of the collapse of state authority.

and apply it to two cases: the Lebanese Forces Christian militia and the Bosnian Serbs.[5] The

two cases are expected to shed light on the central puzzle of this research. The two groups

derived much of their power and legitimacy from their military status during the Lebanese

and Bosnian conflicts. Both groups respectively foiled several peace initiatives. Yet, they

have been instrumental in bringing about the Ta'if and Dayton[6] accords. Decried as fanatics,

brigands, and mercenaries, by the press and foreign mediators alike, Lebanese Forces and

Bosnian Serb leaders ultimately behaved in a manner that contradicted the so-called "zero-

sum" nature of their approach to negotiations.

INSTITUTIONS AND MILITIA DECISION-MAKING

This dissertation seeks to theorize the role of institutions in shaping the strategic

choices of militia decision-makers. The argument revolves around the role of militia

institutionalization or the development of an organizational model involving not only the

creation of organizational structures but also a number of routinized relations between these

structures and the population.[7] Though they may differ on how to approach and

conceptualize the phenomenon, both international relations and comparative politics

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[5]The Bosnian Serb armed forces consist of irregular troops and Bosnian soldiers of the former Yugoslav National Army who fought under the military command of General Ratko Mladić and the political authority of Radovan Karadžić. The Lebanese Forces are the militia that fought in the Lebanon war on behalf of the Maronites and more generally of the Christian community in Lebanon.
[6] In spite of the received wisdom about the Dayton agreement, the Bosnian Serbs were not bombed into acceptance by NATO. Their leadership had given its consent to the broad lines of what would become known as Dayton prior to the so-called decisive wave of air raids. According to Susan Woodward, the decision to go ahead with the bombing carried mostly a symbolic value meant to ensure the participation of the Bosniac leadership to the talks. Susan Woodward, personal communication, Stanford, 16 September 1998.
[7] This definition is in the "old institutionalist" tradition spearheaded by Huntington. See, Samuel Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1968).

acknowledge the role of organizations in shaping policy making.[8] In this research, I argue that

1. Institutionalization brings new *financial* and *organizational* interests to bear on the calculus of costs and benefits.

2. These interests result in *a widening of the militia's win-set* and *in an increased militia vulnerability to fluctuations in the balance of military forces.*

3. The modified calculus of cost-benefit increases the number of situations in which decision-makers exhibit *willingness to compromise*

The argument can briefly be summarized as follows. In an environment of conflict, militias institutionalize to be more organized, more competitive on the battlefield and hence more likely to achieve their objectives. Institutionalization would thus seem to strengthen a militia and make it less amenable to compromise. However, institutions also structure choices in a different way: they influence the preference formation that is at the root of the calculus of costs and benefits. Institutions create financial interests as well as concerns for institutional preservation, which are grafted upon the ideological considerations informing the choices of decision-makers.[9] Moreover, institutions also become part of the environment of the conflict, shaping that environment and being shaped by it in turn. Consequently, the decision-makers' win-sets change and their vulnerability to fluctuation in the military balance of force increases. It is the conjugated impact of both sets of changes that brings about more possibilities for compromise.

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[8] All organizations are to a larger or lesser degree propitious sites for the conduct of bureaucratic politics. In my own experience as a journalist conducting interviews of decision-makers during the Lebanese civil war, I have experienced first-hand the insight that "where you stand depends on where you sit."

This study acknowledges that the militias' decision to adhere to a peace settlement is a necessary though not a sufficient condition for the viability of any given peace agreement. The sustainability of peace depends on more than its acceptance by one party. In a game of strategic interaction, I focus on only one of the many players and propose to examine its calculus of cost-benefit in order to understand its strategic choice. However, this is by no means an unimportant player. The willingness of militias to compromise is crucial because:

1) These groups are often identified as extremists who consider compromise as incompatible with their ideological goals; and

2) Their military dimension suggests that they are well equipped to pose a threat to peace.

In other words, militias are prime candidates for the role of spoilers, "leaders and parties who believe that peace emerging from negotiations threatens their power, worldview, and interests, and use violence to undermine attempts to achieve it."[10]

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[9] Although leaders may be constrained by their supporters, the research focuses on leadership circles as the locus of decision-making.

[10] Stephen John Stedman, "Negotiation and Mediation in Internal Conflicts," in *The International Dimensions of Internal Conflict*, Michael E. Brown, ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1996), 369-371; Idem., "Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes," *International Security* 22, 2 (fall 1997): 5-53. There are two distinct categories of spoilers: internal spoilers, parties that sign peace agreements and then renege on their commitment to peace, and external spoilers, parties that did not participate in the negotiations are refuse to be bound by the agreement resulting from these negotiations.

To better understand the importance of the militia decision-makers' strategic choice, we can conceptualize peace negotiations as a two-level game. The notion of two-level games was developed to capture the fact that negotiators need to reach a compromise not only with their interlocutors at the bargaining table but with the various political forces at home whose ratification is necessary if the agreement is to be implemented. In the context of civil wars, the notion of two-level games can be translated to capture extra-communal negotiations and intra-communal politics. At the extra-communal level, the focus is on the bargaining between protagonists. At the intra-communal level, the focus is on the politics within each of the factions to the conflict. Although there is an extensive literature on bargaining, this literature tends to focus on Level II interaction, the interaction between negotiators representing the various internal parties as well as external mediators. Level I, or the bargaining that happens within groups, is less well understood. However, Level I negotiations are crucial to the chances of reaching agreement at Level II. Indeed, the only formal constraint on ratification of a Level II agreement is that, since the identical agreement must be ratified by both sides, a preliminary Level II agreement cannot be amended at Level I without reopening the Level II negotiations. In the context of civil war settlements, this formal constraint captures the notion of internal spoiling, internal spoilers being parties that ratify an agreement and then turn the tables on it.

To prevent internal spoiling, we must understand the Level II politics that bring actors to the negotiating table. Whereas some actors may be willing to compromise for reasons having to do with their domestic weakness, others come to the negotiating table backed by a strong internal consensus. All else being equal, we would expect a higher

likelihood of internal spoiling in the first case than in the second where internal consensus improves the odds that the agreement will be ratified domestically. This sort of consideration highlights the importance of Level II politics for the achievement of a civil war settlement. However, Level I negotiators are often badly misinformed about Level II politics, particularly on the opposing side. Hence, they fail to understand the strategic choice of their opponents and offer bargains that may not be acceptable to the other side.

WHAT COUNTS AS INSTITUTIONS?

This study is concerned with the impact of institutions on the strategic choice of militia decision-makers. But what is an institution? Although institutions have generated intense interest among social scientists what counts as an institution is a matter of little consensus.[11] It is often said, "political science is the study of institutions."[12] Political scientists are concerned with the connection between institutions and order /stability. Hence, they tend to emphasize the regulative aspect of institutions. In his classic, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, Huntington lists the following political institutions:

> effective bureaucracies, well-organized political parties, a high degree of popular participation in public affairs, working systems of civilian control over the military, extensive activity by the government in the economy, and

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[11] Definitions range from "temporary congealed tastes," frameworks of "rules, procedures, and arrangements," "regularities in repetitive interaction ... customs and rules that provide a set of incentives and disincentives for individuals," governance structures and social arrangements geared to minimize transaction costs, to "recognized practices consisting of easily identifiable roles, coupled with collections of rules or conventions governing relations among occupants of these roles." In order, these definitions are by William Riker (1980), Kenneth Shepsle (1986), Douglass North (1986), Oliver Williamson (1985), and Oran Young (1986).

[12] Nelson Polsby cited in Kathleen Thelen and Sven Steinmo, "Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Politics," in *Structuring Politics: Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Analysis*, Sven Steinmo, Kathleen Thelen, and Frank Longstreth, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 3.

reasonably effective procedures for regulating succession and controlling political conflict.[13]

Later institutionalists add a normative dimension to their definitions. Peter Hall's widely accepted definition labels institutions "the formal rules, compliance procedures, and standard operating practices that structure the relationship between individuals in various units of the polity and the economy."[14] Others like John Ikenberry adopt a three-level definition including the specific characteristics of government institutions, the overarching structures of the state, and the nation's normative social order.[15] Recent debates have sought to focus attention on the cognitive dimension of political institutions. Most prominently, Finnemore has argued that we should pay attention to the manner in which cultural environments operate on organizations at all levels embedding local environments in larger national or transnational ones.[16] In political science as in other disciplines, the term institution is used to refer to several phenomena with one overarching commonality, their impact on political outcomes.

In this research, I am interested in the process in which militias develop from loosely coordinated guerrilla groups into bureaucratized organizations. This is the process that I refer to as institutionalization, the emergence and consolidation of organizations and

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[13] Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, 1.

[14] Peter Hall, *Governing the Economy: The Politics of State Intervention in Britain and France* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 19.

[15] G. John Ikenberry, "Conclusion: An Institutional Approach to American Foreign Economic Policy," in *The State and American Foreign Economic Policy*, G. John Ikenberry, David Lake, and Michael Mastanduno, eds. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), 226.

[16] Martha Finnemore, "Norms, Culture, and World Politics: Insights from Sociology's Institutionalism," *International Organization* 50, 2 (1996): 325-347.

procedures. Militia institutions have regulative, normative, as well as cognitive dimensions.[17] As will be discussed in detail in chapter two, the initial impulse for institutionalization is triggered, among other factors, by a desire to increase efficiency in the conduct of warfare. This concern for efficiency captures the regulative dimension of militia institutions that attempt to establish order and promote coordination in the conduct of the struggle. These institutions are also normative in that they are informed by a set of principles and an ideology. In the Lebanese and Bosnian Serb cases, this ideology takes on an ethnic coloring. The Lebanese Forces purport to defend the cause of the Lebanese Christian community, perceived to be culturally and even ethnically different from the Lebanese Muslims.[18] The Bosnian Serbs also make a great deal of differences between Serbs and Muslims. They refer to the latter as Turks, a label meant to underscore the connection of the Bosnian Muslims to the Ottoman Empire as opposed to the Slavic Orthodox ancestry of the Serbs. Finally, militia institutions also have a cognitive dimension associated with the influence of the international state-system that will be discussed further at a later point in this dissertation.

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[17] These three dimensions are Scott's attempt at providing an organizing framework for the study of institutions. Knowledge systems that control our behavior by shaping our conception of the world are an example of cognitive institutions. Moral beliefs and internalized obligations that provide the bases for social meaning and social order are normative institutions. Arrangements devised to solve interest conflicts and other differences are regulative institutions. W. Richard Scott, "Introduction: Institutional Theory and Organizations," in *The Institutional Construction of Organizations: International and Longitudinal Studies*, W. Richard Scott and Søren Christensen, eds. (London: Sage, 1995), 33.

[18] This will be discussed in detail in the case-study of the Lebanese Forces. LF ideology traces the descent of the Lebanese Christians to the Phoenician people who inhabited the region in antiquity whereas the Lebanese Muslims are seen as descendents of the Arab tribes that conquered the region upon the advent of Islam.

The process of militia institutionalization involves the transformation of ad hoc paramilitary groups into formal organizations and the subsequent consolidation of these organizations. I do not mean to suggest that bureaucratization and institutionalization are analogous. It would be arbitrary to identify institutionalization with formal organization. Marriage, for example, is one of the most durable social institutions yet it is not a formal organization. Nevertheless, in the case of militias, institutionalization refers to the development of a general notion of "resistance" against an existing political order from an idea to a military expression and finally to a bureaucratized set of relatively self-sustaining organizations. The development of the Lebanese Forces from an umbrella organization regrouping a number of smaller Christian guerrillas into a unified military structure and later into a multi-faceted bureaucracy spanning the military, political, and social spheres illustrates this process. It is quite telling that as they moved from the second to the third of these stages, the LF changed their motto: *Al-Quwwat muqawima* [The Forces are a resistance movement] was replaced by *Al-Quwwat mu'assassa* [The Forces are an institution].

METHODOLOGICAL RATIONALE

In attempting to understand the emergence, development and impact of militia institutions, I rely on the insights of the new institutionalist literature, especially its rational choice and historical variants.[19] The new institutionalism grew out of dissatisfaction with state-centered and society-centered approaches to the study of political outcomes.

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[19] For a survey article, see Peter A. Hall and Rosemary Taylor, "Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms," *Political Studies* 44 (1996): 936-957. In this research, I deal mainly with the historical and rational choice variants.

According to this literature, institutions mediate political struggles. They "constrain and refract politics but they are never the sole 'cause' of outcomes."[20] The new institutionalist literature makes two claims of interest to this research: 1) that institutions shape political actors' identities and interests and 2) that institutions structure the relations of power between such actors and other groups.

In spite of these shared claims about the role of institutions, students of institutions disagree over the nature of the subject of their analyses. Do institutions reflect the preferences of actors or do they represent collective outcomes that are not the simple sum of individual interests?[21] For institutional economists and public choice theorists, actors construct institutions that achieve the outcome they desire. From this perspective, preferences are treated as unproblematic and exogenous and there is little consideration of feedback mechanisms between interests and institutions.[22] Sociologically oriented institutionalists take an opposite view. Not only do they believe that actors do not choose freely among institutions, but they also contend that individual choices and preferences can only be understood in the cultural and historical frameworks in which they are embedded.

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[20] Kathleen Thelen and Sven Steinmo, "Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Politics," in *Structuring Politics*, 3.

[21] Paul DiMaggio and Walter Powell, "Introduction," in *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*, Walter Powell and Paul DiMaggio, eds. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), 9-10. I would like to note that, for the purposes of this research, I use preferences and interests interchangeably.

[22] While they acknowledge that actors' options may become limited by sunk costs in existing institutions and that the actors' strategies may even yield unintended effects, these analysts however view institutional arrangements as "adaptive solutions to problems of opportunism, imperfect or asymmetric information, and costly monitoring." *Ibid.*

Although its proponents often cast this debate in all-or-nothing terms, I take a different view. I accept that actors construct institutions for specific purposes. Indeed, militia institutionalization is a means to an end. Militia institutions are established to increase the groups' fighting efficiency, consolidate domestic support, or project legitimacy, in other words to help group leaders achieve their political objectives. However, I disagree that these institutions necessarily achieve the outcome that actors desire. In other words, although institutions may initially be designed to achieve equilibria, they are not always efficient. In the second chapter of this dissertation, I argue that militia institutions are initially established to improve a group's success in warfare once this group determines that it can only achieve its objective through armed conflict. In the third chapter, I discuss three dynamics that are unleashed by the process of institutionalization, the net effect of which is an actual increase in militia vulnerability to the military balance of forces.

I also take the point of sociological institutionalists that cultural or historical frameworks constrain or otherwise influence the nature of institutions. However, I disagree with the contention that individuals do not choose freely among institutions. This statement is in need of a qualifier. Individuals may not choose freely among the universe of theoretically available institutions but there is room for choice among a number of options available in their cultural and/or historical repertoire. To take an empirical example, popular participation in public affairs is an institution in democratic societies. This institution is constrained by the norm of democracy, which de-legitimizes certain kinds of popular participation, notably participation by violent means (riots, clashes, armed rebellions, etc.). However, individuals have a choice between different avenues of participation in public

affairs. They can express their opinions by voting in elections, forming interest groups to lobby the government on specific issues, or joining political parties. These choices exist and they matter for the quality of popular participation and ultimately for the quality of the democracy itself. Democracies where popular participation is limited to the polls are qualitatively different from those democracies that can boast a vibrant civil society. An institution can be strengthened or weakened by the-albeit constrained-choices that individuals make. Therefore, I accept the point of sociological institutionalists but I problematize the choices that individuals make. I contend that these choices have a significant impact on the nature of the institution, its development, and its performance. They have an impact on political outcomes.

Rational choice institutionalism allows me to account for the emergence of militia institutions; sociological institutionalism is helpful in understanding the constraints posed on the development of these institutions. Historical institutionalism, in turn, is the most effective tool in tracing the impact of institutions on political outcomes. In discussing the relation between institutions and outcomes, rational choice institutionalists see institutions as features of a strategic context imposing constraints on a self-interested behavior. From this perspective, institutions define the *strategies* that political actors adopt in the pursuit of their interests. Historical institutionalists, on the other hand, make a stronger claim about the role of institutions. They argue that institutions shape not just the *strategies* but also the *goals* that actors pursue. This debate goes to the core of the question of preference formation. For rational choice institutionalists, preferences are exogenously fixed. For historical institutionalists, preferences are endogenous. They are deeply embedded in the structural context in which

actors operate. In its stronger version, the historical institutionalist perspective assigns agency to structures. In its weaker formulation, it claims that institutions shape actors' preferences.[23]

Once again, the two approaches need not be conceived as necessarily irreconcilable. In my earlier discussion of the origins of institutions, I argued that militia institutions are usually established to solve a collective action problem. The establishment of such institutions is a conscious attempt by actors sharing a common political objective and ideological affinity to improve their success on the battlefield and at the negotiating table. However, the establishment of institutions introduces new considerations into the calculus of decision-makers. I disagree with the argument that "many of the changes in preferences observed by the agency-centered approach's critics are better understood as changes in strategies."[24] I propose that institutions do not merely constrain the strategies of self-interested actors. Instead I attempt to establish that *institutions modify the preferences of actors by introducing new interests in their preference structures*. Using historical institutionalist analysis, I trace the development of these interests and their inclusion in the preference structure of decision-makers.

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[23] For a discussion of the agency debate between rational choice and historical institutionalism, see William Roberts Clark, "Agents and Structures: Two Views of Preferences, Two Views of Institutions," *International Studies Quarterly* 42 (1998): 245-270.
[24] Ibid., 252.

CASE SELECTION

I propose to test the argument on two militia groups, the Lebanese Forces and the Bosnian Serbs, employing George's method of structured-focussed comparison.[25] The comparative case-study approach, more specifically the use of structured-focused comparison, is especially suited for the project at hand. Structured-focused comparison is the closest real-life replica of a controlled experiment in which as many variables as possible are maintained constant. The study of several decisional instances within a single conflict, involving a single militia group, serves to ward off the dangers associated with an explanation in which too many variables may be at play. The decision to conduct two case studies as opposed to only one seeks to strengthen the generalizability of the argument. Had I chosen only a single militia group and developed an explanation of its decision-making there would have been potential for the explanation to be tailored to the specific case.[26] This is even more necessary since the argument was initially developed in a study of the Lebanese Forces' decision to accept the Ta'if Accord.[27]

The Lebanese Forces and the Bosnian Serbs are good cases for this study. Both groups clearly fall inside the definition of militias adopted by this study. The Lebanese

[25] Alexander George, "Some Guides to Bridging the Gap," *International Studies Quarterly* 38 (supplement, April 1994): 171-172; Andrew Bennett and Alexander George, "Research Designs in Case Study Methods," Paper presented at the MacArthur Foundation Workshop on Case Study Methods, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs (BCSIA), Harvard University, 17-19 October 1997.

[26] The inclusion of several LF strategic choices and of the Bosnian Serb case study is a conscious attempt to move from the particular to the more general. In spite of their similarities, the Bosnian and Lebanese civil wars have taken place in different settings and this provides a harder test for the explanation I develop in this research.

[27] This study was presented as a term paper in partial fulfillment for the requirements of Pol. Sci. 160-640A, a course on Arab politics in the department of Political Science, McGill University, Fall 1992.

Forces (LF) were one of the most prominent Lebanese militias. Initially the armed wing of the Christian Maronite political parties united under an umbrella organization, the Lebanese Front, the LF became the only significant military actor on the Christian political scene for reasons to be addressed later in this research. They also acquired political independence from the political groups that contributed to their establishment and, by 1985, the militia was the major political and military representative of the Lebanese Christians. The Bosnian Serb paramilitaries were a number of small groups with little coordination amongst themselves. However, by May 1992, the Bosnian Serb Assembly formed its own government and approved the formation of its own defense force. Heretofore, the Bosnian militia groups were regrouped under the aegis of the Bosnian Serb Army (Vojska Republike Srpske) and the political leadership of the Bosnian Serb party (Srpska Demokratska Stranka) of Radovan Karadžić. The Bosnian Serbs continued to receive material and moral backing from the Serbian authorities in Belgrade. It was obvious since 1992 that no solution to the crisis in Bosnia could be implemented without their cooperation and support. [28]

The Lebanese Forces and the Bosnian Serbs also belong to the same sub-class of militias,[29] militarized groups that organize in defense of a crumbling political status quo. The Lebanese Forces have been described as defenders of the Lebanist cause, an ideology which conceives of Lebanon as a vigorously independent Western leaning country and which was espoused by the Christian Maronite leaders of the state.[30] In the pre-war Lebanese political system all positions were carefully distributed to ensure proportional representation of the

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[28] This was clearly illustrated by the fate of the Lisbon statement, one of the earliest attempts by the European Community to find a solution to the crisis in Bosnia-Herzegovina.
[29] In chapter III, I discuss the various sub-groups that can be regrouped under the label militia.

country's seventeen confessional groups, with the Christian Maronites getting the lion's share. The state attempted to protect the status quo ante by ignoring demands for change and following a policy of conciliation toward opponents of the system. This encouraged the growth of extra-institutional channels of social mobilization. Opponents of the system interpreted the policy as rigidity; beneficiaries of the political order interpreted the same policy as an inability to protect their interests forcefully. Both groups thus sought security by means of building up their own militias. Like their Lebanese counterparts, the Bosnian Serbs were a pro-status quo militia united by a desire to maintain the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia as a state where Serbs would be in control of their political destiny. Indeed, the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina can only be understood in the context of the collapse of the Yugoslav State. In the post-Tito era, the collective Yugoslav presidency was paralyzed by its failure to reach unanimity, a constitutional condition for its good functioning.[31] At the same time, the leaders of Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia attempted to internally destabilize their adversaries by "encouraging ethnic conflicts on their territories, or by tolerating and allowing the drafting of 'volunteers' or mercenaries to be sent to areas affected by ethnic rebellion."[32] Thus, in many ways the collapse of Tito's Yugoslavia echoed the processes that took place a decade earlier in Lebanon. The central state apparatus was rendered ineffective and as a result, all the groups within the polity felt threatened. Bosnia-Herzegovina epitomizes the contradictions of the former Yugoslavia. Often called little Yugoslavia, Bosnia is composed of an ethnic mosaic, the diversity and complexity of which acted as a magnifying lens for the

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[30] Frank Stoakes, "The Civil War in Lebanon," *The World Today* (January 1976): 8-17.

[31] See Vojin Dimitrijević, "The 1974 Constitution and Constitutional Process as a Factor in the Collapse of Yugoslavia," in *Yugoslavia: The Former and the Future: Reflections by Scholars From the Region*, Payam Akhavan and Robert Howse, eds. (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1995), 45-74.

[32] Dušan Janjić, "Resurgence of Ethnic Conflict in Yugoslavia: the Demise of Communism and the Rise of the 'New Elites' of Nationalism," in *Yugoslavia: The Former and the Future*.

problems of the country. Surrounded by two strong neighbors, Croatia and Serbia, with stakes in its political situation, the Bosnian civil war[33] shares a number of troubling contextual similarities with the Lebanese conflict.

Both militias were engaged in ethnic conflict.[34] Although Lebanese Christians and Muslims cannot establish their ancestral differences with any certainty, this has not stopped Christians from using religious differences to imagine a non-Arab ancestry. Indeed, religion has long been used in Lebanon to argue that Christian Lebanese are not Arabs, that their roots go back to the ancient kingdom of Phoenicia and that their history and culture are thus essentially divergent from the Muslim half of the Lebanese population.[35] Likewise, the "imagined communities" of Bosnian Serbs, Croats, and Muslims do not owe their markers to any clear differences in ethnic origin and/or language.[36] Rather, religious affiliation has been highlighted in this particular case to imagine the groups as separate in spite of a long shared history. The literature on ethnic conflicts suggests that the issues at stake in such conflicts are more intractable than other kinds of disputes and that the stakes are indivisible. Therefore, ethnic conflicts are expected to be particularly resistant to negotiated solutions. They provide tough tests of the alternative explanation, which points to ideology as the

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[33] In the introduction to the Bosnian case study, I make the argument that in spite of its entanglement with the politics of Yugoslavia and Croatia, the conflict in Bosnia qualifies as a civil war.

[34] In this research, ethnicity refers to communities based on a kinship imagined to exist by virtue of shared historic and cultural bonds of different kinds—language, religion, race, tribe, caste, sect, etc. This is a broader use of the term— as opposed to narrower definitions of ethnicity based on common blood ancestry. See John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith, eds., *Ethnicity* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1996). See also Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1983).

[35] Matti Moosa, *The Maronites in History* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1986), I

[36] Dušan Nečak, "Historical Elements for Understanding the 'Yugoslav' Question," in *Yugoslavia: The Former and the Future*, 19.

primary factor in decision-making.[37]

The Lebanese Forces and the Bosnian Serbs have also been relatively successful in establishing sanctuaries. This success was partially due to the fact that both conflicts fall in the category of collapsed states. [38] When collapse is accompanied by civil conflict, the national territory is often effectively divided into enclaves controlled by various protagonists. In the words of one French commentator for example, by 1985 the Lebanese State was only functioning in the international arena. [39] In such instances, the protagonists are propelled into a position where they may have to replace governments. This involves supplying the classic collective goods provided by the state: protection from external and internal enemies, the provision of legal and administrative order, and contributions to the material security of the population. Hence, the two cases are appropriate to study the impact of institutionalization on the decision-making of militia leaders. In both instances, the militia developed beyond the military sphere to include civilian components, they built a complex bureaucracy spanning the military, social, and economic spheres.

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[37] See for example, Paul Pillar, *Negotiating Peace: War Termination as a Bargaining Process* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983); Fred Ikle, *Every War Must End* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974); and Donald Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985).

[38] Collapsed states are states "where the structure, authority (legitimate power), law, and political order have fallen apart and must be reconstructed in some form, old or new. On the other hand, it is not necessarily anarchy." There is structure in the chaos of civil wars. As Mary Anderson observed, "It takes a lot of cooperation to wage a war and continue to carry out other activities." I. William Zartman, "Introduction: Posing the Problem of State Collapse," in *Collapsed States: The Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority*, I. William Zartman, ed. (Boulder, Co.: Lynne Rienner, 1995), 1; Mary Anderson, President of the Collaborative for Development Action, "Do No Harm," Public lecture, Stanford University, 19 November 1998.

[39] Paul-Jean Franceschini, "Les déchirements des chrétiens libanais— M. Gemayel s'efforce de réduire la dissidence ouverte des Forces phalangistes," *Le Monde* 15 March 1985.

The two cases share a number of other interesting similarities. Both groups have enjoyed strong regional alliances (respectively Yugoslavia and Israel). The two militias have been described by other sides to the Lebanese and Bosnian conflicts as extensions of foreign powers in the domestic politics of their respective countries. However, both the Lebanese Forces and the Bosnian Serbs have also differed with their patrons on crucial issues. Given the extent of their initial financial dependence on outside patrons, the two cases should also provide a tough test for the alternative explanation which suggests that these groups have no independent decision-making of their own. Finally, in both, the militias took an active part in the black market economy that surrounds civil wars. Their success in garnering revenues would suggest that they would indeed have financial incentives in continuing to fight.

In brief, I contend that the Lebanese Forces and the Bosnian Serbs provide tough cases for the alternative approaches to militia decision-making. Both militias have behaved and been described as ideological extremists. They have had financial stakes in the conflicts and have enjoyed strong regional alliances that led some to question the independence of their decision-making. In spite of the relative ease of institutionalization propelled by the situation of state collapse, neither is an easy test for the explanation that I propose. Indeed, I elected to conduct within case analysis with this in mind.

TESTING THE ARGUMENT: WITHIN-CASE ANALYSIS

Within-case analysis will be the primary method of testing the hypotheses of this research.[40] The research analyzes the strategic choice of the Lebanese Forces at three historical junctures when comprehensive peace settlements were under negotiation: the 1984 Lausanne talks, the 1985 Tripartite Agreement, the 1989 Ta'if Agreement. I later analyze the LF's strategic choice to boycott the 1992 legislative elections, the first post-civil war elections. Likewise, I analyze the strategic decisions of the Bosnian Serb leadership at the following turning points: the Vance-Owen plan (September-October 1992), the Contact Group plan (Summer 1994), and the Dayton accord (1995). Once again, these junctures represent various attempts at conflict-resolution. I also study the decision of the Bosnian Serb leadership to participate in the first post-conflict legislative elections in 1996.

In each case study, within-case analysis entails a focus on four significant junctures.[41] These junctures represent instances when the militias have had to choose between on-going conflict and acceptance of compromise solutions. Although elections (Lebanon, 1992; Bosnia, 1996) do not fall under the same category as the various peace agreements, their inclusion in the analysis is warranted. Indeed, the attitude of militia groups toward these formative elections should allow us to test the solidity of the agreements. Since the durability of peace is one of the concerns that underlie this study, a follow-up of the groups' attitudes into the post-conflict era is not only justified but also desirable.

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[40] The research relies on a mix of primary and secondary sources. I use personal interviews, internal documents, local and international news reports, archives, as well as the many studies of the Lebanese and Bosnian conflicts to gather the information upon which the cases are built.
[41] For a detailed list of the junctures, please refer to the case selection section of this chapter.

In this respect, the attitude of the Bosnian Serb leaders toward the 1996 summer elections could have been interpreted as an omen of the fragility of post-Dayton Bosnia. Likewise, the increasing marginalization of the Lebanese Forces and their supporters in Lebanese political life as a result, among other things, of the 1992 elections in the country, also raise doubts as to the long-term resolution of the Lebanese conflict. But should we interpret these decisions as casting serious doubts on the viability of peace? The inclusion of these cases allows me to assess the explanatory power of the model I propose. I argue that it is possible to sort out those instances in which the decision-makers' strategic choice is tactical and those instances in which it is a strategic commitment to peace.

A strong case can be made for the need to differentiate between tactical decisions to compromise and more strategic ones. Indeed, a tactical decision does not imply commitment to a peace process. Nor does it suggest that the conflict has effectively shifted from a military confrontation to a political one. Given the propensity for broken truces, a lull in the fighting is not sufficient proof of a group's willingness to compromise nor is verbal acquiescence enough. I thus take strategic willingness to compromise to mean at least signing an agreement which stipulates the dismantling of all military factions to a conflict.[42] When militia leaders make a strategic choice to compromise, they can be expected to have a vested interest in the peace settlement. Under such conditions, exit is both costly and disadvantageous. This alternative will only be exercised in the most extreme cases, when both voice and loyalty to the peace agreement have become non-options. If this explanation

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[42]Disbanding the military apparatus should not necessarily be equated with de-institutionalization. Militias are sometimes offered the option of establishing political parties to promote their views through political struggle in the post-conflict polity (Bosnian Serbs provide a good example).

is powerful, then reneging on peace should only happen when the actors' survival is at stake.

I have deliberately included several decisions for each of the militia groups that I intend to study. This allows me 1) to test my argument on different kinds of outcomes and thus secure variation on the dependent variable and 2) to engage in process tracing and thus grapple with historical sequences. Process tracing will also be useful in helping rule out a host of alternative accounts by monitoring changes in the historical constellation surrounding institutionalization. Only such an approach can ascertain whether it is the impact of institutionalization rather than a number of alternative explanations that is most significant to militia decision-making. If the proposed explanation can not only account for willingness to compromise but if it can also explain instances of rejection this will undoubtedly strengthen the argument.

OUTLINE OF THE DISSERTATION

The rest of this research proceeds as follows. Chapter two defines militias and militia institutions. Chapter three situates my work in the larger literature on militias and conflict-resolution. Chapter four offers an account of the origins and development of militia institutions. Chapter five develops a model of militia decision-making revolving around the role of institutionalization in changing the nature and outcome of the strategic choice of militia decision-makers. Chapters six and seven cover the Lebanese case study. In chapter six, I provide a background discussion of the Lebanese Civil War and a detailed discussion of the emergence and institutionalization of the Lebanese Forces. In chapter seven, I

analyze the decisions of the Lebanese Forces to either accept or reject the Lausanne, Damascus, and Ta'if peace settlements. In chapters eight and nine, I deal with the Bosnian Serb case study. Chapter eight discusses the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as the emergence and institutional development of the Republika Srpska. Chapter nine provides an analysis of Bosnian Serb strategic choices in 1992, 1994 and 1995. Finally, the dissertation concludes with an evaluation of the proposed model, directions for further research and thoughts on its applicability to other cases.

II. MILITIAS AND CONFLICT-RESOLUTION

What is the current state of our knowledge on militias? How does it relate to the issue of civil conflict resolution? In this chapter, I review the literature in comparative politics and international relations concerned with civil conflict. I argue that comparative politics has little to say about the politics of armed groups. I place particular emphasis on two sets of literatures, one that discusses the nature of militias, the other that discusses the issue of civil war termination. Both suffer from gaps. What is more, these gaps are inter-related. Because scholars concerned with the politics of armed groups have not recognized the institutional dimension of these actors, they have until now been unable to offer an integrated approach to conflict resolution which links the intra-communal politics of these actors with the extra-communal bargaining which happens at the negotiating table.

While intra-state conflict has become the privileged route taken by self-perceived "nations" attempting to establish statehood,[43] neither comparative politics nor international relations have been able to offer a comprehensive explanation of the conditions—short of outright victory or secession—under which a durable peace can be achieved in civil wars. In comparative politics, a voluminous literature scrutinizes inter-ethnic relations, but it tends to focus on ethnic movements and parties in general rather than the specific politics of armed militia groups. Interest in accommodation processes has resulted in studies of the institutional arrangements that permit the peaceful coexistence of groups.[44] Short of the domination of one group by another, these arrangements involve some sort of power

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[43] Ted Robert Gurr and Barbara Harff, *Ethnic Conflict in World Politics* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994).
[44] See Arendt Lijphart, *Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980); and Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict.*

sharing. Consociationalism is the most advocated power-sharing solution to address the issue of democratic stability in deeply divided societies. However, "the preconditions for successful power-sharing have not been empirically established in the literature on comparative politics."[45] From a game theoretic perspective, it has been argued that interethnic cooperation can be maintained as long as individual breakdowns of the social order are dealt with by in-group policing. This prevents isolated interethnic incidents from spiraling into large-scale confrontations between the ethnic groups as blocs.[46] Like the consociational approach however, there is little in this analysis that tells us about the conditions under which more stable in-group security regimes (as opposed to unstable spiraling regimes) can be achieved and how movement across both sets of polities occurs. Once the arrangements break down, as they did in Lebanon and Yugoslavia, comparative politics cannot explain or predict specific outcomes of violent conflict. At best, we are left with a typology of possible outcomes.[47]

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[45] Siobhán Harty, "Disputed States, Contested Nations: Institutions for Peace in Post-Conflict Settings," Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association, 15-20 February 1999, Washington, D.C., 3.

[46] James Fearon and David Laitin, "Explaining Interethnic Cooperation," *American Political Science Review* 90, 4 (December 1996).

[47] John McGarry and Brendan O'Leary, eds., *The Politics of Ethnic Conflict Regulation* (London and New York : Routledge and Keegan Paul, 1993).

"Fanatics, Mercenaries, and Brigands": Militias in the Literature

In civil war situations, militias are of crucial importance on the battleground. Not only are they among the main protagonists of the conflict, they also possess the military means of disrupting any settlement they dislike. However, in practice, these groups tend to be considered as outlaws and where possible, outside mediators seek legitimate political forces to pose as representatives of these groups at the negotiating table. There has been very little academic attention devoted to the politics of armed militias.[48] Their study has tended to be largely descriptive.[49] In answering the question of civil war's apparent intractability, analysts who look at the nature of militias point to either to ideological motives[50] or to financial incentives.[51] Though partially useful in getting at the preferences of militia decision-makers, this literature misses the potential existence of a more complex set of motives underlying the actions and decisions of these groups.

"Fanatics": Militias as Ideological Extremists

Many attempts at theorizing about militia groups surmise that decisions regarding political action derive from a group's ideology.[52] According to this kind of explanation, militia leaders would weigh conflict-resolution schemes solely in terms of their political

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[48] This literature is interspersed in various sub-fields in the disciplines of political science, economics and history.

[49] Laqueur's extensive study of guerrilla is a case in point. Walter Laqueur, *Guerrilla : A Historical and Critical Study* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1977).

[50] In the case of Lebanon, this approach is adopted by a number of analysts. See, Elaine Hagopian, "Maronite Hegemony to Maronite Militancy: The Creation and Disintegration of Lebanon," *Third World Quarterly* 11, 4 (October 1989): 101-117; and Idem, "Redrawing the Map in the Middle East: Phalangist Lebanon and Zionist Israel," *Arab Studies Quarterly* 5 (fall 1983): 324-330.

[51] R.T. Naylor, "The Insurgent Economy: Black Market Operations of Guerrilla Organizations," *Crime, Law and Social Change*, 20 (1993).

[52] See for example, Michael Ignatieff, *Blood and Belonging: Journeys Into the New Nationalism* (New York: Viking Press, 1993).

objectives. These political objectives typically range from overthrowing regimes that do not share the same ideological beliefs to seceding from a state where the group constitutes an ethnic minority. These sorts of objectives are not only exclusionist vis-a-vis other groups living in the same territorial space, they also imply a zero-sum approach to conflict-resolution.

This contention cannot account for instances of militia acceptance of compromise solutions, which imply by definition that each party has backed down on some of its initial objectives.[53] One attempt to salvage this approach suggests that we cannot take the declared objectives of these groups at face value. Militias, it is argued, will often ask for more than they really want to achieve. But the Lebanese case study illustrates that this need not be the case. Had the Lebanese Forces taken decisions solely on the basis of ideology, they would have turned down any scheme that did not give the Maronite community the upper hand in state affairs. Yet, the LF were pivotal in securing the success of the Ta'if Accord which stripped this community of many of its political prerogatives. The militia had rejected an earlier scheme, the Lausanne Reconciliation talks, which went further in meeting the group's stated objectives. A similar process can be traced in the evolution of the political positions of the Palestinian Liberation Organization. Initially committed to the eradication of Israel, the liberation of all Palestinian territory, and the restoration of Palestinians' rights in their homeland, the PLO settled for the Oslo Agreement that did not fulfill any of these demands. Thus, when taken in isolation from other factors, ideology fails to provide a convincing explanation for compromise. Moreover, it cannot account for fluctuation in decisions.

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[53]Some studies of the Lebanese Forces would have predicted such an outcome. See for example,

"Mercenaries" and "Brigands": Militias as Profit-Seekers

Mercenaries

In this approach, militias are not even considered as actors in their own right. Instead, the focus is on the alliances they establish and that tend to be highly asymmetric. Proponents of this approach use the asymmetry in the relationship to contend that the groups have no political autonomy and that their members are only mercenaries for hire motivated by considerations of material gain. Instead, this line of explanation leads to the suggestion that patrons are the real political actor and the militias are only puppets in the patrons' game.

This sort of argument has been used in reference to insurgents, revolutionary movements, and guerrillas, as well as in inter-state conflicts. Several analysts of the situation in Mozambique, for example, have insisted on approaching the Resistencia Nacional Moçambiçana (RENAMO) as "a domestic instrument of Rhodesian aggression (1976-80) and apartheid destabilisation (1981-89)."[54] Similarly, successive U.S. administrations have tended to view Central American revolutionaries as either Cuban or Soviet proxies. The intractability of the conflicts is thus seen as a function of the strategic designs of external actors with a stake in the outcome of a particular internal conflict.

Hagopian, "Maronite Hegemony to Maronite Militancy."

[54] João Honwana, "Implementing Peace Agreements in Civil Wars: The Case of Mozambique," paper presented to the Workshop on Peace Implementation, Center for International Security and Cooperation, Stanford University, 15-16 September 1998, 2.

In Bosnia, this approach was starkly illustrated by the international community's insistence on dealing with President Slobodan Milošević of Serbia as the political actor who could deliver the Bosnian Serbs, in spite of clear signs that they did not consistently yield to his authority. Likewise, the same approach was adopted in Lebanon where, at several junctures during the conflict, pre-civil war leaders were selected to negotiate an end to the hostilities. This approach has proven inadequate in consistently delivering durable peace.[55] Although militia leaders may be "dragged" into peace settlements by their allies, there is no guarantee that they will remain compliant. That patrons cannot deliver lasting peace on behalf of their clients has been clearly illustrated in the case of Sri Lanka. Indeed the failure of the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord of 1987 rested primarily with the fact that the Indian and Sri Lankan governments negotiated the agreement in the absence of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). Ultimately, the agreement "focused too much attention on the 'international aspects' of the conflict and too little attention on the domestic aspects which were far more complex and intractable than the former."[56]

Brigands

The description of militias as brigands emphasizes the use of military capabilities to extract economic resources in an environment of political and economic collapse. To quote David Keen, "the apparent 'chaos' of civil war can be used to further local and short-term interests. These are frequently economic: to paraphrase Carl von Clausewitz, war has

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[55] Although it did work in some cases, notably in the case of the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia.
[56] S.W.R. de A. Samarasinghe and Kamala Liyanage, "Friends and Foes of the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord," in *Peace Accords and Ethnic Conflict*, K.M De Silva and S.W.R. Samarasinghe, eds. (London and New York: Pinter, 1993), 156.

increasingly become the continuation of economics by other means."[57] This kind of

interpretation finds echoes in resource competition theory which suggests that ethnic

conflict would remain insignificant if not connected to processes and opportunities for

economic survival.[58]

Several analyses of the Lebanese and Bosnian situations have framed the rise of

"ethnic consciousness" in terms of economic competition.[59] From this perspective, sole

emphasis on the search for economic gain suggests that the looming prospect of decreasing

benefits is an essential pre-condition for compromise. This is the implication of Keen's

argument in *The Economic Functions of Violence in Civil Wars*, when he maintains that economic

interests have actually led to the persistence of violence. Although this logic has been used

as a justification for policies such as arms embargoes and other economic sanctions, the

connection between economic losses and willingness to compromise is not always

substantiated by evidence.

[57] David Keen, *The Economic Functions of Violence in Civil Wars*, Adelphi Paper 320 (London: Oxford University Press and The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1998), 11.

[58] This builds on the relative deprivation hypothesis, which argues that relative economic deprivation causes conflict. See James C. Davies, "Toward a Theory of Revolution," *American Sociological Review* 27, 1 (February 1962): 5-19; and Ted Robert Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970). Critiques of the relative deprivation theory highlight that 1) the poor lack resources and opportunities to rebel, and 2) that there is a collective action problem involved in organizing a rebellion of the economically deprived sectors of society. For the first set of critiques, see Harry Eckstein, "On the Etiology of Internal Wars," in *Struggles in the State: Sources and Patterns of World Revolution*, George A. Kelly and Clifford W. Brown Jr., eds. (New York: Wiley, 1969), 168-195. For the second set of critiques see Mark Lichbach, "What Makes Rational Peasants Revolutionary? Dilemma, Paradox, and Irony in Peasant Collective Action," *World Politics* 46, 3 (April 1994): 383-418. The second set of critiques is based on the theory of collective action. See Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965).

[59] See for example Salim Nasr, "The Crisis of Lebanese Capitalism," *MERIP* (December 1978); and Dragomir Vojnić, "Disparity and Disintegration : The Economic Dimension of Yugoslavia's Demise," in *Yugoslavia : The Former and the Future*, 75-111.

In the case of the Palestine Liberation Organization, for example, a stark reversal in financial fortunes is identified as one of the conditions that made the 1993 Oslo Accord with Israel possible. When Fatah entered into a compromise with Israel in 1993, the PLO had suffered economically from the downfalls of the second Gulf War during which the organization's rents from Arab Gulf states were suspended. This sequence of events lends credence to the proponents of this thesis. However, one should qualify the argument in two ways. At the same time as Fatah initiated negotiations with Israel, smaller less prosperous members of the PLO refused to follow suit although they were similarly affected by the downturn in PLO economic fortunes. More significantly though, the shift in PLO positions away from ideological intractability can be traced back to 1974 when the organization was at the pinnacle of financial wealth. In spite of the common wisdom to this effect, it is not clear therefore that economic wealth is associated with a hardening of positions and a refusal to negotiate or, conversely, that economic hard-times necessarily bring about a softening in political stances. Resource-rich militias such as the Lebanese Forces come to the negotiating table at a time when poorer ones refuse to even consider the possibility of compromise.[60]

In Summary

This literature is concerned with uncovering militia motivations to fight. The preferences identified by these analyses are important factors in militia decision-making. However, none of the approaches can consistently explain fluctuations in militia attitudes. Ideology, patrons, and economic gain have proven inadequate to account for decisions to

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[60] The same argument applies to the Lebanese Forces, see Marie-Joelle Zahar, "The Black Market Operations of Ethnic Militias: A Source of Strength or a Liability?" Paper presented to the Annual Conference of the Canadian Political Science Association, Ottawa, 31 May - 2 June 1998.

compromise. Ideology may explain reluctance to compromise but it fails to elucidate instances when an otherwise reluctant group accepts to give up some of its prior demands. Financial incentives also fail in this regard. If militias were mercenaries motivated by the prospect of gains, patrons would be able to buy them off during the course of peace negotiations. But patrons cannot always deliver their clients. Rather, clients have been known to forsake beneficial patron-client relationships when serious divergences emerge between them and their patrons.[61] Finally, there is no one-to-one correlation between economic resources and refusal to compromise. Although undoubtedly important components of militia decision-making, ideology and financial incentives remain just that: components, parts of a larger puzzle that this research attempts to unravel.

CIVIL WARS IN THE LITERATURE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The international relations literature on civil conflict resolution poses the issue of civil conflict resolution in contradistinction with inter-state war termination. Most civil wars end with the outright victory of one side over the other. Between 1900 and 1980, only fifteen percent of civil wars ended in a negotiated settlement.[62] This has led analysts to focus on barriers to civil conflict resolution and, alternatively, on the conditions under which these obstacles can be overcome. This literature has yielded two broad sets of propositions. The first puts the blame for the failure to reach settlements on the actors themselves. The other focuses on conditions inherent to civil war that prevent the attainment of an end to conflict.

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[61] This has been demonstrated time and again in the relationship between the Lebanese Forces and Israel, that between the Bosnian Serbs and the FRY, as well as in several other instances of civil war.

The answer to the question "why are civil wars so resistant to negotiated resolution?" has thus elicited three types of responses focusing on psychological barriers, tactical and strategic obstacles, and security concerns.

Psychological Barriers

At the individual level of analysis, the tendency has been to identify leadership pathologies as a prime obstacle to conflict-resolution. Civil wars, it is argued, are fought by leaders who will accept nothing less than victory. Theirs is a total war that demonizes the adversary and calls for his elimination. This argument is similar to the "fanatics" argument that analysts have specifically made in relation with militias. The only difference is that it includes a larger spectrum of actors. For example, it was applied to South African President P.W. Botha. Zartman and Kriesberg suggest that a change in leadership (from hardline to moderate) may be one of the conditions that produce "ripeness" for conflict-resolution.[63] Changes of leadership have undoubtedly played a role in a number of real-life cases such as South Africa. But "leadership engineering" by external actors is not always possible, nor is it necessarily advisable. In the Bosnian parliamentary elections of 1998, the attempt to engineer the electoral success of "moderate" Biljana Plavšić backfired and an extreme nationalist leader, Nikola Poplašen, reaped the fruits of reckless maneuvering.

Psychological variables have also been used to explain the breakdown of peace

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[62] Stephen John Stedman, *Peacemaking in Civil Wars: International Mediation in Zimbabwe, 1974-1980* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1991), 4-9.
[63] I. William Zartman, *Ripe for Resolution: Conflict and Intervention in Africa* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1989); and Louis Kriesberg, "Preventing and Resolving Destructive Communal Conflicts," in *Wars in the Midst of Peace: The International Politics of Ethnic Conflict*, David Carment and Patrick James, eds. (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1996), 232-251.

agreements. These breakdowns are blamed on total spoilers, leaders with pathological tendencies who hold immutable preferences and lack the pragmatism necessary to settle. Because they consider peace to be threatening, total spoilers use violence to disrupt peace settlements.[64] Though interesting, this notion cannot account for stark changes in the attitudes of leaders who, after rejecting a number of deals, lay down their weapons and negotiate peace settlements. It was not a moderate Bosnian Serb leader who "accepted" the Dayton Peace Agreement but Radovan Karadžić, an indicted war criminal. Nor is Karadžić an exceptional case in effecting such a stark reversal as the PLO, the IRA, and other such groups whose wartime leaders ultimately oversaw peace negotiations indicate.

Tactical and Strategic Obstacles

Another attempt to account for the difficulties inherent in the resolution of civil conflict focuses on tactical and strategic barriers to the achievement of a negotiated settlement.[65] From a game theoretic perspective, these barriers arise from the efforts of bargainers to maximize their short-term and/or long-term outcomes. The proponents of this approach assert that bargaining problems are particularly exacting in situations of civil wars. Extremely high (and some argue indivisible) stakes, asymmetric information, and intransigent demands make mutually acceptable bargains difficult to achieve. Supporters of this kind of explanation argue that outside mediation is the key to overcoming the special set

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[64] Stedman, "Spoiler Problems," 10-11.
[65] This approach is inspired from the game theoretic and economic literature on bargaining. See David Lax and James Sebenius, *The Manager as Negotiator: Bargaining for Cooperation and Competitive Gain* (New York: Free Press, 1986). See also, Roger Fisher, William Ury and Bruce Patton, eds., *Getting to Yes: Negotiation Agreement without Giving In* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1981).

of bargaining problems associated with negotiations in civil war settings.[66] But mediators are not always successful in bringing about resolution. In Bosnia as in Lebanon, the ultimate resolution of the conflict came on the tails of several unsuccessful mediated searches for peace. This begs the question of the conditions under which mediation will bear fruit.

A classical balance of power explanation centered on the notion of "ripe moments" has been proposed to specify conditions under which mediation is more likely to be successful. Ripe moments are associated with two sorts of intensity—so-called plateaus and precipices—which produce different sorts of pressures. Protagonists of a civil war reach a plateau when one side is unable to achieve its aims, to resolve the problem, or to win the conflict by itself, and when the other side arrives at a similar perception. A precipice, on the other hand, can be an impending catastrophe or one that has been encountered narrowly and missed. It "represents a realization by both sides that matters will swiftly get worse if they have not gotten better in ways that negotiation seeks to define."[67]

This approach is useful though incomplete. Groups locked in a civil conflict can perceive that they reached a hurting stalemate and/or precipice independently from one another and this perception can independently change their attitude toward compromise.[68] Also missing from the discussion of "ripe moments" are the reasons invoked to explain a group's perception of having reached either of these two stages. Indeed, some groups sustain military stalemates without entering into peace negotiations and others recover from

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[66] See Hiskias Assefa, *Mediation of Civil Wars: Approaches and Strategies—The Sudan Conflict* (Boulder: Westview, 1987); Stedman, *Peacemaking in Civil War*, Zartman, *Ripe for Resolution*.
[67] Zartman, *Ripe for Resolution*, 267-268.

the brink of disaster. One can think in this respect about the situation in Algeria where the clear stalemate between the ruling National Liberation Front (FLN or Front de libération nationale) and the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS or Front islamique du salut) did not automatically force the two contenders to the negotiating table.

Security Dilemmas

The third class of explanations that seek to account for the apparent intractability of civil wars identifies security dilemmas as the main obstacle to civil war resolution. Third image approaches propose that civil wars reproduce the security dilemma on a smaller scale.[69] In the absence of an overarching authority, parties to the conflict seek self-help solutions to their security problems. The greatest problem that civil war opponents encounter is "how to write an enforcement contract under conditions of extreme risk." According to proponents of this variant, many civil war negotiations would succeed in designing peaceful transitions if the participants could be protected during the implementation period.[70] In other words, factions to a civil war face a commitment problem. Demobilization is an especially thorny issue. Even adversaries who truly wish to resolve their wars remain weary of disarmament because their weapons are the only means for them to protect themselves against surprise attacks or to impose the enforcement of the peace terms. In such conditions, outside intervention can serve the purpose of enforcing the

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[68] Stedman, *Peacemaking in Civil Wars.*
[69] Barry R. Posen, "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict," in *Ethnic Conflict and International Security,* Michael Brown, ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 103-124.
[70] Barbara F. Walter, *Designing Transitions from Violent Civil War,* IGCC Policy Paper 31 (San Diego: UC Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation, 1998), available at http://www-igcc.ucsd.edu/igcc2/PolicyPapers/pp31.html; Internet.

terms of the contract.[71] The outsiders' reluctance to stay long enough to guarantee the peaceful transfer of power is blamed for the breakdown of peace settlements.

The approach rightly identifies the security dilemma as an important obstacle to civil conflict resolution. However, there are two empirical problems with the proposed solutions. The involvement of external actors may go a long way to reassure former enemies. However, the strategic situation of actors continues to matter for decision-making even with the presence of external implementers. Angola is a case in point. Following the 1994 Lusaka Protocol, sustained UN presence on the ground was not sufficient to allay the fears of Jonas Savimbi and to ensure his continued commitment to the peace process. There have also been cases—albeit few—of self-enforcing peace agreements that succeeded, cases in which one cannot invoke the presence of an external enforcer as the solution to the commitment problems faced by the factions. On the other hand, external involvement in the implementation process can directly contribute to the insecurity of factions to the conflict. Whereas most analytical frameworks of outside implementation take UN missions as their frame of reference, a number of peace settlements have been implemented by regional powers or organizations such as Syria in Lebanon. These actors tend to not only be partial in the conflicts that they presume to arbitrate but they are also less philosophically opposed to the use of force in implementation than the UN. The presence of partial armed foreign troops may heighten the insecurity of some actors. In Lebanon, the presence of some 35,000 Syrian troops was central to the Lebanese Forces' hesitation to comply with the demobilization and disarmament clauses of the Ta'if Accord. In other words, external

implementers are not a sufficient condition for overcoming the commitment problem of parties to a peace process. External implementation may, in some cases, even heighten the security concerns of some actors and therefore directly contribute to the thorny issue of disarmament.

In Summary

This brief review identified three sets of explanations that purport to account for the apparent difficulty to achieve conflict resolution in civil wars. As with the earlier discussion, each and every one of these explanations can explain some cases but fails to explain others. In the concluding section of this chapter, I bring the two sets of literatures together as a prelude to identifying the gap in the literature.

IDENTIFYING THE GAP IN THE LITERATURE

The Disjunction between Preferences and Conflict-Resolution

The two sets of literature reviewed above seldom intersect. Having identified ideology and financial incentives as obstacles to negotiated outcomes, analysts rarely attempt link the preferences of the warring factions to the success of peace settlements. Negotiated peace does not follow from the desire of the combatants but from the success of others to frustrate the aims of the warring factions.

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[71] Barbara F. Walter, "The Critical Barrier to Civil War Settlement," *International Organization* 51, 3 (summer 1997).

The spoilers' approach is one of the few attempts to link motivations with conflict-resolution though it takes a different cut at this problem. Bargainers may overcome the strategic problems inherent in negotiation with the help of mediators. The security dilemma may also be overcome. This does not necessarily ensure the success of a peace settlement. The reason is the existence of spoilers or actors who believe that peace threatens their "power, worldview, and interests."[72] Hence, the identification of potential spoilers and the development of spoiler management techniques are essential to the sustainability of a peace agreement.

This is a promising avenue of research that explicitly draws connections between actor preferences and the sustainability of peace. At this stage, however, the analysis does not provide sufficient clues to determine the type of spoiler a priori. With the exception of the total spoiler category, it does not allow us to clearly understand the determinants of actor preferences. Nor does it allow us to specify the parameters within which potential spoilers assess risk, cost, and benefit.

There is little work on the connection between militia preferences and negotiated outcomes to civil war. Moreover, preferences alone do not tell us much about the constraints and opportunities with which leaders have to contend. They do not answer critical questions about the impact of patrons or of intra-communal competition with other

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[72] Stedman, "Spoiler Problems," 5. There are different types of spoilers: limited, greedy, and total. They differ on two axes: the goals pursued by these actors and the degree of their commitment to achieving these goals. Whereas limited spoilers have limited goals—for example, recognition, redress of a specific set of grievances, or the acquisition of a share of power—total spoilers pursue total power and exclusive recognition of authority. Moreover, spoilers can be more or less committed to the achievement of their goals, hence more or less sensitive to calculations of risk and cost-benefit.

groups on an actor's willingness to compromise. Although they can shed light on specific sources of militia preferences, current analyses fail to provide us with a framework to grasp intra-group politics, to make the connection between the limits set by such politics on achievement of preferences and the choices of actors at the negotiating table.

Re-framing the Study of Civil Conflict-Resolution

A more useful way of conceptualizing the literature on militias and conflict resolution entails a return to the notion of two-level games developed in the first chapter. As alluded to elsewhere in this research, peace negotiations involve two inter-related though conceptually separate bargaining games. The first set, or intra-communal bargaining, delimits the constraints and opportunities that negotiators bring with them to the table (Level I). The second is what has formally been studied under the label civil conflict-resolution (Level II).

In spite of their diversity, all the current approaches to conflict-resolution have one thing in common. They focus on the obstacles (leadership pathologies, bargaining tactics, security dilemmas) to or pre-conditions (replacement of hard-line leaders, ripe moments or external mediators) for Level II negotiations, that is extra-communal negotiations between factions to the conflict. However, none of the approaches explicitly addresses the link between Levels I and II. How do intra-communal politics affect extra-communal negotiations? Are there specific situations in which intra-communal politics help or alternatively block the achievement of a peace agreement? Of all the authors cited above, only Zartman and Stedman attempt to link the internal strength of the parties with their

negotiating postures. Zartman acknowledges that parties need to be domestically strong to make concessions at the negotiating table, going as far as claiming that this dimension overrides others in the definition of ripe moments, but failing to elaborate on internal strength at any length.[73] Stedman refines the concept of ripeness by linking it to internal politics. He contends that changes in leadership may induce ripeness if a settlement is in the practical political interests of the new leader and if the military wing of his faction backs that leader.[74] Although perceptive, these observations fall short of a generalizable theory of decision-making explicitly linking variables at Levels I and II.

The gaps in both literatures are intimately connected. When looking at militias, analysts have failed to see an important dimension of such groups. Militias are not simply fanatics, mercenaries, or brigands. They are also institution-builders. Militias develop complex organizational structures and institutions that affect the preference structure and the context of choice of militia leaders. Moreover, much like other large bureaucracies, militias are the site of bureaucratic politics. An institutional model of decision-making captures the intra-communal dimension of militia bargaining. It can systematically assess the constraints and opportunities facing militia leaders as they evaluate proposed peace settlements. These constraints and opportunities determine in large part the strategic choices of militia leaders. An institutional analysis provides the parameters within which leaders assess costs, benefits and risks. By bridging preferences, intra-communal bargaining, and strategic choices—or the bargaining positions of leaders at the negotiating table,

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[73] Zartman, *Ripe for Resolution*, 274.
[74] Stedman, *Peacemaking in Civil War*, 241-242.

institutions provide the organizing framework that brings together the literature on militia

preferences and the literature on civil conflict-resolution.

III. MILITIAS AND MILITIA INSTITUTIONS

The argument that I develop in this dissertation applies broadly to the class of actors labeled militias. As briefly discussed in chapter I, I define militias as *armed groups competing to gain or protect political power either against or in the state.* What are the various groups that fall under this label? Under what conditions do state actors belong in this category?[75] Can we exclude groups whose primary objective in resorting to violence is the achievement of economic rather than political gain? How easily can we draw the line between economic and political objectives?[76] This chapter clears the conceptual field. It fills the first gap identified in chapter two, the literature's failure to acknowledge the institutional dimension of militias. I discuss the conditions under which militia are likely to emerge, trace the origins of militia institutions and point to the most likely sources of variations in institutional forms.

CLEARING THE CONCEPTUAL FIELD

Like most social science concepts, the concept of militia is blurred at the edges. The word militia initially referred to a reserve body of citizens enrolled for military duty and called upon only in an emergency.[77] In recent times, the label has been used loosely to describe the private armies of pro-regime strongmen and the paramilitary formations that

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[75] For example, in the Togo, in 1993, the army was accused of turning into a private tribal militia exclusively at the service of President Eyadema and of a group of officers from the town of Pya, hometown of the President.

[76] The interplay between politics and economics cannot be disregarded. Indeed, "[w]hile criminal organizations function in a parapolitical way, attempting to control and regulate in order to increase income, insurgent groups work in a reversed sequence, using their income to promote their activities as underground governments." R.T. Naylor, "The Insurgent Economy: Black Market Operations of Guerrilla Organizations," *Crime, Law and Social Change* 20 (1993), 14.

organize in defense of the political order in a given country.[78] It has also been used in connection with states where the central authority has been considerably weakened. In such cases, the formations established by warlords, tribal or regional strongmen, drug lords, and the like are referred to as militias. In this research, I argue that, at the most fundamental level, the various groups that fall under this label share the characteristic of being armed factions resorting to violence to attain their objective. The word militia can therefore be used in reference to

- Insurgents: Insurgents use violence to challenge the power of the state. In Ireland, for example, this is the main difference between the Irish Republican Army and the Ulster Defense Forces. Whereas the IRA is an insurgent movement, the UDF is more accurately described as a pro-regime militia.

- Guerrillas: Guerrilla—the Spanish term for little war—warfare refers to hit-and-run operations carried out by small bands of irregulars. Guerrilla tactics usually comprise raids and sabotage operations.[79] They have been used in the fight against enemy occupation, as illustrated by Tito's Partisans in Yugoslavia during World War Two. Guerrilla warfare has also been the centerpiece of a number of internal wars such as the conflicts in Angola and Mozambique. The term guerrilla has often been used to refer to insurgents espousing left-leaning ideologies, especially in the context of Latin America.

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[77] As armies became increasingly professional, the need for militias receded. However, a number of countries such as Switzerland continued to maintain such forces.

[78] In the Togo for example, Emmanuel Eyadema, one of President Eyadema's three sons, established his militia in Lomé in the early 1990s. Comi M. Toulabor, "Sur un continent en quête de stabilité: La "bataille finale" du général Eyadéma au Togo," *Le Monde Diplomatique*, March 1993, 18-19.

[79] For a comprehensive review, see Walter Laqueur, *Guerrilla: A Historical and Critical Study* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1977).

- Revolutionary armies: In the twentieth century, the doctrine of guerrilla warfare became increasingly identified with Mao Tse-tung. Yet, the word revolutionary army brings China and Vietnam to mind. In both instances, Communist insurgents engaged in regular army operations as well as in guerrilla warfare.[80]

- Ethnic groups: Whereas the dividing line between states on the one hand and insurgents, guerrillas, and revolutionary armies, on the other tended to be ideological, some militias form along ethnic divides. This type of militia has become increasingly common with, though not exclusively connected to, the resurgence of ethno-national conflict in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. The Bosnian Serbs fall under this category. So do Chechen, Abkhaz, and other ethnic groups currently engaged in civil wars in the Caucasus and Central Asia.

- State proxies fighting on behalf of, but not at the behest of, the state. This distinction is important for many regimes (the Duvaliers in Haiti, Somoza in Nicaragua) are highly personalized but do not qualify as militias. Yet there have been numerous instances in which states cultivated militias as adjuncts of state power, the paradigmatic case being the Interhamwe in Rwanda.

- Warlords: According to William Reno, the absence of collective, versus private

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[80] Early on in the Red Army's existence, guerrilla operations were "on the whole subordinate to regular army activities." Mao denounced the use of such tactics arguing that the army should not be dispersed but that it should instead "establish and consolidate revolutionary bases." The Long March proceeded largely along regular military lines but the Red Army reverted to guerrilla tactics after the massive defeat that it incurred at Kuang Chang in April 1934. In the first Vietnam war, Vietnamese Communists set up a regular army early on. But in the beginning the war was "mainly guerrilla in character." The guerrillas built a counter-state, one in which they "levied taxes, collected rice, recruited soldiers and disseminated their propaganda." It was not until 1950 that major units of the Communist regular army entered the battle. Laqueur, *Guerrilla*, 246-266.

interest "is a major distinguishing feature of warlord politics."[81] Warlords may mobilize followers along tribal or family such as was the case in Somalia. However, narcoterrorist warlords in Colombia and Southeast Asia operate differently, usually attempting to control peasant/rural populations in their areas of operations.

In spite of their many differences, these groups belong on a continuum of non-state forces that resort to violence in the pursuit of their objectives. They can usefully be conceptualized as varying along two axes. The first plots collective vs. private interests to capture the variation in motives underlying the actions of militias. The other plots the range of mobilization efforts undertaken by such groups. Whereas some militias appeal to a very narrow section of society, others have a broader message that appeals to a cross-section of society. Of course, it ought to be understood that groups can actually move along both axes during the course of a conflict.

CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES: THE PLAYING FIELD OF MILITIA POLITICS

Under what conditions are militias likely to emerge? When do they transform into complex organizations? Not all political groups take on the characteristics of a militia nor do all militias develop into bureaucratized organizations or quasi-states. In this section, I discuss the conditions associated with militia emergence and institutionalization. I start with the obvious observation that militias do not emerge and operate in an institutional vacuum. Instead, their emergence and later development can be relatively constrained by a pre-existing institutional context. This context shapes the playing field within which militias

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[81] William Reno, *Warlord Politics and African States* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1999), 3.

operate. For the purposes of this discussion, I focus on structural factors that affect the emergence of militias and the likelihood that they will develop into bureaucratized organizations. These factors are

1) the space provided for militia emergence and consolidation by the state, and
2) the existence of potential challengers for representation of a given community.

The likelihood that militias will emerge in a given political environment is largely determined by the propensity of the state to consider the claims of aggrieved communities as legitimate and subject to potential accommodation. When they can express their grievances and expect relative retribution within the political system, groups are less likely to resort to violence. In this sense, the emergence of militia groups is associated with a growing perception that the cause of a given community will not be addressed within the normal channels of political life. Militias are therefore more likely to be associated with political systems perceived as exclusionary by part of their populations. The more exclusionary the political system, the higher the likelihood that aggrieved communities will take up armed struggle to redress perceived grievances.[82] The outbreak of violence is only further confirmation of the failure and/or absence of political solutions.

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[82] See Ted Robert Gurr, *Minorities at Risk: A Global View of Ethnopolitical Conflicts* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1993), especially chapter 4.

The twentieth century's history of Irish Catholic insurgency provides a telling illustration. Before resorting to armed insurrection, Irish Catholics attempted to get the British government to redress discrimination against them. The civil rights movement demanded jobs, housing, and the implementation of one person, one vote. The non-violent nature of the 1968 civil rights marches indicates that avenues for participation in the system, though limited, were not totally closed for Irish Catholics. The rise of the IRA as the main vehicle for the expression of Irish Catholic discontent, in contrast, coincides with increasing perceptions that the British government had totally closed off avenues for Catholic participation in the political system.[83]

Militias can also develop in another kind of setting. Where a state has traditionally operated to the advantage of a specific group or community within the polity and where this state weakens and can no more offer the same advantages or guarantees, militias emerge to maintain these benefits and protect the group's power within the state. This situation is extremely well illustrated by the emergence of Christian militias in Lebanon. Initially, the Lebanese State institutions were devised to provide the Christian communities, more specifically the Maronites, with guarantees that they would not be deprived of their perceived uniqueness and forced to blend in the larger Arab and Muslim World. However, the State's perceived inability to decisively deal with the crises of 1958 and 1969 led Christian

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[83] The Battle of the Bogside is a turning point in the introduction of violent militancy. At that point in the conflict, Irish Catholics perceived that the British government did not only seek to destroy them "in terms of political power, but to destroy them as a people." Catholics came to see the state as incapable of reform; "it would have to be dismantled completely." Interview with Paul Arthur PBS Frontline, *The IRA and Sinn Fein.* http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/ira/conflict/history.html. Milton Esman who argues that in Northern Ireland, Catholics could propagandize, mobilize, and participate in elections but that Catholic grievances and demands were systematically disregarded echoes this assessment. Milton Esman, *Ethnic Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), 32.

leaders to infer that the state was weak and the army unable to defend the country.[84] Consequently, they embarked on the formation and training of paramilitaries to defend their vision of Lebanon. Alternatively, states may also cultivate militias as adjuncts of state power as discussed earlier.

The state does not only affect the likelihood of militia emergence, it also plays a role in allowing or constraining militia institutionalization. The stronger a state, the narrower the political space left for militias to organize. Strong states are states with the capacity to penetrate society, regulate social relationships, extract resources, and appropriate or use these resources in determined ways.[85] The reach of a strong state extends over all of its territory. Under such conditions, it is extremely difficult for militias to challenge the state's legitimacy and displace its institutions.[86] Militias fighting strong states have to contend with a challenger that possesses extensive control over its territory, with the capacity to efficiently extract resources from the population and to decide on their allocation. Consequently, the stronger the state the more constrained a militia's capability to establish a power base or sanctuary.[87]

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[84] These two crises will be discussed in more detail in chapter five.

[85] Joel Migdal, *Strong Societies and Weak States: State-Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988).

[86] It is true, however, that failure to mount a challenge can become an indicator of strength and that the argument, though empirically valid, may sound tautological.

[87] Sanctuary refers to so-called 'liberated zones' sited within the territory in contention. Rex Brynen, *Sanctuary and Survival: The PLO in Lebanon* (London: Pinter; Boulder: Westview, 1990), 3.

Conversely, the weaker the central government the more space a militia group will have to organize.[88] A weak state cannot extend its authority effectively over the entire territory; nor can it often extract resources necessary for the development and consolidation of its institutions. Under such conditions, militias can take advantage of the limited reach of the state to consolidate their power in relatively sheltered territorial bases. They can also use their military might to extract resources from the population. States that have witnessed a collapse of their institutions are at the lower end of the spectrum, providing a wide open political space where militia groups can engage in an institutional development closest to the process of state making. Sanctuaries may achieve the status of "states in waiting," fully functional with many, or most of, the attributes of an otherwise legal state.

In the mid-1980's, under the impulse of the Lebanese Forces, the Christian areas of Lebanon approximated this model. Not only did the Forces have a regular standing army and a tax system, they had also set up their parallel police, judiciary, social services, and representative offices abroad. Likewise, the Republika Srpska qualified as a quasi-state between 1992 and 1995. The institutions of the LF and of the Bosnian Serbs emerged in a context where both groups doubted the state's ability to protect their interests. For the Lebanese Forces, the Cairo Agreement which gave Palestinian fighters a free hand in establishing guerrilla bases in Lebanon, was evidence of the state's failure to address their grievances. In Bosnia, parliament's decision to go ahead with independence in spite of the Bosnian Serb objections served the same purpose. In both cases, the development of quasi-

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[88] The state weakness hypothesis contends that the weaker the capacity, cohesion, and legitimacy of the state, the more political space there is for collective violence. For a variation of this argument see Jack Goldstone, *Revolution and Rebellion in the Early Modern World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

state institutions was also aided by the near collapse of central state institutions at the onset of the war.

If the emergence of bureaucratized militias depends largely on the playing field determined by the state, the institutional development of these groups could also vary depending on the existence of other organizations seeking to organize the community. For example, there may already be fully functional political parties or cultural organizations representing the same community. Their presence on the political scene defines a secondary kind of opportunity structure. These actors may provide the militia groups with a recruitment base. They may also constrain the militias' attempt to pose as sole representatives of the community. Likewise, the existence of political, cultural, or social communal associations may force a distribution of roles amongst all and retrench the militia into a narrower military role. Hence, I expect that where there are other social or political communal organizations, the militia may be constrained by political competition.

This negotiation and re-negotiation of roles is perfectly illustrated by the relations between the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) and the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK led by Ibrahim Rugova). When the KLA first emerged on the scene in Kosovo, it did not step into a political vacuum. Rugova and his party were already organized into a shadow government running the province. The KLA had to fight for its share of power, at times using intimidation to bring moderates over to its side. Initially, the movement was relegated to a military role. The KLA only burst onto the political scene in the summer of 1998 when the rising intensity of clashes between its units and the Serbian police and the increase in civilian casualties drew international attention to the brewing crisis in Kosovo. The KLA's

involvement in the military dimension of the crisis justified its presence at the Rambouillet talks as one of the main political actors in the Kosovo crisis. In Lebanon, the existence of a number of parties organized to protect the Maronites' particular vision of the Lebanese State initially limited the Lebanese Forces to a purely military role. For the first three years of the conflict, the LF were the "military arm of the Christian resistance," a label indicating the existence of other actors claiming political representation of the community.

To recapitulate, resort to military violence is more likely when there is a perception that the political system is exclusionary. Moreover, the emergence of bureaucratized militias is more likely to be associated with weak states. As militias extend their control over contested territory, they are faced with the need to organize the societies living in the areas under their control. While armies defend state borders, the territory which falls under the control of militias is often referred to as enclaves—also sanctuaries or 'zones of control.' This territory becomes a safe haven of sorts to which the groups can retreat without being pursued by the other protagonists of the conflict. I identify the establishment of sanctuaries and the operation of militias in a substantially weakened state context as the two characteristics that set some militia groups apart and provide a favorable context for militia institutionalization. A final factor that may influence the course of militia institutionalization is the prior existence of other organizations seeking to offer specific services to the same target community.

THE ORIGINS OF MILITIA INSTITUTIONS

The formation of militias indicates the failure to come up with a political solution to the perceived grievances of a given group or community. Thus, militias seek to effect political change through military means. Though conflict is a means to an end, success in fighting becomes an end in itself especially when militias perceive the conflict as the only path to achieve their ultimate goal. The twin concerns for increased efficiency in waging warfare and subsequent improvement of their chances of success provide the initial impulse for the institutionalization of militias.

As militia leaders engage in warfare, they attempt to build and expand their power base.[89] In the domestic anarchic environment of civil wars, militia leaders establish organizational structures and a number of routinized relations between these structures and the population. Like governments, militias are engaged in the business of protection with the difference that they lack the sanctity of governments.[90] Any sustainable war effort requires organized fighting units and a financial base. Typically, the formation of military units is often followed by the establishment of systematic taxation, a process similar to the early stages of state institutionalization in Europe of the Middle Ages.

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[89] Whilst not overstating the similarities, the argument that I develop in this section has a number of aspects in common with Tilly's account of state making in the Europe of the Middle Ages. See Charles Tilly, ed., *The Formation of National States in Western Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975); Idem, "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime," in *Bringing the State Back In*, Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 169-191.

[90] According to Tilly, governments "commonly simulate, stimulate, or even fabricate threats of external war." Their repressive and extractive activities often constitute "the largest current threats to the livelihoods of their own citizens." In that sense, militias are not extremely different from governments. Tilly, "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime," 171.

Institutions are created in order to achieve specific outcomes. In this case, money and men serve the purpose of improving militias' military odds. In spite of the different settings in which they operated, the first Commander-in-chief of the Lebanese Forces, Bashir Jumayyil, and Bosnian Serb President Radovan Karadžić chose to prioritize the unification of fighting manpower as a first step towards the institutionalization of their groups. This will be discussed in detail later but the first "order" issued by Jumayyil and Karadžić were ultimatums to smaller guerrilla groups to join the fold of their military structures.

However, the imperatives of the struggle do not only propel the formation of military units and of taxation systems. Violence has a larger effect on the "growth and change of those peculiar forms of government we call national states."[91] Success in war produces arrangements that can deliver resources for purposes other than military success. The very act of building a military machine tends to promote territorial consolidation, centralization, differentiation of the instruments of government, and monopolization of the means of coercion. These are most of the Weberian characteristics associated with statehood: territory, taxes, a bureaucracy, and monopoly over the means of coercion. In other words, war provides the fundamentals of state-making. Initial success in warfare triggers a process of militia institutionalization that extends beyond the military and fiscal domains. The development of organizational structures transforms these groups into forces to reckon with.

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[91] Ibid., 170.

Historical and Cultural Constraints

Institutionalization does not necessarily aim at, or result in, state-making. In Europe of the Middle Ages, power holders did not undertake war making, extraction, and capital accumulation with the intention of creating national states nor did they foresee that such states would emerge from their activities. Likewise, although some militias may be in the business of replacing the state, others are not. Regardless of their ultimate objectives and of the final outcomes of their struggle, initially successful militias[92] engage in a process of institutionalization designed to meet the financial and organizational requirements of a protracted conflict.

However, the organization of the world into Western-style bureaucratic states, a "prominent artifact of Western cultural dominance," affects both the dynamics of present day conflicts and the strategies of internal as well as external actors.[93] The intractability of many political conflicts can be partially attributed to "extreme valuation of the sate as the only legitimate form of political organization."[94] It accounts for state authorities' reluctance to recognize sub-state actors as well as for the desire of many such actors to acquire the legitimacy that is associated with the status of statehood.

Another consequence of this valuation is that international actors who intervene in internal conflicts tend to privilege "legitimate actors" when selecting potential participants in peace talks. I have already mentioned the Bosnian case where the international community elected to negotiate with President Slobodan Milošević rather than deal with the Bosnian

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[92] Success refers to the ability to withstand physical elimination in the early phases of conflict.
[93] Finnemore, "Norms, Culture, and World Politics," 332.
[94] Ibid.

Serbs. This phenomenon is not restricted to militias. Even regimes that are not considered "legitimate" will often be discounted as negotiating partners. In the Shaba crisis, for instance, Zartman suggests that the US inability to treat Angola's MPLA regime as more than a Soviet puppet was to blame for the failure of negotiations in 1977.[95]

Militia leaders typically want their voice to be heard whether they seek to secede or to renegotiate the role of their community in the future polity.[96] Civil wars can end in two ways: by the decisive victory of one side over the other or through a negotiated settlement. This research is concerned with negotiated outcomes. If the conflict is to end through negotiations, militia leaders will seek to be either present or represented at the negotiating table. Although militia institutionalization may not necessarily result in state making, it is nevertheless influenced by the political outcome that leaders seek to achieve.

Militias face a conundrum. Institutionalization transforms them into forces with which to reckon. This in itself however does not secure their legitimization or their inclusion in future negotiations. This is a significant shift from the situation in the Middle Ages when institutionalization was central to the legitimization of warlords. Indeed, legitimacy was not a function of some abstract organizing principle or of popular approval. Instead, warlords were concerned about recognition by other power holders who were much more likely to "confirm the decisions of a challenged authority that controls substantial

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[95] Zartman, *Ripe for Resolution*, 256.

[96] Militias engaged in civil wars typically seek to champion the cause of their community. The groups' objectives can range from re-negotiation of the current political system to secession. Attempts to secure re-negotiation suggest that militias want guarantees that other groups in the polity will respect their community's political and other rights. Attempts to seek secession or independence indicate a belief that such rights can only be secured through the establishment of an independent nation-state.

force."[97] Nowadays, the development of a complex bureaucracy does not necessarily enhance the legitimacy of militias. It can sometimes even work against their efforts to secure recognition. Such complexity might, for example, cause worry to other contenders and foreign observers. When non-state actors become more visible and draw more support, they risk "being portrayed by their adversaries as mavericks threatening international legitimacy." Hence, militias are particularly concerned with the issue of being "heard, perceived, and recognized by nation-states and international organizations."[98]

This predicament has a direct impact on the course of militia institutionalization. Whether or not militias intend to establish a separate state, they are likely to adopt some of the trappings of statehood in an attempt to gain legitimacy. It is not uncommon for bureaucratized militias to increasingly look like quasi-states or to develop governments-in-waiting. Militias commonly attempt to appropriate the forms and procedures of states in order to modify external actors' perceptions of their legitimacy.

The PLO's struggle for recognition is illustrative of the complexity of the relationship between institutionalization and legitimacy in our modern world. The PLO was established in 1964. In an effort to mount a successful guerrilla war against Israel and to gain autonomy from often-constraining allies, the organization underwent a process of institutionalization. However, this process did not automatically enhance the legitimacy of the group. PLO institutionalization was instrumental in winning the organization recognition from some states. In 1974, for example, the Arab League recognized the PLO

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[97] Tilly, "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime," 171.

as the only legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Simultaneously, however, the PLO's institutionalization was instrumental in heightening the threat perception of not only its foe, Israel, but even some of its allies, namely Jordan and Lebanon. In both countries, embattled regimes perceived the increasingly complex and powerful organization as a threat to their stability and they acted militarily to contain this threat.

Variations in Militia Institutional Forms

Isomorphism is not homogeneity. Although many militias adopt the forms and procedures of states there is still room for diversity in this process. It is beyond the scope of the current dissertation to develop a complete typology of militias. However, I would like to suggest some of the most obvious possibilities and highlight that initial choices in this respect are not innocuous.

One obvious axis of variation concerns the balance between civilian and military institutions. Are the military units clearly subordinated to the political leadership? A number of factors might account for various configurations in civil-military relations including, but not limited to, the ideology of the organization, the revenue base of the various sub-components of the militia, and the value attributed to political autonomy from the military in the larger societal context. Institutions can also differ in their modes of decision-making. Much like the differences between a presidential and a parliamentary system, militias may decide to develop representative institutions that incorporate segments of the population in their decision-making. They might also decide to restrict decision-making to members of an

[98] Mohammad Selim, "The Survival of a Non-State Actor: The Foreign Policy of the Palestine Liberation Organization," in *The Foreign Policy of Arab States: The Challenge of Change*, Bahgat Korany and Ali Hillal Dessouki, eds., Second edition (Boulder: Westview, 1991).

inner circle. How are decisions reached? Who is consulted? How is disagreement dealt with? Once again, variation on this dimension could be a function of the organization's ideology or even a function of the political experience that militia leaders bring to the group. In a society where there is little direct experience of participatory decision-making, for example, it is likely that militia leaders will replicate some of the templates existing in their immediate environment.

The case of the Bosnian Serbs is illustrative of these contentions. Although Serb nationalists in Bosnia sought to dismember the former Yugoslavia and to demarcate themselves from its communist legacy, they were extremely influenced by its institutional structure to the extent that the institutions of the Bosnian Serb Republic replicated the old Yugoslav structures. In theory, state and party were separate. In practice, authority was highly centralized in the party which controlled the state and whose leading members were the effective decision-makers in Republika Srpska. This phenomenon is not restricted to militias. Latin Americanists argue that the degree and direction of political change possible under military dictatorships were constrained by the legacy of the way in which society was organized politically and by preexisting links between society and the state.[99] This is also widely documented in transitions from authoritarian to democratic regimes where a number of authoritarian practices and arrangements survive into the new era of democracy constraining the possibilities for in-depth change of the system.

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[99] A brilliant exposition of this dynamic is Frances Hagopian, "Traditional Politics against State Transformation in Brazil," in *State Power and Social Forces: Domination and Transformation in the Third World*, Joel Migdal, Atul Kohli, and Vivienne Shue, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

To sum up, I argue that institutionalization arises out of a need for centralization of activities to increase efficiency in carrying out the struggle. In an effort to legitimate themselves in the eyes of other power contenders and of international mediators, militias are likely to seek legitimacy through emulation of the forms and procedures to which symbolic legitimacy is attached, forms and procedures usually identified with states. This emulation does not however result in homogeneity. Militia institutions are likely to borrow the specifics of their institutional forms and procedures from the templates that they are most familiar with in their direct environment.

IV. THE PUZZLE OF MILITIA COMPROMISE IN PEACE NEGOTIATIONS

Having defined militias and explained the genesis of militia institutions, I now turn to the puzzle of militia compromise in peace negotiations within the context of the literature on civil conflict resolution. I develop an institutional explanation of militia compromise. How do institutions affect decisions by militia leaders to accept or reject proposed peace deals? The answer is a two-step model of militia decision-making. In a first stage, institutions affect the nature of decisions. Institutions increase capabilities thus bringing new *financial* and *organizational* interests to bear on the calculus of costs and benefits. These institutions change not only the preference structure of decision-makers but also the environment of decision-making. They *broaden the militia's win-set* and *increase militia vulnerability to fluctuations in the balance of military forces*. I argue that these changes affect the leaders' calculus of costs and benefits increasing the number of situations in which decision-makers exhibit *willingness to compromise*.

ACHIEVING DURABLE PEACE

The durability of peace is one of the concerns that underlie this study. I adopt a minimalist definition of peace as cessation of armed hostilities. However, I seek to differentiate between tactical and strategic decisions to commit to such a cessation of hostilities to capture differences in the leaders' commitment to peace.

There are two ways of conceptualizing peace in a post-conflict setting. The first is to define peace as the absence of armed conflict. This is what is commonly referred to as conflict management or the "elimination, neutralization, or control of the means of pursuing either the conflict or the crisis."[100] The other commonly referred to as positive peace implies the attainment of some standards of democracy and social justice. This is sometimes labeled conflict resolution because it entails the elimination of the causes of the underlying conflict. Some analysts argue that conflict resolution should be preferred over conflict management because, short of the elimination of the underlying causes of the conflict, a flare-up in the violence is always possible.[101] Although conflict resolution should be the long-term goal of mediators or negotiators, in the short-term it is important to stop the killing.

Although I adopt a minimalist definition of peace, I am concerned with the durability of non-violent interactions between former protagonists. Hence, I differentiate tactical decisions to compromise from strategic ones. A tactical decision does not imply commitment to a peace process. Nor does it suggest that the conflict has effectively shifted from a military confrontation to a political one. Given the propensity for broken truces, neither a lull in the fighting nor verbal acquiescence to a cease-fire is sufficient proof of a group's willingness to compromise. I thus take willingness to compromise to mean signing a peace agreement that stipulates the demobilization of all armed factions with clearly defined costs for non-compliance. Such an agreement may not resolve all the issues underlying civil strife but it resolutely shifts interaction between the protagonists to a non-violent mode of

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[100] Zartman, *Ripe for Resolution*, 8.

dispute resolution. When militia leaders make a strategic choice to compromise, they can be expected to have a vested interest in the peace settlement. Under such conditions, exit is both costly and disadvantageous. We can fairly confidently expect that this alternative will only be exercised in the most extreme cases, when both voice and loyalty to the peace agreement have become non-options.

Indeed, the problem of commitment to peace is an important one. Although some peace agreements end civil conflict, others break down. The breakdown of peace accords is often followed by far-reaching violence. The Rwandan genocide succeeded the 1992 Arusha peace agreement. Likewise, some of the worst violence in Angola, Sri Lanka, and Cambodia (among others) followed the signing of peace accords. Most peace agreements break down because one or more factions to the agreement renege on their commitments. To date, the literature has not been able to satisfactorily explain both the achievement of peace and the ulterior breakdown of peace settlements.

MILITIA COMPROMISE: AN INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS

In the rest of this chapter, I develop a two-step model of militia decision-making in answer to the central research question of this dissertation, "why do militias—whose power, riches, and legitimacy are a function of the conflict—accept peace settlements?" This model starts from the assumption that an understanding of conditions at Level I—intra-communal politics—is crucial to evaluate the possibility of conducting successful Level II negotiations.

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[101] *Ibid.*, 279.

If the only formal constraint on the ratification of a Level II agreement is its acceptance at Level I, it is therefore crucial to understand the domestic as well as the external incentives that drive a leader to compromise. Although the external environment may force leaders to come to the negotiating table (hence the importance of the notion of ripeness), it is domestic conditions that determine the strength and durability of a given peace deal.

The proposed model articulates the interaction between internal and external determinants of militia decision-making. In a first stage, I show that the emergence of institutions changes the nature of militia decision-making by increasing the group's capabilities and introducing new interests in the preference structure of decision-makers. In a second stage, I show that the leaders' calculus of costs and benefits changes as a result of institutionalization. I go on to demonstrate that institutionalization increases the number of situations in which militia leaders are willing to compromise on their political objectives and reach peace settlements.

Institutions Matter: The Impact of Institutional Development on Militias

Institutions increase militia capabilities. Capabilities refer to the militia's capacity to deal with a number of war, and non-war, related issues. The change in militia capabilities is a function of increasing organizational complexity and financial capacity.[102] As militias set up structures to deal with military, political, social, and economic issues their capabilities

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[102] The insight that organizations create capabilities goes back to Adam's Smith analysis of task specialization and labor division in a pin factory. See Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* [1776], Edwin Cannan, ed. (New York: Modern Library, 1994), Book One, Chapter One.

increase. Moreover, the more revenue a militia generates, the more financial capacity it will have to develop new departments or organizations that will address these issues adequately.

Initially, militia preferences are a function of the objectives that these groups seek to achieve. The external environment constrains their options as to the manner in which to achieve these preferences, thus operating at the level of strategies.[103] Once institutions develop, they substantively modify actors' preferences by introducing new interests in their preference structures. This process is akin to the relation between means and ends. Means are a functional tool used to reach a given end. However, these means can acquire a separate value and become ends in themselves. I contend that once institutions are established they affect actors' preferences through a similar process. This transformation can be uncovered by historical institutional investigations of the impact of institutions on the self-defined interests of actors.

Increase in Capabilities

The development of militia institutions is associated with an increase in capabilities. Capabilities are essential to improve the militia's chances of attaining its objectives. These capabilities are mainly of two sorts, financial and material. The two are closely related since increases in manpower, weaponry, and infrastructure are premised in part upon revenue generation.

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[103] In Chapter Three, I illustrated the manner in which a restrictive environment is particularly likely to encourage militias to resort to violence in pursuit of their objectives.

In the early stages of a conflict, the mobilization of fighters is a central task. Typically, militias start as small ad hoc organizations. The nucleus is often limited to a leader and few followers who form the permanent membership.[104] Early on, militias can offer recruits little by way of benefits or material rewards. Instead, membership is associated with an increase in physical insecurity resulting from direct exposure to violence. On average, it is accurate to expect that in the early stages of conflict recruits are mostly drawn to the group because of shared ideological goals and political objectives, especially in the case of ethnic conflicts where fear forces the population to take sides. But the groups' ideological appeal is not sufficient to sustain their fight. Although popular support can initially provide a boost to nascent groups, it cannot ensure their continuing survival. Domestic support, though important in many ways, is often insufficient to generate the kind of revenue needed to sustain the financial requirements of armed conflict.

The financial requirements of sustained military conflict impose the search for revenue. Militia revenue can come from different sources. It can be domestically generated or externally garnered. It can also come from involvement in productive activities, be parasitical or more predatory. Following are potential sources of militia revenue:

• Extortion: This is a common source of combatant revenue in civil wars. Armed men take advantage of their weaponry to engage in theft, looting, and other exactions. They take advantage of the population's fear and helplessness to prey upon readily available resources. Extortion can generate substantial amounts of revenue but the supply side is not inexhaustible.

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[104] This observation holds for a wide spectrum of militias. See Christopher Clapham, *African*

- Theft of international aid: Aid taxation can be imposed on the aid-recipients, at distribution sites, or at the source. In the latter case, aid convoys are either hijacked and their contents sold for profit, or a protection cost is imposed to secure the delivery of the aid to its intended recipients. Though a common feature in civil wars, the integration of aid in conflict dynamics was probably most publicly discussed in the Somali case.[105]

- Licensing fees: When they control territorial enclaves, militias often impose fees on entry to and exit from their zones of control. These fees apply equally to individuals and merchandise. In Republika Srpska, a substantial amount of revenue was thus generated by issuing "exit visas" to Bosnian Muslims who sought official assurances that they would be allowed to leave the Bosnian Serb areas safely. Throughout the war in Lebanon, the Lebanese Forces and other militias garnered fortunes by wresting control of the harbors away from the Lebanese Port Authority.

- Revolutionary taxation: An independent resource base usually involves some form of revolutionary taxation. As early as 1976, barely one year into the conflict, the Lebanese Forces established the "national treasury" a highly organized financial department, responsible for generating revenue for the war effort. More recently, the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA also known in Albanian as UCK) established an international fund, "Homeland Calls," as an essential element of its effort to secure independence for Kosovo from Serbia. When the domestic sources of militia revenue derive primarily

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Guerrillas (Oxford: James Currey, 1998), chapters 2, 3, and 6.

[105] See Daniel Compagnon, "Somali Armed Movements: The Interplay of Political Entrepreneurship and Clan-Based Factions," in *African Guerrillas*, 86. See also, John Prendergast, *Frontline Diplomacy: Humanitarian Aid and Conflict in Africa* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1996).

from "revolutionary taxation," the group's relation to the population tends to be parasitical.

- External assistance: Militias can also turn for support to other domestic political forces or external actors who sympathize with their cause. For example, in its early days, "... much of the support for the IRA came from the United States, where there are about 15 million Americans of Irish descent. ... Irish-Americans collected funds and weapons for the Provos. The New York-based Irish Northern Aid Committee (Noraid) became the largest American source of cash. In addition, machine guns, rifles, pistols, grenades, and ammunition were sent to help the underground fighters.[106] Militias also seek external patrons willing to finance their war effort either because of shared ideology or for strategic reasons. Hence, the Lebanese Forces turned to the State of Israel for assistance and Belgrade extended lines of supply and financial support to the Bosnian Serbs.

- Economic re-organization of the relations of production: Institutionalization allows militias to divert some of their revenue into non-military activities and to develop economic relations with the population of the territories under their control. In Latin America, insurgents tend to buy supplies from local peasants at prices well above market rates.[107] Involvement may even mean a total reorganization of the relations of production. For example, Peru's Sendero Luminoso typically altered the economic base of areas under its control establishing cooperative forms of agriculture. In the

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[106] Louis Snyder, *Global Mini-Nationalisms: Autonomy or Independence* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1982), 58-59.

[107] Timothy Wickham-Crowley, *Exploring Revolution: Essays on Latin American Insurgency and Revolutionary Theory* (New York and London: Sharpe Inc., 1990), 40.

Philippines, the New People's Army implements land reform and attempts to replace capitalism with a cooperative parallel economy.[108]

• Provision of the pre-requisites for economic exchanges: In time, militias become symbiotic with their environments. Economic development and the well being of populations come to depend on militia provision of security and infrastructure. Militias, not unlike states, provide the basic requisites for the conduct of economic exchanges. In return, they receive a part of the population's income. In Lebanon's Christian enclave, the Lebanese Forces established an elaborate infrastructure to regulate the conduct of commerce and other economic activities. This involved customs duties, harbor facilities, a price control commission, a body of law-like regulations on the conduct of business, as well as the provision of internal security within the territory under the militia's control. This infrastructure was instrumental in allowing the population to conduct business and maintain relatively normal economic activities. In return, the LF collected taxes and excise duty on goods and services. Likewise, in Republika Srpska, the Bosnian Serb leadership controlled imports and exports, delivering licenses to traders, providing a "legal" framework for the conduct of business, and receiving payment in return. This infrastructure remained one of the main sources of Bosnian Serb revenue, especially as the imposition of economic sanctions by the international community provided an opportunity for enrichment through sanction busting.

• Business empires: In some cases, the involvement of militias in the economy is so diversified and complex that it becomes difficult to separate the gray economy from the

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[108] Naylor, "The Insurgent Economy," 16.

legal market economy. The militias not only replace the state in the provision of a framework for the conduct of economic exchanges, they also form business empires acquiring stakes in legal businesses and diversifying their sources of income. Post-1985, the Lebanese Forces created their own business empire that extended from the acquisition of shares in the "Casino du Liban" to operating a chain of low-cost supermarkets and to the creation and management of a maritime line linking Lebanon to Cyprus.

Manpower and financial resources improve a militia's performance in war. But success in war also promotes the consolidation of a territorial base. In other words, successful militias are also the ones most likely to drive the state or other power contenders out of the territory that they control. Militias thus become faced with the need to organize that territory, in other words to take over the functions of the state. At this juncture, the militia's involvement in the territory extends beyond the military and economic spheres. A social component enters into the picture and militias frequently provide collective goods to the populations under their control.

Apart from reorganizing the relations of production in the areas under their control, guerrilla movements have often been known to provide a full array of social contract services to the local populations.[109] There is massive evidence that this was the case in Cuba, Venezuela, Colombia and Guatemala, among others, in the 1960s. A Venezuelan peasant summarized this situation by distinguishing "the guerrillas' *gobierno de arriba*, or government

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[109] Wickham-Crowley, *Exploring Revolution*, 39.

up in the hills, from the normal government down in the towns, or *gobierno de abajo*."[110] In Lebanon and Republika Srpska, the provision of collective goods was a centerpiece of the relations between the militia and the population. The Lebanese Forces established one of the most sophisticated institutions to deal with these socio-economic issues. The National Solidarity Foundation addressed all the needs of the population, providing employment, low-cost housing, medical care, schooling assistance, and the like. In the Republika Srpska, the Bosnian Serbs put in place "war municipalities" that provided, among others, relocation and gainful employment to Serb refugees.

This expansion of the militia's activities beyond the politico-military realm necessitates the development of a complex bureaucracy. Increasingly, militias establish departments to deal with civilian affairs as well as with military matters. Alongside with the organization of the military wing and the generation of revenue, the growth of this bureaucracy also contributes to the increase in militia capabilities.

Diversification of Interests

Militias are initially interested in achieving a set of political objectives and to this effect, they are interested in success in war. But the development of a complex organizational structure introduces other interests in the calculus of decision-makers. These interests are of two sorts: organizational and financial. Institutions formalize leadership and structure of command. As the militia grows stronger, as its activities expand and diversify,

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[110] Norman Gall, "The Continental Revolution," *The New Leader* 48 (12 April 1965), 5 cited in Wickham-Crowley, *Exploring Revolution*, 39.

the mere fact of belonging to the militia becomes a source of power and influence. The survival of the group becomes an end in itself for all members.

Whereas top-level leaders may be ensured power positions in the post-conflict polity,[111] it is less clear that similar benefits will trickle down the hierarchical pyramid. Middle-level leaders depend on the survival of the institution to maintain their relatively privileged positions. This is not a radical departure from common wisdom but a restatement of one of the central insights of bureaucratic politics. In the same way that military and defense industries are reluctant to sign their own downsizing through reductions in their allocations of state budgets, militia leaders come to see their interests to be best served by the survival of their group, and hence by the continuation of the conflict.

In this context, two examples illustrate the dilemma that peace can bring about. "In Mozambique, winning RENAMO (Mozambiquan National Resistance) acquiescence to the peace process involved side payments to its top political leaders and to its foot soldiers through demobilization programs."[112] In the West Bank, the Palestinian Authority brought middle-level military and political leaders within the fold in a conscious attempt to ensure the disbursement of benefits to all its allies/clients who could potentially be disaffected by the

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[111] The notion that peace settlements are in essence elite pacts established as a transitional strategy toward democratic regimes or outcomes is gaining credence in the literature. See for example, Timothy Sisk, *Power Sharing and International Mediation in Ethnic Conflicts* (Washington, D.C.: USIP Press, 1996), especially the discussion in chapter 5; and Caroline Hartzell and Donald Rothchild, "Political Pacts as Negotiated Agreements: Comparing Ethnic and Non-Ethnic Cases," *International Negotiation* 2 (1997): 147-171.

[112] Sisk, *Power Sharing and International Mediation*, 85.

peace process. These measures, highly criticized for their patrimonial character and for their heavy toll on resources, are however necessary to limit potential threats to peace.[113]

Institutionalization also markedly increases the financial benefits that accrue to the militia as a direct consequence of its involvement in the conflict. The preservation of these benefits develops into a separate objective that, like bureaucratic interests, has no direct connection to the initial cause of the civil war. These financial benefits come either from involvement in legal and illegal economic activities or from control of, or access to, international aid. Peacemaking is resisted because "leaders and members of militant groups, who must be key actors in any peacemaking process, reap ... material benefits from the perpetuation of conflict, while passing the costs to others."[114] The financial rewards gleaned by the Khmer Rouge in the ruby-mining business, by UNITA in the diamond trade, and by the Shan United Army in the opium trade illustrate the point.[115]

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[113] For a comprehensive analysis of this dilemma in the Palestinian case see, Rex Brynen, "The Neopatrimonial Dimensions of Palestinian Politics," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 25, 1 (1995).

[114] John M. Richardson Jr. and Jianxin Wang, "Peace Accords: Seeking Conflict Resolution in Deeply Divided Societies," in *Economic Dimensions of Ethnic Conflict: International Perspectives*, S.W.R. de A. Samarasinghe and Reed Coughlan, eds. (London: Pinter, 1991), 184.

[115] See Jacques Bernardis, *Diamants Connection* (Paris: 1985), the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 7 February 1991, and 28 June 1990, and *The Economist*, 6 April 1991.

Win-Sets and Political Decisions

The process of institutionalization changes the nature of militia decision-making. Institutionalization results in the development of two new sets of interests that decision-makers have to consider: maintain command and control over the institutions of the group, and ensure the continued inflow of financial benefits. Decision-makers now have to take these two interests into consideration alongside the political objectives that they hope to achieve. How do militia interests affect the size of their win-sets and how does institutionalization modify these win-sets? To answer this question, I take a look at militia interests prior to institutionalization then turn to the impact of an increase in the number and variety of interests that militia leaders attempt to achieve.

Militias are illegal political actors; as such they are barred from access to state resources and other legitimate avenues of political expression, organization and mobilization. As discussed earlier, most cases of civil war are associated with a perception of paralysis of the political system.[116] Consequently, militias force their demands on the larger political agenda by resorting to violence and inflexibility.[117] By taking up armed struggle, they force other political actors to address their concerns seriously, if only by engaging in a struggle. Their

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[116] An abundant literature in comparative politics documents the role of rigid political institutions in the breakdown of social order. See for example Samuel Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies; Leon Hurwitz, "Contemporary Approaches to Political Stability," *Comparative Politics* 5, 3 (1973): 449-463; Amos Perlmutter, "The Praetorian State and the Praetorian Army: Toward a Taxonomy of Civil-Military Relations in Developing Societies," *Comparative Politics* 1, 3 (April): 382.404.

[117] This behavior is consistent with the expectations of social minority theorists. They argue that consistency provides otherwise voiceless and powerless minorities with an essential power, that of setting up an insoluble social problem and refusing to compromise. By blocking negotiation with the representatives of the dominant model, social instability is created. See, Gabriel Mugny and Stamos Papastamou, *The Power of Minorities*, European Monographs in Social Psychology, 31 (London: Academic Press and The European Association of Experimental Psychology, 1982), 20.

previous experience heightens the militia's mistrust of solutions proposed by an exclusionary government (or majority as the case may be). Hence, the militia will favor outcomes such as wide decentralization or outright secession over accommodation and other attempts at reinstating the *status quo ante*. Consequently, conflict resolution tends to be framed in win or lose terms. The government has little incentive to move toward the militia's position[118] while the militia's distrust of government prevents it from accepting compromise solutions. In such instances, it does not matter to the militia that the other side may have the upper hand in terms of military might and power. The calculus of costs and benefits is such that the utility of fighting now is higher than the probability of obtaining a satisfactory settlement regardless of the cost of fighting.[119]

This dynamic is extremely acute in conflicts with ethnic overtones. Regardless of the initial causes of a civil war,[120] the introduction of an ethnic component greatly complicates the search for a solution. In conflicts such as the Lebanese and Bosnian civil wars political and economic competition leads to fears (real and imagined) of communal marginalization, extinction, or absorption motivating powerful resistance.[121] Militias believe that the political

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[118] One possible incentive would be to avoid the cost of violence. However, governments concerned with the cost of violence would probably make compromises to prevent the outbreak of conflict in the first instance. In chapter II, I discussed the logic behind the assumption that militias will be more likely to emerge when governments are deaf to the demands of a given group or community.

[119] The rationale for such a utility calculus has been captured by the notion of the problem of commitment to peace. See, James Fearon, "Commitment Problems and the Spread of Ethnic Conflict," in *The International Spread of Ethnic Conflict: Fear, Diffusion, and Escalation,* David Lake and Donald Rothchild, eds. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 107-126.

[120] It must be noted that most "ethnic" conflicts are struggles over real political or economic grievances. The shorthand "ethnic conflict" is meant to capture the reality of division along communal lines not to suggest my adherence to the thesis of "ancient ethnic hatreds."

[121] In Lebanon, the LF claimed that the conflict was ethnic because the Christians of Lebanon do not trace their roots to Arab descent. Although the claim is controversial, what really matters in such situations is the self-perception of the group. See, Edward Azar, "Lebanon: The Role of External

process has failed to accommodate the concerns of their community; thus they are likely to exhibit inflexibility. Because of the perceived zero-sum nature of the struggle, they adopt positions that allow for little if any compromise. For example, Bosnian Muslims would not compromise on the issue of independence because they feared that they would become second-class citizens in a Serb-dominated Yugoslavia. However, Bosnian Serbs feared the prospect of becoming an ethnic minority in an independent Bosnia and Herzegovina. In such situations, the intensity of fears on both sides and the highly destructive nature of the conflicts allow little scope for negotiated mutual gains and outcomes.[122] This scenario is starkly illustrated by developments in the Kosovo conflict. The KLA was extremely suspicious of the likelihood that the government of President Milošević would ever address the demands of the Kosovar Albanians. Hence, the militia favored fighting over compromise. Beginning in the summer of 1997, the KLA escalated its attacks on Serb police forces and Serb institutions in the province of Kosovo. The Serbs, in return, feared that KLA intentions were to ultimately seek the independence of Kosovo. This would have been unacceptable for the Serbs for whom Kosovo is the cradle of their ethnic nationalism. In addition to other considerations proper to the Milošević regime,[123] this dynamic resulted in a spiral of escalation, the failure of talks at Rambouillet, and the subsequent NATO operation against the Serb regime and forces. At inception, or in their early development stages, this attitude seems to have been representative of the decision patterns of Palestinian

Forces in Confessional Pluralism," in *Ideology and Power in the Middle East: Essays in Honor of George Lanczowski*, Peter Chelkowski and Robert Pranger, eds. (Durham: Duke University Press, 1988), 325.
[122] Donald Rothchild, "Africa's Interethnic Conflicts: The Linkages Among Demands Require Strategies and Management of Conflict," in *Conflict Resolution in Africa*, Francis Mading Deng and I. William Zartman, eds. (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1991), 194.
[123] President Milošević built his power base on the Kosovo myth. Any unwarranted compromise on this issue would have been damaging to his regime's survival.

guerrilla groups that called for the destruction of the State of Israel, as it is of most separatist movements claiming to represent an ethnic community.

Given perceptions of the struggle as a zero-sum game, militia decision-makers who evaluate peace deals on the basis of their political objectives are likely to *reject compromise*. This provides us with our first hypothesis:

> Hypothesis 1: *When political objectives are prominent in the calculus of militia decision-makers, they will reject compromise.*

It is however important to note that militia decision-makers may not have an independent say in the negotiations process. Because they are illegal political actors, militias sometimes enter into alliances with recognized political forces and external powers with a stake in the conflict who will seek to dictate positions to their weaker clients (see the discussion of relations with allies below). In such cases, attainment of a peace settlement is based on coerced compromise and holds the real prospect that spoilers will emerge to challenge the settlement.

Figure IV-1: Win-Sets of Actors at the Outset of Conflict*

Actor A   Actor B

Win-set A   Win-set B

This figure illustrates the positions of actors at the outset of a conflict. The absence of overlap in the win-sets captures the fact that the universe of theoretically possible deals is an empty set. Hence, there is no possibility of reaching a negotiated solution that is mutually acceptable to the actors.

Institutionalization introduces organizational and financial interests in the preference structure of militia decision-makers. Whereas militia leaders were primarily interested in achieving their political objectives at the start of the conflict, they now seek to preserve organizational and financial interests too. Consequently, they evaluate proposed peace deals with all three objectives in mind. *Ceteris paribus*, institutionalization broadens the win-set of a militia, increasing the possibility that it will overlap with the win-set of protagonists. The process of institutionalization thus reduces the objective distance between the win-sets of various opponents. When the win-sets of two opponents overlap, the common part represents the universe of theoretically possible deals.

Hypothesis 2: *When militia interests diversify, the likelihood that they will find common ground with their adversaries increases.*

This broadening of militia interests makes it possible to introduce a different structure of payoffs in proposed peace deals. For example, militias may be induced to compromise political objectives while still achieving other objectives such as the preservation of their organizational and financial interests. But whereas the achievement of political objectives might have been sufficient to induce willingness to compromise at the outset of the conflict, it becomes insufficient once financial and organizational interests enter into the picture.

Figure IV-2: Institutionalization's Impact on Militia Interests

Actor A   Actor B

Win-set A   Win-set B

Overlap in Win-sets
(Universe of theoretically possible deals)
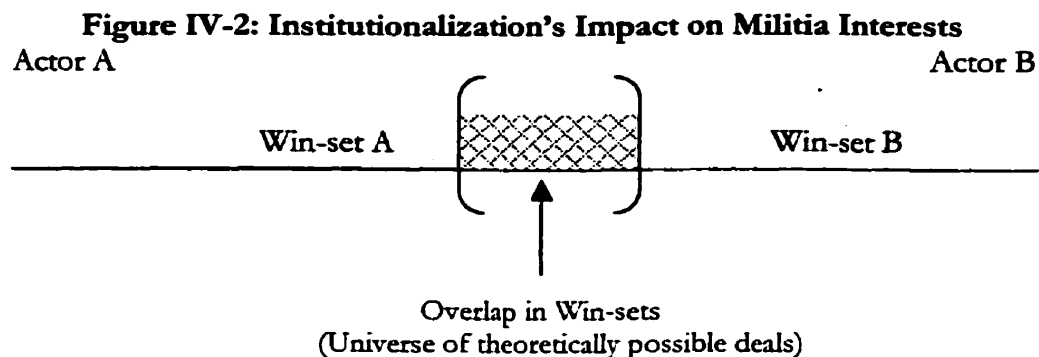
A final word is in order to wrap up this discussion. These general expectations hold ceteris paribus but they do not suggest that militia institutionalization will necessarily result in a peace agreement or even in willingness to compromise. All they indicate is that militia institutionalization increases the likelihood that the militia and its adversaries may theoretically find common ground. On the face of it, however, the changes associated with institutionalization do not suggest that, as they develop into institutions, militias would become willing to compromise. On the contrary, they suggest that militias will increasingly have stakes in continued warfare. Moreover, as they acquire more capabilities, militias can be expected to wage a more successful war and to sustain military stalemates for extended time periods. However, institutionalized militias have actually proven willing to compromise. In 1983 the Lebanese Forces refused to compromise on the political prerogatives of the Christian Maronite community in Lebanon. In 1989, they accepted the Ta'if Accord, the cornerstone of which was a substantial reduction in these political prerogatives. At Dayton, the Bosnian Serbs saw their dream of establishing a greater Serbia squashed. Yet, they did not spoil the agreement as they had others before it. How can we explain these puzzling empirical findings?

The Puzzle of Militia Compromise

In this section, I use the insights of rational choice institutionalism to explore the ways in which institutions modify the cost-benefit calculus of self-interested actors by altering the parameters within which they make their strategic choices. I propose that the emergence of institutions transforms the context in which actors make decisions. Hence, institutions affect the strategies adopted by actors. In other words, the achievement of the actors' goals may sometimes be better served by compromise than by the continuation of conflict. As mentioned earlier on in this dissertation, I recognize that the final outcome is dependent on the strategic interaction of several actors engaged in a bargaining game. However, for the purposes of this analysis I am only concerned with explaining the strategic choice of one set of actors, in this case militia groups.

Specifically, I argue that the conjugated impact of the broadening in militia interests and a decreasing ability to withstand fluctuations in the military balance of forces opens the way for compromise. When a militia calculates that the costs of fluctuations in the military balance of power are such that a deal preserving its organizational and financial interests is a better option, militia leaders act pragmatically. They opt for the preservation of material benefits and for organizational survival over achievement of their maximal political objectives. In other words, ideological fanatics transform into politicians.

Figure IV-3: Schematic Representation of the Role of Institutions in the Two-Level Peace Negotiations Game*

Alternative Explanations

| FANATICS |
| BRIGANDS |
| MERCENARIES |

LEVEL I

LEVEL II

Alternative Explanation

| Independent variable |
| INSTITUTIONS |

| Financial and Organizational Interests |

| Win-set |

| Increased Capabilities |

| Ability to Withstand Changes in the Balance of Forces |

Dependent variable

| Strategic Choice |

| STRATEGIC AND TACTICAL |
| Strategic Interaction (Bargaining Game) |
| BARGAINING PROBLEMS |

| Peace Settlement or Breakdown of Talks |

| SECURITY DILEMMA |

Alternative Explanation

The light gray box represents Level I, or the part of the bargaining game that I am interested in. The exclusion of the strategic interaction with other players (dark gray box) suggests that a strategic choice may be influenced and modified by the attitudes of others at the negotiating table (Level II). However, this dissertation attempts to show that some militias actually come to the negotiating table with a serious will to compromise. I argue that it is important to understand the conditions under which this occurs to judge the likelihood that negotiations with such an actor will or will not fail.

Institutions structure the relations of power between actors. There is a large literature on the role of common institutions in alleviating problems of information, and introducing an element of certainty in the calculus of actors. Although they are not shared, militia institutions structure the context in which decision-makers operate thus acting as either enabling or constraining factors in the evaluation of possible strategies to achieve the group's objectives. Common wisdom suggests that, all else being equal, the process of institutionalization should work to the militia's advantage because institutions are associated with an increase in capabilities. However, I will endeavor to establish that this is not necessarily the case. Although institutionalization increases the absolute level of militia capabilities, nonetheless it also triggers three dynamics that actually decrease a militia's ability to withstand fluctuations in the balance of military forces.

1.   Visibility and Vulnerability

Capabilities increase a militia's visibility and hence its vulnerability to material losses. The accumulation of material assets and the development of a complex fixed infrastructure come at a price. The militia becomes more visible and hence an easier target. Militarily, transformation into a more professional force implies an investment in equipment and a division of roles based on increasing unit specialization. While this unit specialization is central to improve the odds of winning the war, it creates vulnerabilities and paradoxically, may lead to large losses of military hardware. Increased vulnerability is also a function of the growth of permanent institutional structures and organizations.

> Assets mean flexibility and independence, they also open a new window of vulnerability. In protecting their assets, guerrilla groups face the same problems as criminals, and more. For successful criminals are precisely those most

desirous of a public front of respectability which simultaneously provides them with a means for disguising the origins of their income and wealth. By contrast, successful guerrillas seek notoriety in terms of public confrontation with the authorities, in which case identifiable assets are susceptible to counter attack by the state.[124]

Once again, the PLO provides a telling example. The transformation of the organization from a guerilla movement into a government-in-exile for the Palestinian refugee population was accompanied by a tremendous increase in fixed infrastructure. The vulnerability of this infrastructure was established during the 1982 invasion of Lebanon. Israel "sought out and physically destroyed $400 million worth of PLO infrastructure and assets in the form of factories, offices, commercial real estate, hospitals and schools, as well as seizing bank records that might have permitted them to trace financial assets around the world."[125]

It can be argued that this denotes not so much an increase in vulnerability as a change in the kind of vulnerability. However, a division of labor and an increasing reliance on technology for the conduct of warfare accompany the increase in militia capabilities. When non-institutionalized militias suffer a military reversal of fortunes, they can regroup and resume the fight. When institutionalized militias suffer a military reversal of fortunes, their losses are more difficult to compensate. Institutionalized militias are dependent on complex hardware to wage the war. The loss of this hardware does not only demote them to the situation they were in at the outset of the war. In effect, the increasing reliance on sophisticated equipment and the impact of task specialization mean that, in the event of

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[124] Naylor, "The Insurgent Economy."

heavy material losses, militiamen are more vulnerable because the acquisition of sophisticated armaments and the decision to specialize decrease the versatility of individual fighters. Going back to the PLO example, the organization, which managed to regroup its forces after severe setbacks in the late 1960's and 1970's, could not reconstitute its fighting potential as easily in the wake of the Lebanon defeat. It is telling that the next military challenge to Israel would not come from the PLO camps but from inside the occupied territories.

2.   Intra-Militia Factionalism

The development of new interests is likely to increase factionalism within the militia. As financial interests become part of the calculus of militia decision-makers, internal divergences are likely to appear over the allocation of these resources and the distribution of spoils. Large organizations tend to be the site of bureaucratic politics and inter-service rivalries. Indeed, as institutions formalize leadership and structure of command, they create a potential for the practice of bureaucratic politics among the various organizational structures as a new class of militia leaders competes for access to and control of the "commanding heights" of militia leadership.

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[125] Ibid., 43. See also, Joe Stork and Jim Paul, eds., *War in Lebanon*, Special issue of the *MERIP Report* (September-October 1982).

In this context, the imminence of a peace deal may heighten internal struggle as high-ranking leaders clash with middle-ranking officers over the extent of concessions granted to achieve peace. As mentioned earlier, middle-ranking officers depend on the survival of the institution to maintain their relatively privileged positions. Whereas the top leadership may secure positions in the post-conflict polity, it is less clear that similar benefits trickle down the militia hierarchy.

Bureaucratic politics approaches shed some light on the manner in which factionalism bears on decision-making. [126] This perspective acknowledges that "positions define what players both may and must do."[127] It underscores the extent to which internal considerations that have no direct connection with or bearing on a given situation may influence the policy developed by specific actors in response to the situation. The Lebanese and Bosnian cases provide ample illustration of this dynamic. In 1985, Samir Ja`ja` —then Lebanese Forces' chief of staff—rejected the Tripartite Agreement negotiated by the LF commander-in-chief Ilyas Hubeiqa. Ja`ja` was not opposed to peace per se, he was the architect of LF acceptance of the Ta'if Accord in 1989. Rather, he objected to the terms of the agreement that did not provide compensation to any LF militiamen, with the exception of the top political leadership. Likewise, Radovan Karadžić's decision to mend fences with Belgrade in 1995 had little to do with the Serb reversal in fortunes in Bosnia but more to do with the internal struggle between Karadžić and Army Commander, Ratko Mladić.

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[126] As developed in Graham Allison, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Boston, Mass.: Little, Brown, and co., 1971) and in Graham Allison and Morton Halperin, "Bureaucratic Politics: A Paradigm and Some Policy Implications," in *Classics of International Relations*, John Vasquez, ed. (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1990), 157-163

[127] Allison, *Essence of Decision*, 165.

3.   Strains in Relations with Allies

Both the increase in militia capabilities and the changes in militia interests can strain relations with allies.[128] Militias are particularly prone to dependence on their allies. Because they are illegitimate political actors, they need recognition and support to gain voice both in the domestic political arena and in the international arena, to be included in decisions. At the same time, however, the militias' allies have interests of their own and they tend to expect a higher level of compliance from militias than they would from other more equal partners.

External forces with a stake in the outcome of a civil conflict can become complicating factors. "Sometimes such a regional power ... may see its interests best served by the prolonging of a stalemate until the situation forces a settlement it can accept, rather than commit itself wholeheartedly to the course of conflict resolution."[129] Although indigenous factors are responsible for the intractability of most internal conflicts, regional actors have often attempted to dictate hard or soft stances to their clients out of self-interest.[130] The interests and calculations of foreign patrons need not necessarily coincide with the best interests of the militias. The regional ambitions or long-term political goals of external actors often clash with the specific, unyielding political objectives of militias. They are also likely to go against the short-term considerations of militias that bear the brunt of the fighting and are therefore, concerned with issues of survival.

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[128] The logic of this argument applies to internal as well as external allies.

[129] De Silva and Samarasinghe, "Introduction," in *Peace Accords and Ethnic Conflict*, 14.

[130] In the Third World, "the Big Powers' and the superpowers' interventions in civil conflicts have added to their severity and cost and introduced protractedness ... to what otherwise could have been a less salient set of conflictive interactions." Edward Azar et al., "Protracted Social Conflict: Theory and Practice in the Middle East," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 8, 1: 47.

The example of the PLO comes to mind. In its early days, the organization was exclusively dependent upon outside sponsors, mainly Arab regimes, which used it to their own political ends. The Palestinian resistance did not agree to all that went on but it found itself incapable of acting forcefully to change the course of events to its advantage. This use and abuse of the Palestinian cause was partially halted by mounting popular support and by a process of institutionalization. [131] The conflict of interests between Belgrade and Pale is another illustration. By mid-1993, Belgrade sought to secure the lifting of economic sanctions in exchange for compromise on the status of the Bosnian Serbs. However the political leadership in Pale refused to submit to President Milošević's position on the issue and sought to hold out until they got a better offer from the international community.

As they build up more capabilities, militias increasingly seek to achieve their maximum objectives, which now include new militia-specific organizational and financial interests. This is likely to exacerbate tensions with allies who expect compliance in return for their assistance. Militias often use their new financial levers to decrease their dependence on this external assistance. Aid from foreign governments reinforces perceptions of the militias as mercenaries rather than independent political actors. To avoid such constraints, groups—such as the Sendero Luminoso in Peru or the New Peoples' Army in the Philippines—rely solely on income raised through local underground operations. [132] The financial independence resulting from institutionalization decreases the group's need for patrons to ensure its survival. In the case of the PLO, for example, by the early 1980s the

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[131] Fringe Palestinian movements have remained financially (and otherwise) dependent on foreign sponsors. While the mainstream PLO acquired a relative independence from (though still remaining vulnerable to) Arab regimes, groups such as the Sa'iqa remain mere Palestinian puppets in the hands of external patrons, in this case the Syrian regime.

organization's tax revenue and investment income were sufficient to insulate it from pressures from outside sponsors.[133]

Militias can also disagree with their internal or external allies on the distribution of spoils. Any growth of militia income and wealth represents a deduction from the economic resources available to, and therefore the political-military power exercised by, its internal political allies. The increase in a militia's economic grip especially when it comes hand in hand with increasing organizational capabilities threatens all those who vie for the same resource pool. Resource competition theory suggests that rivalry over scarce and valued rewards in the political, economic and social areas will exacerbate conflict between groups.[134] Institutionalization may thus exacerbate tensions between militias and their allies as they compete over the distribution of spoils and the division of roles.

In summary, I have argued that institutionalization has the potential to trigger three dynamics that decrease a militia's ability to sustain fluctuations in the military balance of forces. Again, this is not a deterministic argument. Although militia institutionalization increases militia vulnerability to the material costs of conflict, this does not necessarily translate into a relative decrease in militia power relative to the other protagonists of the conflict. Only when a militia suffers a relatively severe defeat does this increase in vulnerability become an issue in the calculus of decision-makers. Likewise, factionalism can result from institutionalization but that need not be the case. Without going into detail, it

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[132] Naylor, "The Insurgent Economy," 19.
[133] For an overview of PLO finances, see Cheryl Rubenberg, *The Palestine Liberation Organization: Its Institutional Infrastructure* (Belmont: Institute for Arab Studies, 1983).

can be argued that this is the juncture at which the type of militia institutions matters. If the institutions are authoritarian and tend to concentrate power and control, one would expect greater factionalism than if the institutions are perceived as participatory. Indeed, disagreements are less likely to drive militia factions to exit if these factions have the possibility of resorting to voice in an attempt to share their concerns with the leadership and other factions within the group. However, it must be acknowledged that Leninist organization strategies have also proven successful as a military type of command and control. Yet, such a strategy requires the allocation of extensive resources to internal control, a matter that may become problematic in a situation where dwindling resources trigger allocation problems. Finally, highly institutionalized militias may become less dependent on their allies but the manner in which the relation is managed can go a long way in determining the extent of the strains. More institutionalized patron-client relations will unravel less quickly than ad-hoc relations will. This is clearly illustrated by the unraveling of relations between Belgrade and Pale. Even when the relation between the Bosnian Serb political leadership and President Milošević deteriorated, the relations between the Yugoslav and Serb armies did not unravel to the same extent, due to the myriad institutional links connecting them.

[134.] S.W.R. de A. Samarasinghe and Reed Coughlan, "Introduction," in *Economic Dimensions of Ethnic Conflict*, 5.

Figure IV-4: The Impact of Institutions on the Context of Militia Decision-Making
Institutionalization
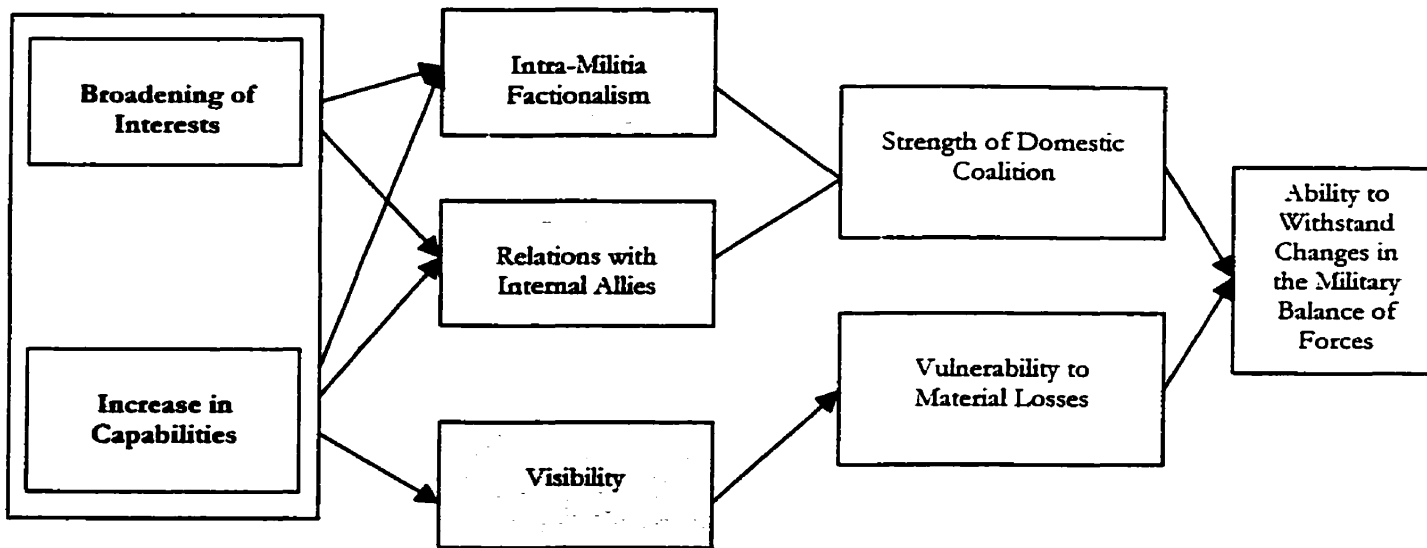
MILITIA DECISION-MAKING AND PEACE SETTLEMENTS

When do militia leaders come to the negotiating table willing to compromise? If offered a deal that entails compromise on the group's ideological objectives but that also provides for the survival of militia institutions, when do decision-makers accept the deal and when do they reject it? To sort out the various possible outcomes, I return to the notion of two-level games. Two-level games are premised on the notion that domestic and international politics are entangled. Negotiators involved in an international bargain are thus playing simultaneously on two boards. The first board is the international scene that provides the context against which the bargain is set. The second board is the domestic scene where negotiators have to be able to sell the bargain that they reach.

We can thus think of a militia leader's decision as an evaluation of costs and benefits on these two boards. The first is the external environment or the military balance of forces on the ground. Is the militia in a dominant military position? Is the military situation stalemated or has the militia suffered a reversal in military fortunes? The second dimension is domestic politics within the area controlled by the militia. Is the militia in agreement with its internal allies on the policy to follow? Is it unified or is it torn apart by factionalism?

Board One: The Military Balance of Forces

In a civil war, militias can be in one of three positions vis-à-vis other protagonists. They can have a relative military advantage, they can be locked in a stalemate, or they can be in a relatively disadvantaged situation. Note that external support for such a group is endogenous to the balance of forces on the ground. Whether this support comes in the form of weapons or money or both, it contributes to the balance of forces. In the preceding discussion, I have argued that an increase in capabilities should all else being equal make a militia more powerful.

However, I have shown that institutionalization can have a number of unintended consequences. Although a militia can attempt to guard itself against the negative impact of the dynamics described above; their net effect, should they obtain, is to decrease the militia's capacity to sustain negative changes in the military balance of forces on the ground.

Hypothesis 3: *All else being equal, an institutionalized militia will be more sensitive to negative changes in the balance of power than a non-institutionalized militia.*

In other words, I am saying that the cost of reversals in military fortune is higher at higher levels of institutionalization. As discussed earlier, the emergence of institutions results in a change in militia vulnerability. Because it acquires more assets, the militia becomes more visible and hence more vulnerable to material losses. At the same time, as militias institutionalize, the amount of resources necessary to maintain the groups' infrastructure and simultaneously allow it to wage its wars increases exponentially. These fiscal needs pass "well beyond those that can be met through the occasional act of politically-motivated banditry. To meet those needs, the guerrilla movement can rely on contributions from foreign sponsors, [135] or it can tap the resources of the host economy."[136] But reversals in military fortunes are likely to disrupt the internal economy of the zones under militia control. This puts an additional financial burden on the groups. As a result, we would expect that

Hypothesis 4: *All else being equal, an institutionalized militia will be more likely to compromise when facing a precipice than when facing a stalemate.*

In many civil wars however, conflict management arrangements are reached through negotiation at a time when there seems to be a relative symmetry in power relationships. Cambodia, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Namibia and Mozambique seem to fall under this category. Equally important are the instances in which military plateaus do not lead to subsequent peace agreements. To illustrate borrowing from the Lebanese experience, a military plateau was reached in Lebanon around 1984-1985. By that time, the various militias were in control of demarcated territorial enclaves. A military and political deadlock

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[135] Israel, for example, estimated its yearly contribution to LF finances averaged $25 million between 1976 and 1982. Elizabeth Picard, "Liban, la matrice historique," in *Les économies de guerre dans les conflits de basse intensité*, François Jean and Jean-Christophe Ruffin, eds. (Paris: Pluriel, 1996).

[136] Naylor, "The Insurgent Economy," 17.

ensued and all parties noted their inability to single-handedly change the status quo or achieve victory for their side. As a result, the bulk of military operations revolved around internal struggles within each of the parties to the conflict as evidenced by the war over the camps which pitted the Amal Movement against its one-time Palestinian allies and by the various internal upheavals [*intifadas*] within the Christian camp. However, it was not until four years later that a serious attempt at conflict-resolution was initiated.

Why do groups manage to sustain a military stalemate at some points in the conflict but not at others? The answer lies in the impact of institutionalization. When a militia is locked in a stalemated military situation with other protagonists in the conflict, its ability to sustain the stalemate is a function of the extent to which the situation is perceived as costly.[137] As discussed above, organizations create capabilities. An institutionalized militia will have more capabilities to endure a stalemated situation both in terms of generating sufficient income to maintain itself in power and in terms of organizing the territory under its control to prevent a breakdown in the domestic order. However, a militia may not be able to hold up under conditions that jeopardize the foundations of its power and influence or when its ability to prevent the military stalemate from degenerating into a military defeat is severely curtailed.

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[137] This is what Zartman called a "hurting stalemate." It is important to underline that not all stalemates are equally "hurting."

In 1989, the Syrian armed forces entered in a confrontation with the troops of General Michel 'Awn in Lebanon. The confrontation was inconclusive because neither party could overtake the other militarily. However, the stalemate was particularly hurting for the territories under 'Awn's control because the Syrian armed forces surrounded these territories by land and imposed a naval blockade on them by sea. As a result, the population and the troops suffered shortages in basic commodities, notably medical equipment and fuel. This stalemate was qualitatively different from the one that had developed in the mid-1980's precisely because it threatened the domestic fabric of one of the regions whereas the earlier stalemate had actually allowed all regions to continue to function more or less normally.

Board Two: The Strength of the Domestic Coalition

To understand the calculus of decision-makers we also need to consider the domestic political environment in which they operate. As discussed above, institutionalization may result in factionalism and strains between a militia and its internal allies. The extent of disagreement between a militia leadership and other like-minded political forces is likely to have an impact both on the leadership's willingness to compromise and on its ability to deliver a peace treaty. The most secure leadership is the one that enjoys the broad support of other political forces as well as the support and loyalty of other factions within the militia. The least secure leadership is the one faced with opposition from within and without. A 2x2 matrix allows us to conceptualize the types of domestic coalitions with which a decision-maker will have to contend.

Table IV-1: Strength of Domestic Coalition

Strains with Internal Allies	Intra-Militia Factionalism Yes	No
Yes	Small Power Base	Weak coalition
No	Weak coalition	Strong coalition

Hypothesis 5: *If the domestic cost of compromise is low, a decision-maker will make this strategic choice more easily than if the domestic cost is high.*

The weaker a leader's domestic coalition, the more likely he is to face opposition if he demonstrates willingness to compromise. A domestically weak leader is particularly vulnerable to political outbidding by opposing factions who think that the proposed deal is not attractive. This kind of situation is highly likely when the preferences of various factions differ. The emergence of institutions was demonstrated to have exactly such an effect. The introduction of organizational and financial interests in the preference structure of militia leaders increases the likelihood that these preferences diverge with those of middle-range leaders who may not be benefiting to the same extent from the power and economic benefits accruing to the top leadership. Moreover, the institutionalization of a militia also raises the specter that its interests will diverge from those of its domestic allies.

However, a leader with an extremely narrow base of power may also find it in his interest to compromise. In such a situation, the leader may calculate that unless he attempts

to change the balance of internal forces, his incumbency is in danger. Negotiations may provide an entry point into tipping the domestic balance, especially when the expected benefits from an agreement are higher than the benefit of continuing to wage war. This phenomenon is also known as "reverberation" in game-theoretic analysis. In other words, I expect that all else being equal the decision-maker's willingness to compromise should be an inverted U curve.

Figure IV-5: Willingness to Compromise as a Function of Strength of the Domestic Coalition
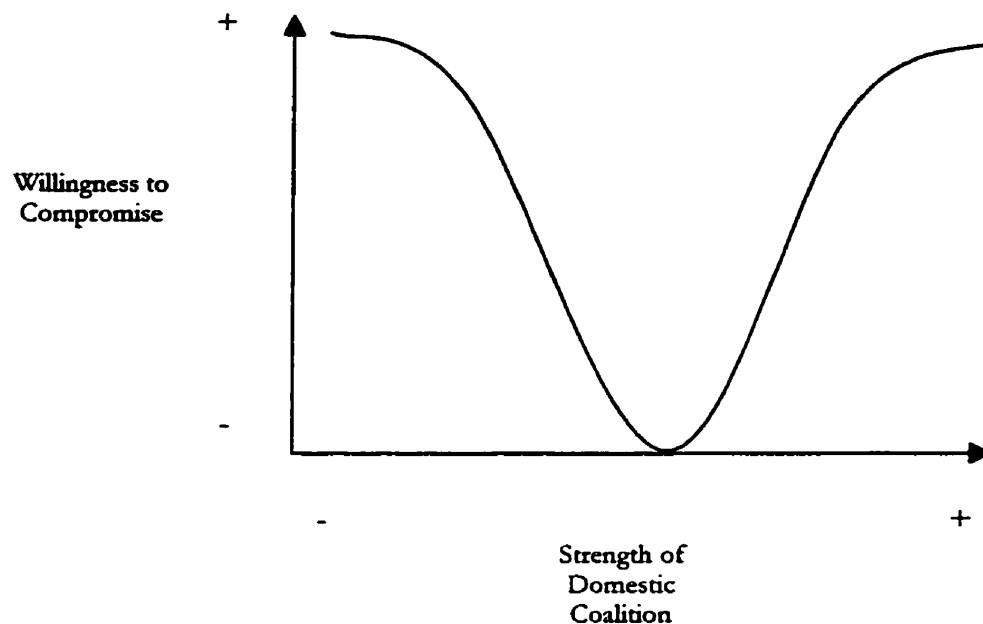
However, the weaker a militia leader, the most likely that his decisions will be contested by opponents. An internally embattled leadership is vulnerable to outbidding and attempted coups. Although some leaders enter into peace agreements in an attempt to

restructure the internal balance of forces to their advantage, this attempt is likely to fail. Indeed, successful restructuring requires rapid proof that the leader's choice of peace was well founded, and by extension, that his opponents cannot use this decision against him. However, peace dividends usually require a certain length of time to become tangible. The only immediate dividend, the cessation of hostilities, is only likely to have a substantial impact if the population and the combatants are showing signs of exhaustion. Thus the likelihood that the militia leader's internal political opponents[138] will spoil the agreement is inversely proportional to the strength of the leader's domestic coalition.

Figure IV-6: Likelihood of Spoiling by Domestic Political Opponents as a Function of Strength of the Leader's Domestic Coalition

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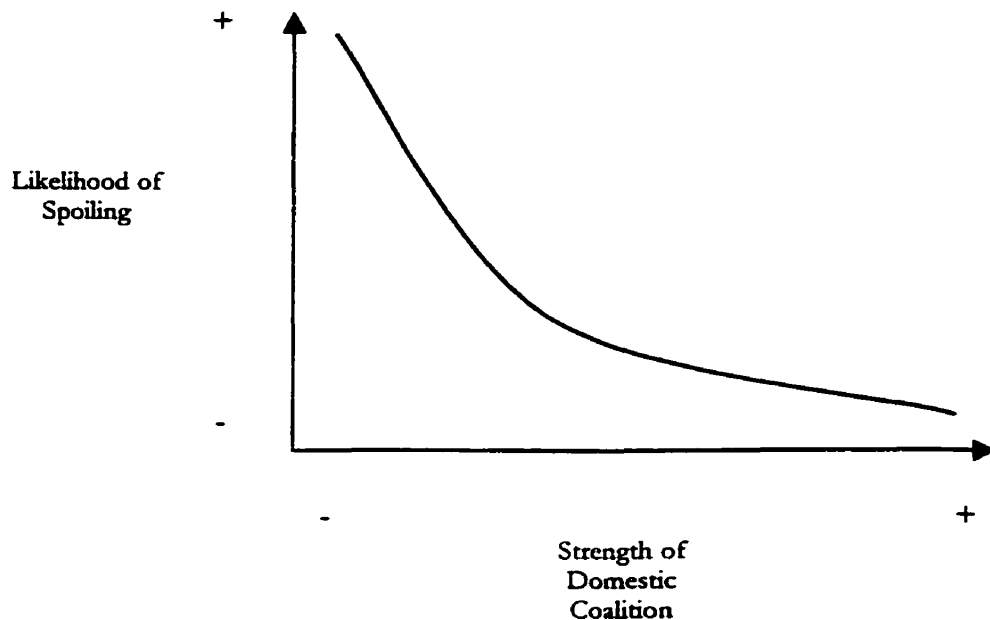
[138] As opposed to external political opponents or the factions involved in the conflict on the 'enemy' side.

Resolving the Puzzle of Militia Compromise

The unusual complexity of two-level games resides in the fact that a move that might be logical based on a cost-benefit calculus at one level may be totally ill advised at the second level. In this last section, I bring together the expectations of both levels and discuss the range of possible situations that a militia decision-maker may face.

Let us recapitulate. At this point, the question is: If a militia is institutionalized and its decision-makers are offered a deal that entails compromise on the group's ideological objectives but also provides for the survival of militia institutions, when do decision-makers accept the deal and when do they reject it? This question starts with the assumption that there is a deal on the table. Moreover, the deal offers the militia a structure of incentives such that the group can maintain some of its organizational and financial interests in return for compromise on political objectives and for a cessation of hostilities. Another assumption embedded in this discussion is that the decision-maker will give primacy to his domestic calculus if a choice must be made. This assumption is normal in two-level games, not least because the decision-maker's own incumbency often depends on his domestic standing.[139]

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[139] Robert Putnam, "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games," *International Organization* 42, 3 (summer 1998).

When a militia is in a position of relative advantage vis-à-vis other protagonists in the conflict, it has no incentive to compromise, regardless of the strength of its domestic coalition. In this kind of situation, the militia does not feel an urgency to settle the conflict and it can wait in the hope of decisively winning the conflict and imposing its own terms on a future settlement. Under such conditions, the mere hint that the decision-maker might be considering a compromise would hurt his domestic standing. An unnecessary compromise is likely to be read as treason and it will in all likelihood trigger ideological outbidding by rivals waiting for an opportunity to seize power.

If a deal is put on the table when the militia is locked in a stalemate with other protagonists, acceptance of the deal might provide a way out, especially if leaders calculate that they are unlikely to improve their position in future negotiations. As discussed above, not all stalemates are hurting. A decision-maker who is not faced with a hurting stalemate may prefer to hold out on making compromises for fear of risking his position in power. If the decision-maker has a small power base, however, he might seek to enter into negotiations in an attempt to change the internal balance of forces to his advantage. This situation is highly risky as it holds the dual possibility that other domestic power contenders will reject any agreement reached by such a "non-representative" negotiator and that the decision-maker himself will renege on his commitment once his internal position is strengthened. On the other hand, if the stalemate is hurting the decision-maker will seek to negotiate a deal. In such conditions, it is imperative to know the strength of that leader's domestic coalition to assess the agreement's startup chances. If the decision-maker enjoys strong support, it is likely that he will be able to commit his constituency to respect the

terms of the settlement. However, if the decision-maker has weak or no support, the chances that the deal will be spoiled are high.

The last alternative to consider in this discussion is the situation where a militia is at a relative disadvantage vis-à-vis other protagonists. In such a situation, militia decision-makers will most probably seek to seize the opportunity of negotiations to save what they can of their crumbling extra-legal "empires." In this situation, the militia will be willing to compromise but, as in the case of hurting stalemates, this position is open to challenges if the group does not have a strong domestic coalition.

In conclusion, I have argued that institutions change the preference structure of decision-makers and the context of decision-making. I have also used the notion of two level games to elucidate the decision-makers' evaluation of costs and benefits. This approach has allowed me to propose an integrated explanation that simultaneously takes into account domestic and external determinants of militia decision-making. This explanation not only clarifies the mechanisms through which willingness to compromise obtains; it also allows the analyst to predict which peace settlements are more likely to be durable and which are likely to muster little if any support and hence break down.

Table IV-2: Expectations of the Model of Decision-Making

	Strength of Domestic Coalition	Small Power Base	Weak Coalition	Strong Coalition
Military position				
Relative advantage	*Leader Decision*	*Reject*	*Reject*	*Reject*
	Spoiling by leader	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
	Spoiling by Domestic Opponents			
Stalemate	*Leader Decision*	*Accept*	*Reject*	*Reject*
	Spoiling by Leader	Yes	N.A.	N.A.
	Spoiling by Domestic Opponents	Yes		
Hurting stalemate	*Leader Decision*	*Accept*	*Accept*	*Accept*
	Spoiling by Leader	No	No	No
	Spoiling by Domestic Opponents	Yes	Yes	No
Relative disadvantage	*Leader Decision*	*Accept*	*Accept*	*Accept*
	Spoiling by Leader	Yes	Yes	No
	Spoiling by Domestic Opponents	Yes	Yes	No

N.A. means not applicable. In situations where a militia rejects an agreement, it cannot be accused of internal 'spoiling' it because the agreement was not accepted in the first place. Spoiling, in the use I make of the term, refers to reneging on one's commitment to uphold the terms of a peace settlement.

Figure IV-7: Schematic Representation of the Link between Institutionalization and Willingness to Compromise

Institutional Preservation in return for
Political Compromise

No Provisions for
Institutional Preservation

Deal Offer

Institutionalization

↑ Win-set

Strategic Choice

Broadening of Interests

↓ Strength of Domestic Coalition

Willingness to Compromise

Increase in Capabilities

↓ Capacity to Withstand Changes in the Military Balance of Forces

Vulnerability to Material Losses

Balance of Military Forces

Propitious

Unpropitious

V.   THE LEBANESE FORCES:
FROM MUQAWAMA TO MU'ASSASSA

Meeting in extraordinary session in Ta'if, Saudi Arabia, in late 1989, a majority of the Lebanese parliamentarians negotiated the Ta'if Agreement.[140]   Unlike other settlements, aborted before they saw light, Ta'if has survived albeit with ups and downs.   This success is due to its initial acceptance to varying degrees by most contenders on the Lebanese political scene.   In a country where politics are so polarized that leaders have difficulties reaching stable agreements,[141] Ta'if required a consensus among the country's major constituent religious groups to survive.   While the agreement was endorsed by representatives of the major Muslim factions in Lebanon, Christians were initially less enthusiastic about Ta'if. When then-Army Commander Michel 'Awn fiercely opposed the accord, ultimate responsibility for its survival rested with the other main Christian Lebanese faction, the Lebanese Forces (LF).

Why did the Lebanese Forces accept the Ta'if Agreement? LF acceptance of Ta'if stands in stark contrast to the militia's earlier rejection of other settlement blueprints. [142]   This

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[140] See, *Wathiqat al-Wifaq al-Watani al-Lubnani* [The Lebanese National Reconciliation Document] (n.p.: Lebanese Republic Publications, n.d.).

[141] Polarization has been invoked to explain the breakdown of the Lebanese consociational arrangement.   Michael Hudson for example, writes, "it is difficult to think of any pair of major leaders, within or between sects, between whom there are not differences....   In a political environment considerably more anarchic than the world of international politics, Lebanon's leaders lack the diplomatic skills necessary to achieve even subdued consensus." Michael Hudson, "The Breakdown of Democracy in Lebanon," *Journal of International Affairs* 38, 2, (1985): 289-290.

[142] For an overview of the various attempts at conflict-resolution, see Mary-Jane Deeb and Marius Deeb, "Internal Negotiations in a Centralist Conflict: Lebanon," in *Elusive Peace: Negotiating an End to Civil Wars*, I. William Zartman, ed. (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1995).

chapter provides a background to the analysis of LF decision-making. It opens with a discussion of pre-civil war Lebanese politics, highlighting those factors most directly responsible for the emergence of militias in the Lebanese context. Against a background discussion of the conflict and of its evolution, I outline the genesis and development of the Lebanese Forces. I then describe the process of LF institutionalization. I capture the growth of political, financial, social and administrative structures by tracing the manner in which the LF gradually came to see themselves not merely as a *muqawama* but as a *mu'assasa*. [143] I also discuss the rise of financial and organizational interests linked to this increase in capabilities. I trace these interests by tracking their impact on intra-militia factionalism and on the emergence of strains in the relations between the LF and their allies. The chapter closes on a discussion of the Lebanese Forces' ideology and the parameters that it set for the evaluation of peace settlements. In the next chapter, I turn to the specifics of LF decision-making in three separate instances.

CONSOCIATIONALISM, SECTARIANISM, AND THE MILITIA PHENOMENON IN LEBANON

At independence, Lebanese leaders adopted a consociational formula for governance embodied in the National Pact of 1943. The Pact institutionalized Muslim-Christian socio-cultural coexistence:

1. It adopted segmental proportionality as the organizing principle of the Lebanese political system thereby providing minority guarantees to Lebanon's religious communities.

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[143] *Muqawama* stands for resistance while *mu'assassa* means institution.

2. It also pledged to respect the communities' right to conduct their own internal affairs with a large degree of segmental autonomy.

3. Finally, it sought to bridge diverging perceptions of Lebanon's role and identity. The Christian Maronites underlined the uniqueness of the Lebanese historical experience and the distinctiveness of the Lebanese people. Their major partners in the Pact, the Sunni community, claimed a cultural affiliation to the broader Arab and Muslim world.[144] As a compromise solution, Lebanon would be "an independent country with an Arab face."

By organizing political life around the various Christian and Muslim communities, the National Pact solidified religious identities. But the system also attempted to encourage inter-communal cooperation.[145] However, the Pact ultimately failed in its effort to bridge the divergent communal visions of Lebanon. Each of the communities looked to outside actors to promote its own vision of Lebanon's role and identity, thus inviting foreign intervention in Lebanese internal affairs and intensifying the country's vulnerability to its volatile environment.[146]

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[144] See Albert Hourani, "Visions of Lebanon," in *Toward a Viable Lebanon*, Halim Barakat, ed. (London: Croom Helm; Washington: Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University, 1988), 3-10.

[145] Although seats in Parliament were distributed among the various confessions, the Electoral Law also divided the country into geographical districts. Each district "elects from two to eight deputies of specified religious affiliation... Since most districts have populations of several sects, candidates must often depend upon votes from sects other than their own, and this tends to reduce appeals to religious partisanship and encourage moderation." Malcolm Kerr, "The 1960 Lebanese Parliamentary Elections," *Middle Eastern Affairs* 11, 9, (1960): 268.

[146] The impact of external factors on internal Lebanese stability and order is unparalleled excepted for the strain exerted by the Palestinian factor on the Jordanian political system. See Michael Hudson, "The Problem of Authoritative Power in Lebanese Politics: Why Consociationalism Failed," in *Lebanon: a History of Conflict and Consensus*, Nadim Shehadi and Dana Haffar Mills, eds. (London: The Centre for Lebanese Studies, I.B. Tauris, 1988), 226-234.

Prior to 1975, two crises illustrated the entanglement between domestic and regional issues.[147] In 1958, President Camille Sham'un decided to join the US-led Baghdad Pact. The decision was strongly opposed by the Lebanese National Movement (LNM)[148] which identified with President Gamal 'Abd al-Nasir's discourse of Arab unity. Disagreement over Lebanon's foreign policy orientation triggered a crisis, the focus of which were the extensive prerogatives that the Constitution granted to the Maronite Christian President. The opposition demanded political reforms to prevent the pro-Western Maronite vision of Lebanon from dominating and from violating the spirit of the National Pact. The crisis was resolved on the basis of return to the status quo ante.

In a second instance, after the 1967 Arab defeat against Israel, Palestinians took up guerrilla warfare and they started operating from Lebanon. Christian leaderships considered the guerrillas as a threat to Lebanon's stability. Moved by a spirit of Arab brotherhood, the LNM parties wanted Lebanon to embrace the Palestinian cause. Once again, differences on regional issues sparked an internal crisis when the Lebanese Army confronted the guerrillas. The move was applauded by Christian traditional leaderships and heavily condemned by the LNM. Egypt mediated a settlement, the Cairo Agreement, which gave the guerrillas a wide margin of maneuver.[149]

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[147] "A close examination of the 1975-76 "civil war" will reveal that then—as at every time there has been a civil or religious war in Lebanon—it 'coincided' with at least one regional problem for which the internal socio-economic or political crisis in Lebanon served as vehicle." Ghassan Tuéni, "Lebanon: A New Republic?" *Foreign Affairs* 61 (fall 1982): 86.

[148] The Lebanese National Movement is an umbrella organization of all the opposition parties during the 1958 crisis. Kamal Junblatt, leader of the Progressive Socialist Party and a prominent Druze feudal leader headed it.

[149] The PLO was instructed to coordinate activities with the Lebanese Army. Some territorial restrictions were placed on the guerrillas. In exchange, the Lebanese government recognized the

These two pre-civil war crises and the state's attempt to resolve them through conciliation led Christian leaders to infer that the state was weak and the army unable to defend the country. Consequently, they embarked on the formation and training of paramilitaries to defend their vision of Lebanon. The Kata'ib Party was especially noticeable in this respect. Al-Kata'ib al-Lubnaniyya [the Lebanese Phalanges] was the largest main Maronite political party in Lebanon and one of the most outspoken proponents of the Maronite vision of Lebanon. Founded as a paramilitary youth movement in 1936 by Pierre Jumayyil, the party fought for Lebanon's independence before transforming itself into a constitutional party in 1952. In 1958 and 1973, party members took an active part in the two crises that rocked the country. After 1958, the party built up its armament, re-organized, and trained a fighting force. Party militiamen under training at any moment did not exceed three thousand men. Kata'ib members were equipped with automatic rifles, machine guns, light mortars and a limited amount of military transport. The Kata'ib militia was not only the largest and most trained militia in Lebanon,[150] it was also dedicated to the defense of the status quo and to the preservation of the Maronite-dominated power-sharing formula.[151] Other groups armed themselves in response and by the mid-1970s almost every party in Lebanon had built its own militia. The stage was set for the eruption of the Lebanese Civil War.

legitimacy of a Palestinian armed presence in Lebanon and the PLO's right to establish autonomous institutions in the camps.
[150] In comparison with other Lebanese factions but not with the Palestinian guerrillas.
[151] See Frank Stoakes, "The Supervigilantes: The Lebanese Kataeb Party as a Builder, Surrogate and Defender of the State," Middle Eastern Studies (1975): 215-236.

This brief excursion into pre-1975 Lebanese history is telling in two respects. Prior to the collapse of the consociational arrangement, the sectarianisation of politics and the weakness of the state provided the opportunity for the emergence of militias. The fragility of the central state apparatus was an omen of the near total collapse of state institutions, which followed the outbreak of violence.

THE LEBANESE CIVIL WAR, 1975-1990

The Lebanese civil war is one of the most complex, if not the most complex, internal conflict of the twentieth century.[152] The war erupted on 13 April 1975, when twenty-six Palestinians were gunned down in retaliation for an assassination attempt against Kata'ib party leader, Pierre Jumayyil. The two main warring factions are often labeled Christian versus Muslim; this is only partially correct. It is more accurate to describe them as pro- and anti-status quo. The commonly held notion that this was a religious conflict masked the fact that religious divisions roughly overlapped with power and wealth differentials. The more powerful traditional elites (mostly the Maronites) fought to maintain their privileges and the more socio-economically disadvantaged groups in society (mostly the Shi'a community)

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[152] By my count, there were seven major internal factions (the Lebanese Forces, the Kata'ib Party, the National Liberal Party, the Progressive Socialist Party, al-Murabitun, Amal, and Hizballah) and six minor internal factions (the Guardians of the Cedar, the Tanzeem Party, the Marada, Jund Allah, the Islamic Amal, and the Habashi militia). The conflict also involved at least five Palestinian guerrilla factions (Fatah, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), the PFLP-General Command, and al-Sa'iqa). Two regional actors, Syria and Israel, were militarily embroiled in the war. These regional actors supported different factions at different points in the conflict. As for international actors, Lebanon received peacekeeping assistance from the UN Intervention Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), the Arab Deterrent Force, and the Multi-National Force (MNF), each of which involved militaries from at least three different countries. Finally, external mediators in Lebanon included, among others, France, the Vatican, the United States, the Arab League, Saudi Arabia, and Syria.

fought for more power and hence access to state resources. In 1977 the pro-status quo traditional Christian leaderships held a meeting in the monastery of Sayyidat al-Bir and formed the Lebanese Front, an umbrella organization dedicated to the defense of Christian political interests in Lebanon.[153] The Front would later create the Lebanese Forces, a committee to oversee military operations carried out by the various Christian militias. Pierre Jumayyil's son, Bashir, was elected as the first commander-in-chief of the Lebanese Forces (LF). For their part, the anti-status quo forces revolved around the Lebanese National Movement and some Palestinian guerrillas.

Some of the groups, especially on the Christian side, did however perceive the conflict as an ethnic struggle. As sectarian-based acts of violence against civilians drove the population to seek refuge among co-religionists, the ethnic dimension of the war seemed to overshadow other issues.[154] While the Christian right took the lead in purging Palestinian and Muslim presence from the areas under its control, this confessional homogenization of territory was not a preserve of Christian-controlled areas.[155]

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[153] The Front included political forces associated with Maronite traditional political families, the Jumayyils, the Sham'uns, and the Franjiyyas in addition to the militias of Maronite religious orders under the lead of Father Sharbil Qassis. Pierre Jumayyil headed the Kata'ib party. Former President Camille Sham'un led the National Liberal Party. Then-President Suleyman Franjiyyah led the Marada.

[154] Although carried out on a smaller scale than in the former Yugoslavia, ethnic cleansing was practiced in Lebanon. In 1975, the village of Damur, south of Beirut, was the site of one of the earliest confessionally based massacres. The most sadly famous massacres of civilians based on their communal belonging are the massacres of Palestinians in the refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila in the wake of the 1982 Israeli invasion.

[155] The 1983 'battle of the mountain' purged the Shuf from Christian presence while the 1984 battles of the Iqlim al-Kharrub and Eastern Sidon resulted in the displacement of the majority of the Christian population of these areas.

The first two years of the conflict saw a proliferation of militias in Lebanon. As already alluded to, both the Lebanese Front and the Lebanese National Movement were umbrella organizations regrouping a myriad of smaller parties. As of 1978, a general consolidation of the military field began. As the Lebanese Forces emerged on the Christian political scene, similar militias were established in the Shi`a and Druze communities by the Amal Movement and the Progressive Socialist Party respectively. [156] For their part, the Lebanese Forces undertook the integration of smaller Christian militias. This development was prompted in part by the deterioration of relations between the Lebanese Front and the Syrian authorities.[157]

Both Syria and Israel had stakes in the civil war. Neither country wanted to see a weak Lebanon fall under the orbit of the other. As early as January 1976, Syria mediated cease-fires and a fourteen-point Constitutional Document, the first of many spoiled peace settlements. That same year, President Franjiyyah and the Lebanese Front requested the deployment of Syrian Forces to prevent an all-out victory of the LNM and its allies. In May 1976, the first Syrian forces of interposition entered Lebanon. Their presence was further legitimized a few months later when the Riyadh conference established the Arab Deterrent

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[156] The Amal Movement, a Shi`a organization created by cleric Imam Moussa Sadr, was the first Shi`a political party to emerge in Lebanon. The Progressive Socialist Party, a largely Druze party, was created by LNM leader Kamal Junblatt. Hizballah, a more radical Shi`a movement backed by Iran, was established upon Israel's invasion in 1982 with the self-declared objective of freeing Lebanon from Israeli presence.

[157] Many reasons can be invoked for this deterioration in ties. However, the Camp David peace process between Egypt and Israel was the major event that forced Syria to reconsider its alliances in Lebanon. With an eye on becoming the uncontested regional leader following Egypt's "sell-out," the Syrian regime reinforced its ties to the PLO by establishing the Front for Steadfastness and Confrontation.

Force.[158] However, relations between the Christian forces and the Syrians soon turned sour. As of 1977 clashes opposed the LF to regular Syrian troops.

In 1978, while the LF drove Syrian troops out of East Beirut, Israel Defense Forces (IDF) troops entered southern Lebanon in retaliation for a guerrilla attack on a bus near Tel Aviv. The UN Security Council issued Resolution 425 calling on Israel to withdraw and United Nations Interim Forces in Lebanon (UNIFIL) were sent to replace the Israelis as they pulled back. However, the Israeli withdrawal was only partial. Israel retained a ten-kilometer 'security belt' entrusted to a Lebanese militia client, the South Lebanon Army. Israel invaded Lebanon again in 1982, ostensibly to eliminate the Palestinian security threat to Northern Galilee. PLO guerrillas[159] were driven out of south and central Lebanon. The Israelis also put their weight behind Bashir Jumayyil's candidacy to the presidency of the Lebanese Republic. In August 1982 Jumayyil was elected President of the Republic only to be assassinated two weeks before the start of his presidential mandate.

After 1982, the various internal forces reached a military equilibrium. The battles of the two first years of conflict (1975-1976) had roughly determined the military map. Demarcation lines were drawn, zones of control delimited. This is not to say that military operations ceased as of 1982. A number of major confrontations occurred afterwards, notably the 1983 "Battle of the Mountain," the 1984 *intifada* in West Beirut, the 1985 battle of the Iqlim and eastern Sidon, as well as the "War of the Camps." But these battles did not

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[158] The Riyadh conference was held in Saudi Arabia, in October 1976. It sought to find a solution to the Lebanese Civil War. In January 1977, a thirty thousand men strong Arab Deterrent Force was positioned in Lebanon. Of these, twenty-seven thousand were Syrian forces.

drastically modify the military map, nor did they seriously tip the balance of power in favor of any of the contenders. Their net effect was to homogenize the various local zones of control by ridding them of pockets of "enemy" presence. For example, the "Battle of the Mountain" cleared the predominantly Druze Shuf area of Lebanese Forces' presence. These military operations were instrumental in paving the way for the establishment of compact territorial enclaves in which the militias asserted their control.

This precarious equilibrium was shattered in summer 1988 when the situation in Lebanon reached an unprecedented political deadlock. The protagonists could not agree on a compromise candidate for the presidency of the Republic. President Amin Jumayyil—who had been elected to replace his slain brother—appointed Army Commander General Michel 'Awn at the 24th hour to head a cabinet of transition. Muslim leaders rejected the constitutionality of this appointment. Instead, they extended recognition to Jumayyil's last Prime Minister, Salim al-Huss. For the first time since the outbreak of civil war, the remaining functioning state institutions were in jeopardy.[160] The presidency was vacant, there were two parallel governments, the Central Bank refused to take sides with either government, and the army split along confessional lines with troops loyal to 'Awn and others closing ranks with Huss. The crisis reached such proportions that in January 1989 the Arab League's Foreign Ministers met in an emergency session. They established a six-

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[159] The Palestinians' *tajawuzat* [exactions] had antagonized their allies of the Lebanese National Movement.

[160] Until that time, Lebanon's executive had continued to function although it did not possess effective control on the ground. The main militias—the Lebanese Forces, Amal, Hizballah and the Progressive Socialist Party—effectively 'governed' their respective zones of control sidelining the army and police forces. However, some state institutions, notably the Central Bank, the Foreign Ministry, and the Presidency of the Republic, remained active throughout. The Cabinet was often

member committee to negotiate with the parties but to no avail. General `Awn demanded the withdrawal of foreign troops from the country as a pre-condition to negotiations whereas Prime Minister Huss and Speaker al-Hussayni insisted on the primacy of internal reforms.

Against this backdrop, `Awn launched a 'war of liberation' from Syrian occupation. His firepower was no match for the might of the Syrian armed forces, which enforced a naval blockade of the Christian enclave. However, the military escalation drew international attention. Meeting in Casablanca in May 1989, Arab leaders established a Tripartite Committee[161] that criticized Syria as an obstacle to the restoration of Lebanese sovereignty. The Arab mediation effort was successful in formulating a seven-point truce plan. It stipulated that a cease-fire would come into effect on 29 August, followed by a meeting of the Lebanese parliamentarians in Ta'if.[162] `Awn attempted to spoil the agreement. On October 13, Syrian troops entered into regions under his control and ousted the general. The LF then openly came out in favor of Ta'if.

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paralyzed by warlord ministers who boycotted its sessions and parliament met episodically although it had little control over the situation.

[161] The six-member committee of the Arab League established the Tripartite Committee comprising the kings of Morocco and Saudi Arabia and the president of Algeria. Effectively, their respective foreign ministers carried out most of the negotiations.

[162] The Ta'if Accord will be examined in greater detail in the next chapter.

ORGANIZING THE RESISTANCE, 1975-1980

Genesis of the Lebanese Forces: 1975-1976

In 1976, the Lebanese Front decided to purge the Christian-controlled areas of remaining pockets of Palestinian presence. Of the numerous Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon, two of the largest, Karantina and Tall al-Za'atar, were in these areas. The battle of Tall al-Za'atar was the largest offensive undertaken by the Christian forces since the outbreak of the civil war.[163] The scope of the operation forced the Lebanese Front to improve military coordination among its various militias. In August 1976, the Lebanese Front established a military coordination committee known as the Joint Command Council (JCC) of the Lebanese Forces. The Lebanese Forces were the armed wing of the resistance. Much like the Lebanese Front was a political umbrella for all the pro-status quo forces, the LF was a military umbrella for the militias affiliated with the Front. The LF was responsible for the conduct of military operations but it was expected to defer to the Lebanese Front in matters of policy. This would not be the case. Several factors (to be discussed later in this chapter) contributed to the decline of the Front's importance and to its displacement by the LF Command Council.[164] Ultimately, the Command Council became the main political representative of the Christian community.

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[163] Several military groups were involved in the Tall al-Za'atar operation: the Kata'ib of Pierre Gemayel, the National Liberal Party of former President Camille Sham'un, the Guardians of the Cedars of Etienne Sakr (known as Abu Arz), the Tanzeem, the Lebanese Youth Movement, as well as infantry and artillery units of the Lebanese Army.

[164] The LF Command Council originally included eight representatives of the four principal militias that made up previous joint commands: the Kata'ib, the Tanzeem, the NLP, and the Guardians of the Cedars.

From a Joint Command Council to an All-Christian Militia

The Joint Command Council played a central role in Christian military operations to oust the Syrian troops from East Beirut in 1977-1978.[165] The JCC thus gained increasing importance and permanence as a central instrument of the war effort. In 1979, the council formed its first independent military units. It then proceeded—often forcibly—to integrate the smaller militias of all Christian parties. The integration process ended on 7 July 1980 when LF units destroyed the last independent military units of the National Liberal Party.[166] The dismantling of the smaller militias was instrumental in "reducing the political parties' capacity for independent action outside the framework of the Lebanese Forces."[167] But the military branch of the LF remained ad-hoc in character; it was a citizen army rather than a professional corps. In spite of a system of conscription introduced in July 1982, the militia consisted largely of volunteers. Only in 1986 did it fully become a professional army with the establishment of a cadet academy and the introduction of the system of military rank.

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[165] Beirut was divided into two areas. East Beirut was under the control of the pro-status quo forces, West Beirut was under LNM and Palestinian control.

[166] This bloodbath resulted in as many as five hundred casualties. See Jonathan Randal, *La guerre de mille ans*, Beatrice Vierne translator (Paris: Grasset, 1984), 135-138; Karim Pakradouni, *As-Salaam al-Mafqoud: 'Ahd Elias Sarkis, 1976-1982* [The Lost Peace: The Mandate of Iliyas Sarkis, 1976-1982] (Beirut: 'Abr al-Sharq lil-Manshurat, 1984), 225-231.

[167] Lewis Snider, "The Lebanese Forces: Wartime Origins and Political Significance," in *The Emergence of a New Lebanon: Fantasy or Reality?* Edward Azar, ed. (New York: Praeger, 1984), 131.

Figure V-1: Evolution of the Lebanese Forces 1976-1980*

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                    ┌─────────────────────────┐
                    │    LEBANESE FRONT       │
                    │  (Political Directorate) │
                    └─────────────────────────┘
                                 │
                    ┌─────────────────────────┐
FOUNDED 1976        │    Lebanese Forces      │
                    │  Joint Command Council  │
                    │  (Joint military command)│
                    └─────────────────────────┘
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Kata'ib Militia	Tiger Militia (NLP)	Tanzeem Militia	Guardians of the Cedar Militia	Non-Affiliated Fighters

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Integration              ┌─────────────────────┐
begins 1979              │  LEBANESE FORCES    │
ends 1980                │  INTEGRATED MILITIA │
                         │       UNITS         │
                         └─────────────────────┘
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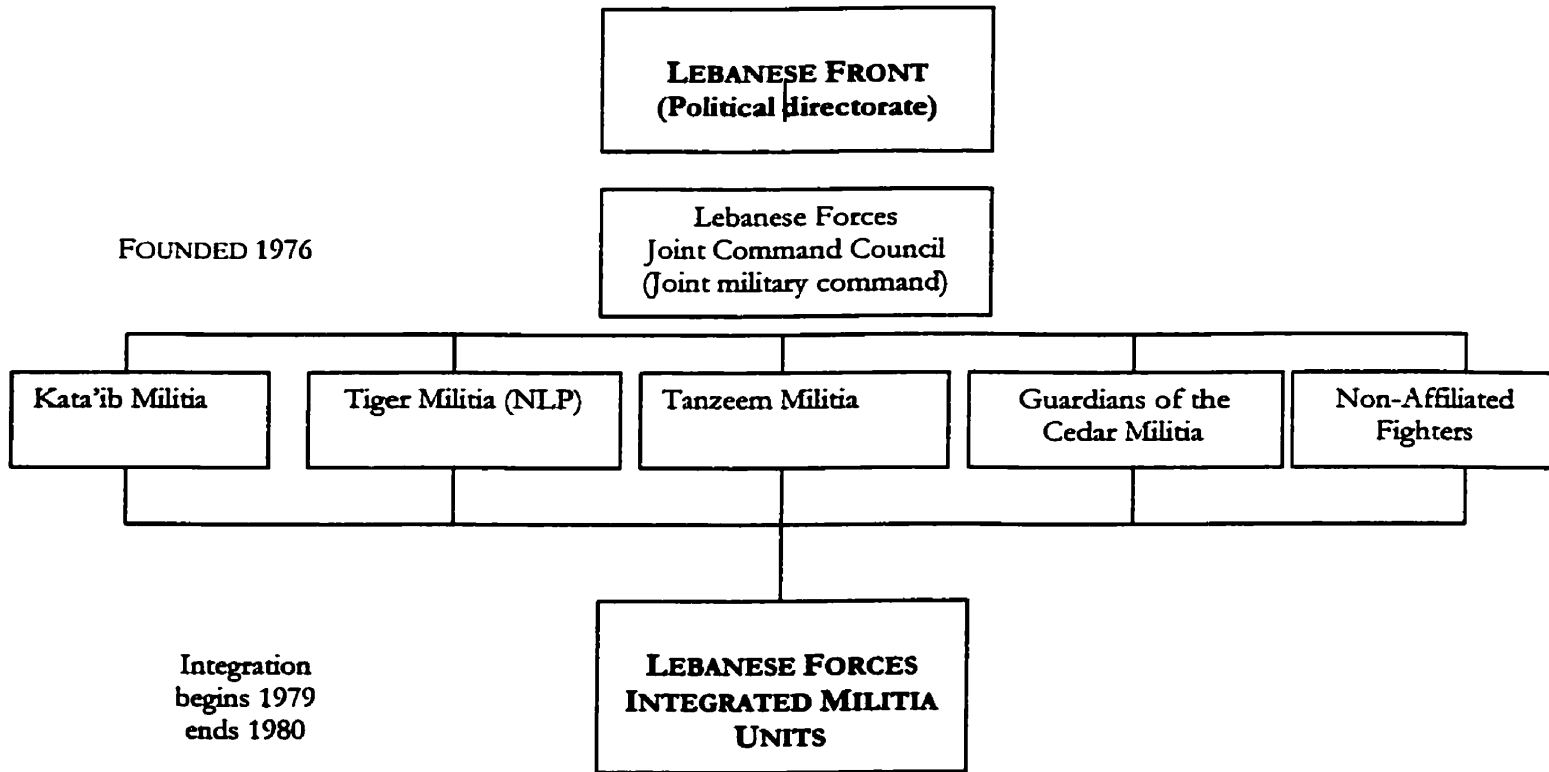
*Adapted from Lewis Snider, "The Lebanese Forces: Wartime Origins and Political Significance," 131.

The Civilian Bureaucracy

In parallel to the development of military units, civilian administrative structures began to emerge. Early civilian departments had a clear security dimension. The JCC sought to remedy the paralysis of the legal state apparatus. It established a department to look into crimes and security issues such as "killings, thefts, monopolies on foodstuffs,

drugs, and aggressions on persons, private and public property."[168] This would soon branch into a police department and military courts entrusted with keeping the peace in LF-controlled areas.

In an attempt to enlist popular support for the war effort, the LF decided to cater to the needs of the population. In 1979, citing the importance of social and cultural endeavors to the resistance struggle, the JCC decided to "provide citizens living in the free zones with a decent livelihood."[169] The militia set up a series of sub-committees to deal with economic development, social security, educational policies, and consumer protection. A full gamut of social services (health, education, economic assistance) were initially offered through the Popular Committees and later regrouped under the aegis of the Social Solidarity Foundation. The militia branched into other public goods. It established a Public Transport Directorate and a ferry line between the seaports of Juniyeh (Lebanon) and Larnaca (Cyprus). The Refugees' Bureau offered assistance to displaced Christian populations and the Emergency Civic Action acted as a local development agency. Finally, the LF Information Department coordinated LF media—a television network *The Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation*, two radio stations, and a political weekly *Al-Massira*.

[168] *An-Nahar* (Beirut), 30 November 1978.
[169] *An-Nahar* (Beirut), 11 September 1979.

The militia also established political institutions. The foreign relations department (established 1981) handled diplomatic contacts while the overseas department established relations with the Lebanese Diaspora in Europe, North and South America. Diplomatically, the LF sought to market its cause in world capitals. Bashir Jumayyil was personally instrumental in the establishment of LF bureaus abroad. Although its extra-legal status barred the militia from full-fledged diplomatic representation, these offices and antennas contributed to bring the Christian point of view to the attention of foreign governments and world public opinion.

THE INCREASE IN FINANCIAL CAPABILITIES

The expansion of the militia's military and civilian apparatus required a constant inflow of revenue. Initially, funds came from LF involvement in the black market, from revolutionary taxation, and from the militia's alliance with Israel. As the LF sought to gain autonomy from the Lebanese Front, their involvement in the economy of the Christian areas became more sophisticated and symbiotic.

The Black Market

The black market played an important role in the development of the Lebanese Forces' military machine and in the initial development of its civilian administration. Large-scale acts of banditry accompanied the onset of military conflict. The ransacking of silos and warehouses at the Beirut harbor, and the plunder of the commercial downtown area of

Beirut[170] garnered combined returns of one to two billion U.S. dollars to all the militias that participated in it. As early as 1976, the Christian militias secured control of the fifth basin at the harbor. Maritime piracy, the diversion of commercial ships at gunpoint and the hijacking of their shipments,[171] was one of the earliest manifestations of organized LF involvement in the black market. According to the International Maritime Bureau thirty piracy operations were recorded between April 1978 and July 1988 off the Lebanese coast. A substantial part of the merchandise (10 out of the 30 shipments, the others being distributed among five to six other illegal ports) was downloaded at the fifth basin under LF control.[172]

Black market activities constituted an important proportion of LF revenue. These activities continued to coexist alongside 'legal' LF economic ventures, as the militia moved from a parasitical to a symbiotic relation with the economy of the Christian enclave. Because of the covert nature of these activities, it is difficult to give an accurate idea of the proportion of LF revenue generated on the black market. However, we know that Israel estimated its yearly contribution to LF finances at $25 million.[173] Likewise, LF officials admitted in 1982 that their yearly revenues reached $100 million.[174] Simple arithmetics and logic suggest that the remaining $75 million/year could not have solely come from legal commercial ventures. Not only was the Christian enclave's economy war-battered but the Lebanese Forces were also

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[170] Including major banking establishments whose coffers and vaults were emptied of their contents.
[171] The shipments are either sold on the Lebanese market or to third parties in other states. Revenues from such sales constitute a net profit since no money was invested in the purchase of the merchandise or in taxes to the state.
[172] Susanna Tarbush, "The Lebanese Forces attempt to sell the idea of setting up a special force against maritime piracy to the International Maritime Bureau," Al-Hayat (London), 20 February 1989.
[173] Elizabeth Picard, "Liban, la matrice historique,".
[174] Randal, La guerre de mille ans, 151-152.

primarily a military formation with few commercial and financial ventures of their own. Indeed, most of the militia's domestic revenue was generated through revolutionary taxation.

Revolutionary Taxation

From the early months of the civil war, the Christian militias levied direct and indirect taxes. To regularize the collection of taxes, the JCC created the National Treasury [*Al-Sunduq al-wataniyy*] in 1976. The treasury was "a highly-organized financial department which resembles the ministry of finance in its accounting procedures and administrative hierarchy."[175] The Treasury formalized tax-collection. Taxes were imposed on citizens, commercial establishments, and industries, as well as at public facilities [harbors and customs] manned by the LF. In 1978, the conflict between the LF and their one-time allies, the Marada militia of former president Suleiman Franjiyyah, resulted in the establishment of the Barbara Customs, the last Lebanese Forces outpost north of Beirut. Customs taxes raised at the Barbara checkpoint and at the fifth basin of the Beirut harbor constituted one of the main sources of LF revenue until the early 1980s. Although no precise data are available for the LF, it has been established that "militias demanded outright ransoms from industrialists, merchants, or wealthy investors (easily totaling U.S. $500 million since 1975)."[176] These ransoms, as well as the revolutionary taxation, were in essence protection rackets whereby strongmen undertook to ensure security in return for financial contributions.

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175. "The Lebanese Forces: From the Militia of a Party to an Organized Army and Public Service," *Al-Hayat* (London), 31 January 1990.
176. Georges Corm, "The War System: Militia Hegemony and the Reestablishment of the State," in *Peace for Lebanon? From War to Reconstruction*,Deirdre Collings, ed. (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1994), 217.

The Alliance with Israel

The third source of LF revenue was the military alliance with Israel. In 1978, Bashir Jumayyil turned to Israel for logistic help. The choice of the Hebrew State was prompted by several considerations. First was the long history of Maronite-Israeli connections.[177] Lebanese Maronites saw in Israel a regional power sympathetic to their concerns as a 'threatened' religious minority in a sea of Muslims. Bordering Lebanon, Israel was also ideally positioned as a source of military and financial aid. The Hebrew State, in turn, had its own interests. Israeli-Syrian confrontation had always been played out in Lebanon. Neither party was willing to let the buffer state become an undisputed zone of influence for the other. Israel and Syria sought to thwart efforts to end the Lebanese conflict when either perceived these efforts as giving the other the upper hand in the country. Syria torpedoed the May 1983 agreement between Lebanon and Israel while the Lebanese Forces, Israel's closest Lebanese clients, spoiled a number of Syrian-mediated peace settlements. By supporting the Maronites, Israel blocked Syria's efforts to put Lebanon back together under a *Pax Syriana*. Since Lebanon was also the external sanctuary of the PLO, Israel's interest in undercutting the strong Palestinian military and political implantation in Lebanon also informed support for the Maronites.

As indicated earlier, Israeli financial support was substantial. However, Israel was not willing to jeopardize its interests for the sake of the Lebanese Forces. When Bashir Jumayyil backed down on a promise to establish a separate peace with Israel once he was elected

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[177] See, Benny Morris, "Israel and the Lebanese Phalange: The Birth of a Relationship, 1948-1951," *Studies in Zionism* 5, 1 (1984): 125-144; Hagopian, "Redrawing the Map in the Middle East;" and Idem., "Maronite Hegemony to Maronite Militancy: The Creation and Disintegration of Lebanon," *Third World Quarterly* 11, 4 (October 1989): 101-117.

President of the Lebanese Republic, Israeli support dwindled down and Israeli decision-makers approached other Lebanese factions, notably the Progressive Socialist Party.

Institutionalizing Revenue Generation

Increasingly, the LF sought financial autonomy. This was prompted in part by the realization that external patrons did not always prove willing to cover the costs of the militia's operations. And when they did, this usually came at a price. It also resulted from the realization that direct tax collection was a limited source of revenue. The population resented the graduated surcharge on households and the tax on businesses. Though they were levied in an elaborate way, indirect taxes proved insufficient.[178] As the LF gradually took over the functions of the state, its expenditure obligations moved beyond the military sphere. These obligations included the care of militiamen's dependents, thus bringing a social security component into the picture. The financial need grew with the collapse of state structures and with the militia's decision to step in and provide collective goods to the population. As a result, the militia took a number of steps to institutionalize revenue generation further.

In July 1980, the Lebanese Forces announced the closing down of all illegal harbors and the creation of a Port Authority. The move was intended to cooperate with representatives of the business sector and work with them on revitalizing production, ensuring the importation of primary resources and putting a halt to the increasing cost of living.[179] In 1982, the LF founded the Gamma group. Gamma's purpose was to develop a scheme to

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178. A one Lebanese pound surcharge on cinema tickets and a two-percent surcharge on restaurant meals and gasoline indexed to the US dollar because of the dwindling value of the Lebanese Pound.
179. *An-Nahar* (Beirut), 13 July 1980.

rekindle the Christian enclave's economy. According to LF high-ranking official, Karim Pakradouni, the team was working on "short and long-term projects to salvage the Lebanese infrastructure and plan for the reconstruction of Lebanon via a 'Marshall Plan' of sorts."[180] Gamma's studies transformed the economic relationship between the LF and the population. The militia diversified its involvement in the economy of the enclave. It set up a number of legitimate businesses and bought shares in others. LF business ventures ranged from maritime transportation to the management of parking lots. The interface between the parallel economy and the legal economy was such that it covered practically every potential field of activity, approximating the model of the corporatist state.[181] The militia even set up its own legal banking institution, the aptly named Prosperity Bank, to manage its ever-growing finances.

In Summary

In the early to mid-1980s, the Lebanese Forces' involvement in legal and illegal economic activities was an indirect source of internal legitimation. Revenue generated from such activities contributed to the development of para-statal institutions that provided the population of the Christian enclave with collective goods. The establishment of services such as subsidized public transport, garbage collection, a police force, and a legal system, among others, reinforced perceptions of the militia as 'of and for the people.' Moreover, starting in the early 1980s, the LF provided services—subsidized education, housing, medical care for long-term illnesses, summer camps for war children—which created a network of

[180] An-Nahar (Beirut), 3 July 1982.
[181] Picard, "Liban: la matrice historique."

patrimonial ties between it and the population. However, there was also intermittent exasperation with the exactions committed by individual militiamen in some localities.[182]

The Impact of Organizational and Financial Interests

Under the impetus of Bashir Jumayyil, LF organizational and financial capabilities increased. A wide array of departments was created to offset the paralysis of the State. The LF Command Council was enlarged to include the chairmen of LF civilian departments—finance, foreign affairs, information, intelligence and logistics—as well as key military personnel. As the LF became more central to Christian resistance efforts and as the militia grew in size and scope, Council members stopped identifying with the smaller militias that they originally belonged to. They developed an institutional personality centered on membership in the Lebanese Forces.

The increase in militia capabilities gave rise to new organizational and financial interests. The Lebanese Front and the Kata'ib Party vied for control of the expanding and increasingly profitable militia institutions. At the same time, LF Command Council members increasingly sought to wrest control of the militia away from the traditional political leaderships. A number of high-ranking LF personnel also fought each other in an attempt to expand their personal influence within the militia and, consequently, on the Lebanese political scene. Indeed, the militia had become a source of political power and

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[182] Post-1988, this exasperation would outweigh the patrimonial benefits in the decision of many Christians to join the campaign of General Michel 'Awn to 'restore the rule of law'.

financial benefit, especially for Council members, but also for LF militiamen lower in the ranks.

Friends into Foes: The Lebanese Forces' Road to Political Autonomy

When Bashir Gemayel set out to expand the LF, he had an eye on neutralizing contenders for power in the Christian enclave. Through a series of bloody purges, Bashir became the uncontested 'King of Marounistan'.[183] The power struggle within the Christian camp was overlaid with ideological differences. It pitted the traditional more conservative *zu'ama'* [leaders, singular *za'im*] against the younger emerging militia elite. At stake in this struggle were clashing interpretations of Lebanon's raison d'être and regional role.[184] Traditional leaders subscribed to the view that Lebanon "should retain its Christian identity while not divorcing itself from the Arab one." They strove to revive the National Pact formula. Young militia leaders were more radical in their views (as will be discussed at length shortly).

The traditional leadership tried to keep the lid over the militia, as the latter grew stronger and more autonomous. Although the Lebanese Forces remained under the political tutelage of the Lebanese Front, Bashir Jumayyil's Israeli ties afforded the militia a relative margin of independence and freedom of maneuver. The young militia commander assumed responsibility for several political decisions taken without the full assent of the Lebanese

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[183] Two of the most bloody episodes were the July 7 Movement and the murder of Suleiman Franjiyeh's son in June 1978. See Randal, *La guerre de mille ans*, chapter 4. The nickname 'King of Marounistan' is also Randal's.
[184] Albert Hourani, *Syria and Lebanon: A Political Essay* (London: Oxford University Press, 1946).

Front. By the time when Jumayyil was elected President of the Lebanese Republic, militia institutionalization was well under way (see figure 2).

Jumayyil's death proved to be a severe setback for the Lebanese Forces. It brought the militia back under the political custody of traditional leaders. The LF leadership was in no position to contest the attempted takeover. Relations with Israel were at a low after Bashir backtracked on his promise to deliver a separate peace treaty with Israel. The militia also suffered a severe military setback against the Druze Progressive Socialist Party in the Shuf mountain.

President Amin Jumayyil— who succeeded his brother as President of the Republic— sought to sideline the militia further. In 1983, when he selected participants to the Lausanne peace talks,[185] Jumayyil asked Druze and Shi'a militia leaders to represent their respective communities. However, he invited the traditional Christian leaderships to speak for the Christian community. The Lebanese Forces rejected the outcome of the Lausanne peace talks. Fadi Frem, the new Commander-in-Chief of the LF, acknowledged the existence of ideological differences between the militia and the Lebanese Front. He also declared that the LF's military dimension afforded the militia a political role.[186] In spite of the apparent compliance of the militia, these were signs that trouble lay ahead.

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[185] The Lausanne and Geneva peace talks will be dealt with at length in the next chapter.
[186] Fadi Frem, "Nos ressources sont illégales... La présence palestinienne, syrienne et israélienne aussi," *Magazine* (Beirut), 20 November 1982.

In their repeated bids for power over the LF, the Lebanese Front and the Kata'ib Party targeted the militia's finances and its leadership. In 1984, President Amin Jumayyil engineered the election of his brother-in-law Fu'ad Abu Nader to lead the Lebanese Forces. Under his leadership, the LF assumed a more conciliatory stance toward the Syrians, in line with the wishes of Jumayyil and the Kata'ib. Commenting on this development, the Syrian official newspaper Al-Thawra considered the election of Abu Nader "a victory for the positions of President Amin Jumayyil [which] reinstates the political and organizational supremacy of the Kata'ib over the Lebanese Forces."[187]

Jumayyil also attempted to decrease LF financial autonomy. He sought to dismantle the Barbara customs checkpoint, one of the two main sources of LF revenue. Jumayyil tried to reduce the budget of the LF intelligence service. It was not incidental that these two departments were led by emerging militia strongmen Samir Ja`ja` and Iliyas Hubeiqa. In his efforts to tame the militia, Jumayyil also sought to discredit Ja`ja` by engineering his expulsion from the Kata'ib Party for insubordination. At Jumayyil's instigation, the Kata'ib politburo dismissed Ja`ja`, citing his refusal to implement the State's decision concerning the Barbara checkpoint.

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[187] *An-Nahar* (Beirut), 11 October 1984.

Figure V-2: Organizational Structure of the Lebanese Forces (1980)

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                              ┌─────────────┐
                              │ The Lebanese│
                              │    Front    │
                              └──────┬──────┘
                                     │
          ┌──────────────┐   ┌───────┴────────┐        ┌──────────────┐
          │ Gamma Studies │  │ Commander-in-  │        │  Radio Free  │
          │  and Plans    │──│ chief/Lebanese │────────│  Lebanon /   │
          └──────────────┘   │    Forces      │        │   Lebanese   │
          ┌──────────────┐   └───────┬────────┘        │ Broadcasting │
          │    Delta     │──│                │─────────│ Corporation  │
          │  Computing   │   ┌───────┴────────┐        └──────────────┘
          │   Center     │   │  LF Command    │
          └──────────────┘   │   Council      │
                              └───────┬────────┘
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| Counter-Intelligence and Security | Financial Affairs | Social Relief | Military | Foreign Affairs | Public Services |

Military → Chief-of Staff — Inspector General

Chief-of Staff → General Staff, Special Staff

General Staff:

| G1 Personnel | G2 Military Intelligence | G3 Operations and Plans | G4 Logistics and Supply | G5 Military Information |

Special Staff:

| Unit Commands | Reserves | Special Unit Commands | Weapons Command |

This "takeover of the LF" ultimately brought about the fall of Abu Nader. He was toppled on 12 December 1985, by an internal uprising—*intifada*—led by Ilyas Hubeiqa and Samir Ja`ja`. This was a landmark in the history of the Forces. The militia asserted its political independence from the Lebanese Front and the Kata'ib Party.[188] As its tentacles reached into all levels of public life, the LF emerged as the Christian actor that could not be circumvented in the search for a national settlement. This rise to preeminence was evident when Syria singled out the LF to represent the Christians in negotiations that led to the Tripartite Accord of December 1986.[189]

Organizational Interests and Intra-Militia Power Struggles

At the same time as the Lebanese Forces asserted their political independence from the Kata'ib party and the Lebanese Front, the LF Command Council took over the political functions of the Lebanese Front. Around the same time, a number of Christian traditional leaders were estranged or passed away.[190] Thus, political decision-making completely fell into the hands of the younger generation of militia leaders. The LF Commander chaired the council assisted by a deputy commander. Whereas technical decisions became increasingly delegated to the heads of the various departments, political decisions were put to a vote of the

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[188] Nevertheless, President Jumayyil continued to seek influence over the militia and he was involved in providing support for an unsuccessful internal mutiny against Samir Ja`ja` in August 1986. The mutiny involved LF officers resentful of the decision to be submitted to rehabilitation training.

[189] The Tripartite Agreement is the second of three case studies that will be examined in more detail in the next chapter.

[190] Pierre Jumayyil died in the summer of 1985, Camille Sham`un in 1987. Suleiman Franjiyyah distanced himself from the Front in May 1978. After the assassination of his son by LF gunmen in June he severed ties to the Lebanese Front.

Command Council.[191] However, on matters of high security and/or "high politics" the commander had a final say.[192]

As the Lebanese Forces grew in scope and power, control over the militia became increasingly attractive. Aside from external power bids, there were a number of intra-militia struggles for control of the top leadership positions. The *intifada*'s motto stressed the need to reinstate democratic decision-making in the ranks of the Christian resistance. For Ja`ja` and Hubeiqa, the upheaval was a stepping stone to political preeminence. Neither traditional *aqtab* [poles—refers to traditional leaderships] nor heirs of long *zu`ama'* traditions, they had finally entered the political arena. When, two months later, Iliyas Hubeiqa took over from Ja`ja` in a bloodless coup and attempted to monopolize power, he used the same tactics as the Kata'ib had in their own bids for power over the LF. Hubeiqa negotiated the Tripartite Agreement under the terms of which the Lebanese Forces and other Lebanese militias were to disband. This stipulation was strongly rejected by Ja`ja` and his supporters who were offered no compensation under the terms of the agreement. As will be discussed in detail in the next chapter, Ja`ja` and his men wrested power away from Hubeiqa to preserve their positions within the militia as well as the benefits accruing to them from the good functioning of LF institutions.

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[191] Roger Dib, former secretary general of the LF, puts it in those terms: "Only one person decides the general policy line after extensive consultations. However, the executive apparatus is highly decentralized as you are dealing with the management of forty to fifty budgets and of 23,000 salaries." Roger Dib, former LF Secretary-General, author interview, 6 August 1997.

[192] Rafiq Khoury, political advisor to Samir Ja`ja`, author interview, 7 July 1993.

AL-QUWWAT MU'ASSASSA, 1986-1989

Between 1986 and 1989, the LF was the major political actor and the only military faction on the Christian scene. The LF success in establishing an internal sanctuary was unique. The militia imposed its military and political hegemony over the Christian enclave; it also developed an unparalleled infrastructure. The social homogeneity of its enclave and its territorial compactness were only matched by the Progressive Socialist Party's experiment in the Shuf region. However, no other militia came close to matching the military machine of the LF.

The militia embarked on a process of deepened institutionalization involving the expansion of its civilian departments and in-depth restructuring and professionalization of its military wing (see figure 3). Following the second *intifada*, Samir Ja'ja' launched a major restructuring of the militia. He introduced the system of military rank forcing all military officers to undergo rehabilitation training at the newly established military academy of Ghosta. At the administrative level, institutionalization of the LF also soared as indicated by the establishment of the Social Solidarity Foundation, a multi-faceted bureaucratic establishment performing the functions of a welfare 'state'. Other LF departments expanded considerably and the number of LF "civil servants" was estimated at around 4000 persons in 1988.

LF finances expanded to new levels after 1986. By the late 1980s, the Lebanese Forces had imposed on the Christian enclave "what was likely the world's most complex and thorough system of parallel taxation."[193] Their reach into the economy was illustrated by the

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[193] Naylor, "The Insurgent Economy," 32.

taxation of every aspect of economic activity. But the militia went much further. To palliate dependence on taxation,[194] the LF diversified its fundraising activities. It interfaced with the formal economy. By 1990, the militia had established a financial holding from which they drew "the majority of their earnings, with taxes on fuel, cement production, and restaurants amounting to only 5% of LF revenues."[195] The rest came from approximately twenty companies--in Lebanon and abroad--ranging from export-import to supermarkets. The militia's most successful domestic venture, the Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation, was the highest-rated television network in the country with 68% of the total audience. The network's advertising revenues alone reached $5 million annually. But trouble lay ahead in the form of a challenge to LF supremacy in the Christian camp launched by Army Commander General Michel ʿAwn.

The Rise of General ʿAwn's Challenge

General ʿAwn, had a long history of troubled relations with the LF. The militia had opposed his bid to run for the presidency of the Republic in 1988.[196] When ʿAwn decided to restore the rule of law in February 1989, he singled out illegal ports controlled by the LF. LF control of the fifth basin provided ʿAwn with a perfect pretext to weaken a strong contender for power in the Christian enclave. Playing on the perception of the militia as bandits, ʿAwn

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[194] Direct taxes on households and businesses were dropped in 1985 as economic conditions deteriorated and resentment started to grow among the population.
[195] Acil Tabbara, "Les "F.L.": un empire économique impressionnant," L'Orient-le Jour (Beirut), 7 December 1990.
[196] During Jumayyil's term in office, skirmishes had opposed members of the militia to regular soldiers. In 1988, ʿAwn's intention to run for president of the Lebanese Republic created friction as Jaʿjaʿ rejected his nomination and a near clash erupted between the LF and the Army in May. This power struggle entered a lull when both ʿAwn and Jaʿjaʿ agreed to obstruct the elections to block the election of Syrian nominee, former President Suleiman Franjiyya. The temporary convergence of interests did not last long.

declared that the confrontation was not a power struggle among Christian leaderships but the first in a series of moves to reestablish state authority. When the Ta'if Accord was negotiated, `Awn resented the LF attempt not to take sides with either the pro- or the anti-Ta'if camps. The second confrontation between the militia and the army erupted in January 1990 after `Awn issued an ultimatum to the LF to disband and dissolve all its institutions. This struggle for power and influence was one of the bloodiest episodes of the civil war.

Table V-1: Chronology of the Civil War in Lebanon, 1975-1990;
Chronology of the Lebanese Forces, 1976-1990

	CIVIL WAR	LEBANESE FORCES
1975	**April** The civil war breaks out	
1976	**August** The Christian assault on Tall al-Za'atar	**August** Creation of the Joint Command Council of the Lebanese Forces
1977	**May** The first Syrian troops enter Lebanon	
1978	**May** Israel invades South Lebanon, establishes the 'security belt' **April** The Lebanese Forces attempt to drive Syrian troops out of Christian-controlled areas	
1979		**September** The Lebanese Forces create the "Popular Committees"
1980		**June** Bashir Jummayil completes the unification of all the Christian militias
1982	**June** Israel invades Lebanon	**August** The LF launch the Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation Bashir Jumayyil is elected President of the Republic Fadi Frem is elected Commander in Chief of the LF **September** Jumayyil is assassinated
1983	**May** Israel and Lebanon reach a negotiated agreement **September** The LF lose the battle of the Shuf against the PSP **October** The Geneva national reconciliation talks start	
1984	**February** Amal and the Progressive Socialist Party attack the Lebanese Army in West Beirut Creation of Hizballah **March** The Lausanne national reconciliation talks are held	**October** The Kata'ib Party force the election of Fu'ad Abu Nader at the helm of the LF

1984		**December** Abu Nader is toppled during the first intifada; the Lebanese Forces are now independent from the Lebanese Front
1985	**April-May** The LF lose the battle of the Iqlim and Eastern Sidon **December** LF Commander in Chief, Ilyas Hubeiqa signs the Tripartite Agreement	**May** Infighting among intifada leadership results in the takeover of the LF by Iliyas Hubeiqa
1986		**March** The LF spoil the agreement and an internal uprising ousts Hubeiqa. He is replaced by Samir Ja`ja`
1988	**August** President Jumayyil appoints Army Commander General Michel `Awn head of a transitional cabinet	
1989	**February** The Lebanese Forces and the Lebanese Army enter into their first confrontation **March** `Awn launches the war of liberation from Syrian 'occupation' **August** The Tripartite Committee of the Arab League negotiates a ceasefire **September** Lebanese Parliamentarians negotiate the Ta'if Accord	
1990	**January** The Lebanese Forces and the Lebanese Army enter into their second confrontation **April** The Lebanese Forces come out in favor of the Ta'if Agreement **October** Syrian troops end `Awn's rebellion against Ta'if	

"The Lebanon We Want To Build:"[197] LF Ideology and Political Objectives

It is necessary to grasp the social and religious composition of the LF to comprehend the militia's vision of Lebanon as well as its goals and objectives. Not only is the militia predominantly Christian, it is overwhelmingly Maronite.[198] Thus its vision of "what kind of Lebanon should emerge from the fighting [...] is a reflection of Maronite thinking."[199]

The Maronite vision of Lebanon can be traced back to Bishop Nicolas Murad (d. 1862) who advocated the establishment of a Christian emirate (principality) in Lebanon. He claimed that this emirate had historical roots and that the Maronites were an ethnically distinct people.[200] A noted layman, Tanyus Shidyaq elaborated upon this theme, introducing the concept of Phoenicia in Maronite political thinking. Put simply his claim was that the borders of the Shihabi emirate—the politico-territorial entity that preceeded the Lebanese State—coincided with those of Phoenician Lebanon.[201] These concepts trickled down to contemporary Maronite political thinking in the form of Lebanonism, the ideology of Pierre Jumayyil's Kata'ib Party.[202] Lebanonism stresses Lebanon's Phoenician heritage as a

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[197] This is the title of the first document in which the Lebanese Front sketched its vision of Lebanon.
[198] LF ranks also include Greek Catholics, Greek Orthodox, Armenian Catholics, Assyrians and other Christians as well as an estimated five to seven percent Muslims. Louis Snider, "The Lebanese Forces: Their Origins and Role in Lebanon's Politics," *Middle East Journal* 38, 1, (winter 1984): 134.
[199] Ibid., 118.
[200] See, Iliya Harik, *Politics and Change in a Traditional Society: Lebanon, 1711-1845* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), 142; and Matti Moosa, *The Maronites in History* (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1986), 284.
[201] Marie-Christine Aulas, "The Socio-Ideological Development of the Maronite Community: The Emergence of the Phalanges and the Lebanese Forces," *Arab Studies Quarterly* 7, 4 (1987): 11.
[202] John P. Entelis, "Belief-System and Ideology Formation in the Lebanese Kata'ib Party," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 4, (1973): 156.

counterbalance to the proclaimed Arab affiliation of Muslim Lebanese. It presents the country as a refuge "an asylum for ethnic minorities, and those persecuted for their religious beliefs."[203]

During the Lebanese Civil War, this Maronite 'ideological mythology' was reaffirmed by the Lebanese Front.[204] It provided a common basis for the development of a sectarian-based understanding of ethnicity.[205] However, it was also appropriated differently by various Christian groups. Traditional leaders used it as a platform to defend peace settlements reaffirming the status quo ante. The younger militia leaders carried the inference to the extreme. Their political project was uncompromising: to secure Maronite predominance and upper hand in State affairs. If this could not be achieved, they brandished the specter of partition and of the establishment of an independent Maronite State.

The Lebanese Forces' ideology pivots around a Maronite ethnic nationalism, "Maronitism," which informs LF stances vis-à-vis proposed solutions to Lebanon's quandary. At various times in the conflict, the LF proposed a loose confederation, a federal system, or wide administrative decentralization as possible solutions to Lebanon's quandary. Throughout, however, the militia's ideology translated into three distinct though inter-related sets of preferences. These were the ideological lenses through which the LF evaluated proposed peace settlements:

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[203] Ibid., 159.
[204] Elaine Hagopian, "Redrawing the Map in the Middle East," 324-330.
[205] Sectarian ethnicity refers to the growth of ethnic nationalism along sectarian lines. When these lines also correspond to minority cleavages ethnic nationalism and minority nationalism become one. See As'ad Abu-Khalil, *The Politics of Sectarian Ethnicity: Segmentation in Lebanese Society* (Ph.D. Dissertation, Georgetown University, 1988).

1. The LF outspokenly promoted the right of Lebanese constituent groups to preserve their distinctive cultural and historical backgrounds. As a corollary, the militia refused to accept Lebanon's Arab identity unconditionally, an acceptance that would betray the belief in Lebanon's pluralistic nature. The militia also championed the right of communities to conduct their own educational, cultural and religious affairs free of outside intervention. The LF thus advocated extensive autonomy for each of the country's constituent groups.

2. Whatever the formula they proposed at a particular point in time, one caveat was LF insistence on securing Maronite upper hand in the conduct of state affairs. The LF considered presidential prerogatives granted to the Maronite head of State not as privileges but as security guarantees.[206] Without such safeguards, the militia preferred to go its separate way and establish a smaller independent canton.

3. Maronite ethnic nationalism had foreign policy implications too. It translated into Lebanonism, an assertion of Lebanon's independent status. This premise informed the Maronite position on the Palestinian issue. Lebanonism also informed Maronite resistance to inclusive political projects such as Arab unity or the reconstituting of Greater Syria.

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[206] The National Pact gave the Head of State extensive presidential prerogatives to "safeguard Lebanon from being engulfed by its Muslim/Arab environment." The prerogatives are considered by many Maronites as an essential political tool to implement their vision of Lebanon. See Iliya Harik, "The Maronites and the Future of Lebanon: A Case of Communal Conflict," in *Security Perspectives and Policies: Lebanon, Syria, Israel and the Palestinians*, Steven Dorr and Neysa Slater, eds. (Washington, D.C.: Defense Academic Research Support Program, 1991), 45-56.

LF INSTITUTIONALIZATION IN THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

The process of LF institutionalization illustrates a number of contentions raised in chapter three. The Lebanese Forces were established by the Lebanese Front in order to coordinate disparate militias and improve the military odds of the Christian forces. Early militia institutions emerged out of a need to mobilize manpower and generate revenue and support for the war effort. The increase in capabilities freed additional resources and the militia began to widen the scope of its activities until it became a state within the state. As it grew in size and scope, the LF developed from an armed resistance movement into an institution. This transformation involved a drive to acquire financial and political independence.

LF expansion meant that control of the militia became attractive to insiders as well as outsiders. Control of the militia procured both organizational power and financial rewards. This translated into a series of external power bids and internal uprisings that characterized internal politics in the Christian community throughout the war. As the LF institutionalized, emphasis shifted on issues involving the day-to-day survival of the institution as a whole.[207] Increasingly, financial and institutional considerations were at odds with ideological interests. The strategic choices of the LF reflect this tension. In the next chapter, I turn to a discussion of three such strategic choices.

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[207]·Kamal Beyoghlow, "Lebanon's New Leaders: Militias in Politics," *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies* 12, 2 (Spring 1989): 33-35.

Figure V-3: Organizational Structure of the Lebanese Forces (1989)

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┌──────────────┐       ┌──────────────┐      ┌──────────────┐
│ The Lebanese │◄----►│ Commander-in-│──────│ Gamma Studies│
│    Front     │       │  chief of the│      │  and Plans   │
│              │       │Lebanese Forces│     └──────────────┘
└──────────────┘       └──────────────┘      ┌──────────────┐
                         ┌──────────┐         │    Delta     │
                         │ LF Command│         │  Computing   │
                         │  Council  │         │   Center     │
                         └──────────┘         └──────────────┘
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Social Relief	Financial Affairs	Foreign Affairs	Military	Counter-Intelligence and Security	Public Services	Information

- Social Solidarity Foundation
- LF Commercial Center / Real Estate Property Bank
- Repatriation Office / Rehabilitation Value (D.C.)
- Chief-of Staff
- Front Carriage Collection for Public Transportation / Police Forces / Commando Prison
- Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation Radio Free Lebanon / Wizario

Military Academy

General Staff

G1 Personnel	G2 Military Intelligence	G3 Operations and Plans	G4 Logistics and Supply	G5 Military Information

Special Staff

Unit Commands	Weapons Command	Special Unit Commands	Reserves

VI. THE LEBANESE FORCES AND THE TA'IF ACCORD: INSTITUTIONAL PRESERVATION IN HARD TIMES

This chapter explores LF decision-making processes in an attempt to explain why the Lebanese Forces accepted the Ta'if Agreement— an acceptance that stands in stark contrast to the militia's rejection of two earlier settlement blueprints, the Lausanne talks of March 1984, and the Tripartite Agreement of December 1985. Despite the literature's almost exclusive focus on the ideological dimension of LF policy-making, I argue that no thorough understanding of the strategic choices of LF decision-makers can disregard the impact of institutions on the leaders' calculus of costs and benefits. Though ideology clearly influences LF preferences, and while the militia constantly evaluates its military position vis-à-vis that of other protagonists, institutions act as a refracting lens which modifies the impact of these factors in the calculus of decision-makers. As the militia becomes more institutionalized its leaders' win-sets broaden to incorporate emerging organizational and financial preferences. The militia also becomes more vulnerable to fluctuations in the balance of military forces on the ground.

The chapter discusses the strategic choices of the LF leadership with regard to the 1984 Lausanne Talks, the 1985 Tripartite Agreement, and the 1989 Ta'if Accord. I first situate each of these agreements in historical context. I then proceed to demonstrate that, in each instance, the decisions of militia leaders was a function of their calculus of costs and benefits on two 'decision boards' (one internal and the other external to the regions under militia

control). The chapter closes with an evaluation of the predictive value of the proposed model of decision-making for understanding the likelihood of spoiling in each instance.

THE LAUSANNE, TRIPARTITE, AND TA'IF AGREEMENTS

Under what circumstances were the Lausanne, Tripartite, and Ta'if agreements negotiated? In this section, I put the agreements in a broad historical context while paying special attention to the situation from the vantage point of the Lebanese Forces.

The Lausanne National Reconciliation Conference

In March 1984, representatives of the Lebanese warring communities met in Lausanne, Switzerland, to seek an end to Lebanon's civil war. The Lausanne peace settlement was negotiated at a time when the Lebanese Forces were in a detrimental position both politically and militarily. Politically, the militia lost the autonomy gained under the lead of Bashir Jumayyil. Militarily, the Forces had just incurred their first major defeat in the "Battle of the Mountain." In spite of their extreme weakness at this juncture, the LF declared that they were not concerned with the outcome of the Lausanne talks.[208]

The Lausanne reconciliation talks broke a five-month political deadlock. In October 1983, the protagonists had tried to restart the stalled national dialogue. They held talks in Geneva under the auspices of Syria and Saudi Arabia. The talks were obstructed by disagreements over the fate of the May 17, 1983 Agreement between Lebanon and Israel.

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[208] Midday Arabic News Broadcast, *The Voice of Lebanon* (Beirut), March 9, 1984.

Negotiated under US auspices by the government of President Amin Jumayyil, the agreement had been severely criticized by Lebanese Muslim communities. The Syrian representative to the Geneva talks insisted on its abrogation.[209] Though President Jumayyil attempted to amend the agreement and make it acceptable to Muslim Lebanese, Israel's Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir rejected this option. As Jumayyil visited the US in search of a solution to this quagmire, Syrian artillery targeted the Presidential Palace and the Defense Ministry, thus reminding the Lebanese President that the solution to the Lebanese crisis was not to be found in Washington but in Damascus.[210]

The Christian-Muslim disagreement over the fate of the May 17 Agreement reflected a larger deterioration of the situation. Muslim Lebanese reacted negatively to Jumayyil's attempt to safeguard Maronite presidential prerogatives and bring Lebanon closer to the West. Although the agreement provided a focal point for political squabbles, it would not directly cause a military confrontation. Instead, fighting would erupt over the Lebanese army's heavy-handed involvement in internal security. After the 1982 Israeli invasion, President Jumayyil had sought to strengthen the central government's authority by way of rebuilding the Lebanese armed forces. When Israel withdrew from West Beirut, mainly Christian-controlled army units were deployed in the capital. They embarked upon round-ups and arrests of Palestinians and Lebanese-Muslims. Muslim communities perceived the army as guardian of a Christian 'order,' the same order that signed an agreement with Israel.

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[209]Karim Pakradouni, *Le piège: De la malédiction libanaise à la Guerre du Golfe* (Beirut: Fiches du Monde Arabe, 1991), 93.
[210] *Ibid.*, 94.

By mid-1983 there were clear signs of growing Muslim anger. In August of that year the anger burst into all-out attacks on the army.[211]

While the Shi`a and Druze took to the streets and attacked army units, Jumayyil sought assistance from Syria and Saudi Arabia to resume the national dialogue. Syria expressed political and military intransigence on the matter of the May 17 Agreement. Not only did the Syrian artillery target Lebanese State institutions, Syrian Forces also entered into a confrontation with the US Marines stationed in Lebanon. The sharp deterioration in bilateral Lebanese-Syrian ties prompted fears that the military situation would worsen. In February 1984, as renewed skirmishes between the Lebanese Army and the Shi`a Amal Movement were reported, President Jumayyil attempted to defuse the tension by proposing a reform package. The move came too late. On 6 February, Amal fighters attacked the Lebanese Army in West Beirut, forcing army units to withdraw to the demarcation lines. Soon after, the US withdrew its troops from Lebanon and suspended weapons deliveries to the Lebanese Army. Abandoned by Washington, Gemayel finally caved in to Syria. In early March the Lebanese Council of Ministers abrogated the May 17 Agreement. The fighting stopped immediately thereafter. One week later, the Lausanne talks started.

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[211] David McDowall, *Lebanon: A Conflict of Minorities*, Revised edition (London: Minority Rights Group, 1986), 16-17.

At the time of the Lausanne Conference, the Lebanese Forces were recovering from two major blows. The death of Bashir Jumayyil in September 1982 had put the militia's incipient political autonomy in jeopardy. As discussed earlier, the young militia commander had assumed responsibility for several political decisions taken without the full assent of the Lebanese Front, notably the military alliance with Israel. Upon Bashir's death, the LF became a pawn in the intra-Christian power struggle. The Kata'ib Party and the Lebanese Front both attempted to reassert control over the expanding institutions of the militia.

By summer 1983, the Lebanese Forces were also in a precarious military position. Upon the 1982 Israeli invasion, the Lebanese Forces were in a position of relative military predominance. The Israeli Army invited the LF to reassert its presence in the Shuf, the Druze-controlled part of Mount Lebanon. Christian military presence was also reported episodically in Muslim-controlled West Beirut. But Bashir, elected to the Presidency of the Republic with Israel's backing, had backtracked on his promise to deliver a peace treaty with Israel. Rapidly, ties between Israel and the LF deteriorated. Israel withdrew its troops from the Shuf without informing its militia client. Druze militiamen grabbed the opportunity to take revenge for exactions suffered at the hands of LF militiamen and Kata'ib Party members. The ensuing "Battle of the Mountain" ended in a total LF defeat. The forces of the Progressive Socialist Party regained control over the Shuf ousting the LF and forcing the exodus of the near-totality of the area's Christian population. (See map 1)

Map VI-1: Balance of Military Forces on the Eve of the Lausanne Agreement
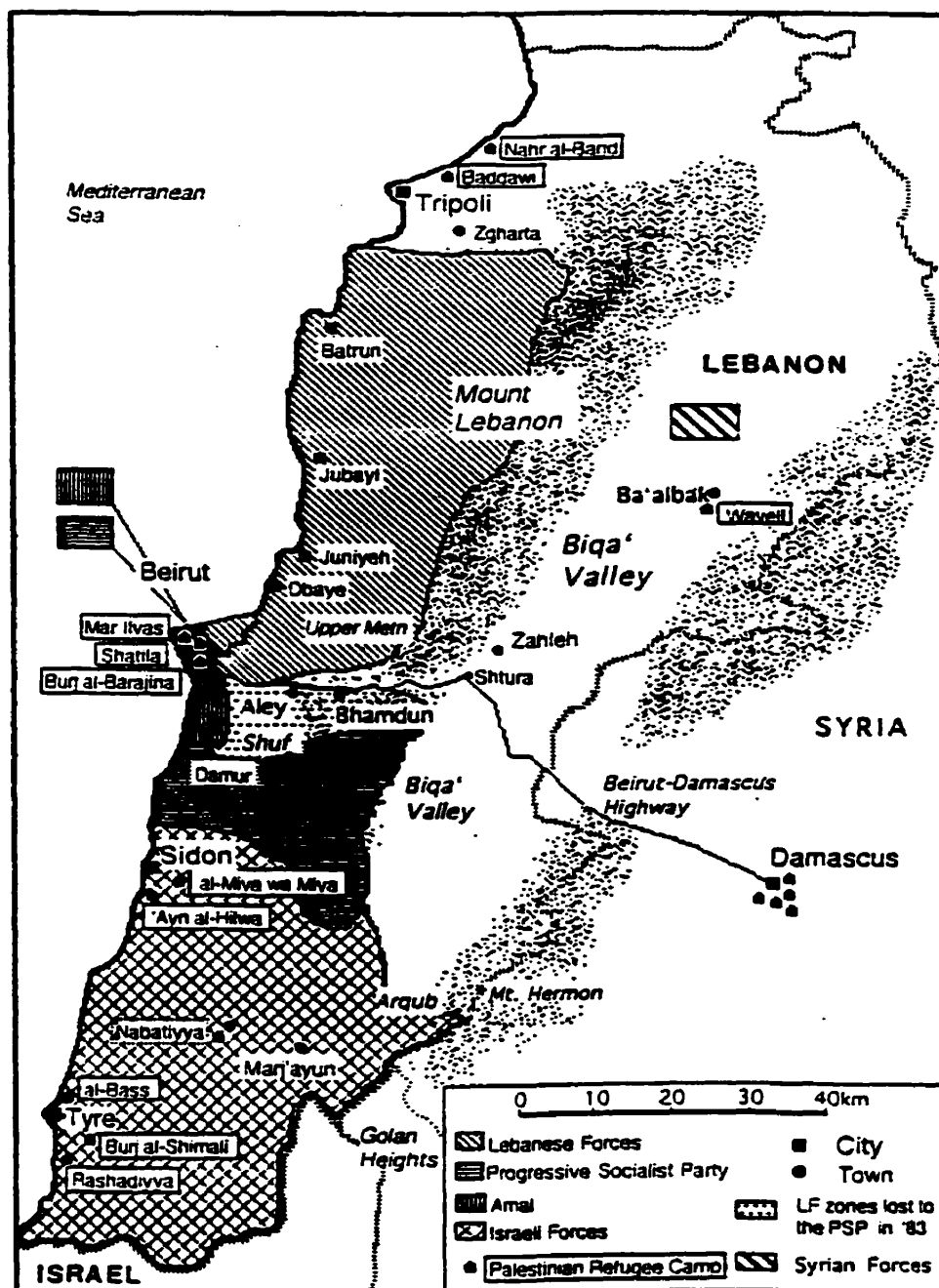
Source: Original map courtesy of Rex Brynen

The Tripartite Agreement

The Lebanese Forces were one of three Lebanese parties to the Tripartite Agreement, a peace settlement negotiated under the auspices of the Syrian authorities in late 1985.[212] At that time, the Forces had asserted their autonomy from the Lebanese Front. The militia had suffered a military reversal of fortunes in the battle of Eastern Sidon and the Iqlim al-Kharrub. However, the LF was still in a good position relative to other protagonists.

After the Lausanne conference, the internal political stalemate and the intermittently explosive military situation put the *Pax Syriana* in jeopardy. Several protagonists hampered the implementation of practical steps to end the war. In August 1984, PSP leader Minister Walid Junblatt challenged the government's efforts to extend the state's control beyond the capital Beirut. Blocking the state's access to the Shuf, Junblatt set up the 'Civil Administration of the Mountain,' a parallel administrative apparatus manned by his Progressive Socialist Party. For their part, the LF refused to dismantle their customs office at Barbara and thus pave the way for reopening the coastal highway. Throughout 1984-1985, Junblatt and Minister Nabih Berri openly boycotted government meetings. Syrian auspices failed to bridge the gap between Junblatt and Berri on the one hand and President Jumayyil on the other.[213]

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[212] The other two parties were the Amal Movement and the PSP.
[213] Syria's Foreign Minister, `Abd al-Halim Khaddam, repeatedly attempted to bring the two rebel ministers back in the ministerial fold. His efforts resulted in the holding of the Bikfaya conference, a meeting meant to give a new impetus to national unity.

Faced with the paralysis of the Lebanese State, the Syrian authorities decided in the summer of 1985 to bypass the Lebanese government and reach a settlement with the *de facto* political forces. Syria opened a dialogue with the Lebanese Forces and shortly thereafter sponsored negotiations between the Christian militia and its Shi`a and Druze counterparts. No other faction or political leadership was involved in the meetings. When the text of the agreement was finally made public, President Jumayyil resisted pressures to adopt it wholesale and elevate it to the status of a new national pact and constitution.[214] For his part, Syria's vice-president, `Abd al-Halim Khaddam, refused to amend the text of the agreement. Once again, the situation was deadlocked. The stalemate ended when an internal uprising removed LF Commander Ilyas Hubeiqa from office and spoiled the agreement.

The Lebanese Forces' position had substantially improved between March 1984 and December 1985. In relative terms, the Lebanese Forces were much less constrained at the onset of negotiations than they had been at the time of the Lausanne conference. As discussed in the preceding chapter, the March 1984 *intifada* marked the LF's rise to political preeminence. Militarily, the LF had suffered another defeat. When, in early 1984, Israel announced its intention to implement the second stage of its troop withdrawal from South Lebanon—more specifically from Iqlim al-Kharrub and Eastern Sidon—tension was on the rise in the Iqlim between LF militiamen and Amal/PSP fighters. The LF realized that, should its troops stay behind, a debacle would ensue. Thus, the LF leadership attempted to secure either a Lebanese Army deployment in the region or an Israeli postponement of the

[214] On 30 December 1985, the new Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shara` visited Jumayyil in Ba`abda, carrying an invitation from President al-Assad to attend a bilateral summit meeting in Damascus. Jumayyil and Assad would meet on 2 January, and again on 14 January.

withdrawal. Negotiations were still underway when Israel withdrew its forces and large-scale conflict erupted. The militia was defeated and withdrew, thus forcing the exodus of Christians who lived in the area. However, the Iqlim al-Kharrub debacle did not significantly alter the militia's position. Instead, it was instrumental in regrouping LF military units and the Christian population in the relative security of a homogeneous territorial enclave. (See map 2) Relations with Israel were subsequently clouded by the Jewish State's decision to withdraw its troops from the Iqlim. They were also undermined by the anti-Israeli profile of leading members of the *intifada* leadership. However, they remained well above the all-time low of 1982/83.

The power struggle within the LF could have been a source of LF weakness. In April 1985, tensions surfaced in the LF leadership. At stake were the political negotiations to ease the explosive situation in Iqlim al-Kharrub. Samir Ja`ja` wanted to mandate President Amin Jumayyil to intercede with Syria and prevent a military confrontation. Iliyas Hubeiqa not only refused to turn to the President, he also interpreted Ja`ja`'s decision as a breach of the principle of collegiality adopted by the *intifada* leadership. Hubeiqa seized the occasion to dissolve the triumvirate that headed the LF and submit his candidacy for the presidency of the LF executive council. In the course of negotiations leading to the Tripartite Agreement, Hubeiqa not only asserted political control over the LF, he also managed to militarily subdue any opposition. The LF Commander was confident of having won the power struggle.[215]

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[215] Hubeiqa's confidence led him to believe that, within the LF, the power ratio between him and Samir Ja`ja` was 6:1. This was also the perception prevalent in Syria where Hubeiqa was deemed to represent the majority of Christians. Pakradouni, *Le piège*, 133.

Intense divisions among the various factions on the Muslim side also offset intra-LF factionalism. At the same time that the LF gained political autonomy, in West Beirut the PSP forcibly dismantled the Sunni militia, Al-Murabitun. Syria encouraged the Amal Movement to move against Beirut's Palestinian camps in May 1985. Intra-communal power struggles surrounded the emergence of new militia actors, notably Hizballah, Jundallah, and the splinter Islamic Amal. Druze-Shi`a relations were also tense, especially concerning an Israeli-brokered agreement to freeze PSP-LF conflict in Iqlim al-Kharrub.[216] In summer 1985, PSP and Amal militiamen fought in the streets of Beirut in another episode of the militias' struggle for influence.

[216] LF presence in the predominantly Sunni-populated coastal plain below the Shuf, was a direct consequence of the Israeli occupation. The border between the Iqlim and the Shuf became a LF-Druze confrontation ground after the "Battle of the Mountain." PSP leader Walid Junblatt took advantage of his community's relations with the Druze of Israel to reach a standoff agreement that was made public in March 1984.

Map VI-2: Balance of Military Forces on the Eve of the Tripartite Agreement

Mediterranean Sea

Tripoli

● Zgharta

LEBANON

Batrun

Mount Lebanon

Jubayl

Ba'albale

Biqa' Valley

Juniyeh

Beirut

Obayeh

Zahleh

Shatila

Burj al-Barajina

Shtura

Aley

Bhamdun

Shuf

SYRIA

Damur

Biqa' Valley

Beirut-Damascus Highway

Sidon

Damascus

al-Miya wa Miya

'Ayn al-Hilwa

Arqub

Mt. Hermon

Nabatiyya ●

Mar'ayun

al-Bass

Golan Heights

Tyre

● Burj al-Shimali

Rashadiyya

ISRAEL

| 0 | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40km |

▨ Lebanese Forces   ● Town

■ Progressive Socialist Party   ■ City

⊠ Israeli Forces/South Lebanon Army

■ Amal   ▨ LF zones lost to other contenders in '84/'85

▨ Syrian Forces   ● Palestinian Refugee Camp

Source: Original map courtesy of Rex Brynen

The Ta'if Accord

When discussing the Ta'if Agreement, it is necessary to distinguish between two phases. The first begins with the summer 1988 election deadline and ends in September 1989 with the announcement of the agreement. The second begins with General 'Awn's decision to reject Ta'if. It ends in October 1990 when Syrian troops stormed the regions under 'Awn's control, subduing his rebellion against Ta'if. At the end of the first phase, the Lebanese Forces acknowledged that the balance of military forces had tipped in favor of the Muslim communities and their Syrian ally; but there was no sense of urgency. In October 1990, the LF had fought an exhausting battle against General 'Awn's troops. The militia was in financial disarray. The Syrian operation against 'Awn shattered the territorial integrity of the Christian enclave for the first time since the outbreak of the war. In short, the Lebanese Forces were on the edge of a precipice.

As discussed at length in the preceding chapter, negotiations in Ta'if were meant to prevent remaining functioning state institutions from unraveling. The talks also sought to defuse a tense military situation between the forces of General 'Awn and his allies on the one hand and the Syrian troops in alliance with the militia of the PSP on the other.[217] Most Lebanese factions welcomed the outcome of the negotiations with the exception of General 'Awn. 'Awn had not disagreed on the principle of negotiations.[218] But no sooner the

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[217] Although the Druze militiamen of the Progressive Socialist Party fought pitched battles against 'Awn's forces, most of the other Lebanese militias allied with the Syrian forces participated only tangentially in the military operations.

[218] In September 1989, the General had publicly accepted the seven-point agreement that included provisions for the holding of peace negotiations. During the negotiations, the General was kept appraised of the details and he apparently gave Christian members of Parliament negotiating on behalf of the eastern regions (the region under his control) the green light to accept the terms of the

agreement was made public that he disavowed the Christian parliamentarians who participated in the talks. The General objected to the fact that Ta'if did not commit the Syrian armed forces to a rapid and complete withdrawal from Lebanon. He also rejected the political reforms introduced by the agreement as unacceptable. According to him, the reforms did not solve any fundamental political problems.[219]

At the time of the Ta'if Agreement, the LF was at the apex of its development. The militia overshadowed most Christian political actors. Its power struggle with the Army was in a state of latency. In spite of 'Awn's defeat in the "War of Liberation," the LF could still prevail themselves of a self-contained sanctuary. Israeli and Iraqi support for the LF and 'Awn's army relatively strengthened the Christian enclave. Put on the spot by General 'Awn who attempted to use the agreement to strengthen his position in the Christian areas,[220] the LF initially reserved their opinion on the agreement. Instead, they sought to revive a federal solution to the Lebanese conflict.

A year later, the situation had drastically changed. The General had moved to spoil Ta'if by dissolving Parliament, thus blocking the election of a new President and the enactment of the agreement into law. The attempt failed. Members of Parliament elected

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agreement. George Sa'adah, *Qissati ma' al-Ta'if* [My Story with Ta'if] (Beirut: Matabi' al-karim al-haditha, 1988), 121; George Sa'adah, Kata'ib Party leader, author interview, 29 July 1997.

[219] For a good discussion of the 'Awn phenomenon, see Paul Salem, "Two Years of Living Dangerously: General Awn and the Precarious Rise of Lebanon's Second Republic," *The Beirut Review* 1, 1 (spring 1991).

[220] 'Awn requested the LF to make their position public intimating that failure to do so meant approval of Ta'if, hence treason to the Lebanese cause.

Deputy René Mu'awwad to the Presidency.[221] The General refused to relinquish power to President Mu'awwad and later to President Hrawi, both legitimately elected within the constitutional bounds of Ta'if. Hrawi relieved the General of his command in November 1989 but 'Awn refused to give up. 'Awn also condemned the Lebanese Forces for not clearly supporting his position. He invoked the need for "unification of the rifles" to issue an ultimatum to the LF. On 28 January 1990, 'Awn requested that the militia disbands and that militiamen integrate army ranks. On 30 January a major LF-Lebanese Army confrontation erupted. The Christian enclave was divided into two zones of control. The long and bloody struggle left both sides weakened and vulnerable.[222] The Syrian Army took advantage of this vulnerability and on October 13, 1990 it moved against 'Awn (with the support of the Lebanese Army units loyal to the pro-Ta'if political establishment) forcing his troops to surrender.[223] It was only at this point that the LF openly embraced Ta'if. (See map 3)

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[221] Mu'awwad was murdered within weeks of his election in a booby-trapped bomb attack on his motorcade, on Independence Day, 22 November 1989.

[222] UN estimates put the losses from the fighting at 1,500 killed, 3,500 wounded, 25,000 houses and 300 industrial establishments damaged. See Annie Laurent, "A War Between Brothers: The Army-Lebanese Forces Showdown in East Beirut," *The Beirut Review* 1, 1 (spring 1991).

[223] ' Awn took take refuge at the French embassy and then went into exile.

Map VI-3: Balance of Forces on the Eve of the Ta'if Accord
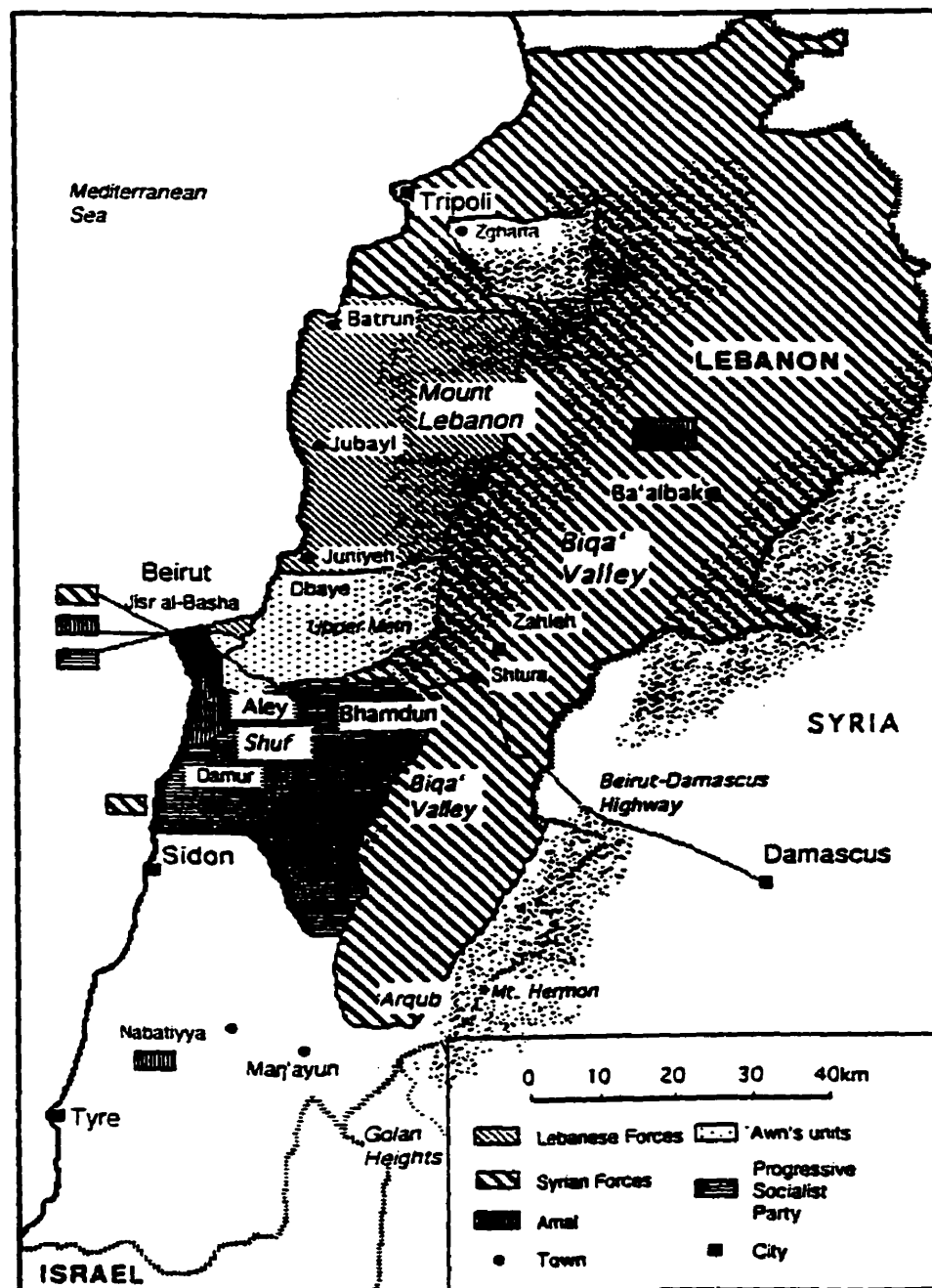
Source: Original map courtesy of Rex Brynen

Stalemates, Precipices and LF Decision-Making

In light of the evidence presented above, it is difficult to link LF willingness to compromise to either the attainment of a military stalemate or that of a precipice. The balance of military forces did not seem to influence LF decision-making consistently. The militia withstood a relatively long stalemate and was able to recover from serious military losses notably in the 1983 "Battle of the Mountain." Even more to the point, the LF rejected the Lausanne peace settlement in the wake of a military defeat but they initially accepted the Tripartite Agreement at a time when they were relatively secure vis-à-vis their adversaries. Even after the disastrous 'War of Liberation,' the LF seemed confident that, in spite of the serious tipping of the balance in favor of their opponents, they could still define some parameters for a solution to the conflict.

IDEOLOGY AND PREFERENCES IN LF STRATEGIC CHOICES

Were LF decisions to reject the Lausanne talks and the Tripartite Agreement but to accept the Ta'if Accord based on ideological considerations? To assess the power of an ideology-based explanation, I compare the terms on offer in all three settlements. Once again, the discussion focuses on the militia's interpretation of the terms in each of these instances. As discussed in the preceding chapter, LF preferences can be encapsulated in two central tenets: Lebanonism and Maronite preeminence in State affairs.

Lebanon, an Arab Country After All

The Lausanne talks, the Tripartite Agreement and the Ta'if Accord asserted Lebanon's

Arab identity. In that sense, all three ran counter to the staunch Lebanonism of the Lebanese

Forces. But the three proposals drew substantially different implications from this assertion.

The Lausanne talks merely asserted Lebanon's belonging to the Arab World.[224] This

represented a major departure from the premise of the National Pact. The original covenant

had signaled mutual Christian and Muslim willingness to compromise on Lebanon's identity

and, consequently, on its foreign policy. The Tripartite Agreement and the Ta'if Accord went

the extra mile. They translated Lebanon's 'arabism' into a set of specific foreign policy stances.

The role of the Lebanese Army and the nature of Lebanese-Syrian relations were at the heart

of these policy changes.

The Lebanese Army: At the Vanguard of Confrontation with Israel?

The Tripartite Agreement and the Ta'if Accord identify the army as the instrument of

South Lebanon's liberation from Israeli occupation. Ta'if, for example, states that "The armed

forces shall be unified, equipped, and trained to assume their national responsibilities in facing

Israeli aggression."[225] This clearly departs from the Lebanese authorities' decision, at the onset

of the Arab-Israeli conflict, to eschew an active military role.[226] This professed neutrality had

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[224] The final communiqué of the Lausanne talks did not address the specifics of the agreement reached by participants. Premier Rashid Karami was appointed to form a cabinet of national entente. It is this cabinet's declaration of intent (May 31, 1984) which best encapsulates the outcome of the conference.

[225] "The Ta'if Agreement," *The Beirut Review* 1, 1 (1991): 167.

[226] Of the Arab states bordering Israel, Lebanon is the only one sharing with Israel "a regular frontier negotiated between the British mandatory authorities in Palestine and the French mandatory authorities in Lebanon, and formally established by a special treaty registered in the League of Nations as early as 1922." Kamal Salibi, *Crossroads to Civil War: Lebanon 1958-1976* (Delmar, New York: Caravan Books, 1976), 27.

anyhow become increasingly difficult to maintain. Since the clashes of the 1970s with the Palestinians, the army had become a lightning rod of sectarian divisions. Lebanese Muslims demanded Army dedication to confronting Israel. Maronites insisted that an Army clampdown on Palestinian resistance activities was the best defense for Lebanon. As redefined in the Tripartite Agreement and Ta'if, the Army's role ran counter to Maronite preferences.

Lebanon and Syria: One People, Two Countries

"Lebanon's Arab character finds it highest expression in the privileged Lebanese-Syrian relations."[227] According to the Tripartite Agreement and the Ta'if Accord, Lebanon's Arab identity and its active involvement in the Arab-Israeli conflict entail cooperation between Lebanon and its closest Arab neighbor, Syria.

The Tripartite Agreement highlights the security interdependence of both countries. It states that Lebanon should not allow itself to be used as a 'gateway' through which Israel could strike at or threaten Syria. This requires the stationing of Syrian troops in specific strategic locations in Lebanon. In brief, the agreement expects Lebanon to act both as a buffer and a front enabling Syria to minimize and, when appropriate, counter security threats posed by Israel.[228]

The Tripartite Agreement introduces the concept of "strategic complementarity" between Lebanon and Syria. This complementarity spans the military, economic, and

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[227] Samy Hilal, "L'accord de Damas: de la négociation à la non-solution," *Cahiers de l'Orient* (Winter 1986): 79.

[228] Hussein Sirriyeh, *Lebanon: Dimensions of Conflict*, Adelphi Papers 243 (London: International Institute of Strategic Studies, 1989), 39.

educational realms. It includes provisions to prevent the Lebanese media from launching "hostile campaigns" against the privileged bilateral relations.[229] Direct Syrian sponsorship of the document heightened concerns that Lebanon might be falling under Syrian tutelage. Critics even described the proposed relationship as an ideological and geo-political *Anschluss*.[230]

In the same vein as the Tripartite Agreement, Ta'if states that Lebanese-Syrian relations derive from Lebanon's "close filial ties to all the Arab states." They draw their distinctiveness from "the roots of propinquity, history and common filial interests"[231] shared by the two countries. Ta'if reiterates the Tripartite Agreement's concern that Lebanon should not be "a source of threat to Syria's security." Both blueprints draw on variants of the notion of "strategic complementarity" to condone Syrian military presence in strategic locations such as the Lebanese Biqa` Valley. In both agreements, the privileged Lebanese-Syrian relations' clause stands in contradiction with the staunch LF attachment to Lebanon's independence.

Not only did the Lebanese Forces disagree that Lebanon was an Arab country, the Maronite militia could not accept the foreign policy consequences of this assertion. It was adamantly opposed to the stationing of Syrian troops in Lebanon, it had a history of suspicion of Syrian designs for Lebanon, and it saw the army as a protector of Lebanon against the Palestinians not Israel.

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[229] Hilal, "L'accord de Damas," 79-81.
[230] Ibid., 80.
[231] "The Ta'if Agreement," 171.

civil war "an aggression aimed at the free Christian presence in Lebanon."[235] This presence could only be safeguarded by preserving the prerogatives of the Christian Maronite President. The LF also objected to the idea of referenda which, short of complete secularization, would "translate into the hegemony of a religious majority." It proposed instead a "pluralist" solution, which would "secure the peace, freedom, and equality of all religious groups while still respecting their differences." The declaration did not elaborate on the specific organizational features of this "pluralist" society. It is however safe to assume that the militia had in mind a version of the federal project initially put forward by Christian representatives to the Lausanne talks.[236]

The Tripartite Agreement severely curtailed the prerogatives of the President of the Republic. The agreement deprived the President of his vote in the Council of Ministers. To grasp the significance of the President's vote, it should be noted that, in Lebanon, important policy decisions were customarily tackled in meetings headed by the President while meetings headed by the Premier handled routine administrative matters. The Council of Ministers thus replaced the Presidency as the repository of executive power.[237] This reduction in presidential prerogatives was incompatible with the premises of LF ideology. The Tripartite Agreement was even more problematic. It advocated the immediate all-out

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[235] "Bayan al-fa'aliyyat al-massihiyya," in *Ibid.*, 500.

[236] When their federal project was turned down by other participants, the representatives of the Kata'ib and National Liberal Party demanded wide administrative financial and developmental decentralization.

[237] Otherwise, the Tripartite Accord did not significantly depart from reforms proposed during the Switzerland talks. See Elie Salem, "Cabinet Politics in Lebanon," *Middle East Journal* 21(1967): 489. Under the terms of the Tripartite Agreement, the President was only allowed to chair the council of ministers in specific situations. Although he still nominated the Prime Minister, he was now bound by the results of prior parliamentary consultations. Situations when the President would still chair the

deconfessionalization of the political system. This was unacceptable to the LF which, given demographic changes in Lebanon, represented a demographic minority and feared the hegemony of a Muslim majority.

Despite a sweeping reduction in presidential powers (even more drastic than under the terms of the Tripartite Agreement), the Ta'if Agreement offered the Lebanese Forces a few carrots as well as sticks. The agreement radically transformed the Lebanese political system. It took executive power away from the President of the Republic and entrusted it to the Council of Ministers, reducing the president's role to a largely ceremonial function.[238] But "the Ta'if Accord is not the Tripartite Agreement."[239] This loss of Maronite preponderance was compensated by the stipulation that voting on 'fundamental issues'[240] required a two-thirds majority of the cabinet. Cabinets in Lebanon usually follow the unspoken rule of 50:50 distribution of seats between Christians and Muslims. Short of a national consensus, this stipulation provided a de facto minority veto.[241] Ta'if was also slightly more favorable than the Tripartite Agreement on the matter of deconfessionalization. Although deconfessionalization is stated as an explicit goal in the agreement, "The accord effectively concedes the futility of

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Council of Ministers include declarations of peace and war, general mobilization, proclamation of the state of emergency, etc.

[238] Article 17 of the Lebanese Constitution (as amended in 1990) reads "Executive power shall be entrusted to the Council of Ministers and the Council shall exercise it in accordance with conditions laid down in this Constitution." The original article (in the 1926 Constitution) was "Executive power shall be entrusted to the President of the Republic who shall exercise it assisted by the Ministers in accordance with conditions laid down in this Constitution." "The Constitution of Lebanon after the Amendments of August 21, 1990," in *The Beirut Review* 1, 1 (spring 1991): 127.

[239] Toufic Hindi, Political advisor to Samir Ja'ja` and member of the LF Command Council, author interview, 31 July 1997.

[240] Fundamental issues are defined as declaring and ending states of emergency, peace and war, general mobilization, approving treaties, approving the yearly budget, long-term development planning, deciding on the new election law, and the law on nationality among other issues.

any serious attempt to expunge political sectarianism in Lebanon, at least for the foreseeable future."[242]

Together Apart

Another important consideration is the extent of autonomy granted to Lebanese constituent groups by the three blueprints. For if the LF sought to secure Maronite preponderance in governing Lebanon, in case of failure, they sought the separation of the communities to preserve their socio-cultural autonomy. While the Tripartite Agreement rejected autonomy beyond narrow administrative decentralization, both Lausanne and Ta'if provided for devolution of authority at the local level.

At Lausanne, Christian representatives had put forward a federal project. They argued that a unitary system was not suited to the diversity of Lebanon's religious and cultural groups and to their separate histories.[243] As these representatives backed down from their initial proposal, they made a concession that the LF could not accept. The *Bayan al-fa'aliyyat al-massihiyya* rejected the compromise. It highlighted that Arab and Christian identities were incompatible. The two co-signatories of the declaration, the Federation of Christian Lebanese Leagues and the Christian Democratic Federation, cabled Christian representatives asking them to reconsider the decision to accept Lebanon's Arab identity. According to the *Bayan*,

[241] For the Lebanese Forces, the veto minority was contingent upon the militia's emergence as the major Christian contender in which case its representatives or allies would secure representation in government.

[242] Augustus Richard Norton, "Lebanon after Ta'if: Is the Civil War Over?" *Middle East Journal* 45, 3 (fall 1991): 461.

[243] "Lebanon: A Federated Republic," text of the NLP-Kata'ib proposal, in Imad Younis, *Silsilat al-watha'iq*," 487-489.

the consecration of the country's Arab identity at the political and cultural levels transgressed the pluralism of the Lebanese population.

The Tripartite Agreement seriously challenged the Lebanese Forces' notion of Lebanese pluralism. It not only rejected partition schemes but narrowed down the understanding of decentralization. The various administrative regions were granted implementation powers but decisions rested with the central authorities. Administrative regions had no jurisdictional or financial autonomy. They could not determine their cultural, educational or developmental objectives. The Agreement thus ran counter to the LF objective of preserving Christian cultural and historical distinctiveness.

Ta'if favored broad administrative decentralization at the level of small administrative units. This concept provides a point of equilibrium between Christian fears of being overwhelmed by a demographically expanding Muslim community[244] and the benefits of continued coexistence. Unlike the Tripartite Agreement, Ta'if stretched the definition of the concept. It hinted to a possible redrawing of the Lebanese administrative map to partially reflect the demographic and political changes that took place during the war.[245] Although

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[244] Some Muslims have been pressuring for adoption of a majority democracy. Given the demographic changes in Lebanon this practically means a reversal of the old Maronite hegemony to the profit of the Shi'a community. See Muhammad Faour, "The Demography of Lebanon: A Reappraisal," *Middle Eastern Studies* 27, 4 (1991): 631-641; and Arnon Soffer, "Lebanon - Where Demography is the Core of Politics and Life," *Middle Eastern Studies* 22 (1986): 197-205.

[245] Article 3 of the section on administrative decentralization reads "The administrative map shall be reconsidered in order to ensure national integration while preserving coexistence and the unity of land, people, and institutions." "The Ta'if Agreement," 163.

administrative decentralization falls short of local political or financial autonomy, it addresses

Christian fears of falling into *dhimmi* status.[246]

Ideology and Win-sets

The preceding chapter identified three inter-related sets of preferences that formed the

core of "Maronitism": socio-cultural pluralism and differentiation, Maronite preponderance in

state affairs, and Lebanonism or an independent foreign policy. The settlement blueprints

reached at Lausanne, Damascus, and Ta'if encroached on all three sets of preferences. All

three blueprints seriously challenged the LF "vision of Lebanon."[247] And while the Tripartite

Agreement stands out as the most detrimental political project by LF standards, it is not clear

that the Ta'if Accord is substantially more advantageous than the terms of the Lausanne

settlement. However, the then nascent—and, in absolute terms, less powerful—militia

rejected Lausanne primarily on ideological grounds. Given the LF acceptance of Ta'if and

rejection of Lausanne, we can reject the alternative explanation which ascribes militia decision-

making solely to ideological considerations.

INSTITUTIONS AND THE CALCULUS OF COST AND BENEFIT

As the Lebanese territory split into territorial enclaves, militia leaders found themselves

in a situation where they had to evaluate proposed peace settlements with an eye on two

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[246] This issue of identity still poses a dilemma to some Maronites "It matters not that such fears seem unwarranted or hyperbolic to others. They exist and are genuinely felt, and this imposes on the other sects the moral imperative of viewing them with the seriousness and compassion they demand." Walid Khalidi, "Lebanon: Yesterday and Tomorrow," *Middle East Journal* 43, 3 (1989): 379.
[247] See The Lebanese Forces, *Taef 1989 and Damascus 1985: A Political Comparison,* available at http://www.lebanese-forces.org/taefdamascus.htm, internet.

boards. The first represented their position relative to other protagonists in the conflict; the other captured their position within the regions under their control. As leaders calculated costs and benefits, two factors influenced their evaluation: the congruence between their political objectives and the terms of the settlement on offer and their ability to sustain changes in the military balance of forces. The emergence and development of a network of militia institutions affected both factors.

Institutions, Visibility, and Vulnerability: The Military Dimension of 'Ripeness'

What differentiates the context of LF strategic choices in 1984, 1985, 1989 and 1990?[248] In each of these cases, a cursory review of the military balance of forces points to the fact that peace talks seem to follow a worsening in Christian military fortunes.

1. In 1983, the Lebanese Forces were defeated in the Battle of the Mountain.

2. In 1984 they had to withdraw from Eastern Sidon and Iqlim al-Kharrub.

3. In 1989 the Christian side had lost the "War of Liberation" against Syria's military presence in Lebanon.

4. Finally, in 1990, the Lebanese Forces and the troops of General `Awn were locked in a stalemate upon the "war of attrition." This stalemate would last until the Syrian operation of 13 October 1990 which ended `Awn's rebellion against the Ta'if Accord.

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[248] The Lausanne Talks are held in 1984, the Tripartite Agreement is reached in 1985, the Ta'if Agreement is signed in 1989 but only implemented in 1990.

A closer look at these historical junctures yields a different interpretation. In 1983 and 1984, the losses suffered by the Lebanese Forces were limited to military hardware and territory which had only been acquired by the Christian militia upon Israel's invasion of Lebanon. From a purely military perspective, the defeats of 1983 and 1984 did not substantially change the balance of military forces in Lebanon. While the LF clearly lost a temporary advantage, the militia's position did not worsen substantially relative to that of the other protagonists. The LF merely returned to the 'starting point' where it had been prior to the Israeli invasion when a rough balance of military forces reined among the two camps in the Lebanese civil war.

In 1989-1990, the situation was quite different. LF material losses extended beyond military hardware. Military operations were now targeting the militia's civilian institutions. As discussed in chapter five, in February 1989 General 'Awn targeted the fifth basin of the Beirut harbor, one of the major sources of LF revenue. When, less than 24 hours after the outbreak of clashes against the Army, LF Commander Samir Ja'ja' decided to turn the fifth basin over to the Army and suspend tax collection, he invoked the need to maintain cohesion in Christian ranks. The decision cost the militia a net revenue loss of two hundred thousand dollars monthly.[249]

A year later, the militia was even more vulnerable although its conflict with the army had not returned a clear victor. Upon the second LF-Army clash, the militia was near total military exhaustion and in a state of financial disarray. One report suggests that, by the end of

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[249] *Al-Hayat* (London), 31 January 1990.

the LF-Army conflict, the militia had lost most of its revenue base especially since the army

overran the LF National Treasury early in the conflict. The losses were estimated as follows:

- $800,000/month from land and property sales taxes
- $200,000/month from the revenues of the fifth basin
- $80,000/month from the revenues of the Juniyah harbor
- $100,000/month from the taxes on fuel products
- $240,000/month from taxes on restaurants, the entertainment business, and the casino of Lebanon
- $20,000/month from taxes imposed at checkpoints.[250]

The Lebanese Forces experienced several military reversals of fortune throughout the civil war. The impact of these reversals was not necessarily commensurate with the scope of the military defeat. In purely military terms, the LF defeat in the 1983 Battle of the Mountain was more serious than the LF ebb following the 1990 confrontation with the army. The 1990 LF-Army clash, the most costly confrontation from the perspective of the LF, did not end in a defeat but in a long stalemate. This was not a battle across the demarcation lines but a power struggle within Christian ranks. As discussed above, its losses were not limited to military hardware or territory.[251] The destruction of part of the LF infrastructure, especially those institutions that generated revenue for the militia, was responsible for elevating the costs of this confrontation above those of other episodes in the civil war.

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[250] *Ibid.*

[251] In 1990, the Lebanese Forces lost some territory to the army but in relative terms the loss of territory in 1983 and 1984 was more substantial.

Institutions, Autonomy, and the Health of Domestic Coalitions

The emergence of a network of LF institutions heightened the power struggle within the Christian community. Traditional leaderships felt threatened by the autonomous power base of the militia. Militia leaders, in turn, used their growing organizational capacity and financial autonomy to distance themselves from the traditional leaderships. They asserted the Lebanese Forces' right to be a political actor on par with the Lebanese Front and the Christian political parties.

Upon Bashir Jumayyil's death, the Lebanese Front and the Kata'ib Party tried to subdue the rising star of the Lebanese Forces. In the preceding chapter, I discussed how in 1982-1983 the LF became a pawn in the power struggle within the Christian community. In this power struggle, traditional leaders were clearly at an advantage. President Jumayyil had selected Maronite *zu`ama'* and members of the Lebanese Front to represent the Christian community at Lausanne, thus isolating the leadership of the LF. The militia was ill equipped to deal with this challenge. Financially, it still depended largely on taxation. But taxes proved insufficient in generating the revenue needed to meet the requirements of an ever-more conventional type of warfare. Bashir had relied on Israel's financial, military, and political assistance. Post-1982, Jerusalem withheld financial support from the militia. With the election of Fu'ad Abu-Nader to the helm of the LF, the militia fell back into the orbit of the traditional leaderships.

The power struggle between the militia leadership and the traditional elites culminated in the 1985 *intifada*. Subsequently, the political autonomy of the Lebanese Forces was

acknowledged when Syria singled out the militia to represent Lebanese Christians at the talks leading to the Tripartite Agreement. As discussed in chapter five, institutionalization was instrumental in these developments. In the early to mid-1980s, the revenue generated on the black market contributed to the development of para-statal LF institutions. Through the provision of collective goods, the militia established patrimonial ties with the population of the Christian enclave. In practical terms, the militia was building its independent base of popular support, a policy captured in the label *shabab* that Christian Lebanese used in reference to militiamen.[252]

Financial autonomy was one of the factors that allowed the LF to open a dialogue with Syria upon the first *intifada*. The establishment of such links speaks to the independence gained by the militia, which replaced the Israeli option with the Syrian one.[253] However, this autonomy also created a deeper wedge between the *intifada* leadership and other Christian representatives when Ilyas Hubeiqa proceeded to monopolize dialogue with Syria to his sole advantage. Behind-the-scenes Syrian-LF dialogue came out in the open in September 1985 when a LF delegation visited Damascus. As the broad lines of the agreement under discussion began to leak out to the media, opposition to the terms of the agreement mounted. Hubeiqa's ruthless silencing of the opposition deepened the rift.[254]

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[252] The term *shabab* literally means "the young ones." It is socially used with reference to adolescents within one's familial and close social networks.

[253] Enhanced LF structural and financial independence could also be implied from the militia's occasional criticism of Israel. Karim Pakradouni rejected the establishment of Greater Israel and went as far as accusing Tel Aviv of intervention in Lebanon's internal affairs. Midday Arabic news broadcast, *Voice of Lebanon* (Beirut), 24 December 1985.

[254] He took over the Kata'ib newspaper *al-`Amal* and put its editor-in-chief under house arrest for criticizing the proposed agreement. Hubeiqa also seized the party's radio station, *The Voice of Lebanon*, whose director was dismissed. Party headquarters were put under surveillance and the phone lines of high-ranking officials were tapped. Hubeiqa was also involved in masterminding an

Hubeiqa's attempt to monopolize Christian decision-making ultimately backfired. The LF Commander-in-Chief was ousted by another *intifada* led by Samir Ja`ja`. Under Ja`ja`'s lead, LF institutionalization soared to new levels. Enhanced financial and structural autonomy gave the militia the impetus to diversify its political alliances. Less constrained by accountability to its tax base and more secure about its preeminence on the Christian scene, the LF opened up to the Arab World. In May 1986, a LF delegation met PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat in Tunis. In November 1986, Arafat would even appear on LF television at the instigation of LF Deputy Commander, Karim Pakradouni. The decision strained LF internal and external alliances. Lebanese Front leader Camille Sham`un thought Pakradouni had "gone too far." The coordinator of Israeli activities in Lebanon, Uri Lubrani, condemned the move. In Pakradouni's own words, this whole affair proved that the LF enjoyed "freedom of movement" and that theirs was "a policy of overture." Through Arafat, the LF would also establish an alliance with Iraq. Iraq would become a major source of LF military and political support.

The second *intifada* confirmed the status of the LF as a political and military force that could not be disregarded. However, the institutionalization drive spearheaded by Ja`ja` triggered a renewed power struggle between the militia and other Christian political forces. In spite of a brief cooperation, in early 1986, between the LF and President Jumayyil's Kata'ib, tension soon resurfaced. Disagreement deepened on the eve of the presidential elections. A mere week after Jumayyil stepped down, LF military units took over his stronghold in the

internal upheaval against NLP leader Camille Sham`un. The LF leader was also connected to other intimidation schemes involving the use of force, notably the explosion of a booby-trapped car at a Lebanese Front meeting.

Metn region. The militia asserted control over all regional Kata'ib party offices as well as several institutions partially owned or controlled by the former President, notably the 'Amal and Le Réveil newspapers and the House of the Future Research Center. The man who had attempted to control LF institutions was losing some of his own—and his party's— institutional base to the militia.

The institutionalization of the Lebanese Forces also triggered a struggle for influence with the Lebanese Army. As discussed earlier, 'Awn took advantage of his nomination as interim Prime Minister to reassert the 'rule of law' and question the legitimacy of the LF's claim to represent Lebanon's Christians. On the morrow of the first LF-Army confrontation, and while Samir Ja'ja' gave in to his exigencies, General 'Awn was still defiant. He described the militia as fascists and Mafiosi who collected illegal taxes and ran bars and brothels. "I have nothing to propose to the LF," he said, "they cannot express any wishes. I am the authority. I stopped the fighting because I was asked to do so. But the problem remains and we seek a radical and final solution."[255] In January 1990, the General would issue an ultimatum requesting overnight dismantling of the LF military apparatus. He would also demand that all LF civilian institutions be closed. This would spark the 'war of attrition,' the most ruthless episode of inter-Christian power struggles.

Inter-Christian discord intensified as LF institutions grew in power and scope. But institutionalization did not only heighten the power struggle between the militia and potential challengers for representation of the Christians, it also created a psychological

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[255] Françoise Chipaux, "Liban: trêve précaire," Le Monde (Paris), 20 February 1989.

distance between the 'faceless LF bureaucratic monster' and the population of the Christian enclave. Long gone were the days when the militia was personified and when the population identified with the *shabab*. The exactions committed by militiamen—in spite of efforts by the leadership to impose sanctions on transgressors—reinforced the stereotype of militiamen as brigands. The Lebanese Forces attempted to engage in damage control. In 1985, the militia had already dropped direct taxes on households and businesses in response to popular resentment fuelled by sharply deteriorating economic conditions. In 1989, the militia stepped up its involvement in social services and the provision of collective goods in an attempt to shore up patrimonial links with the population. Nevertheless, exactions committed by members of the LF and the growing estrangement of a population tired of the war system dominated the popular evaluation of the militia.[256]

COSTS, BENEFITS, AND STRATEGIC CHOICES

Why did the Lebanese Forces reject the outcome of the Lausanne peace talks, accept the Tripartite Agreement (only to spoil it later) and finally accept the Ta'if Agreement? And how did their assessment of the situation, both within their zone of control and in relation to other protagonists in the civil war, affect their calculus of costs and benefits? In the penultimate section of this chapter, I show that the strategic choice of the Lebanese Forces leadership, in each of the three instances, is consistent with the expectations of the model of militia decision-making that I developed in chapter four.

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[256]By 1988, a German study revealed that all militias had lost as much as fifty percent of their 1984 support. Theodor Hanf of the Arnold Bergstraesser Institut in Friburg conducted the study. It is quoted in Ghassan Tuéni, "Peut-on refaire le Liban?" *Politique Etrangère* 2 (summer 1990): 344-345.

The LF and the Lausanne Talks: Tactical Acceptance under Duress

When the outcome of the Lausanne Conference was announced, the Lebanese Forces rejected the talks as the "direct result of Syrian military pressure."[257] As discussed earlier in this chapter, the LF were ideologically opposed to the political settlement that emerged at Lausanne. The agreement did not secure gains for the militia. Its implementation threatened sources of LF income and strengthened the legitimacy of the Lebanese Front's claim to speak for the Christian community. However, the militia's expression of its disapproval was constrained by two considerations: the power struggle between its leadership and the more established Christian Lebanese political leaders and the overall balance of military forces.

The balance of military forces had tipped to the side of Syria's allies with the abrogation of the May 17 agreement, the "Battle of the Mountain," the Lebanese Army's expulsion from West Beirut, and the US abandonment of Lebanon. At a time when its relations with Israel were at an all-time low, the militia was highly dependent on the Lebanese Front for revenue. This dependence became more acute in the wake of the formation of the Karami government. In its efforts to strengthen central state authority, the government identified two immediate targets: the private media and illegal harbors. Both targets were areas of LF vulnerability as they provided the bulk of militia revenue. Both were essential to the continuity of LF institutions especially as revolutionary taxation was also coming under governmental attack. In this highly detrimental situation, the asymmetry of the patron-client relations between the LF and its internal allies carried the weight of the decision.

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[257] Evening Arabic News Broadcast, *Voice of Lebanon* (Beirut), 16 March 1984.

The Lebanese Front embraced the results of Lausanne. This seriously limited LF capability to translate opposition to the outcome of the talks into tangible actions. The LF abided by the military cease-fire and cooperated with the military committee charged with overseeing the cessation of hostilities. This tactical acceptance was designed to preserve LF institutions by avoiding a showdown with the strong and established political elites.[258] It would not be long, however, before the LF took advantage of the March *intifada* to turn the tables on the Lausanne peace settlement.

The LF and the Tripartite Agreement: Domestic Standings and Peace Prospects

On the eve of the Tripartite Agreement, the balance of military forces had reached a rough equilibrium. In spite of the LF defeat in Iqlim al-Kharrub and Eastern Sidon, the militia had regrouped in the territorially homogeneous Christian enclave. However, Christian political unity was torn asunder. Although the Lebanese Forces imposed their presence as an autonomous political actor on the Christian scene, the legitimacy of their representation was still questioned by the traditional leaderships. Moreover, the militia was also ridden with factionalism as the 9 May movement split the intifada leadership into two camps.

Ilyas Hubeiqa's decision to go ahead with the Tripartite Agreement in spite of serious reservations and outright opposition within the Christian camp can only be understood as the attempt of an embattled leader to secure his position by changing the balance of internal forces. Hubeiqa assessed the situation as a stark choice between two options: acceptance of

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[258] LF Commander Fadi Frem considered the cease-fire resolution as the essential outcome of the Lausanne Conference. He expressed LF approval of a cease-fire to which he pledged support. Evening Arabic News Broadcast, *Voice of Lebanon* (Beirut), 21 March 1984.

the agreement and resumption of fighting. When, on 27 December 1985, he failed to convince other Christian political forces of the soundness of his decision, the LF commander-in-chief declared "If the agreement is good, it will be beneficial to all; if it is not, I will shoulder full responsibility for it." This had been Hubeiqa's line throughout the course of negotiations. He had tried to win support for the agreement by arguing that the ensuing government of national unity would allow the Lebanese Forces to appoint at least ten ministers and another thirty parliamentarians. Hubeiqa even suggested that Ja'ja' be associated with him in the nomination process. In Karim Pakradouni's opinion "the peace settlement proposal reflected the power struggle more than it offered the basis for a national solution."[259]

The LF and the Ta'if Accord: Institutional Preservation in Hard Times

When the terms of the Ta'if Accord were first made public, the Lebanese Forces were enjoying a respite in their struggle with the Army. In spite of General 'Awn's defeat in the 'War of Liberation,' the Christian enclave was still relatively secure. However, the national balance of power had tipped in favor of the pro-Syrian Lebanese camp. The militia knew that Ta'if was the best deal a military loser could get.[260] However, it was concerned with what it perceived as the main source of threat to its institutional and financial interests: renewed fighting with the troops of 'Awn.

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[259] Karim Pakradouni, Le piège, 123.
[260] Informal discussion with Lebanese Forces officials, September 1989.

LF vulnerability to material losses had tremendously increased upon the second intifada.[261] This caused Samir Ja`ja` not only to accept the terms of the February truce with General `Awn but to make further concessions.[262] When `Awn urged the LF to take a clear stance vis-à-vis the Ta'if Accord, the militia was faced with two strategic choices with ominous consequences. Support of Ta'if meant disagreement with `Awn. This held the prospect of renewed intra-Christian fighting. On the other hand, rejection of Ta'if held the prospect of Syrian military intervention in support of the pro-Ta'if camp. Both choices threatened the LF institutional and financial interests.

As `Awn rebelled against Ta'if, the LF saw an opportunity to do away with a serious contender on the Christian scene.[263] According to Pakradouni, this was Ja`ja`'s intention as far back as September 1989. At the time, the LF Commander's calculations pivoted around the need to avoid a military showdown. Attacking `Awn, he assessed, would be more difficult than attacking Hubeiqa.[264] In an attempt to eschew the confrontation with `Awn, Ja`ja` promoted the establishment of a federal state as "the solution of the future, the peaceful outcome sought [by the Lebanese], the best option and the fittest alternative, yet

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[261] In the first Army-LF confrontation, the targets were LF harbors; at the outset of the second confrontation, army bombings and attempted takeovers focused on the LF headquarters and their National Treasury, respectively the seat of LF institutional and financial power.

[262] Ja`ja` refused to meet the foreign press throughout the 'War of Liberation.' Instructions to the LF Foreign Press Office were that nothing ought to be said that might usher an unwanted confrontation. The Lebanese Forces also halted recruitment of new members. R. Tarabay, former head of the LF Foreign Press Office, personal communication, March 1989.

[263] Karim Pakradouni, LF Deputy Commander-in-Chief, author interview, 6 August 1997.

[264] See Pakradouni, Le piège, 247. Such realpolitik considerations had already informed Ja`ja`'s reaction to the appointment of `Awn as transitional Prime Minister. As his assessment of the balance of power did not give the LF a clear advantage in the event of a battle, he chose to describe the `Awn cabinet as hukumat istiqlal (a government of independence). Ja`ja` expressed his disapproval of `Awn and his policies on several occasions, namely in a briefing to staff of the LF Foreign Relations Department and select invited journalists on the eve of the second LF-Lebanese Army confrontation

maybe the last chance."[265] Though this appeasement bid failed to prevent the eruption of fighting, it speaks to the contention that the primary motivation of the militia leadership was to safeguard its institutional and financial interests. Indeed, Ja`ja` accepted the fated military struggle only when prompted to relinquish all power over the militia and incorporate the LF within Army ranks. It was then that, unable to save the institutions of the LF through diplomacy and evasiveness, he resolved to fight for their preservation.

Upon the second LF-Army clash, the militia was in a position of clear disadvantage vis-à-vis the pro-Syrian camp. Support for the LF was at an all-time low. Internally, the Christian population was totally estranged from the militia. The LF's external allies, Israel and Iraq, were enmeshed in developments in the Gulf. When Ja`ja` extended formal recognition to the government of President Hrawi on 4 April 1990, nine months of blind artillery duels had resulted in a hurting stalemate for the Lebanese Forces and the troops of General `Awn. `Awn's challenge had forced the newly elected president and his cabinet to move to Ramlet al-Bayda in Syrian-controlled West Beirut. Now that the seat of power had moved outside of their zone of control, the LF could not exert any influence on national decision-making. Coupled with the militia's military exhaustion, this held the prospect of sidelining the LF from any role in a post-conflict Lebanon. In contradistinction, acceptance of Ta'if and of the government of President Hrawi, meant that the Lebanese Forces would become an important partner in peace.[266]

265."Libanorama News Report," *Voice of Lebanon* (Beirut), 15 January 1990.
266 Roger Dib, author interview.

Adhering to Ta'if held the promise that the LF would be spared the ruthless fate which met `Awn's units at the hands of Syrian troops in October 1990. Toufic Hindi, political advisor to Samir Ja`ja`, comments that while the Lebanese Forces had the means to reject the Tripartite Agreement, they were aware that rejection of Ta'if would have led to a bigger catastrophe.[267] The move also salvaged non-military LF institutions from dismantling. Indeed, as early as June 1990, Ja`ja` envisaged the post-Ta'if role of the militia as follows:

> Upon the re-establishment of the State, the LF will become a political party. **Its social, economic, and media institutions will continue to function.** As for its military institutions, they will either be dismembered or incorporated within the state's institutions.[268] (My emphasis)

THE DURABILITY OF PEACE: AN INSTITUTIONAL PERSPECTIVE

This chapter has analyzed the strategic choices of LF decision-makers at the time of the Lausanne peace talks, the Tripartite Agreement, and the Ta'if Accord. I have argued that LF leaders took decisions based on a dual cost-benefit calculus. First, they evaluated the position of the militia relative to other protagonists in the conflict, then they evaluated the internal cost of any given choice, be it compromise or rejection. At all times, militia leaders had an eye on the preservation of their organizational and financial interests, which derived from control of the LF institutions.

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[267] Toufic Hindi, author interview.
[268] Interview with Samir Ja`ja`, *Al-Dawliyya* (Paris), 27 June 1990.

In this section, I take the explanation one step further and assert that the logic of the argument allows us to account for the durability of the settlements reached in each of the three instances. I submit that neither the Lausanne talks nor the Tripartite Agreement had much chances of being implemented whereas the conditions that surrounded LF acceptance of Ta'if guaranteed that the militia would not spoil that specific settlement.

The Lausanne Talks and the Tripartite Agreement: Bad Timing or Missed Opportunities?

Neither the Lausanne reconciliation talks nor the Tripartite Agreement should have been expected to deliver lasting peace. Even if the other parties to the conflict had been serious about their commitment to peace, the Christian political forces were not. In both instances, Christian negotiators were unable to deliver the acquiescence of all the Christian political forces. Hence, in both instances, the chances of spoiling were high.

The Lebanese Forces vehemently opposed the outcome of the Lausanne Reconciliation Conference. However, the militia was in no position to block the agreement. Commenting on the LF leadership's strategic choice, Samir Ja'ja' explains "The opposition was internal and political because, at this juncture, the fate of the LF was being reconsidered [by the Lebanese Front and the Kata'ib Party] upon the death of Bashir Jumayyil."[269] The militia's decision to cooperate with the military committee in charge of supervising the cease-fire was tactical. In no way should it have been interpreted as LF assent to the outcome of the Lausanne talks. The militia dragged its feet on the implementation of other

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[269] Samir Ja'ja', LF Commander-in-Chief, author interview, 3 August 1993.

normalization steps. Samir Ja'ja' refused to dismantle the Barbara checkpoint and thus remove an obstacle to reopening the coastal highway linking all Lebanese regions. But this opposition would not be the determining factor in the failure of the Lausanne settlement. Political paralysis hampered the introduction of political reforms into the Lebanese system. In the meantime, militias reasserted control over various regions of the country.

There were obvious ideological reasons for LF disagreement with the terms of the Tripartite Agreement. However, the power struggle on the Christian scene was one of the main determinants of internal opposition to Hubeiqa. The weakness of Hubeiqa's domestic base should have raised concerns that dissatisfied Christian political leaderships would move to spoil the agreement. Upon the signing of the Tripartite Agreement, Hubeiqa attempted to silence potentially serious opposition. Threatening challenges could come from two sources, the pro-Ja'ja' faction of the LF that opposed the substance of the Agreement, and President Amin Jumayyil who still commanded power among Christian ranks.[270]

Not only did Hubeiqa attempt to monopolize Christian decision-making, he also negotiated an agreement that reduced Maronite political influence and planned to disband militias. For Ja'ja' and his men, implementation of the Agreement had two dreadful consequences. These ambitious emerging rural young leaders would lose their chance to have their say in politics. The planned disbanding of the LF would strip them of their institutional roles, the same roles that provided them with an opportunity to become political actors in a

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[270] The office of the presidency provided Jumayyil with prerogatives that gave him political leeway in spite of his isolation. He also maintained a group of loyalists in the Metn. The hometown of Pierre Jumayyil, Bikfaya, is located in this region. Local Kata'ib members are staunch supporters of the Jumayyil family, bound to the party more by tribal allegiances than by party solidarity.

country where entry into the political 'club' was by invitation mostly. Moreover, they would also be denied the benefits accruing from control over the institutions of the LF.[271] In this instance, ideological, institutional, and financial considerations prompted part of the LF leadership to reject the Tripartite Agreement. The militia's military capabilities were enrolled in the defense of those interests. As a result, the strategic choice of the LF expressed itself as a military upheaval. Backed by a temporary convergence of interests with the Kata'ib of the Metn loyal to Amin Jumayyil, the LF overthrew Hubeiqa in a swift, one day operation, on 15 March 1986. His deposition dealt the deathblow to the Tripartite Accord. The central role of organizational and financial interests was starkly illustrated by the conditions under which Hubeiqa was permitted to leave the Christian areas. He was requested to formally resign his position on the LF executive committee and to return the contents of the National Treasury to the LF.

The Aftermath of Ta'if: LF Commitment to Peace in Theoretical Perspective

According to the predictions of the model developed in chapter four, the Lebanese Forces would not have been expected to spoil the Ta'if Agreement.[272] However, the LF decided to boycott the 1992 parliamentary elections. In the following section, I argue that the LF decision to boycott the elections was consistent with the militia's incentives in accepting Ta'if. In spite of the group's history of violence in spoiling earlier agreements,[273] the LF

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[271] Since accessing high-ranking positions within the LF, the young leaders had become acutely aware of the benefits accruing from control over the LF institutions. It should be recalled that most of these young men came from middle class families that migrated to the capital in the early seventies in search of better living conditions.

[272] The Lebanese Forces did not renege on their commitment until 1994, when the LF party was banned, LF institutions were dismantled by force, and LF leaders prosecuted and thrown in jail.

[273] Notably the Tripartite Agreement reached in December 1985.

decided not to resort to weapons in their opposition. This, I argue, is also in line with the expectations of the theoretical framework proposed above.

With the outbreak of the Gulf War, implementation of Ta'if gradually fell into the hands of Syria. In this context, LF support of Ta'if on ideological grounds proved increasingly difficult. The militia's commitment to the premises of "Maronitism" grew increasingly irreconcilable with the contours of the emerging second republic. The implementation of the Ta'if Accord looked like "an attempt to eliminate the Lebanese Forces as a player on the political scene."[274]

In compliance with the provisions of Ta'if, the first government of national unity introduced political reforms into the Constitution. Of all the aspects of the agreement this was by far the most successful and the least controversial. This relative ease can be attributed to the nature of the reforms. Most of the amendments introduced by Ta'if had already been proposed in earlier rounds of negotiations; "although Ta'if is the first negotiated accord since 1975 that has endured, the settlement it embodies did not evolve in a vacuum; rather it rests on principles discovered during earlier, unsuccessful searches for peace."[275]

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[274] Toufic Hindi, author interview.
[275] Hani A. Faris, "The Failure of Peacemaking in Lebanon, 1975-1989," in *Peace for Lebanon?* 28.

The government also implemented the "Greater Beirut" security plan, the first stage in the disarmament of militias. The plan provided for the evacuation of all militias from Beirut. According to its provisions, the army would take over all the maritime harbors, a major source of militia revenue. In a second stage, the cabinet planned the dissolution of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias and the confiscation of their weapons. In March 1991, the main Lebanese militias were declared officially dissolved. Much of their heavy equipment was collected, although some of it was sold outside the country.[276]

Initially, the Lebanese Forces resisted disbanding. They requested the prior disarming of Palestinian fighters and the redeployment of Syrian troops from the Beirut area to eastern Lebanon. Later, the militia hinted that it would maintain its military apparatus in northern Lebanon as long as Hizballah militants were allowed to carry weapons.[277] The Lebanese Forces had good reasons to worry about disarming. Upon LF withdrawal from the Greater Beirut area in December 1990, frequent incidents were reported involving the ransacking of LF offices. Moreover, Syrian troop redeployment was not going ahead as scheduled. In October 1990 Syrian units had entered Christian regions formerly under the control of General 'Awn. Syrian withdrawal from these areas, scheduled to follow the Lebanese Army's deployment, was not fully implemented. In spite of these security concerns, the LF ultimately dismantled their military apparatus. The militia removed its heavy artillery and ammunitions from Lebanese territory, returned to the Lebanese Army military

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[276] The Lebanese Forces, for example, sold some of their equipment to the Bosnian Serbs.

[277] Hizballah had tied its own disbanding to Israel's compliance with UN Security Council Resolution 425. The party's refusal to disarm was ultimately endorsed following an agreement between Syria and Iran. Under the terms of the agreement, Hizballah was allowed to function as a resistance movement in southern Lebanon and the eastern Biqa` but vowed to function only as a political party in Beirut itself and other areas under the control of the Lebanese authorities.

equipment that initially belonged to it, and even offered some of its own military equipment to the army.[278]

Christian parties to the Ta'if Accord accepted the reformulation of the political system and the end of Christian preponderance in State affairs in counterpart for a real partnership with other parties. In reality, they were increasingly marginalized in post-Ta'if Lebanon. LF political retreat became evident as the government turned a deaf ear to the militia's stances concerning crucial issues commanding a national consensus. The LF representative in the first post-conflict government, Minister Roger Dib, boycotted cabinet meetings; the LF was not represented in the second government. The militia distanced itself from the center of decision-making.

In 1992, the LF joined in a general Christian boycott of the first post-conflict parliamentary elections. In the words of one analyst, "the context of 1992 ... greatly fed the fears, and provided grounds for objection for most of the personalities opposed to the elections."[279] One of the most serious arguments in favor of the boycott revolved around implementation of Ta'if's provisions concerning Syrian troop withdrawal, initially scheduled to be completed by September 1992.[280] On the eve of the elections, Syrian vice-president `Abd al-Halim Khaddam linked this withdrawal to the complete de-confessionalization of

[278] Najah Abu Munsif, "Al-Quwwat al-lubnaniyya tarwi qissat silm al-sanatayn," [The Lebanese Forces Tell the Story of Two Years of Peace], *Al-Diyar* (Beirut), 4 December 1992.
[279] Joseph Bahout, "Liban: Les élections législatives de l'été 1992," *Monde arabe Maghreb Machrek* 139 (January-March 1993): 55.
[280] Ibid.

Lebanese politics.[281] Several Christian political personalities interpreted this attitude as an attempted Syrian "takeover" of Lebanon.

The Lebanese Forces repeatedly pointed to the undemocratic character of the elections, describing them as *"intikhabat ta`yin"* [elections by appointment]. Ta'if stipulated that parliamentary elections shall be held according to a new electoral Law on the basis of the Muhafaza. The law

> ... shall respect the principles which ensure: a) coexistence among the Lebanese communities; b) political representation for all classes and age groups in the population; and c) the effectiveness of that representation, after redrawing the administrative map within the framework of the unity of the land, the people, and the institutions.[282]

But the new electoral law "made a mockery of the Ta'if Agreement and the basic principles of consistency."[283] The law was sent to Parliament over the objections of Christian ministers. This clearly transgressed the stipulation that no major issues would be settled without a two-thirds majority in government. The principle of holding elections on the basis of the *muhafaza* [governorate] was also transgressed. The governorate principle would have encouraged moderate multi-confessional voting. It was only applied in regions where there was no doubt on the political loyalties of the would-be parliamentarians. In regions where the elections were expected to be contested by anti-Syrian forces, or where Syria sought to reward one client over another, the *muhafaza* was abandoned in favor of the smaller, more homogenous *qada'* [district]. Thus, a special status was accorded for the Druze in

[281] In a declaration to the Lebanese Arab language daily *As-Safir* on November 17, 1992, Khaddam made the withdrawal of the Syrian forces conditional on complete deconfessionalization of Lebanese politics, thus postponing this isuue *ad eternam*.
[282] "The Ta'if Agreement," 164.

predominantly Maronite Mount Lebanon to secure the election of Syrian ally, PSP leader Walid Junblatt. Mount Lebanon, a stronghold of Christian opposition, was divided into a number of constituencies to decrease the electoral chances of opposition candidates.

Why did the Lebanese Forces choose not to resort to violence in their opposition to the holding of parliamentary elections? This is a valid question, especially in view of the militia's prior history of violence in disrupting settlements with which it disagreed. One possible answer looks to the success of the demobilization process. It could be argued that the LF did not possess the necessary military might to use force. However, this was not the case. A number of LF officials have since acknowledged that their compliance with the requisites of demobilization were partial at this juncture. The LF, like most other militias in Lebanon, concealed some of their equipment as a guarantee against unexpected developments in peace implementation. Another explanation highlights the futility of military opposition when the adversary has overwhelming superiority. It is true that the firepower of the LF was no match for the might of the 35,000 men-strong Syrian force in Lebanon. However, spoiling does not necessarily entail winning, just disruption. Finally, a third explanation derives from the discussion of LF incentives in accepting Ta'if. If indeed, the LF accepted the agreement to safeguard their institutions, then a cost-benefit analysis would rule out the resort to violence. Indeed, short of a guaranteed military victory, any attempt at using force could backfire and trigger a Syrian clampdown on the institutions of the Lebanese Forces. According to LF Deputy Commander, Karim Pakradouni, the

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[283] See Paul Salem, "The Wounded Republic: Lebanon's Struggle for Recovery," *Arab Studies Quarterly* 16, 4 (fall 1994): 56.

salvation of institutions remained an important consideration.[284] These institutions were still the source of power and riches for many a militia member.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has analyzed the strategic choices of LF leaders vis-à-vis three proposed peace settlements: the Lausanne talks, the Tripartite and the Ta'if agreements. I have shown that neither a pure military nor a pure ideological explanation can account for these various choices. To understand the calculus of costs and benefits in which LF leaders engaged, one also needs to scrutinize the impact of institutions on the strength of the militia's domestic coalition and on its ability to sustain negative changes in the military balance of forces. The discussion has established that LF decision-makers had an eye on the preservation of their organizational and financial interests as well as on achieving specific political objectives. It has also traced the rising vulnerability of the militia to material losses and the impact of institutions on intra-militia factionalism and relations with internal political allies. The discussion accounted for the strategic choices of LF decision-makers at all three historical junctures but it also went further. In the last section, I demonstrated that an understanding of the incentives that bring militia leaders to the negotiating table can also lend insight into the durability of any given peace settlement.

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[284] Even after the dismantling of the LF in 1994, their institutions did not totally disintegrate. However their preservation is increasingly difficult. Karim Pakradouni, author interview.

VII. Behind the Stage in Republika Srpska

The situation in Bosnia is inextricably tied to the wars of succession in the former Yugoslavia. In the chain of events leading to the dismemberment of the Federal Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia, leaders of the Serbian, Croatian and Slovenian Republican elites rode the tide of nationalist sentiment. They attempted to destabilize their adversaries internally by "encouraging ethnic conflicts on their territories, or by tolerating and allowing the drafting of 'volunteers' or mercenaries to be sent to areas affected by ethnic rebellion."[285] The diverse and complex ethnic mosaic of Bosnia-Herzegovina acted as a magnifying lens for the problems of the country.

As a country surrounded by two strong neighbors (Croatia and Serbia) with stakes in its political situation, Bosnia shares a number of similarities with Lebanon including a troubled history of conquest and re-conquest. However, misunderstandings and misrepresentations of Bosnia's history have suggested that the various Bosnian ethnic groups harbored enduring rivalries towards each other. This gave rise to the simplistically powerful thesis of 'ancient ethnic hatreds' which blamed the war on these rivalries.[286] Nothing could be further from the truth. Hatreds and rivalries have existed in Bosnia's past but they were neither immutable nor absolute, nor were they the immediate cause of the war.

This chapter has two inter-related purposes. First, it seeks to disentangle the web of myths and misconceptions surrounding the war in Bosnia. Second, it introduces the most

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[285] Dušan Janjić, "Resurgence of Ethnic Conflict in Yugoslavia," 35.
[286] See for example, Robert Kaplan, *Balkan Ghosts: A Journey through History* (New York: St. Martin's

reviled yet least analyzed or understood group in this conflict, the Bosnian Serbs. In the remainder of this exposition, I set the stage for an analysis of three Bosnian Serb strategic choices vis-à-vis the Vance-Owen Peace Plan, the Contact Group Plan, and the Dayton Peace Agreement. I review Serb ideology focusing on the criteria that Bosnian Serb leaders used in their evaluation of proposed peace settlements. I also trace the growth of institutions that came to be known as the Bosnian Serb Republic [Republika Srpska or RS]. Finally, I capture the rise of financial and organizational interests that accompanied the establishment of Republika Srpska by discussing the emergence of intra-RS factionalism and the gradual worsening of relations between Belgrade and Pale.

THE BOSNIAN CONFLICT: CIVIL WAR OR WAR OF AGGRESSION?

There are competing interpretations of the nature of the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992-1995). Haris Silajdzić, Prime Minister of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Muslim-Croat Federation), talks about the "original sin" committed by those who consider the conflict a civil war.[287] According to his (widely shared) interpretation, the war was an aggression by the rump Federal Republic of Yugoslavia on the newly independent republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Proponents of this interpretation focus on the role of the Yugoslav army in the military operations. They also highlight the close relations between President Slobodan Milošević of Yugoslavia and the Bosnian Serb leadership. Silajdzić, for example, emphasizes that the Bosnian Serb leaders are not natives of the

Press, 1993).

[287] Haris Silajdzić, Bosniac Prime Minister, author interview, 13 September 1998.

republic.[288] From a policy perspective, this approach led foreign negotiators to privilege Milošević as their prime Serb interlocutor under the assumption that he would be able to deliver the Bosnian Serbs.[289] Analytically, the approach resulted in neglect of two of the three internal parties to the conflict. Policy analysts and scholars seldom study the Bosnian Croats and Bosnian Serbs.[290] Rather, the two groups are dismissed as mercenaries at the hire of Presidents Tudjman and Milošević respectively.

This research adopts a different interpretation. I argue that there are two ways of understanding the wars of succession in the former Yugoslavia. First, we can talk about a series of civil conflicts in the context of a disintegrating state. From this perspective, the republican governments of Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia were leaders of secessionist movements. However, upon international recognition of the new Croatian and Bosnian states, the conflict in these two republics must be analyzed in the context of early state formation processes. This distinction does not mean to suggest that foreign intervention in the Bosnian conflict was minimal or inconsequential. Instead, it highlights the existence of meaningful differences in the stakes of the parties to each type of conflict. Civil conflicts within the disintegrating Yugoslav State were essentially about the equal rights of republics to decide their destiny after the federal state's collapse. Civil conflicts within the emerging successor states were about the equal rights of the constituent nations to self-determination.

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[288] Ibid. Though they were not necessarily born in Bosnia, the Bosnian Serb leaders were political personalities in Bosnia before its independence. Biljana Plavšić and Nikola Koljević, for example, represented the Serbs in the 1990 collective presidency of the then-Yugoslav Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

[289] The difficulties encountered in reaching and implementing a peace agreement suggest that Milošević's control of the Bosnian Serbs was, to say the least, partial.

[290] There is only one English-language book devoted to a mainly historical study of the Bosnian Serbs.

Fundamentally, the Bosnian war is "a conflict between the claimants of equal collective rights for different national groups."[291] These two issues are analytically distinct. In practice, Yugoslav constitutional ambiguities made it difficult to distinguish between the two.

Tito's Yugoslavia adopted Lenin's approach to the national question. It recognized the separate existence of Yugoslav nations and sought to protect their sovereign rights in the framework of a federal system. However, nations and peoples were not conceptually distinct (both translate as *narod* in Serbo-Croat). The peoples of Yugoslavia had rights as constituent nations of the federal republics and simultaneously as individual members of nations. The problem lay with the fact that the republics and the constituent nations were not coterminous and that the republics grew increasingly powerful at the expense of the nations. Indeed, as the organization of the Yugoslav economy "emphasized territorial over functional organization and became more and more decentralized with successive marketizing reforms,"[292] sovereignty increasingly came to rest with the republics that mediated between citizens' interests and the policies of the center.

In this context, the dissolution of the former Yugoslavia created a problem for its constituent nations. Whereas some republics like Slovenia were 'ethnically' homogeneous, others like Bosnia were not. The Serbs were the most scattered nation with significant populations living outside Serbia. The rise of nationalist republican governments created a dilemma for national minorities bringing the issue of national self-determination to the fore.

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[291] Milorad Pupovac, "Piecing Together the Balkan Puzzle," in *Yugoslavia: The Former and the Future*, 141.

[292] Susan Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy: Chaos and Dissolution after the Cold War* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1995), 30.

But whereas the international community acknowledged the rights of republics to seek independence, it remained silent about the right to self-determination of the Yugoslav constituent nations. When the Republic of Serbia asked "Do the Serbian people in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina have the right to self-determination?" the Arbitration Commission set up by the European Community to study the issue answered,

> "International law at its current stage of development does not specify all the consequences of the right to self-determination. ... Whatever the circumstances, the right to self-determination may not lead to a change of borders existing at the moment of independence (*uti possetidis juris*). ... If within a country there is one or more groups ... these groups have ... the right to recognition of their identity."[293]

In the remainder of its answer, the Arbitration Commission proceeded to equate the rights of constituent nations with those of national minorities. The Commission argued that constituent nations should enjoy all the rights of minorities in conformity with international law and that they ought to be granted the right to national determination if necessary. In the extreme nationalist climate that accompanied the breakdown of the old Yugoslav order, this was not a reassuring answer.

Having made the determination that the Bosnian conflict is a civil war I turn to the question "why does this analytical distinction matter?" I argue that this distinction is important to understand the nature of the protagonists to the conflict. The definition of the conflict as a civil war allows me to analyze the Bosnian Serbs not as puppets of Belgrade but as Bosnian actors with legitimate concerns. By the same token, it also allows me to reject the

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[293] Branislava Alendar, "Reflection on Nationalism and Minorities in Yugoslavia," in *Nationalism and Minorities*, Michael Freeman, Dragomir Pantić, and Dušan Janjić, eds. (Belgrade: Institute of Social Sciences and England: University of Sussex, 1995), 89, fn.7.

Bosnian Serbs' claims that theirs was or (some would even go as far to say) should be allowed to become an independent state.

In spite of claims to the contrary, the protagonists of this conflict are essentially all Bosnians. The main Bosnian Serb political party, the Srpska Demokratska Stranka [SDS— Serbian Democratic Party] of Radovan Karadžić, was established two months after the SDA of Alija Izetbegović, the first Bosnian nationalist party.[294] The Serb nationalist rhetoric of the SDS has often been used as proof that the party was not a legitimate Bosnian political force but an extension of Belgrade's expansionist designs in Bosnia-Herzegovina. This argument overlooks the fact that Bosnia's Serbs were genuinely concerned about their physical safety in the event of the republic's accession to independence. Their fears were grounded in the very real and relatively recent memory of genocidal atrocities against ordinary Serbs in World War II. The SDS leadership argued that "Serbs had fought two world wars on the winning side in order to ensure the security which a constitutional connection with Serbia would guarantee."[295]

Another argument is that the Serbs are at best a minority in Bosnia and that they should not have an equal say in Bosnian affairs as the majority nation, the Muslims. The use of demographics in support of specific political positions is not unique to this case. However, even this argument can be disproved upon careful consideration. The Muslim demographic majority in Bosnia is a relatively recent phenomenon. "In fact, the Muslims

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[294]In the former Yugoslavia, the term 'national' refers to the constituent nations, i.e. Serbs, Croats, Muslims, and Slovenes. The SDA was established on 26 May 1990 as a "political alliance of Yugoslav citizens belonging to Muslim cultural and historical traditions."
[295] Misha Glenny, *The Fall of Yugoslavia: The Third Balkan War* (New York: Penguin Books, 1996), 155.

only overtook the Serbs as the largest nation in Bosnia some time in the late 1960s."[296] Yugoslav patterns of migration followed routes laid by family and schooling. Thus, they had an ethnic dimension. This is particularly true in Bosnia-Herzegovina where emigration was highest in economically declining regions and in ethnically mixed communes.[297] In particular, the Bosnian Serbs who tended to live in rural areas were attracted to the more fertile plains of Serbia and Vojvodina. Internal migration in search of better economic opportunities might have changed the numbers of Serbs residing in Bosnia. It did not modify the fact that for a substantial number of Serbs, Bosnia was home. Though this was unproblematic before the breakup of Yugoslavia, it became a very real issue with the prospect of the republic's independence.

Can the intervention of Belgrade in the Bosnian war discredit the civil war thesis? When the Bosnian Serbs held their own referendum on sovereignty they had the full backing of the JNA [*Jugoslovenska Narodna Armija*—Yugoslav People's Army] and of the regime in Belgrade. When the conflict erupted in full force, in April of 1992, the JNA fought on the side of the Bosnian Serbs. A number of smaller militias, including the—by now infamous— Tiger units of Arkan and the Chetniks of Vojislav Šešelj, came across the border with Serbia to lend a 'helping hand'. Heavy foreign intervention is commonplace in internal conflict. The military and political interference of Yugoslavia (and Croatia) cannot be dismissed in any analysis of the war in Bosnia. The Yugoslav and Croat intervention arguably made the situation worse. It is not sufficient ground to call the conflict an international war. By

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[296] Tim Judah, *The Serbs: History, Myth, and the Destruction of Yugoslavia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 154.
[297] Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy*, 248.

convention, international wars are conflicts between the regular militaries of two or more independent states. The formal withdrawal in May 1992 of JNA troops from Bosnia weakens the claim that the war was merely a Yugoslav aggression on Bosnia and Herzegovina.[298] It is however true that this withdrawal did not sever the ties between the Vojska Republike Srpske and the JNA. The JNA continued to arm and equip the VRS whose officers were mostly former JNA military cadres.[299] This is not a unique situation however as one needs only recall the role of the Greek and Turkish armies in the Cypriot conflict, or the role of India in Sri-Lanka.

The Bosnian Serbs claimed that they had established a legitimate state apparatus but Republika Srpska never gained international recognition as an independent state. Even Belgrade held recognition from the RS. The case against Bosnian Serb statehood is so clear that it does not warrant further elaboration. However, in conjunction with the preceding discussion of the nature of the war, it strengthens the classification adopted in this research. The Bosnian Serbs, an armed group seeking to protect political power against the Bosnian State, qualify as a militia according to the definition offered earlier in this study.

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[298] Haris Silajdzić, author interview.

[299] By January 1992, President Milošević had ordered the transfer of all Bosnian Serb JNA officers to Bosnia. The officers who remained behind when the JNA withdrew "were not citizens of Yugoslavia, which, by then, was another country." Laura Silber and Alan Little, *Yugoslavia: Death of a Nation* (New York: Penguin Books, 1997), 209, 218.

DESCENT INTO HELL: THE WAR IN BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

In 1980, when Josip Broz Tito died, he left behind a country with weak federal state institutions. Since the 1974 Constitution, federal institutions—to the exception of the JNA—had become increasingly irrelevant to the decision-making process. Their only role was to achieve subsequent legalization for political decisions taken by Tito and the Communist Party. Parallel to this weakening of the central state institutions, progressive decentralization strengthened the republics vis-à-vis the center. Substantial differences among the republics in levels of economic development, demographic movements, and ethnic structure contributed to the process of disintegration. When conflicts erupted, the decision-making procedures within the collective presidency ensured the paralysis of the state.[300] This is not the place for a detailed recollection of the specifics of the disintegration of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Suffice it to say that, after the "Ten-Day War" which established Slovene independence and the war in Croatia (June-November 1991), "the march to war in Bosnia-Herzegovina was a terrible doomed procession."[301]

Upon recognition of Croatia as an independent state by the European Community, Bosnia faced a stark choice: either remain in Serb-dominated Yugoslavia or declare independence. Each of these two options carried a risk. In a Serb-dominated Yugoslavia, Bosnian Muslims feared that they would become an oppressed minority. They often referred to the situation of the Kosovo Albanians in this respect. However, a declaration of independence ran against the wishes of the Bosnian Serbs who constituted thirty-three

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[300] In the post-Tito era, a collective presidency including representatives of all the republics and the two autonomous regions was set up to assume the highest executive office. This presidency took decisions by unanimity thus each republic had an effective veto right and could paralyze decision-making.

percent of Bosnia's pre-war population. This would mean an invitation to the regime of President Milošević to come to the rescue of his ethnic kin.

Belgrade was not the only worry with which President Izetbegović needed to concern himself. In Bosnia, tension ran high between Serbs, Croats, and Muslims. In September 1990, Serb-Muslim clashes erupted in Foča, a town on the Drina River. That same year, the first multiparty parliamentary elections returned a victory for nationalist parties, Izetbegović's SDA [Stranka Demokrastka Akcija or Party for Democratic Action], Karadžić's SDS, and the Croat HDZ [Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednive Bosne-i-Hercegovine or Croat Democratic Union of Bosnia-Herzegovina]. A fragile coalition of the three parties temporarily united against the Communist party held the collective Bosnian presidency.[302] However, strains in the coalition would soon tear it apart.

In February 1991, Izetbegović put a motion to discuss Bosnia's sovereignty before Parliament. The Bosnian President declared "I would sacrifice peace for a sovereign Bosnia-Herzegovina, but for that peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina I would not sacrifice sovereignty."[303] Serb deputies refused to discuss the motion. In August 1991, a last minute attempt by the moderate Muslim Bošniak Organization (MBO) to negotiate a Muslim-Serbian accord to preserve Bosnia's integrity failed. The agreement was accepted by Karadžić and allegedly by Milošević but Izetbegović rejected it. The SDA leader felt that the MBO initiative amounted to taking sides with the Serbs, an unacceptable position in light of events in Bosnia and in

[301] Silber and Little, Yugoslavia, 205.
[302] Modeled after the Yugoslav rotating presidency, the Bosnian Presidency had two places each for Muslims, Serbs, Croats and one place for a Yugoslav.
[303] Quoted in Silber and Little, Yugoslavia, 211.

neighboring Croatia where an undeclared war raged.

In October 1991, Bosnian Serb deputies would walk out of Parliament in protest at the Republic's attempts to secede from Yugoslavia. Ignoring this opposition, the remaining members of the Bosnian Parliament approved the holding of a referendum on independent sovereignty.[304] The Muslim and Croat members of Parliament also amended the Bosnian constitution. They replaced the parliament's rule of decision-making by consensus by a majority vote. Consequently, Bosnian Serbs fears increased that they were "about to be excluded from the governance of the area that they had long regarded as an integral part of Serbia's historical patrimony."[305] When the referendum finally took place on 29 February and 1 March 1992, the Serbs boycotted it but 64.4% of eligible voters cast their votes and 99.7%of those votes favored independence. The dye was cast; Bosnia would soon descend to hell.

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[304] It is useful to note that, at the time of independence in 1992, Bosnia's population numbered approximately 4.3 million people of whom 44% were Muslims, 33% Serbs, 19% Croats, and 4% described themselves as "Other" (a category including Yugoslav). Yugoslav Census of 1991 quoted in Edgar O'Ballance, *Civil War in Bosnia, 1992-1994* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 2.

[305] Lenard Cohen, *Broken Bonds: Yugoslavia's Disintegration and Balkan Politics in Transition* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995), 242.

SERBIAN HISTORY AND IDEOLOGY—BOSNIAN SERB POLITICAL OBJECTIVES

"... History dominates every interview in the Bosnian war. The answer to a question about an artillery attack yesterday will begin in the year 925, invariably illustrated by maps."[306]

During the Yugoslav collapse and the subsequent Bosnian conflict, it became commonplace to talk of an overarching Serb mythology. However, there are subtle differences between the 'ideological imaginary' of FRY Serbs and Krajina Serbs in Croatia and Herzegovina. These differences are the product of dissimilar experiences in the distant and more recent past, experiences that lead the two groups to put distinct emphasis on the same historical events.

"There are two components to the Serb nation: those within and those without occupation."[307] Whereas the Serbs of Serbia and Montenegro (without occupation) share the basic premises of Serb ideology with their kin in Croatia and Bosnia, the nexus between Serbian identity and security is particular to the Krajina Serbs (within occupation). In the rest of this section, I draw the implications of Kosovo and the Vojna Krajina for contemporary Bosnian Serb ideology.

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[306] Ian Brough-Williams, "War without End? The *Bloody Bosnia* Season on Channel Four," in *Bosnia by Television*, James Gow, Richard Peterson, and Alison Preston, eds. (London: British Film Institute, 1996), 23.

[307] David Stewart-Howitt, Field Officer, European Community Humanitarian Organisation (ECHO), Banja Luka [formerly aide to UNPROFOR Commander, Sir Michael Rose], author interview, 2 September 1998.

Historical Memory: The Myth of Kosovo and the Dream of Greater Serbia

For all Serbs, the defining historical event is the battle of Kosovo. On St Vitus's day in 1389, the Turks vanquished the Serbian army on the Field of Blackbirds. Pressed by the Turks to choose between a battle to the death and capitulation, Tsar Lazar chose "the kingdom of heaven over worldly wealth and the betrayal of his nation to a foreign oppressor."[308] Before the battle, Serbia was "an empire which stretched from the Danube to the Pelopponese. It had a strong ambitious leader, an established dynasty, and it was by far the most powerful state in the Balkans."[309]

The loss at the battlefield in Kosovo ushered in centuries of Ottoman domination. Serbs look upon this historical event as a "spoiled opportunity." They believe that their political immaturity is the direct consequence of occupation. Hence, they blame the Muslims, perceived as the legacy of Turkish occupation, for aborting their path to statehood.[310] This link between Serbian history and its re-interpretation into ideology is not of recent vintage. Ilija Garašanin (1812-1874) is the first Serbian politician who articulated a national ideology incorporating the "lessons" of Kosovo in a document entitled *načertanije* [draft plan].

Načertanije is a blueprint for Greater Serbia. Garašanin reasoned that such a state was necessary because, Serbia being the only emerging independent Balkan State, the responsibility to prevent partition of the Balkans between Russia and Austria fell upon her in

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[308] Silber and Little, *Yugoslavia*, 71.
[309] Judah, *The Serbs*, 25. Judah's account of the pre-modern history of Serbia is the most complete and authoritative work on the subject to date.
[310] *Ibid.*

the event of Ottoman collapse. "The main thrust of Garašanin's argument was that the Serbs had been building an empire during the middle ages, but that the arrival of the Turks had put a stop to this."[311] This provided the impulse for his efforts to transform Serbia into a modern European state with a disciplined bureaucracy and a police force.

Kosovo provides the historical justification for Greater Serbia, the logical successor to the Serb state of the middle ages that would have thrived was it not for the defeat at the Field of Blackbirds. This was the underlying message of the highly controversial Memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences, written in 1986 and often considered the starting point of post-Tito Serbian nationalism. The Memorandum argued that Serbs had been unjustly treated in post-Second World War Yugoslavia. They were the victims of political and economic discrimination and their very existence as a nation was threatened. Though they had made the greatest military contribution and suffered the most casualties in the establishment of the Yugoslav State, they were "rewarded" by intentional dispersion in a clear attempt to thwart their unity. The disintegration of Yugoslavia thus threatened to hit the Serbs the hardest and to bring their dream of statehood to a definitive end. The implication of the Memorandum is stark: if the Serbs are ever to have their own state, the time to act is now or never.

The incorporation of Kosovo in the Serb national psyche accounts for the staunch refusal of Bosnian Serbs to part with their Serbian kin in the FRY. Bosnian Serb objections to Muslim suggestions that Bosnia and Herzegovina should consider independence are best

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[311] Judah makes the excellent point that this was not strictly true because the empire had begun to

understood in this framework. The Bosnian Serbs reacted violently to suggestions that held

the potential of shattering their dreams of the re-emergence of a Serbian state. Indicative of

their state of mind is the old Serbian slogan that came to embody the ideology of the

Bosnian Serbs, "Samo sloga Srbina Spašava" [only unity will save the Serbs].

The Land is Ours: The Krajina Experience and the Security-Territory Nexus

An important facet of Bosnian Serb ideology revolves around the concept of the

Vojna Krajina, or military frontier.[312] The Krajina was the defensive line of the Habsburg

Empire, a succession of fortresses designed to ward off further Ottoman expansion

westward. At its zenith, it stretched one thousand miles from the Adriatic, skirting around

the western and northern borders of Ottoman Bosnia, then along the Danube and

Transylvania's borders with the Ottoman Danubian principalities. Soldiers and their families

were granted privileges in recognition of the difficulty of their task, notably exemptions from

taxes and a right to the bounty of their excursions against the Turks. This encouraged many

a Serb to cross from the Ottoman to the Habsburg side and pledge loyalty to the imperial

crown.

In 1630, Ferdinand II issued a decree, the *Statuta Valachorum*, which defined the

status of the Serbs (then called Vlachs). In return for military service, the Vlachs were

exempt from feudal taxation and Croatian authority. They also won a large measure of self-

government. After 1691, the leader of the Serbian exodus from Kosovo, Patriarch Arsenije,

struck an even better deal with Emperor Leopold I. Under the terms of the agreement, the

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collapse because of internal feuding some twenty years before the Battle of Kosovo. *Ibid.*, 56-60.

Serbs were granted equivalent rights they had possessed under the Ottoman dispensation.[313] Hence, the patriarch could rule not only in religious matters but in secular ones as well.

However, the Habsburgs did not always cater to the needs and demands of their peasant soldiers. Periodically, the empire would bow to the demands of the Croatian and Hungarian nobility who also claimed authority in the area. Ultimately, the border came to be organized in such a way that the peasants did not own the land. The authorities granted land concessions to *zadryas* (extended family units) which, in turn, provided the army with a fixed number of soldiers. Increasingly, the empire sent these soldiers to fight its wars in distant places. It was therefore not surprising that they were immensely dissatisfied when the 1878 Congress of Berlin recognized Serbia as a *de jure* independent state but allocated the provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina to Austria-Hungary to administer.

The Vojna Krajina taught the Bosnian Serbs an important lesson. Serb self-governance and relative autonomy could be gained through military valor. However, real self-determination required an independent territorial base. In spite of their services to the Habsburg Empire, the Krajina Serbs found themselves annexed to Austria-Hungary in 1878. The Serbs' desire to live in one state had been overruled. The Krajina experience reinforced the Serb perception that statehood was a territorial issue as well as a 'national imperative'.

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[312] The discussion builds on the historical narrative provided by Judah. *Ibid*, 13-16.
[313] The Serbian State disappeared in the wake of Kosovo but the Serb Orthodox Church continued to exist. It was protected under the Ottoman millet system which allowed 'people of the Book' control over their religious and secular affairs, requiring them only to pay taxes to the authorities in Istanbul.

During World War II, Krajina Serbs came to associate territorially-based autonomy with security. Of all Serbian lands, the Krajina suffered most during the war. The Serbs of Bosnia and Croatia fell under the rule of the Ustaša leader, Ante Pavelić. Pavelić allied himself with the Germans and established the Independent State of Croatia.

> The method by which [he] sought to create his ethnically-pure territory was the annihilation of the Serbs as a people. ... The historical memory of an independent Croatian state that extended as far east as the Drina River—Bosnia's border with Serbia—made the Serbs, living west of the river, consider themselves the most vulnerable of all.[314]

The Serb experience with the Vojna Krajina is a cornerstone of contemporary Bosnian Serb ideology. Whereas the 'Kosovo syndrome' is widespread among Serbs regardless of their regional origin, the 'Krajina syndrome' is more acute among Bosnian and Croatian Serbs. The Bosnian and Croatian Serbs lived along the Krajina and saw themselves as the direct heirs of Krajina soldiers. Their proximity to Croats and Muslims heightened the perception that they served as the first line of defense for the whole Serbian people.

The Bosnian (and Croatian) Serbs sought unity with their ethnic kin in Serbia and Montenegro. In the meantime, they fiercely defended their right to Krajina lands. The 'Krajina experience' strengthened their resolve to defend the land with force if need be. Unlike the Serbs of Belgrade or Montenegro who wanted a Serb state but were more willing to negotiate the exact borders of that state, the majority of Bosnian and Croatian Serbs considered the Krajina an integral part of Serbia. As Susan Woodward perceptively understood, control over territory was central to the Bosnian Serbs. Without condoning the process, even 'population transfers' were carried with this in mind, "to consolidate ethnically

pure territories that would vote correctly in a referendum on sovereignty and in future elections and to justify government administration by their national group."[315]

This would lead not only to divergences between the Bosnian Serbs and Milošević but also to splits among the Bosnian Serbs. One of the deepest lines of divide inside the Bosnian Serb camp pitted Serbs favorable to territorial compromises over Sarajevo and Eastern Serbia against Serbs favorable to territorial concessions in the northwestern regions of the Krajina.

REPUBLIKA SRPSKA: ORIGINS AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

With the collapse of the former Yugoslavia, Serbs outside of Serbia became concerned about the prospect of becoming national minorities in the successor states of the former Yugoslavia. In Croatia and Bosnia, newly established Serb parties agitated to keep the two republics inside the Serb-dominated Yugoslav State. The first hint of Bosnian Serb organization comes in July 1990 with the creation of the Bosnian Serb party, Srpska Demokratska Stranka. The SDS was a branch of the party by the same name established in Croatia by Jovan Rašković.[316] Although they considered Croatia or Bosnia (as the case may be) as their homeland, SDS members considered the perpetuation of the Serb-majority

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[314] Silber and Little, *Yugoslavia*, 92.

[315] Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy*, 242.

[316] In Croatia, the SDS derived its main support from a chain of thirteen communes—in northern Dalmatia, eastern Lika, the Kordun, Banjia, and western Slavonia—in the Krajina. The Krajina is the historically famous Austrian military frontier where Serbs were recruited by the empire to serve as the first line of defense against Ottoman expansion in the Balkans.

Yugoslav state, "crucial to their 'Serbianism' and their perceived security."[317] Under the impulse of the SDS, Bosnian Serbs would reject the independence of Bosnia from the FRY. Bosnian Serb parliamentarians would walk out of the Bosnian parliament and establish the breakaway Republika Srpska.

The SDS Network

In the lead up to the war, the SDS began to extend its local influence in Serb-dominated regions of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The SDS was particularly active in eighteen communes in the northwestern and central parts of Bosnia directly adjacent or close to the Croatian Krajina. "Of the approximately 670,000 people living in these eighteen communes in 1981, 63.1 percent were Serbs, 15.1 percent Moslems, and 9.5 percent Croats, with another roughly 10 percent classified as 'Yugoslavs.'"[318] By autumn 1991, the SDS began to declare large parts of the republic as SAOs or Serbian Autonomous Regions. In these regions, the SDS network established local crisis committees. These groups of local Serb notables, often including municipal officers, the local police chief, and other local personalities (such as the headmasters of schools, owners of local businesses, etc.) prepared the community for the eventual outbreak of war by arming it and mustering available financial resources.

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[317] Cohen, *Broken Bonds*, 130.
[318] *Ibid.*, 141.

In mobilizing and arming the Serbs, the SDS and the local crisis committees relied heavily on the already available institutional structure provided by the Yugoslav Territorial Defense Organization (TO), the Yugoslav popular militia. As part of the Yugoslav concept of Total National Defense, the Yugoslav army had set up reserve forces in each republic. These forces were an integrated part of the army meant to substitute for the regular troops in case of a breakdown in communications. For political guidance, the TOs worked closely with the leadership of the local Communist Party. In heavily Serb-populated areas, the SDS and the crisis committees used the local TOs as a basis to recruit and organize the populace. The TOs allowed the quick identification of Serb reservists. They conveniently provided a structure for the mobilization effort. The only major change was that the SDS replace the Communist Party as the source of political guidance.

The local crisis committees also collected money for the war effort. One important source of revenues was the guest workers, Serbs who were working mainly in Germany but also elsewhere in Western Europe. In return for a "contribution," they could avoid draft in the VRS. Revolutionary taxation by local municipalities was also commonplace. "Municipalities had an increasingly important role in the logistics. For two to three hundred Deutschemarks per month, a person could become a contributor to a unit and thus be exempted from being sent to the front."[319]

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[319] Vladimir Milin, Staff Member, Economic Dept., Office of the High Representative, Banja Luka (formerly a JNA officer and later the VRS liaison officer with the international community in Bosnia), author interview, 5 September 1998. See also, Judah, *The Serbs*, 223.

The "State" and its Shadow: Dual Institutional Structures in the RS

Throughout the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Bosnian Serbs were castigated as villains, criminals, and Nazis. In the process, we came to think of them as an undifferentiated mass of bloodthirsty ethnic fanatics. "Constructs of evil often assume a monolithic entity. However, once we learned about Republika Srpska, we realized the extent of our ignorance."[320] In the words of a Serbian opposition leader, "You sometimes could only see the criminal element but behind it there was a well-organized state, parliament, and other levers of power."[321]

When it became clear that Bosnia would seek independence from Yugoslavia, the Bosnian Serbs sought to strengthen their case for secession from Bosnia and accession to Yugoslavia. One clear way of asserting their right to self-determination was through control over territory. The SDS established the breakaway Bosnian Serb Assembly and declared the Serb Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina (later renamed Republika Srpska). The institutions of the Bosnian Serb Republic were modeled after the institutional structures of the former Yugoslavia. In theory, state and party were separate. In practice, authority was highly centralized in the SDS, which did not only control the crisis committees but also the Bosnian Serb Assembly, the police apparatus, and some say even the para-militaries.[322] The Bosnian

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[320] David Harland, Head of Civil Affairs, UN Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, author interview, 24 August 1998.

[321] Branko Perić, Editor-in-Chief, Alternative Information Network [Alternativna Informativna Mreza], author interview, 5 September 1998.

[322] According to Milin, the political wing exercised influence on military operations through control of the para-militaries. The political wing, working through the municipalities, could for example decide to send para-military reinforcements when the army required backing. However, once on the ground, the paramilitaries were neither accountable nor controllable. In Prijedor, for example, Arkan's troops would parade around and pick young males walking down the street at random. They would shave the youngsters' heads and send them to the front. Milin, author interview.

Serb leadership replicated the institutions of the former Yugoslavia with a central difference, "the execution of power was exerted through the party line"[323] rather than through state institutions. Key SDS people doubled as state officials and the party assumed responsibility by taking over the institutions of the "state".

The Serb constitution gave overwhelming powers to the presidency, although the National Assembly retained some checks and controls. Pale's[324] control over the Assembly derived from the fact that the initial parliament was formed of those SDS members who had been elected in 1990 and later broke away from the Bosnian Parliament. There were few Krajina Serbs in the Bosnian Serb Assembly and those who had seats tended to be SDS appointees.[325] The last SDS control mechanism resided in the police forces. There were three separate police forces, the regular police forces, the special forces (State security), and the secret police (an SDS apparatus). All three technically reported to the Bosnian Serb ministry of the interior. The SDS used the police as a mechanism for the integration of militias, hence the police appointment of Srđan Knezević, commander of the "white wolves," for example.

Ethnic Cleansing, the Black Market, and Institution-Building

Ethnic cleansing was the instrument through which the Bosnian Serb Republic acquired its territorial definition. The ethnic cleansing campaign concentrated on two heavily Muslim-populated areas, northern Bosnia, and the Drina valley. In northern Bosnia,

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[323] David Stewart-Howitt, author interview.
[324] Pale was the center of SDS power. It would become the first 'capital' of Republika Srpska.
[325] A brief review of the top SDS leadership confirms this opinion. Karadžić, Krajišnik, Plavšić and Koljević were all residents of Sarajevo.

the two districts (*opština*) of Sanski Most and Prijedor had a slight Muslim majority before the war (47 and 44 percent respectively). Other surrounding districts, including Banja Luka, had substantial Muslim minorities. In the Drina valley, the majority of the population was Muslim.[326] The implementation of ethnic cleansing provided the Bosnian Serbs with one of the earliest opportunities for the establishment of institutions at the local level. "Every major population center in northern Bosnia acquired, during these months a "Bureau for Population Exchange."[327] These bureaus were in fact the agents of ethnic cleansing. Recruited locally among SDS sympathizers, bureau 'officials' carried out a systematic harassment of Muslim populations with a focus on local community leaders. People were summarily fired from their jobs; their homes and businesses were attacked. In some areas, restrictions on the free movement of Muslim inhabitants were imposed. At Čelinać, near Prijedor, Muslims were forbidden to drive or travel by car, to make phone calls other than from the post office, to assemble in groups larger than three, or to leave without the permission of the authorities. The methodic imposition of restrictions and conduct of harassment were only one aspect of this institutional development. Soon, the bureaus set up a system whereby terrorized Muslims would sign "official documents" willingly giving up their material property in return for the right to leave, itself often made official by the issuance of a departure "visa."

The real and movable property of Muslims was thus available for distribution. Real property was awarded to the "war municipality" or "crisis committee" of the particular town.

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[326] Some of the now sadly famous Muslim majority districts in the Drina valley are Zvornik, Srebernica, and Goražde (Muslims above 66 percent), Brčko, Rogatica, Višegrad, Bratunac, and Foča (Muslims between 50 and 66 percent).

[327] Silber and Little, *Yugoslavia*, 246.

Close associates of the local leaders got first pick; the remainder was used by state officials to control the Serb population. In Bijeljina, for example, one of the officials in charge of the cleansing campaign retooled in security services and real estate. He would "[shake] down local businessmen and [offer] incoming Serb refugees their pick of 'abandoned' homes, provided that they could come up with the requisite sweetener."[328] In Prijedor, Simo Drljaca, the police chief who played a leading role in setting up the notorious Serb concentration camps "managed to retain control over the resulting purified opština or district. Locally, he was known as Mr. Ten Per Cent, because of the kickbacks and extortion payments he squeezed from almost every enterprise in town."[329] The Serbian National Assembly regulated this whole arrangement by passing legislation on "abandoned property" and "temporary occupancy."

A few months into the war, an extremely lucrative black market economy developed.[330] The three most important sources of revenue were the provision of needed supplies, the sale and rental of military material to enemy factions, and the taxation of international aid. At the border between Serb-held Ilidža and Croat-held Kiseljak, it was petrol that the Serbs bought from the Croats. In Vareš, the Croat forces bought food and smuggled Macedonian cigarettes from their Serb business partners. In 1993, the Serbs granted Croat refugee buses safe passage through Serb-held territory. In return, the buses were "accompanied by empty trucks which returned with Croatian humanitarian aid and commercial goods." The Serbs also rented tanks to the Croats until Croatia and the Muslims

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[328] Lawrence Weschler, "High Noon at Twin Peaks," *The New Yorker*, 18 August 1997, 29-30.
[329] Ibid., 29.
[330] All the illustrations are taken from Judah, *The Serbs*, 247-251.

made peace in 1994. In Žepče, "it was said that the Croats could rent tanks from the Serbs for DM 1,000 a day." In Sarajevo, Serbian cigarettes and fresh produce could be found in the city's markets, provided by black-market networks involving men in control of the frontlines on both sides. The Serbs also taxed humanitarian aid. In 1993, they even sent a letter to the United Nations stating their levies. These levies depended on the type of vehicle involved, "ranging from $350 for a large truck down to $140 for a light vehicle, with UN escorts being charged $700 for tracked vehicles and $500 for wheeled armoured vehicles."[331]

Some of this black-market activity was organized by local commanders for personal benefit. However, a substantial part was controlled by the leaderships of the various factions looking to supplement their sources of revenue to wage the war and run their territories. In Republika Srpska, the black market was "run by the [SDS] party and delegated to people that it trusts, upon which it takes a percentage of the gains." Though it was run by the party, the organization of the black market was made possible by the access of party officials to positions in the institutional structure of the proto-Serb State. It was the control of customs, of key ministries such as the interior and resource ministries, and the patronage network which extended from the top all the way down to the Bureaus of population exchange which ensured the smooth flow of resources into the pockets of the Pale clique.

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[331] *Times*, quoted in Edgar O'Ballance, *Civil War in Bosnia, 1992-1994* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 180.

The situation in the Croat town of Vareš provides a clear illustration of this contention. Situated forty kilometers north of Sarajevo, by the summer of 1993, Vareš became a "turntable town for cross-frontline business."[332] Most of the trade involved petrol. One of the most prominent petrol barons was the brother of Momčilo Krajišnik, the Speaker of the Bosnian Serb Assembly. Krajišnik bought petrol from the Croats and made a handsome profit selling it to the Bosnian Serb Army of which he became the provider due to his brother's political position. Vareš was also a turntable for the trade of Macedonian cigarettes, oil, flour, and sugar. On the Serb-side, Brane Damjanović, whose company served as a cover, conducted the operation. This cover was thin however because Damjanović's company was working with the municipal council of the neighboring Serb town of Ilijaš. Damjanović's Croat counterpart, Boro Jakić, "would drive with police escort to Pale to meet Velibor Ostojić, then a Bosnian Serb minister and always a top SDS official, to discuss the terms of trade."[333] This was not an isolated instance.

"Illicit traffic was institutionalized during the war between all warring sides and the trail goes up very high. Many people lined up their pockets but some of the money also went to organizing the RS."[334] The case of Centreks import-export illustrates this contention. Centreks was a state run company established in early 1993. As a margin of Centreks profits went to organizing the political side of the RS, the company was granted an array of tax exemptions with the assent of the National Assembly.[335]

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[332] Judah, *The Serbs*, 247.
[333] *Ibid.*, 248.
[334] Geoffrey Beaumont, UN Civil Affairs Officer, Pale, Interview, 27 August 1998.
[335] Milin, author interview.

The Military Wing

While economic interests became increasingly associated with positions of power and influence in the state, the army's institutionalization followed a different path. In May 1992, the JNA withdrew from Bosnia. Before its withdrawal, the Yugoslav Army had put into place the structures of what would become the Vojska Republike Srpske, or the Bosnian Serb Army. When the new Bosnian Serb government ordered the mobilization of Serb men and women in Bosnia on 20 May 1992, the foundations for the VRS were already firmly laid down. As early as January 1992, President Milošević had issued a secret order to transfer all JNA officers who were Bosnian natives back to their republic. According to Borislav Jović, Milošević's right-hand man, "We did not wait for the recognition of Bosnia to redeploy the troops in Bosnia. [By the time of recognition] out of 90,000 troops in Bosnia, I think, eighty-five percent of them were from Bosnia."[336] Other estimates seem to confirm the numbers advanced by Jović. A German intelligence report calculated that the Bosnian Serbs had "about 90,000 'regulars', consisting of ex-JNA personnel, volunteers and conscripts, and 20,000 irregulars, presumably meaning semi-independent armed groups such as the Tigers, Chetniks, Panthers, and White Eagles."[337]

The irregulars did not spontaneously form a unified structure. Of Karadžić's own admission, "it took us the remainder of 1992 to get control over all sorts of different groups fighting all over the place." This was indeed the SDS leader's first act as President of the Serb Republic of Bosnia. He issued an ultimatum to the militias, ordering them to "join

[336] Silber and Little, *Yugoslavia*, 218.
[337] O'Ballance, *Civil War in Bosnia*, 127.

within three days or they would be seen as, and prosecuted as, criminals."[338] Eventually, the VRS developed a proper military structure and came to include a number of corps, brigades, and units. The army integrated smaller militias within its unified command structure. The most notorious militia to be incorporated in the army was Mauzer's "Panthers."[339] In summer 1993, the Panthers had become a 700-men strong "Special Forces" unit of the VRS.[340]

Not only was the VRS sizable, it was also well equipped as the JNA left behind a substantial amount of military equipment.[341] The commander of the Knin Corps, Ratko Mladić, was promoted to the rank of General and appointed transitional head of the VRS. But it was Pale that issued Mladić's official appointment as commander of the VRS.[342] It bears repeating that the VRS maintained strong links to the JNA during the war. However, the army took its orders from the political leadership of Republika Srpska. The SDS attempted to influence the army by putting its own people in decision-making positions.[343] But the army saw itself as the guardian of the Bosnian Serbs entrusted with the liberation of their historic lands in preparation for the establishment of a Greater Serbia. Because it had

[338] Rob Siebelink, "Radovan Karadzic, the Psychiatrist who Became the Most Wanted War Criminal: "It's Better for Them to Kill Me"," *Drentse Courant/Groninger Dagblad*, 18 May 1998.

[339] Beaumont, author interview. Beaumont used the example of the Panthers to stress that the majority of warlords developed into something else once a unified military command structure emerged.

[340] See O'Ballance, *Civil War in Bosnia*, 196.

[341] The list includes: 24 fixed-wing aircraft, 20 helicopters, 531 tanks, 4 Frog-7 missile squadrons, 87 multiple rocket launchers of 128 and 262 mm caliber, some 5000 heavy mortars (120 mm caliber), and many more smaller ones (mostly 82 mm), in addition to some 220,000 small arms and unspecified numbers of shells, ammunition, explosives, communications gear, vehicles, and other equipment. Miloš Vasić, "The Yugoslav Army and the Post-Yugoslav Armies," in *Yugoslavia and After: A Study in Fragmentation, Despair and Rebirth*, D.A. Dyker and I. Vejvoda, eds. (London and New York: Longman, 1996), 132.

[342] Harland, author interview.

independent sources of financing, the army remained one of the few Bosnian Serb institutions that did not fall under SDS influence. This army vs. party split would play an important role at key points in the conflict.

The Media: An Essential Instrument of State-Making

As discussed earlier, the Bosnian Serbs were in the business of creating an independent entity that would vote correctly in a future referendum on unity with Yugoslavia. Indeed, the creation of the Serb Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina was explicitly linked to the prospect of unity of all Serbs in one state. In this battle for allegiance to the FRY, the media played a paramount role. In setting up their television service, the Bosnian Serbs were inadvertently helped by the Muslims. At the beginning of the conflict, Muslim TOs attacked the Serb-held Sarajevo suburb of Ilidža where the BBC had set up its headquarters. When BBC crewmen abandoned their makeshift studio, the Serbs 'liberated it' acquiring two editing machines and a substantial quantity of videotapes in the process. These would become the basis of the Pale television service, Kanal-S (also known as TV-Pale).

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343 Perić, author interview.

To all parties in the war, television as an independent system was an absurd concept. Under Tito, they had all come to experience the media as "the way they informed, and so controlled, their people."[344] But TV-Pale was more than the instrument of indoctrination of the Bosnian Serbs. Control of information was the modus operandi in Republika Srpska and that included foreign media. The control of foreign journalists' access to the Serb side required the development of a "press center." This office soon became famous for its bureaucratic harassment of foreign crews. This involved a lengthy 'clearing' process and the procurement of an accreditation. The place and time span involved changed on a weekly basis. "In the winter of 1993, when journalists wanted to pass through areas in Sarajevo controlled by the Serbs, they were obliged to go to the Hotel Bistrica in the skiing area of Jahorina, 1700m above sea-level to get accreditation and even then this was only valid for one week."[345] Under such conditions, TV-Pale soon became a source of revenue for the Bosnian Serb leadership. They realized that "because of its exclusive access on the Serbian side, a tidy profit could be made by selling footage to television companies and agencies from around the world."[346]

The media thus strengthened the internal and external fiction of Bosnian Serb independence. Internally, Kanal-S bombarded ordinary Serbs with propaganda that served to heighten their fears of Muslims (and, to a lesser degree, Croats). In the process, it strengthened their dependence on, and loyalty to, the SDS. Externally, control of the media

[344] Martin Bell, *In Harm's Way* (London: Penguin, 1995), 139.
[345] Brigitte Hipfl, Klaus Hipfl, and Jan Jagodinzski, "Documentary Films and the Bosnia-Hercegovina Conflict: From Production to Reception," in *Bosnia by Television*, 35.
[346] Judah, *The Serbs*, 220.

provided the Bosnian Serb leadership with the leverage to force foreign journalists to deal with them as a de facto government.

THE NEXUS BETWEEN INSTITUTIONS, MONEY, AND POWER

The emergence and consolidation of the institutions of Republika Srpska gave rise to organizational and financial interests. But while the growing autonomy of the Bosnian Serbs allowed them to reduce their dependence on Belgrade, the predatory nature of the SDS-controlled war economy would create rifts within Bosnian Serb ranks.

Abel and Cain: Relations between Republika Srpska and Belgrade

One of the most vexing issues for students of the war in Bosnia is the nature of ties between Milošević's FRY and the Bosnian Serbs. According to a high-ranking official at the Office of the High Representative of the United Nations in Bosnia (OHR),

> "Relations between the Bosnian Serbs and Belgrade are difficult to understand. They are not personal (Milošević is disliked), not ideological (the Bosnian Serbs disagree with the socialist line of Milošević's party), not political (the Republika Srpska has become the preferred option of the Bosnian Serbs). Somebody once described them to me as 'primeval'. Whenever there is a crisis, they all go to Belgrade."[347]

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[347] Vincent Devine, Head of the Political Section, Office of the High Representative Banja Luka, author interview, 3 September 1998.

In this section, I disaggregate this relationship into four components: organizational, military, financial, and political. I argue that in the early stages, FRY military and financial support, were crucial in the establishment of the RS. However, Bosnian Serbs maintained a degree of organizational autonomy that would later become the sore point in relations between Milošević and the Bosnian Serb leadership. Post-1993, I argue that the RS was increasingly able to dispense with FRY material and financial support and that political support became paramount. Ironically, at this point in the relationship, Milošević had already decided to abandon his initial plan of establishing a Greater Serbia thus modifying his perception of his former Bosnian Serb partners from allies to political liabilities.

There is no question that FRY support was essential to the establishment of the RS. The most eloquent expression of this support was the role of the JNA in the creation of the VRS discussed above. To recapitulate briefly, this involved two decisions. First, the JNA under the direct orders from Milošević transferred all Bosnian Serb officers back to their native republic, thus preparing for the establishment of the VRS cadres. Second, the JNA armed the VRS by leaving its ammunitions and military equipment behind when it formally withdrew from Bosnia in 1992.

Although this tight connection between the JNA and the VRS has often been used to infer that the Bosnian Serbs were mere puppets of the FRY regime in Belgrade, the reality was otherwise. Unlike Croatia where the Serbian Ministry of the Interior was heavily

involved in the organization of the SDS,[348] most of the organization of the Bosnian SDS fell

to locals. The Bosnian Serb leadership sought to establish institutions that would strengthen

the claim that it had created a Serb Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In so doing, it

relied on readily available templates: the Yugoslav State and the Communist Party. The

importance of establishing a state is supported by the statements of high-ranking Bosnian

Serb officials. VRS Commander, General Ratko Mladić declared,

> "the existence of the Serb Republic may be disputed in the world, but the
> existence of its army is indisputable. The Serb Republic exists because we
> have our territory, our people, our authority and all the attributes of a state.
> Whether they want to recognize it or not is their affair. The army is a
> fact."[349]

The lack of direct organizational control would prove one of Milošević's grave mistakes. "It

meant that later when conflicts arose with Belgrade, Milošević had far less control over [the

Bosnian SDS's] affairs than he wanted."[350]

As the war in Bosnia unfolded, the relation between Belgrade and Pale changed.

Though VRS officers remained on the Yugoslav payroll throughout, Belgrade became less

forthcoming with equipment, especially after the international community imposed sanctions

on the Serbs. "Sometimes, material supplies came in from Yugoslavia but whether they were

granted or sold depended on the goodwill of Belgrade on that particular day. However, on a

personal basis, [VRS] generals could still go to Belgrade and obtain stuff for their units."[351]

But while the decrease of FRY aid might have partially hurt the Bosnian Serbs, it did not

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[348] Judah details the involvement of the SDB (Serbian Ministry of Interior) in the organization of the
Croatian SDS in "Frankie and Badger Go to War." Judah, *The Serbs*, 168-190.
[349] Owen, *Balkan Odyssey*, 77.
[350] *Ibid.*, p. 192.
[351] Milin, Interview, 5 September 1998.

paralyze them. As discussed above, a thriving black market had developed in the meantime. The institutionalization of this predatory war economy generated sufficient revenue to dispense with Belgrade's financial and material assistance.

The gradual loss of influence of the FRY gave rise to tensions between Milošević and the Bosnian Serb leadership. As early as the Vance-Owen plan, differences had begun to emerge over the extent of concessions the Bosnian Serbs should agree to in exchange for peace. "The divide was between a pragmatist, willing to buy the favors of the international community when the price was right, and more maximalist unbending leaders."[352] However, it was much easier for Milošević to trade territories than it was for the Bosnian Serbs who had a more direct stake in the outcome of the negotiations. In the words of one interviewee, "The Pale leadership tended to come from Sarajevo where they lost part of their former lives as a result of the war. Sitting in Pale and overlooking the city from which they were displaced, they also had personal reasons to adopt hard-line positions."[353] On 31 July 1994, the main FRY pro-government daily, *Politika*, carried on the front page a statement by Milošević that revealed the depth of the divisions. It read,

> The overriding interest of the Serbian nation is peace, and no one has the right to reject that... The goal of freedom and justice for the Serbian nation is achieved. Now is the time for concessions... The Bosnian Serb Republic could never have been formed without the help of the FRY. The very least that the Yugoslavs can expect from the Bosnian Serbs is that they save them from further sanctions. There are no moral grounds whatsoever to justify additional sacrifices from the FRY and the entire Serbian people.[354]

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[352] Harland, author interview, 24 August 1998.
[353] UNHCR official, Interview, 7 September 1998. (Identity withheld at the request of the interviewee).
[354] Owen, *Balkan Odyssey*, 296.

Although President Milošević was the spokesperson for the Bosnian Serbs at Dayton, there is plenty of evidence to suggest that the Bosnian Serb leadership was more than a collection of 'puppets of a Belgrade-sponsored aggression to create a Greater Serbia.'[355]

Factionalism in Republika Srpska

The reach of the proto-state of Republika Srpska and the institutionalization of a predatory war economy controlled by the political wing ushered in factionalism. On 10 September 1993, soldiers from the Krajina corps staged a mutiny to protest the deteriorating living standards among troops. The soldiers, most of who were originally from Banja Luka and the surrounding area, demanded the arrest of local war profiteers. They broadcast a statement over Radio Banja Luka declaring "We, who with patriotism and chivalry entered the history of our people, have become beggars and strangers among our people in our own land." The statement went on to note that many of those who evaded the draft had become rich "with the blessing of the current political powers."[356]

Although the mutiny was swiftly suppressed, it brought a number of contentious issues to the surface. The soldiers did not only protest their deteriorating living conditions. They also demanded to know why the leadership was not negotiating a settlement for the reconfiguration of the country.[357] After all, they pointed out, the military objective of the war, to downsize the Muslims and the Croats, had been achieved paving the way for serious

[355] Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy*, 290.
[356] Judah, *The Serbs*, 252.
[357] Stewart-Howitt, author interview.

negotiations of such a settlement. The wider Banja Luka population backed the soldiers' mutiny. Some army unit commanders, including former militia warlords such as Mauzer, started asking questions concerning the care of the dependents of their soldiers.[358]

Internal tensions in Republika Srpska increased with the decision of Belgrade to impose sanctions on Pale for rejecting the Contact Group plan in the summer of 1994. Milošević's abandonment of the Bosnian Serbs had two ominous consequences. More than ever, military supplies to the VRS depended on the good will of Belgrade. Although there is evidence that the blockade was not as airtight as the international community would have liked it to be, the VRS lacked supplies, ammunitions, fuel, and sometimes food. Consequently, troops increasingly relied on the municipalities to provide logistical support. "As fuel, food, and ammunitions ran in short supply, the municipalities increasingly contributed to the war effort."[359]

However, municipalities were part and parcel of the elaborate patronage network put in place by the SDS leaders who acted as state officials. As a result, non-military considerations began to intervene in decisions on the allocation of troops. "At the beginning of 1995, lots of troops from the Eastern RS started being allocated to the area of the northwest and they could often be recalled on overnight notice."[360] The army resented the politicized allocation of scarce resources that, it claimed, prevented it from performing its functions properly.

[358] Ibid.
[359] Milin, author interview. See also, Judah, *The Serbs*, 223.
[360] Milin, author interview.

In the meantime, the economic interests and gains of the SDS officials in power soared. "After Serbia imposed sanctions on the RS, criminality increased."[361] For black-market profiteers, the embargo provided an excellent opportunity for enrichment. They could increase their activities by selling goods not only to Bosnian Muslims and Croats but also to ordinary Serbs that the sanctions affected most directly. General consumption goods became a source of financial gain as core SDS people traded these goods tax free in return for contributions to their "bosses" in the state structure. Gas station owners had to pay racketeers on a monthly basis. Shortly after the fall of the Republika Srpska Krajina [the Croat Serb Republic], the Bosnian Serb Parliament accused Vladan Lukić, a former RS premier, of involvement in a scandal over the disappearance of DM3.5m which had been set aside for the sanctions-busting import of oil from Bulgaria. Branko Ostojić, a former deputy premier, was similarly named concerning the loss of DM5.5m intended for oil imports from Romania.[362]

On 4 August 1995, with regular Croat army troops massing against the RSK, Karadžić announced that he was relieving Mladić of his functions as VRS Commander and assuming command of the Army himself.[363] Karadžić blamed Mladić for the loss of Bosanski Grahovo and Glamoč. Mladić deemed the move unconstitutional. In a statement released by the Army press office, he stated, "I entered the war as a soldier and that is how I

[361] Perić, author interview.
[362] Judah, *The Serbs*, 253.
[363] "Top Bosnian Serb General Welcomes Peace Agreement," *Deutsche Presse-Agentur*, 22 November 1995.

want to leave. Therefore, I shall remain at the post of commander of the main headquarters of the Bosnian Serb Army as long as our fighters and the people support me."[364]

This struggle had been brewing for a while. Karadžić feared Mladić's popular appeal and his ties to Belgrade politicians. Moreover,

> He was bothered by Mladic's puritanism; his loathing of gambling and womanizing and war-profiteering, all of which have become part of political life in Serb-controlled Bosnia.[365]

The struggle between the politicians and the military was played out in Parliament. Members of Parliament exchanged accusations with the generals, the first blaming the latter for the loss of territory while the generals blamed their defeat on the diversion of petrol to the black market. Army generals spoke out against the politicized allocation of scarce resources. "The army was never funded from the budget as should be. Usually, it was funded on happenstance, excepted maybe for large campaigns."[366] On 11 August, Karadžić went back on his decision and reinstated Mladić. The confrontation left Karadžić looking weak. "Instead of shoring up his own power, he turned General Mladić into the de facto leader of the Bosnian Serbs. More worrying for Karadzić, there was talk among the Serbs about a military takeover of Bosnia in which he would be ousted."[367] In late August, there were unconfirmed reports of gun battles between Mladić and Karadžić supporters.

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[364] Robert Block, "The Madness of General Mladic," *The New York Review of Books*, 5 October 1995.
[365] *Ibid.*
[366] Milin, author interview.
[367] Block, "The Madness of General Mladic."

IN CONCLUSION

This chapter discussed the political organization of the Bosnian Serbs. I argued that the Bosnian Serbs initially created the SDS to maintain the unity of the Serb lands. When it became clear that Bosnia would seek independence from the former Yugoslavia, the Bosnian Serbs sought to establish their own 'state' as a prelude to accession to the FRY. The Republika Srpska would be the institutional embodiment of this objective. However, Bosnian Serb involvement in the war economy provided the leadership of RS with sufficient revenue to expand its network of power and influence and assert its independence from Belgrade. The leadership's concern with economic gain triggered intra-RS factionalism as the highly institutionalized Bosnian Serb Army protested the war profiteering of the political elite.

As the Republika Srpska became a de facto reality, the financial and organizational considerations of the Bosnian Serb leadership became tied up with its survival. These considerations did not always coincide with the ideological objectives of the Serb nation or even of the Bosnian Serb community. The strategic choices of the Bosnian Serb leadership reflect this tension. It is to a discussion of three such strategic choices that I now turn.

Figure VII-1: Organizational Structure of Republika Srspka (1992-1995)
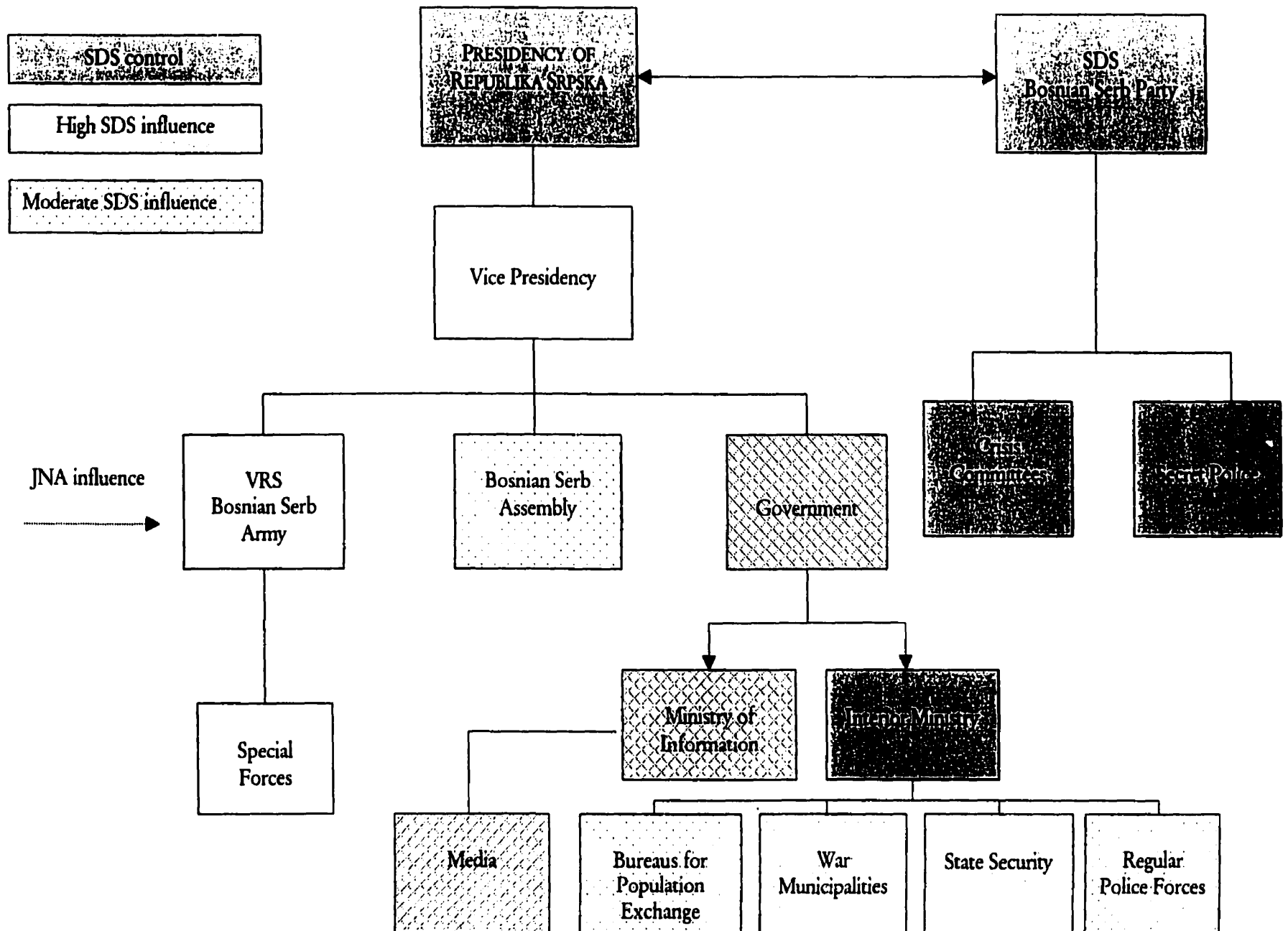
VIII. Buying Time: Bosnia's Serbs and the Dayton Peace Agreement

On 21 November 1995, Serb, Croat, and Muslim leaders initialed a peace agreement at Wright-Patterson airbase in Dayton, Ohio. "After nearly four years, two hundred and fifty thousand people killed, two million refugees, and atrocities that have appalled people all over the world, the people of Bosnia finally [had] a chance to turn from the horror of war to the promise of peace."[368] The Dayton Peace Agreement (DPA) became the basis for conflict-resolution in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The DPA has been hailed as a symbol of successful foreign mediation to negotiate an end to internal conflict.[369]

Most political analyses of the Bosnian war focus on foreign intervention in the conflict. They usually emphasize the role of Yugoslavia and Croatia in fanning the fires of Bosnia. Alternatively, they recount the efforts of the international community to end the conflict. In comparison, there are few systematic analyses of the various Bosnian parties, especially the Bosnian Serbs.[370] This omission is puzzling. Internal parties were the main fighting forces in the Bosnian conflict; they were also the main obstacles to several peace

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[368] President Clinton's announcement of the DPA, quoted in Richard Holbrooke, *To End a War* (New York: Random House, 1998), 309.

[369] In the foreword to his book, US chief negotiator in Bosnia Richard Holbrooke wrote "in late 1995, in the face of growing atrocities and new Bosnian Serb threats, the United States decided to launch a last, all-out negotiating effort. This is the story of how, belatedly and reluctantly, the United States came to intervene and how that intervention brought the war in Bosnia to an end." Holbrooke, *To End A War*, xv.

[370] Consider, for example, this evaluation by Richard Holbrooke, "I was beginning to get a sense of the Pale Serbs: headstrong, given to empty theatrical statements, but in the end, essentially bullies when their bluff was called. The Western mistake over the previous four years had been to treat the Serbs as rational people with whom one could argue, negotiate, compromise, and agree." *Ibid.*, 152. This attitude is representative of a more general trend.

initiatives. It is difficult to sustain an argument that these internal parties were only mercenaries of the external powers with a stake in Bosnia. Though the Bosnian Serbs have often been portrayed as puppets of President Milošević's FRY (Former Republic of Yugoslavia, consisting of Serbia and Montenegro), they were not totally subservient to the wishes of Belgrade.[371] It is also difficult to use ideology consistently to account for the Bosnian Serbs' rejection of the Vance-Owen Peace Plan and Contact Group initiative, and to explain simultaneously the acceptance of the DPA. Finally, although much has been made of the role of NATO bombings in bringing the Bosnian Serbs to the negotiating table, this argument is more difficult to sustain when looking at the facts closely.

In this chapter, I examine the Bosnian Serb strategic choices vis-à-vis three peace initiatives to end the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina: the 1993 Vance-Owen Peace Plan, the 1994 Contact Group Plan, and the 1995 Dayton Peace Agreement. The chapter opens with an overview of significant military developments during the Bosnian conflict. It then evaluates the argument that the shape of negotiations depends on the balance of forces at the time of a given proposed peace settlement.[372] Moving on to an evaluation of the 'ideological fit' of the proposed deals with Bosnian Serb preferences, I demonstrate that rhetoric aside ideology was not the determining factor in the strategic choices of the Bosnian Serb leadership. I finally focus on the constraints that emerging institutions imposed on Bosnian Serb decision-makers. The analysis highlights the role of institutions in shaping the internal balance of power in Republika Srpska, their impact on other considerations such as

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[371] See for example, David Owen, *Balkan Odyssey* (London and New York: Harcourt Brace, 1995), pp. 125, 135, 158, 209, 239.

ideology and the military balance of forces, and their role in bringing about compromise.

MAP DRAWING AND STATE-MAKING: THE MILITARY FIELD IN BOSNIA

In the first two months of war, the Serbs controlled seventy percent of the territory

of Bosnia and Herzegovina.[373] In the initial push, they had the military advantage of JNA

support and participation in the fighting. Their primary war objectives were to secure

border towns with Serbia and Montenegro in order to keep the supply lines open. They also

sought to gain control of the towns and regions that they had earmarked for themselves.

The Bosnian Serbs conducted their war effort on two levels: demarcating their zone of

control and ridding it of pockets of enemy presence. As Woodward wrote,

> The more the war continued in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the more armies fought
> for routes, defensible corridors, and contiguous territories. Outsiders
> continued to talk of percentages of territory in ethnic terms and of what they
> considered to be a just solution, including the aim of not 'rewarding
> aggression.' Neither had much resonance in the behavior of military forces
> whose leaders were thinking in strategic terms of independent survival and
> natural lines of defense and stable borders.[374]

Once military clashes started in Bosnia, events unfolded with great speed. In spite of

the widespread belief that the first clashes occurred on 6 April in Sarajevo, upon the EC

recognition of Bosnia-Herzegovina, they did not. Clashes had already begun in March in

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[372] For example Richard Holbrooke says, "For me, the success of the ... Bosnian-Croat Federation offensive was a classic illustration of the fact that the shape of the diplomatic landscape will usually reflect the balance of forces on the ground." Richard Holbrooke, *To End a War*, 73.

[373] I am indebted to Mihailo Crnobrnja for drawing my attention to the fact that the Serbs did not gain seventy percent of Bosnia's territory during the first three months of the war. This, the usual formulation in academic analyses, is misleading because it implies that the Bosnian Serbs started from zero. Actually, the Serbs controlled about sixty-two percent of the Bosnian territory at the outset of the conflict.

[374] Owen, *Balkan Odyssey*, 269.

Bosanski Brod in the northernmost part of Bosnia. Soon, they spread to Zvornik in the northeast. Yugoslav forces took part in these operations alongside Bosnian Serb militias. "... The special units and the best combat units came from this side [Serbia]. These were police units—the so-called Red Berets—special units of the Serbian Interior Ministry of Belgrade. The army engaged itself to a small degree—it gave artillery support where it was needed."[375]

In view of the deteriorating situation, President Izetbegović issued a general mobilization of the Bosnian Territorial Defense on 4 April. The Serbs interpreted this as a declaration of war and the two Serb members of the collective Bosnian presidency, Nikola Koljević and Biljana Plavšić, resigned. Their resignation put an official end to the already shattered myth of nationalist cooperation among the three ethnic groups in Bosnia. The next day, Serb paramilitaries laid siege to the Sarajevo police academy overlooking the southern part of the city. That same night, the JNA seized control of the Sarajevo airport. On 6 April, Karadžić retaliated against the EC recognition of Bosnia by proclaiming the independent "Serbian Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina" later renamed Republika Srpska. Sarajevo would be the capital (under occupation) of the new state.

Demarcating Republika Srpska

The Bosnian Serbs hit two obstacles in their initial efforts to demarcate the boundaries of their enclave. The first concerned the Neretva valley, the westernmost limit of the territory, which bordered Herzegovina. Although the Bosnian Serbs had earlier

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[375] Silber and Little, *Yugoslavia: Death of a Nation*, 224.

indicated their intention to draw the border of their state at the river Neretva, there was no agreement to this effect between them and the Croats. The Neretva valley was an area of mixed Serb, Croat, and (to a lesser extent) Muslim population and pitched battles were fought for its control at the outset of the war. Ultimately, the Croats cleansed Serbian villages along the river and secured control of the Herzegovinian historic capital, Mostar.

The second obstacle was more serious. Bosnian Serb territory spread in a horseshoe pattern from northwestern Bosnia down to the southeast of the country. The territorial contiguity of the Republika Srpska was at risk in the Posavina valley in the north.[376] There, the regular Croatian army crossed the River Sava to bolster the fledgling Bosnian Croat and Muslim TOs cutting Serb lines across the north. This separated the Bosnian Serb enclave into two regions. The area was the Bosnian Serbs' main access route to Serbia and, from there, to the rest of the world.[377] By 2 May, the Serbs consolidated their hold on Brčko and Doboj. They carved a corridor nicknamed the "corridor of life" in recognition of its strategic value. At its narrowest, at Brčko, the corridor was only two miles wide. In this area unlike others military operations continued throughout the war.

On that same day in early May, the Bosnian Serb forces incurred a military defeat as they tried to divide Sarajevo into Muslim and Serb quarters. This would usher in a trend that would last until the end of the war. The Serbs, enjoying overwhelming firepower superiority, could secure territory as long as they did not encounter substantial resistance. When they

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[376] The Posavina was one of the most heterogeneous regions of Bosnia with substantial Muslim and Croat populations, located at the border between Bosnia, Croatia, and Serbia.

[377] The border between eastern Republika Srpska and Serbia was home to large concentrations of Muslim villages, which at that point were still home to their original inhabitants.

encountered resistance, their lack of infantry proved to be a handicap. They would encircle towns or localities and besiege them, but would not be able to enter these localities until they had reduced them to rubble. On 8 May, the JNA formally withdrew from Bosnia.

The fall of Jajce to the Serbs in October 1992 was the last major Serb land gain. By then, Bosnian Serb forces controlled approximately seventy percent of the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Until the fall of Srebernica and Žepa in July 1995, the confrontation line would not change in any significant way with the exception of a few weeks in 1994 when the Bosnian 5th Corps broke out of the Bihać pocket.

It Is Not the Serb Republic Until It Is All Serb

In Bosnia, the frontlines demarcated in summer 1992 would remain undisturbed until the Muslim-Croat offensive of 1995. However, the task of the Bosnian Serb leadership was not over yet. They had to ensure that, in case of a referendum on sovereignty, the inhabitants of the enclave voted correctly. This was a paramount political objective in view of the recommendations of the Badinter Commission.[378] Briefly stated, the commission had decreed that international recognition of sovereignty would require a referendum asking residents in a given territory to determine their choice of state.

At this point in the conflict, Bosnian Serbs had become acutely aware of the fact that the majority could easily ignore a minority's objections in a referendum. After all, Bosnian Serb wishes to remain within Yugoslavia had been brushed aside by the Bosnian Muslim and

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[378] The Badinter Commission is the European Community Commission discussed in chapter six.

Croat parliamentarians. Hence, it was not sufficient to control territory militarily; you had to ensure that its inhabitants would vote in line with your wishes in any upcoming referendum. Thus originated the policy of ethnic cleansing [etničko čišćenje] that turned the Bosnian war into such a humanitarian and moral nightmare.[379]

THE VOPP, THE CONTACT GROUP PLAN, AND THE DAYTON PEACE AGREEMENT

Unlike peace negotiations in Lebanon that usually attempted to break political stalemates or address changes in the internal balance of military forces, negotiations in Bosnia and Herzegovina were often driven by considerations external to the conflict. Often, initiatives were a belated reaction to facts on the ground. Other times, they were hostage to disagreements among EU members and between the Europeans and the United States. This section introduces the three peace settlements that I have chosen to analyze. It attempts to put the agreements in their national and international context.

The Vance-Owen Peace Plan (VOPP)

The Vance-Owen Peace Plan is the first attempt by the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia (ICFY) to end the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The ICFY was chaired jointly by Lord David Owen, representing the European Commission, and by Cyrus Vance, representing UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali. It sought to bring all the major parties to the conflict to the negotiating table.[380]

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[379] See Susan Woodward, Balkan Tragedy, 236-246.
[380] The ICFY invited representatives of all three Bosnian factions as well as Croatian and Yugoslav representatives. The Bosnian government delegation was headed by President Izetbegović, the Bosnian Croat delegation was headed by HDZ leader Mate Boban, the Bosnian Serb delegation was

The ICFY put the VOPP forward at a time when the Serbs enjoyed a clear advantage over their opponents. Emboldened by their early military successes, the Bosnian Serbs had tightened their grip on the Muslim enclave of Srebernica in April 1993. In spite of a hurried UN Security Council Resolution designating Srebernica a 'safe area', the Serbs continuously shelled the enclave which was home to 60,000 inhabitants, including a number of refugees. Ultimately, an agreement was reached. Under its terms, UN troops would supervise the disarmament of the Bosnian Muslims in the enclave. By 21 April, the UN oversaw the destruction of Muslim weaponry. Srebernica became a UN demilitarized zone.

Around the same time, the standoff between Muslim and Croat forces erupted into armed clashes. This situation had been long in coming. Since 1992, two armies coexisted on the same territory—the HVO and the Army of Bosnia-Herzegovina. In April 1993, taking advantage of the provisions of the VOPP,[381] the HVO demanded that all Bosnian units stationed in areas allocated to the Croats under the Vance-Owen map place themselves under direct HVO command. When the Muslims ignored this injunction, clashes broke out in Jablanica, Konjić, Travnik, Busovača, Zenica, Mostar and Vitez.

Both the demilitarization of Srebernica and the Muslim-Croat clashes strengthened the military position of the Serbs. Although SDS leader Radovan Karadžić agreed upon the plan and initialed it in early May 1993, the Bosnian Serb Parliament rejected it. On 15-16 May 1993, the Parliament held a referendum on the VOPP the results of which dealt a

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headed by SDS leader Radovan Karadžić. Presidents Tudjman and Ćosić represented Croatia and the FRY respectively.
[381] The VOPP divided the country into ten ethnically homogenous provinces. Each ethnic group's armed forces were put in charge of the provinces assigned to their community.

deathblow to the plan. Strong of their military superiority, the Bosnian Serbs showed the same intransigence toward the next attempt at conflict resolution the "HMS Invincible" package which sealed a "Union of Three Republics," in other words the partition of Bosnia-Herzegovina along ethnic lines.[382]

The Contact Group Plan

The abandonment of the Vance-Owen Peace Plan modified the international community's approach to solving the Bosnian conflict. Later efforts started from the premise that it would be impossible to retain the multiethnic character of the country. Instead, they focused on schemes to divide the territory in relatively compact enclaves. The Contact Group plan is the last of these efforts before the Dayton Agreement.[383]

On 5 February 1994, a mortar bomb exploded in the open-air market in the center of Sarajevo. The incident claimed a high number of civilian casualties. It provided the co-chairmen of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia with an opportunity to press Serb leader Radovan Karadžić to negotiate UN administration and demilitarization of the Sarajevo district. UNPROFOR (United Nations Protection Force) Commander, Lt. General Sir Michael Rose, held talks with all the parties at Sarajevo airport. They reached an agreement on a Sarajevo weapons exclusion zone. At a NATO meeting held on the same day, the North Atlantic Council (NAC) decided to give the Bosnian Serbs ten days to either withdraw or regroup and place their heavy weapons under UNPROFOR control. The NAC

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[382] The plan gave the Serbs 53% of Bosnian contiguous territory while 17% went to the Croats and the remaining 30% was allocated to the Muslims.
[383] Other plans include the HMS Invincible (or Owen-Stoltenberg) plan and the EU action plan.

decision also defined the exclusion zone as twenty kilometers from the center of Sarajevo, excluding an area within two kilometers of the Bosnian Serb capital, Pale. It set a ten-day deadline after which the Serbs would be subject to air strikes by NATO airplanes. A last minute flurry of negotiations averted the option of air strikes.

In spring 1994, the Bosnian Serbs turned their attention to the enclave of Goražde. The enclave was strategically important for two reasons. First, it separated two areas under Serb control breaking the contiguity of Serb-held territories in eastern Bosnia. Second, it provided Sarajevo with a potential land bridge to link with the Muslim region of Sandžak in Serbia proper. The battle for Goražde prompted NATO ground assaults and limited air strikes against the Bosnian Serbs. "But the air-strikes did not deter. The guns stopped briefly. But NATO's pin-prick assaults did nothing to diminish the military muscle at Mladić's disposal."[384] Instead, Mladić took one hundred and fifty UN personnel hostage. Ultimately, the Bosnian Serbs reached an agreement with the UNPROFOR troops: demilitarization of the enclave, cease-fire monitoring, and the inter-positioning of UN troops between the Serb forces and the town.

In the aftermath of the Goražde crisis, international negotiations were revived under a new format. Now that the EU and the UN had repeatedly failed to come up with an acceptable settlement, it had become necessary to involve all the foreign parties interested in the issue. Indeed, the internal parties in Bosnia had managed to manipulate divisions within the international community to their advantage. The Serbs counted on the Russians or

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[384] Silber and Little, *Yugoslavia*, 328.

alternatively on the UK's reticence to lift the arms embargo. Emboldened by American support, the Muslims turned down the VOPP and held out for a better deal. The Contact Group was conceived as a way of uniting the international community. It consisted of the Foreign Ministers of the United States, Great Britain, France, Germany, and Russia. The Contact Group was "reminiscent of nineteenth-century Great Power politics."[385] The five nations sought to dictate the future of the former Yugoslavia. However, in the context of the post-Cold War, the group lacked leadership and vision. "Talks on Bosnia were more exercises in regulating relations among the Contact Group members and positioning themselves in the new political order than about the region or its inhabitants."[386]

The Bosnian Serbs read these developments well. They had just successfully challenged the international community over Goražde. NATO's military muscle had not daunted them. There were divisions among members of the Contact Group. The Serbs were in a position of relative advantage.

The Dayton Peace Agreement

The negotiations leading to Dayton were 'a mission of peace in a moment of war.' The negotiations followed momentous events on the political and military planes. Politically, Richard Holbrooke's mission followed the signing in Belgrade of the "Patriarch Paper." The paper was an agreement between Slobodan Milošević and the Bosnian Serb leadership under the terms of which the Yugoslav President would be the head (and the ultimate decision-maker) in any delegation to future peace talks. Militarily, the negotiations followed the first

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[385] *Ibid.*, 336.

reversal in Serb military fortunes since the outbreak of the conflict.

The year nineteen ninety-five was the year of change on the ground in Bosnia. It all started with the fall of Srebernica to the Bosnian Serbs in July. In 1993, the UN and the Serbs had reached an agreement that provided for the demilitarization of the enclave. In fact, the demilitarization had never been fully implemented. Bosnian Muslims organized under the command of President Milošević's former bodyguard Naser Orić continued to launch raids into surrounding Serb areas. The Serbs used two such raids as pretexts to launch a massive retaliation against the enclave. On July 12, General Mladić and his men entered Srebernica.

The fall of Srebernica to the Bosnian Serbs was the beginning of their military demise. For the Muslims, the safe areas—Srebernica, Žepa, Goražde, and Bihać—were liabilities. The isolated enclaves were particularly vulnerable to Serb retaliation. Their fall meant that the Bosnian Muslims could push forward elsewhere without having to concern themselves with the possible consequences for the civilian populations of the safe areas. The fall of Srebernica also changed the dynamics within the international community. Under the lead of the United States, the UN "in effect went to war with the Bosnian Serbs, all pretense of impartiality now abandoned."[387] UNPROFOR troop contributing nations agreed to drawn 'a line in the sand' over Goražde. Should the enclave come under attack, disproportionate NATO air strikes would be used to defend it. They also reached agreement on scrapping the dual key command structure which required the approval of the

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[386] *Ibid.*

UN civilian chief, Yasushi Akashi, before air strikes could proceed. Now, NATO had the authorization to bomb at the request of the UN force commander on the ground.

Other determining changes also deserve mention. On July 19, the Croat Serbs joined forces with their Bosnian kin to attack the Bihać pocket. As the Bosnian war formally spilled over into Croatia, Presidents Izetbegović and Tudjman met to agree on a joint plan to defend Bihać. In early August, Tudjman struck the deathblow to the Republika Srpska Krajina, the self-styled Serbian Republic in Croatia. In July, the Croatian army had wrestled away control of two towns from the Bosnian Serbs: Glamoć and Bosansko Grahovo. From there, they staged a blitzkrieg operation against the Krajina Serbs, attacking them from behind. By August 5, the Croat Serbs were in disarray. Tudjman's forces took over Knin. On August 7, the RSK had collapsed. The Croatian military success changed the balance of power in Bosnia.

On August 28, NATO found a pretext to strike. In a repeat of the 1994 market incident in Sarajevo, a mortar landed near the market square killing thirty-seven people. The next day, UN peacekeepers secretly evacuated Goražde. The NATO campaign began in earnest on the morning of August 30. "In a two week campaign, NATO flew 3,400 sorties, including 750 attack missions against 56 ground targets. Ammunition stores, anti-aircraft batteries, radar installations, communications facilities, warehouses, artillery units, command bunkers and bridges were destroyed."[388] The bombings "challenged the command structure

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[387] *Ibid.*, 351.
[388] *Ibid.*, 366.

and the ability of Serbs to hold on to territory was fundamentally altered."[389] Serb military relay systems were destroyed, the civilian telephone network was incapacitated. The Serbs lost their capacity to re-deploy rapidly and reinforce at will while the Croat and Bosnian Muslim forces gained over-the-horizon capacity and the ability to react quickly. On 15 September, Jajce fell to the Croats and Donji Vakuf to the Bosnian army. With the fall of Bosanski Petrovać and Drvar, the frontline moved to Bosanski Novi, Prijedor, and Sanski Most. The Muslim-Croat offensive had the full backing of Washington.[390] By the end of September, the shift in the frontlines reduced the territory controlled by the Serbs from seventy percent to about half. A general cease-fire was declared on 5 October. Unlike uncountable predecessors, it held. Less than a month later, the proximity talks started.

Bombs for Peace?

The most common explanation of the Bosnian Serb decision to attend the proximity talks credits NATO air strikes with tipping the balance of power on the ground to the advantage of the Muslim-Croat Federation and forcing Bosnian Serb compromise. The architect of Dayton, Richard Holbrooke, links the breakthrough in negotiations to the NATO bombings.[391] However, the record suggests that this inference might be faulty on two counts. The Bosnian Serb political leadership in Pale had already signaled its willingness to negotiate before the NATO bombings.[392] Moreover, NATO air strikes did not seem to

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[389] David Stewart-Howitt, Officer, European Community Humanitarian Organization (ECHO), Banja Luka (former aide to UNPROFOR Commander, General Sir Michael Rose), Interview, 2 September 1998.

[390] See Holbrooke, *To End a War*, 158, 160, et passim.

[391] Holbrooke, *To End a War*, 94-111.

[392] Holbrooke's account details three probes from Pale that attempted to establish a dialogue with the American negotiators. Given Pale's earlier record, it is difficult to jump to the conclusion that the Bosnian Serb leadership was seriously interested in negotiations. However, the reverse inference is

deter the Bosnian Serb military and to increase its willingness to compromise. In this section, I address the Serb military reaction to changes in the military balance of forces.

In spite of the rapid degradation on the ground, there are indications that the Bosnian Serb Army remained undaunted. On 2 September, three days into the NATO operation, General Mladić seemed as inflexible as ever refusing to withdraw his heavy weapons from around Sarajevo. Mladić was still defiant by mid-September. In a meeting with UNPROFOR Commander Bernard Janvier, he threatened to attack the remaining "safe areas" and refused to negotiate until the bombing had ended. The Bosnian Serbs used two French airmen shot down during the NATO air strikes as bargaining chips. The airmen were only released in December, two days before the signing ceremony of the DPA in Paris.

The Bosnian Serb reaction to the Muslim-Croat military offensive provides further indications that the VRS did not bow to military pressure. Although the offensive followed in the heels of the NATO bombings, the VRS Galeb airplanes flew a number of sorties against the Muslim and Croat ground forces involved in the offensive. Toward the end of September, the Serbs started to push the Bosnian 5th Corps back around Bosanska Krupa. "There were already signs that the Serb withdrawal had not been as costly as some had imagined, nor their fighting potential so reduced as some had predicted. The new confrontation line appeared to be defensible by the Bosnian Serbs."[393]

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equally risky. This did not seem to bother Holbrooke who concludes his account of the three probes on this note: "In view of what was about to happen, it was more than fortunate that we rejected these three probes from Pale. Had we opened any of these doors, the course of the next three months would have been significantly different." *Ibid*, 99.

[393] Owen, *Balkan Odyssey*, 339.

BOSNIAN SERB IDEOLOGY AND THE SUBSTANCE OF PEACE PROPOSALS

Having put the three peace settlements in context, I now turn to a discussion of the substance of the proposed deals. I focus specifically on the extent to which the Vance-Owen Peace Plan, the Contact Group Plan, and the Dayton Peace Agreement allowed the Bosnian Serbs to meet their ideological objectives. The Bosnian Serbs wanted to accede to Yugoslavia and unite with their kin in Serbia and Montenegro. Should that prove impossible, they linked the security of their ethnic group to the independence of Republika Srpska.

The Vance-Owen Peace Plan

The Vance-Owen Peace Plan is a comprehensive settlement to the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina comprised of three sections. In the Constitutional Principles, the plan defines Bosnia as a decentralized but unified state. The plan vests substantial autonomy in the provinces and it provides for democratically elected national and local governments. In the Military Paper, the plan outlines a scheme for the cessation of hostilities, the withdrawal of heavy weapons from Sarajevo, the subsequent demilitarization of the city, and finally the separation of forces.[394] The map of Bosnia constitutes the third section of the plan. It delineates a ten-province structure of which three are Muslim, three Serb, two Croat, and one mixed Muslim-Croat. Sarajevo (province 7) is granted a special status under UN management. The plan concludes with an annex detailing special transitional arrangements. These include, but are not limited to, the establishment of a nine-member central

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[394] The armed forces of each ethnic group are assigned to designated provinces. HVO forces are attached to the Croat-majority provinces, VRS troops to the Serb-majority provinces, and the Bosnian Army to the Muslim-majority provinces.

government (three members from each party) and the creation of multi-ethnic provincial governments reflecting the pre-war distribution of groups in each of the provinces.

From a Bosnian Serb perspective, this plan has a number of central flaws. First, and most important, is the proposed territorial division. Although they agreed to relinquish approximately 40% of the territory they controlled, the Bosnian Serbs could not accept the Vance-Owen map as it stood. (See map 5) The map outlines three Serb-majority provinces. Province Two in the northwest includes the *opštinas* of Bosanski Grahova, Glamoc, Sipovo, Mrkonjic Grad, Titov Drvar, Bosanski Petrovac, Ključ, Iskender Vakuf, Kotor Varoš, Banja Luka, Bosanski Novi, Bosanska Dubica, Ćelinač, Prnjavor, Laktaši, Bosanska Gradiska, Srbac, and Teslič. To the northeast, Province Four includes the *opštinas* of Bijeljina, Lopare, and Ugijevik. Finally, to the east of Sarajevo, Province Six includes Pale, Sokolać, Han Pijesak, and the Sekovići enclave. Although these provinces represent the bulk of Serb-inhabited Bosnian territory, they are not contiguous. Moreover, only one of them (province 4) has a direct land link with Serbia.

Though UN-protected routes would link the three provinces, their physical separation ran against the ideological objectives of the Bosnian Serbs. Karadžić made this clear, "we are not demanding more territory," he said, "but that the territory which we have be connected in order to avoid a new Nagorno-Karabakh."[395] In the context of the Serb ideology, this territorial division was problematic on two counts. First, it meant another Kosovo, another spoiled opportunity to consolidate a nascent Serb state. In this respect,

one must recall the insistence of the Bosnian Serbs on adorning their enclave with all the trappings of statehood: a flag, an army, state institutions such as a Parliament. In spite of the fact that no outside power recognized the Serb Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina its leaders were clearly intent on following the path to statehood.

The territorial division exacerbated Serb territorial insecurity. Security had been the driving force behind Serb military engagements in the 'corridor of life'. The Serbs had also acquired territory at the border with the FRY's Muslim-populated Sandžak for security considerations. Now, they were being asked to relinquish those territories. This would mean severing their vital physical link to Belgrade and opening the door to the possibility of a connection between Sandžak and Bosnian Muslims. As Karadžić put it, "this was too risky for us, and I could not accept it because I knew that the international community needed only 10,000 troops in Zvornik and the Posavina corridor to neutralize the Serbs."[396]

Two other issues deserve mention in this context. The VOPP ultimately intended to recreate a multiethnic Bosnia. Although not immediate, this threat was not lightly taken by the Bosnian Serbs. Karadžić repeatedly pressed upon Cyrus Vance and Lord Owen the need to segregate Serbs, Croats, and Muslims. Only ethnically 'pure' provinces would to vote correctly for their choice of state to live in. The VOPP also recognized Bosnia's independence. The specter of that independence had prompted the Serbs to resort to weapons a year earlier. It stood against their wishes to ultimately join with their Serb kin.

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[395] Ralph Joseph, "Karadžić says Bosnian Serbs not demanding more territory," *United Press International* (UPI), 1 May 1993.
[396] Silber and Little, *Yugoslavia*, 279.

Map VIII-1: The Territorial Division of Bosnia According to the VOPP

1, 5, 9	Muslim provinces
2, 4, 6	Serb provinces
3, 8	Croat provinces
10	Mixed Muslim-Croat province
7	Sarajevo, special status
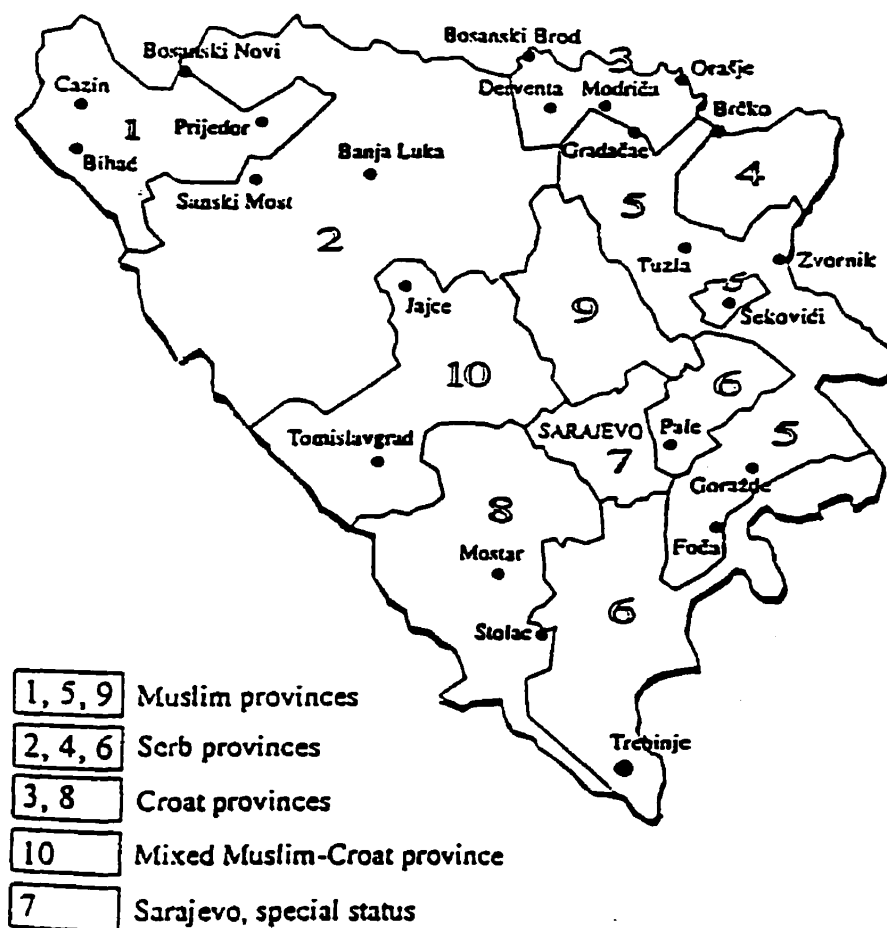
Source: Silber and Little, *Yugoslavia*, p. 12.

The Contact Group Plan

Under the terms of the Contact Group plan, the Serbs would hand over more land than they did under the VOPP. They gave up one third of the seventy percent of land they controlled at the time. In return, they received contiguous territory. There were two problems with this picture. The territory that the Serbs received was vulnerable at Brčko and in eastern Srpska where a large band of territory allocated to the Muslim-Croat Federation cut deeply through Serbian land, effectively breaking the contiguity of the RS. The plan thus failed to address security issues at the core of the Bosnian Serbs' ideological calculus. Paramount was the fear that they would not be able to live in the safety of an all-Serb state and would fall again under occupation. Karadžić repeatedly expressed this concern. He blamed Contact Group members for not taking into considerations "ancient fears of being territorially isolated by the enemy."[397]

From a Bosnian Serb perspective, the plan was even more problematic on a different score. It thwarted the dream of establishing a Serb state. The plan had two premises: it acknowledged the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina within its internationally recognized borders and it divided this republic into two territorial entities. Not only was Republika Srpska "demoted" to the rank of a territorial entity, it was also disadvantaged in comparison with the Muslim-Croat Federation. A detailed Bosnian Serb analysis of the Contact Group proposals underscores this problem.[398] The study claims that the map of the Contact Group plan "endangers the geo-strategic position of the Republic of Srpska, as much as it reduces

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[397] Natela Cutter, "Bosnian Serb Assembly Debates Peace Plan," *United Press International*, 28 July 1994.

[398] Duško Jakšić, *Republika Srpska: Prostor Stanovništvo Resursi* [The Serb Republic: Tally of the Population's Resources] (Banja Luka: Narodna i Univerzitetcka Biblioteka "Petar Kočić", 1995).

its economic potential."[399] (See map 6) According to the author, the proposed map gives "everything urbanized, [including] the most important industrial capacities" to the Federation. Most of the rivers, coal mines (Kamengrad and Miljevina), iron ore (Ljubiua) and bauxite mines (Krupa and Jajce) are located in territories that the Plan took away from the Serbs. The study estimates that the proposed territorial concessions would result in a 40% decrease in the economic potential of the Serb entity.

In conjunction with the territorial disjunction at Brčko and in eastern Srpska, these provisions would make Srpska particularly vulnerable. Bosnian Serb politicians echoed these concerns. The information ministry of the Serb Republic issued an official statement citing similar reasons for the Bosnian Serb rejection of the Contact Group Plan. According to this statement, the Federation would get most of Bosnia's hydro-electric and heating facilities, almost all its industry—including the aluminum factory in Mostar, the industrial plants in the cities of Breža, Visoko, Zenica—and practically all defense industry plants. It also highlighted other unacceptable provisions as follows,

> Of the four airports in Bosnia and Hercegovina, three would go to the Croats and Moslems, as would all the navigable waterways. Railroad lines would also be under the control of the federation.[400]

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[399] *Ibid.*, 239.
[400] Ivan Ivanov, "Bosnian Serbs Say Peace Map Too Good for Opponents," *Itar-Tass*, 25 August 1994.

Map VIII-2: The Territorial Division of Bosnia According to the Contact Group

Front line

Territory Serbs have to cede

Territory under Serb control

Territory Serbs gain

Sarajevo under UN control

Territory under Muslim-Croat control
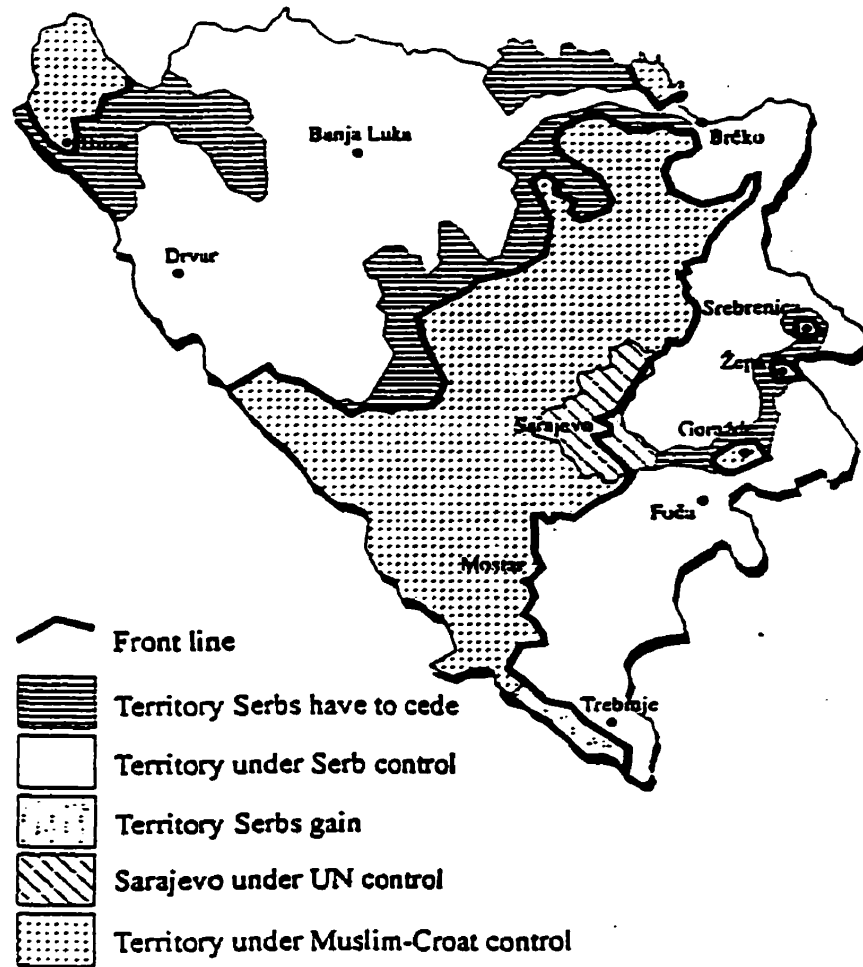
Source: Silber and Little, *Yugoslavia*, p. 13.

The Dayton Peace Agreement

How did the Dayton Peace Agreement (DPA) fare in comparison with the VOPP and the Contact Group Plan? Dayton went further than any preceding plan in addressing the issue of Serb territorial contiguity; it also recognized Republika Srpska as an equal partner to the Muslim-Croat Federation in the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina. However, the plan was still problematic in that it closed the door on the possibility of a future accession of the Republika Srpska to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. While, the DPA was more advantageous than the Contact Group Plan, the VOPP might have been better for the Bosnian Serbs because no one, not even its main authors, believed that it would resist a joint Serb-Croat effort to divide up Bosnia.

The map of the DPA is largely based on the Contact Group map. (See map 7) One significant difference is that the United States had reached the conclusion that the map needed to be updated to "incorporate more viable borders and distribution of territory."[401] From a Serbian perspective, this meant the prospect that proposals to widen the Posavina Corridor around Brčko and provide the Serbs de jure control over the eastern enclaves would be seriously considered. The final map did not live up to these expectations. In the Posavina, the Serbs suffered a slight reduction to the "corridor of life." However, an agreement was reached with the Federation to subject the status of Brčko to binding international arbitration. In Eastern Srpska, the Serbs were granted *de jure* control over some of the enclaves, namely Srebernica and Žepa, whereas the Federation was awarded Goražde.

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[401] Holbrooke, *To End a War*, 86.

Under the terms of the DPA, the territorial contiguity of the RS, though not guaranteed, was not ruled out either. This contiguity was threatened only in the northeast where the decision on Brčko would be crucial. In relative terms, this arrangement was slightly better than the Contact Group map that effectively awarded the Bosnian Muslims a band of territory dividing Eastern Srpska and linking Bosnian Muslims with the Sandžak area in Serbia.

The most significant gain that the Bosnian Serbs achieved was the recognition of Republika Srpska as an equal partner with the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Referred to as 'entities' in the DPA, the RS and the Federation are the two territorial units that constitute the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This recognition is meaningful because of its incorporation in the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, itself an annex of the DPA. Separated by an Inter-Entity Boundary Line (IEBL), the RS and the Federation maintain separate armed forces under the provisions of the DPA. While the IEBL is not an international frontier, the DPA states that "under no circumstances shall any armed forces of either Entity enter into or stay within the territory of the other Entity without the consent of the government of the latter and of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina."[402] The Entities can only adjust the IEBL by mutual consent.

The DPA also delineates the rights and duties of both Entities.[403] Though there is a unified citizenship of Bosnia and Herzegovina, there also is an Entity citizenship. The

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[402] The General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Annex 1A, "Agreement on the Military Aspects of the Peace Settlement," available at _http://www.ohr.int/gfa/gfa-an1a.htm_, internet, 2.

[403] General Framework Agreement, Annex 4, "Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina."

Entities can establish special parallel relationships with neighboring states "consistent with the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina." They can also enter agreements with foreign states and international organizations with the consent of the Parliamentary Assembly. Finally, all governmental functions and powers not expressly assigned in the Constitution to the common institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina fall immediately within the preserve of the Entities.

Map VIII-3: Territorial Division of Bosnia According to the DPA

Muslim-Croat Federation

Bosnian Serb Republic

NEW INTER-ENTITY BOUNDARY LINE
AS PER THE PEACE AGREEMENT

CEASEFIRE LINE BEFORE THE PEACE AGREEMENT
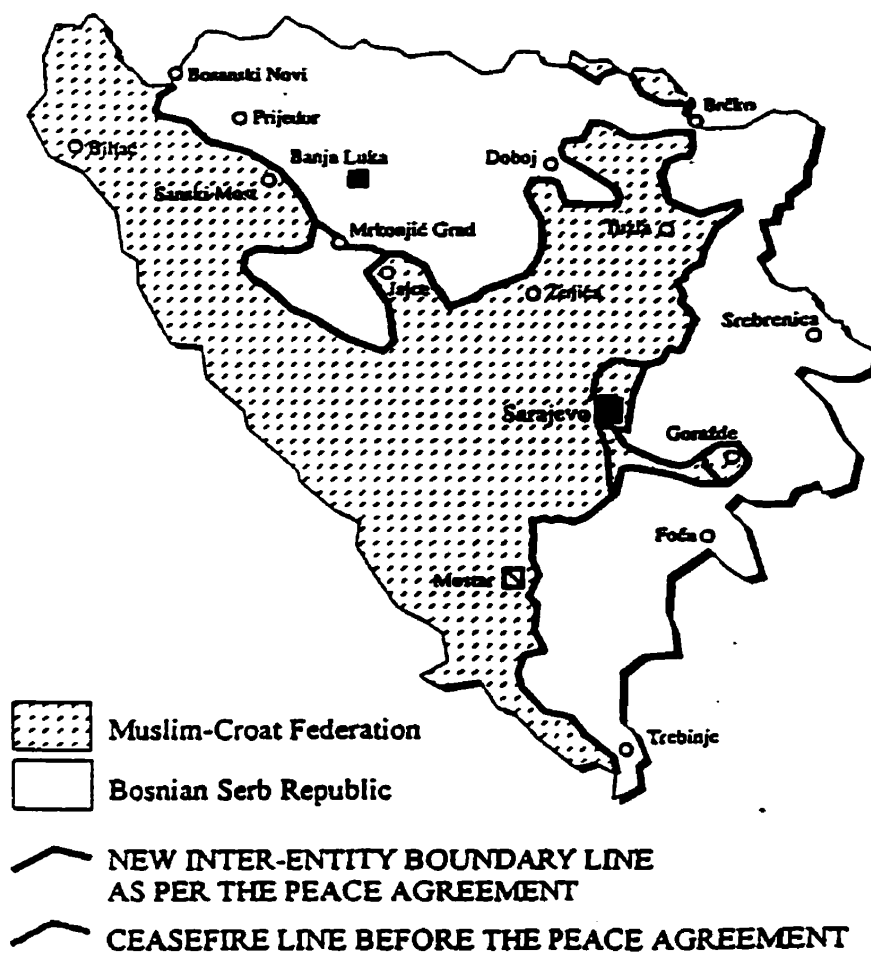
Source: Silber and Little, *Yugoslavia*, p. 14.

Ideology and Win-sets

This cursory exposition of the terms on offer in the VOPP, the Contact Group Plan, and the DPA suggests that ideology did not play a prominent role in the strategic choices of the Bosnian Serb leadership. Members of the RS parliament opposed the VOPP and the Contact Group plan because the territorial dispensations included in both agreements did not deal with Bosnian Serb security concerns. However, Radovan Karadžić and the top Serbian leadership seemed willing to accept the Contact Group plan that did not really meet the political objectives or ideological preferences of the Bosnian Serbs. Ultimately, in spite of their dissatisfaction with the provisions of the DPA, the Bosnian Serb leadership also chose not to resort to force in their opposition to the agreement. There is no evidence in the choices of the top RS leadership that their calculus was primarily determined by ideology.

INSTITUTIONS AND THE CALCULUS OF COST AND BENEFIT

How did the institutionalization process affect the Bosnian Serb leadership's calculus of costs and benefits? In the following section, I argue that the main impact of Bosnian Serb institutionalization was the deterioration in the links between Belgrade and Pale. This deterioration, I contend, had two consequences. It increased intra-RS factionalism and heightened the Bosnian Serb's vulnerability to material losses toward the end of the conflict.

Institutions and Patron-Client Relations

When Slobodan Milošević unleashed the wars of succession in the former Yugoslavia, his main objective was the creation of a Greater Serbia, a state for all Serbs that

would inherit the FSRY. This objective failed with the international community's acceptance of Bosnia as an independent state. "Thereafter, the war objectives were very confused for the inhabitants of the RS. Pale did not know what the future of the Serbs would be without Milošević and he himself did not redefine that future for them."[404] The emerging differences in political objectives between the Bosnian Serbs and the Serbian leadership crystallized in what would become a series of confrontations between Belgrade and Pale. The contentious issues centered on the extent of acceptable territorial compromises and the status of Serb-held territory within a unified Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Angering Big Brother: The VOPP Strains Belgrade-Pale Relations

Milošević's betrayal of the Serbs outside Serbia came in 1993 when he agreed to the VOPP and pressured the Bosnian Serbs to accept it. While Serbia and Montenegro became overly concerned with the weight of economic sanctions, Serbs outside of Serbia were still fighting for their right to self-determination. The two objectives were at odds with one another. The lifting of economic sanctions off Serbia was contingent upon resolution of the conflict in Bosnia. Moreover, the international community had made it clear that such a resolution would be founded on the independence of Bosnia-Herzegovina within its internationally recognized boundaries.

The negotiations of the VOPP and its final rejection by the Bosnian Serbs ushered in the first split between Belgrade and Pale. President Milošević had asked the ICFY for clarifications on three essential issues of the plan. He wanted assurances about the status of

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[404] Stewart-Howitt, author interview.

the northern corridor linking Province Two with Serbia and about the decision-mechanism within the multi-member central Presidency. He also wanted guarantees concerning the nationality of the troops responsible for safety in the Serb-cleansed territories due to be relinquished to the Muslims and Croats. From his standpoint, the assurances that he received were sufficient. UN troops would patrol the corridor, decisions would be taken by consensus (thus giving the Bosnian Serbs veto powers), and the territories would only be policed by UN forces.

At the time, imminent threats of international sanctions against the Serbs were worrying Milošević. Satisfied with the assurances he received from the international community, Milošević took the position that the Serbs, having achieved equality and freedom as a nation, had thus attained their political objectives. The FRY President drafted a letter to the Bosnian Serb Assembly. In it, he stated

"Now is not the right time for us to compete in patriotism. It is the right time for a courageous, considered, and far-reaching decision. You have no right to expose to danger and international sanctions 10,000,000 citizens of Yugoslavia merely because of the remaining open issues which are of far less importance that the results achieved so far... This is an issue of either war or peace and we are opting for peace... an honorable peace with guarantees of your equality and freedom. The other option is an unnecessary war which, now that the Serbian nation in Bosnia-Herzegovina has gained its equality and freedom and had the chance of retaining most of its territories, will bring nothing else but adversity, suffering and violence to you and others."[405]

Milošević's letter was the trigger of the first act of open Bosnian Serb defiance. For the Bosnian Serbs, equality and freedom required the establishment of an all-Serb state. The Bosnian Serbs would only be able to achieve their goals if they sought accession to the FRY.

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[405] Silber and Little, *Yugoslavia*, 280.

However, this required the independence of the Bosnian Serb lands. In Parliament, vice-president Plavšić led the attack on the Yugoslav injunction to accept the VOPP. "Who is this Milošević, this Bulatović, this Ćosić?" she asked. "Did this nation elect them? No, it didn't. President Karadžić, you have been elected President by this parliament. You can't decide. According to our constitution, the parliament decides these issues."[406] This challenge to the autonomy of the leadership signaled Parliament's growing institutionalization. "A year of war aimed at creating a separate state had transformed the political conditions [Karadžić] had to meet. The assembly of Bosnian Serb delegates to the Bosnian Parliament had been acting as an independent parliament for more than a year."[407] These delegates represented the various districts at war to create a separate Serbian republic. They demanded to be heard and they wanted to negotiate from the strength of their position on the ground.

On 7 May, Belgrade announced that it was imposing a supply blockade on the Bosnian Serbs. The move came in retaliation against the Bosnian Serb Parliament's vote by 51 to 2 against adopting the VOPP. The Serbian government statement stated

> As the necessary conditions for peace have been created, the further economic bleeding of the republic of Serbia is becoming intolerable and unjustified. Aid to the Bosnian Serb republic should in future be reduced to just food and medicines in quantities to be established by the competent ministries. Reasons no longer exist for further assistance in money, fuel, raw materials etc.[408]

[406] Silber and Little, *Yugoslavia*, 281.
[407] Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy*, 308.
[408] Paul Holmes, "Yugoslavia Gets Tough with Bosnian Serbs," *Reuters*, 7 May 1993.

Belgrade Splits with Pale

Upon the Bosnian Serb rejection of the VOPP, the international community imposed economic sanctions against Serbia. While the black market and the institutionalization of Republika Srpska allowed the Bosnian Serbs partially to weather the impact of the sanctions, the FRY economy was reeling under the weight of the embargo. By February 1993, the inflation rate was over two hundred percent, by August it had reached 1,880 percent, an annualized rate of 363 quadrillion percent.

Sanctions were not airtight though. There were two obvious ways of evading them. One was Skopje, the capital of Macedonia, a favorite location for front companies. The other was the export of products under a false production label. "Customs officials and even international Sanctions Assistance Monitors were taken care of in the traditional manner, which is to say DM 10,000 a truck."[409] The world was turning a blind eye because it believed that the interdependence between the FRY and the RS could serve as a bargaining chip. Only President Milošević could deliver the Bosnian Serbs and he should not be made to lose some of the instruments that he used to control them. According to a former high-ranking sanctions monitor, "when I was posted in Belgrade and trying to apply the sanctions firmly, I was relieved of my functions because the international community wanted to use this FRY-RS connection as a bargaining chip, not make it work systematically but tighten or loosen the screw depending on their needs."[410]

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[409] Judah, *The Serbs*, 272.
[410] Beaumont, author interview.

Nevertheless, President Milošević began to grow impatient with the intransigence of the Bosnian Serbs. At the end of July, the foreign ministers of the Contact Group tightened the United Nations sanctions against the rump Yugoslavia following the Bosnian Serb rejection of the proposed plan. Belgrade's reaction was immediate. It issued an ultimatum to the Bosnian Serb leadership, demanding that Pale "should immediately and unconditionally accept the plan proposed by the international 'Contact Group'."[411] On 4 August, the blockade went into full force. Belgrade sealed the border, traffic came to a halt, and telephone lines were cut. The Serbian media lashed out at the Bosnian Serb leadership with accusations of war-profiteering and criminal actions. In a clear link between the blockade and the UN sanctions, the FRY President Zoran Lilić told the government daily *Politika* "The national interest of the Serbian people cannot be war, but only peace. It cannot be poverty, but economic revival and prosperity, in one word—life."[412] Lilić held the National Bank of RS responsible for the raging inflation claiming that it was printing money to supply the black market.

Initially, Milošević was convinced that the Bosnian Serbs would yield in a matter of days. He even boasted to diplomats that "those who have confronted me have not long survived."[413] However, the Bosnian Serbs resisted, not days but months. Their capacity to resist was greatly enhanced by the institutionalization of a number of mechanisms that allowed them to weather the pressure.

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[411] "Bosnian Serbs' Parliament to Consider Contact Group's Plan," *Itar-Tass*, 2 August 1994.
[412] Natela Cutter, "Yugoslav President Criticizes Bosnian Serbs," *United Press International*, 19 August 1994.
[413] Silber and Little, *Yugoslavia*, 336.

Parting Ways: Serbs 'Within' Dismiss Serbs 'Without'

In the lead up to Dayton, this divergence of interests between Serbs inside and outside Serbia came to a head. Already in 1994, RSK Serbs and their Bosnian kin had joined forces in defiance of Belgrade. RSK self-styled president Milan Martić had crossed the frontier to Bosnia to vote "no" in the Serb referendum on the Contact Group Plan. "He had wanted to make the point that the destinies of the Krajina and Bosnian Serbs were bound together."[414] Indeed, they were. Milošević had used Krajina and Bosnian Serbs when he believed he could establish a Greater Serbia on the ruins of the old Yugoslavia. In summer 1995, they had become "a burden to be shuffled off so that Serbian could have sanctions lifted and Milošević, who had already transformed himself from communist to nationalist, could now evolve into a peacemaker."[415] The FRY President watched as the Croat army marched on the RSK. His cynicism troubled even RS opposition groups who had no sympathy for the policies of the SDS. One of them told me in an interview, "I am not sure about the role of Belgrade, it is not clear to me. I cannot believe that they had such an influence and let such things happen."[416] The Bosnian Serbs watched in awe. In an open letter to Milošević, Karadžić accused him of abandoning the goal of establishing Greater Serbia. "You have turned your back on the Serbs. You have relented under foreign pressure to an extent which could be compared only to treason," he said.[417]

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[414] Silber and Little, *Yugoslavia*, 357.
[415] Judah, *The Serbs*, 298.
[416] Perić, author interview.
[417] Silber and Little, *Yugoslavia*, 360-361.

Institutions and Intra-RS Factionalism

Belgrade's decision to impose sanctions on Pale gave an additional impulse to the black market economy. The financial interests of the RS politicians became ever more tied to this illegal source of revenue. This would deepen the divide between the politicians and the army.

Initially, the Yugoslav imposition of sanctions did not seem to hurt the Bosnian Serbs. Republika Srpska's capacity to withstand Belgrade's pressure can be attributed partially to the impact of institutionalization. By August 1993, the RS leadership did not only control the levers of power; it had established regularized interactions with the population of the Bosnian Serb territories. When Belgrade announced its blockade, the Bosnian Serb leadership immediately took a series of measures to offset the impact of the decision. It introduced a 60-hour working week and banned holidays. The RS defense ministry issued a decree mobilizing all able-bodied civilians, organizing them into units along company and brigade lines "with an emphasis placed on agricultural work needed to secure food supplies."[418] Of course, there were other means of offsetting the blockade. One of them was the internal black market that had developed inside Bosnia proper and the control of which fell beyond Belgrade's reach.

However, by the time of the Contact Group Plan, divisions were already surfacing among the Bosnian Serbs. These divisions had to do with power and money. As the institutional structure of Republika Srpska solidified, factions emerged within the Bosnian

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[418] *Agence France Presse*, 8 August 1994.

Serb leadership. Each of these factions could be identified by their institutional location, power base, and interests.

The September 1993 mutiny brought these contending factions into sharper focus. Many of the basic tensions in Republika Srpska came together in the mutiny: those who did not profit vs. the war profiteers, the military vs. the civilian authorities, the western vs. the eastern Srpska, and finally the ideologues vs. the pragmatists.[419] The mutiny highlighted the development of two parallel institutional structures: the army and the SDS network. Each had its own power base. The army had the backing of the population in Western Srpska. The SDS network had taken over the state and its constituency spread through patronage networks mostly in Eastern Srpska. Whereas the army was involved in the military struggle for the creation of an independent all-Serb state, the SDS network was also developing economic interests tied to the black market and to the war economy.

The resolution of the mutiny highlighted the existence of serious disagreements between the two factions. Whereas General Mladić expressed sympathy with the mutineers, and was personally involved in the settlement negotiations, the Bosnian Serb Interior Ministry took the lead in quashing the movement. The ministry dispatched troops of the SDS-controlled special police forces to surround Banja Luka. The local police forces were restructured and a number of officers were relieved from their duties. The Krajina Corps was split into two units in an attempt to weaken it. A few mutineers were "taken away for

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[419] Harland, author interview. The pairs are not exclusive of each other. The war profiteers are also the civilian authorities, mainly located in Eastern Srpska. In spite of arguments to the contrary, they were also the pragmatics who were ready to make a deal if the terms met their minimal requirements.

'informative talks' from which some never returned."[420]

Institutions and Vulnerability

Milošević's abandonment of the Bosnian Serbs did not only have political ramifications for Republika Srpska. Arguably, the most important impact of the rift between Belgrade and Pale was the weakening of the Bosnian Serb Army.

Initially, the strain between Pale and Belgrade did not weaken the army as would have been expected. Whereas the FRY-imposed blockade made the life of ordinary citizens harder, "there is strong evidence that the border remained porous. The Bosnian Serbs still received essential military supplies from the Yugoslav army as well as their salaries from Belgrade."[421] Some analysts have interpreted this as a sign that President Milošević wanted to see a political defeat of the Bosnian Serbs but not a military defeat.

This situation changed after the Bosnian Serb rejection of the Contact Group Plan. More than ever, military supplies to the VRS depended on the good will of Belgrade. Although there is evidence again that the blockade was not as airtight as the international community would have liked it to be, the VRS lacked supplies, ammunitions, fuel, and sometimes food. Consequently, troops increasingly relied on the municipalities to provide logistical support.[422] The increasing importance of the municipalities blurred the lines of command and control. Municipalities had always been a preserve of the political wing of the SDS. The party increasingly intervened in decisions on the allocation of troops. "At the

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[420] Stewart-Howitt, author interview.
[421] Silber and Little, *Yugoslavia*, 343.
[422] Milin, author interview.

beginning of 1995, lots of troops from the Eastern RS started being allocated to the area of the northwest and they could often be recalled on overnight notice."[423] The net result was a weakened morale among soldiers. The enthusiasm of earlier days faded. This lack of morale has been invoked to explain the swiftness of the Croat and Bosnian Muslim offensive of September 1995.

For many VRS officers, Jajce provides a perfect illustration that something had gone wrong. It had taken the Serbs a whole year to secure the town. The Croat troops entered it "in buses and on motorcycles."[424] Even the well-documented Serb lack of infantry could not account for the ease of this capture. In the same vein, much is also spun around the fact that General Mladić was hospitalized in Belgrade at the time of the Croat-Muslim offensive. Observers note Mladić's absence and the uncoordinated retreat of the troops saying that this suggests Mladić may have been left in the dark about some developments. The importance of the rumor mill underscores the point that I am trying to make. The VRS, one of Republika Srpska's best functioning institutions, seemed to be unraveling.

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[423] Ibid.
[424] Ibid.

COSTS, BENEFITS, AND STRATEGIC CHOICES

Why did the Bosnian Serbs reject the outcome of the VOPP and of the Contact Group Plan and accept the Dayton Peace Agreement? And how did their assessment of the situation both within their zone of control and in relation to other protagonists in the civil war affect their calculus of costs and benefits? In this section, I show that the strategic choice of the Bosnian Serb leadership, at each of the three instances, is consistent with the expectations of the model of militia decision-making that I developed in chapters one and two.

"We Will Not Loose the Peace Again": Bosnian Serbs Reject the VOPP

The Bosnian Serb rejection of the VOPP should have been anticipated. Ideologically, the VOPP did not achieve any of the Bosnian Serb objectives. Not only did it not secure the creation of an independent Bosnian Serb polity; it also planned to restore the multi-ethnic character of the Bosnian provinces. The acceptance of the VOPP would only confirm the widely held Serb belief that Serbs win wars but loose the peace. Indeed, the Bosnian Serbs were the overall military winners at the time of the negotiations. With seventy percent of the Bosnian territory under their control and 'cleansed' of non-Serb presence, they had also achieved their objective to create an ethnically homogeneous entity that would vote correctly in a referendum on the state of its choice. The VOPP also raised serious security concerns for the Bosnian Serbs. The lack of contiguity of the territory assigned to them under the provisions of the plan made them vulnerable to falling again 'under occupation'.

The emerging rift between Pale and Belgrade was a relatively secondary

consideration in this context. Indeed, the Bosnian Serbs' dependence on the FRY might still have been great but the severance of ties was not 'life-threatening'. Having already achieved their territorial objectives, the Bosnian Serbs did not need the might of the JNA weighing on their side of the military equation. Financially, and although the supply blockade would definitely hurt them, there were alternatives. In the twelve months since the outset of the conflict, a prosperous black market had been established among all three parties to the war. This market generated enough supplies to offset the impact of the FRY decision at least temporarily.

Institutionally, the Bosnian Serb leadership and structures had not been set up in Belgrade. A disagreement with Milošević thus bore no risks of a quick disintegration of the power structure in Pale. This contention is supported by the growing autonomy of the Bosnian Serb Parliament and its refusal to bow to Belgrade's pressure. It bears repeating here that the two Bosnian Serb leaders who spearheaded opposition to the VOPP were none other than Biljana Plavšić and Ratko Mladić, both said to be extremely close to President Milošević. In brief, the Belgrade-Pale patron-client relations were not powerful enough to offset all the negative considerations surrounding an eventual acceptance of the VOPP.

The Bosnian Serbs Reject the Contact Group Plan

The Contact Group Plan, though offering slight improvements in the map of the proposed Serbian entity, still fell short of meeting the central concerns of the Bosnian Serbs. Given the balance of forces at the time of the negotiations and given mounting internal tensions in Republika Srpska, acceptance of such a plan would have been tantamount to

institutional suicide for the Bosnian Serb leadership.

The Contact Group proposals were disadvantageous for the Bosnian Serbs. Beyond the proposals themselves, the manner in which the plan was put forward was a grave cause of worry among the leadership of the RS. Indeed, the Contact Group "gathered to dictate the future of the former Yugoslavia."[425] This attitude deeply disturbed all the main Bosnian protagonists. The Serbs refused to bow to the will of a "world-wide mafia." When the Contact Group unveiled the maps, things got worse. Karadžić called them an "American *diktat.*" This impression was reinforced when the initial Bosnian Serb position met with a firm refusal on behalf of the Contact Group to show flexibility.

Initially, the Bosnian Serbs sought to gain time by accepting the plan as the basis for negotiations about contentious issues. They specifically sought amendments to the proposed maps. They wanted reconsideration of the delimitation of Sarajevo and its surrounding suburbs. They also sought to obtain an exit to the sea. Politically, the Bosnian Serb leadership demanded guarantees for the Serbs' right to self-determination and linking to neighboring nations, the cessation of hostilities along with the implementation of the peace plan, and the lifting of sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro. In a replay of events leading up to the rejection of the VOPP, the Bosnian Serb Assembly voted to put the plan to a referendum.

The Contact Group's response was stern: take it or leave it, acceptance of the plan

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[425] Silber and Little, *Yugoslavia*, 336.

had to be unconditional. Throughout the shuttle diplomacy that followed the disclosure of the maps, the Bosnian Serbs repeatedly voiced their concerns to the international community's representatives. The Speaker of the Serb Parliament Momčilo Krajišnik said, "to accept an unfinished peace proposal would be the beginning of the end of the Serbian people, the loss of our land, and spell national suicide."[426] He also called upon the international community to "correct the maps and constitutional arrangements in a way which guarantees the Bosnian Serbs that they will have their state."[427] Along the same lines, Radovan Karadžić declared that he wanted changes in the plan in order "to guarantee the sovereignty" of Republika Srpska.[428]

However, the international community refused to budge. It went ahead with the planned tightening of sanctions and the FRY retaliated by immediately severing all links with the Bosnian Serbs. The question that arises is why Karadžić did not give in to this tremendous pressure. The answer requires a closer examination of the internal scene in Republika Srpska and an evaluation of the impact that eventual acceptance of the Contact Group plan was likely to have on the interests of the Bosnian Serb leadership.

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[426] Natela Cutter, "Bosnian Serb Assembly Debates Peace Plan," *United Press International,* 28 July 1994.
[427] "Krajišnik Demands Peace Plan Changes, Predicts "No" in Poll," *Agence France Presse,* 8 August 1994.
[428] "Serbs and Contact Group Must Resume Talks: Karadžić," *Agence France Presse,* 1 August 1994.

Presented with a plan that did not achieve any of the Serb objectives, the Bosnian Serb leadership was faced with two stark options. Rejection of the plan held the prospect of a deep rift with Belgrade. It also meant on-going war and the Serb leadership were aware that time was not militarily on their side. Bosnian Serb vice-president Nikola Koljević made this abundantly clear. He also expressed the RS leadership's awareness of the potential consequences of rejecting the Contact Group Plan. According to him, the Bosnian Serb leadership was genuinely attempting to bridge differences and come up with an acceptable plan. They were trying to avoid a possible trap. The Bosnian Serbs did not want to return to the initial plan. This, they feared, would give the legitimacy to the International Community and NATO "to take those territories from us by force and not with 'pin prick' air strikes but an air campaign similar to the one in Iraq."[429]

Once it became clear that the plan was not open to modification, acceptance of the existing terms held a more dangerous prospect: internal disagreement in Bosnian Serb ranks. In the internal balance of forces, the army was in a better position than the political leadership, and the army did not look favorably upon the Contact Group Plan. In an interview on Bosnian Serb television, General Milan Gvero, the deputy commander of the VRS, said his men "would not give up some 30 percent of territory required by [the Contact Group Plan]. An army and people that are winning can not give up what they gained in the battle field at the negotiating table," he said. Gvero stressed that the maps were not acceptable to the Serbs. Many Serb regions would be cut off from one another, "giving up several regions would leave Serbs short of vital economic resources." This was "most

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[429] Andjelko Anusić, Interview with Nikola Koljević, *Argument* (Belgrade), 7 April 1995.

evident near the town of Ključ on the one side, and Jajce and Vlasič, on the other. While in the Posavina area, near Brčko, Serbian territory has been reduced to zero."[430] Whereas the FRY-blockade could be withstood at least temporarily, an open disagreement between the political leadership in Pale and the army was heavier with consequences. Unaffected by the blockade, the army was still in a strong position and it could defeat the political leadership in an armed conflict. The Banja Luka mutiny had already pitted the two sides against one another and the lines in such a conflict were drawn.

An internal military conflict held the prospect that the SDS leadership might lose both its positions of power within the RS apparatus and the benefits accruing from its involvement in black market activities. Moreover, the Contact Group plan provided for the transfer of significant resources from Pale control to the Federation. This meant the prospect of economic loss for the SDS network. By rejecting the Contact Group plan, the Pale clique extricated itself brilliantly from a difficult situation. The Bosnian Serb leadership took an "ideologically correct" position that prevented internal conflict from erupting and deflected attention, at least for the time being, from their criminal activities.

The Dayton Peace Agreement: Buying Time for Republika Srpska

A year after they turned down the Contact Group Plan in a referendum, the Bosnian Serbs accepted the Dayton Peace Agreement, which (at least on the surface) bears a striking resemblance to the Contact Group proposal. Most analysts propose that the NATO air strikes played a decisive role in shifting the balance of power on the ground in favor of the

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[430] Natela Cutter, "Bosnian Serb General Rejects Peace," *United Press International*, 15 August 1994.

Muslim and Croat troops. In turn, they contend that the military losses incurred by the Bosnian Serbs are largely responsible for the Serb decision to accept negotiations and to delegate negotiating responsibility to President Milošević of the FRY. While these factors were undoubtedly important, this argument puts too much weight on external factors and not enough on internal considerations that paved the way for the Dayton Peace Agreement.

Specifically, I argue that the military reversal in fortune must be analyzed primarily in the context of a redrawing of internal factional lines among the Bosnian Serbs. I contend that a coherent explanation of the Bosnian Serb decisions should address the following two questions. First, why did the Bosnian Serb leadership agree to the "Patriarch Paper" that delegated authority to President Milošević in case of future peace negotiations? Second, why didn't the Bosnian Serbs reject the Dayton Peace Agreement once it became clear that its provisions prevented them from ever reaching their objective of establishing a Greater Serbia? I argue that the answers to both questions reside in a careful exploration of developments inside Republika Srpska.

A year had passed since August 1994 when President Milošević imposed a blockade on the Bosnian Serbs for turning down the Contact Group Plan. During that time, relations between the two parties remained tense. The FRY media waged a campaign against the Bosnian Serb leadership unveiling a lot of the black market profiteering that had been going on in the RS. The split between Pale and Belgrade had two significant consequences. It resulted in a total divergence in objectives between the two factions; it also increased the rift between the various factions within the Republika Srpska.

"Not an Outcome that the West Can be Proud of"

In his account of the negotiations leading to the DPA, Richard Holbrooke expresses his belief that "the shape of the diplomatic landscape will usually reflect the balance of forces on the ground." This, he adds, meant that "as diplomats we could not expect the Serbs to be conciliatory at the negotiating table as long as they had experienced nothing but success on the battlefield."[431] However, a quick look at the terms of the DPA might lead observers to disagree with this contention on two counts. First, the DPA was not highly detrimental to the Bosnian Serbs. The conciliatory attitude of the Bosnian Serbs can be attributed to their military reversal of fortunes. It can equally be attributed to the relatively favorable terms of the agreement.

As discussed above, the DPA made important concessions to the Bosnian Serbs. Consider the following evaluation:

> 'It seems to me,' [Herb Okun] said, 'that the Serbs are being bombed into accepting their own peace plan.' He was right, of course. The plan on offer was much more nearly their plan that their adversaries'. The Serbs had wanted partition, and they got partition, albeit within the fiction of a single state. They had wanted autonomy, and they got autonomy—though the territorial division grieved them, especially the loss of their suburbs in Sarajevo. But so great had been their losses in the war's closing weeks that they would actually retrieve through negotiation more land than they handed over.[432]

This assessment is echoed by Anthony Lewis of the New York Times who wrote,

> The mystery is why Washington has brought the parties to an agreement seemingly so favorable to the Serbian leaders' ambitions. Indeed, it is more favorable than the settlement crafted by Cyrus Vance and David Owen, which might well have been achieved when the Serbs were in a much

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[431] Holbrooke, *To End a War*, 73.
[432] Bell, *In Harm's Way*, 285.

stronger position.[433]

The two evaluations seem to strengthen the thesis that the Bosnian Serbs' decision to compromise might have been prompted by the terms of the settlement on offer. However, this would suggest that the Bosnian Serbs had been made privy to the information in advance, something that we know is untrue. The Bosnian Serb leadership objected to the territorial arrangements, including the surrender of Sarajevo, about which they were informed only ten minutes before President Milošević actually signed on the map.[434] Hence, the chronology of events disproves this explanation.

The 'Patriarch Paper': Samo Sloga Bosanska Srbina Spašava[435]

A thorough understanding of the Bosnian Serbs' decisions regarding the Dayton agreement requires an understanding of the "Patriarch Paper." This document, signed on August 30, created a joint Yugoslav-Bosnian Serb delegation for all future peace talks headed by President Milošević. The document stated that in case of a tie vote the head of the delegation would prevail. Signed before the NATO bombings, the document indicates the seriousness of the Bosnian Serb leadership's decision to mend fences with Belgrade.[436]

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[433] Owen, *Balkan Odyssey*, 335.

[434] Ivan Ivanov, "Member of Serb Delegation Feels Deceived in Dayton," *Itar-Tass*, 6 December 1995.

[435] This sentence translates as "Only unity can save the Bosnian Serbs."

[436] The document was witnessed by Patriarch Pavle, the head of the Serbian Orthodox Church, who was known to favor Karadžić over Milošević. The Patriarch's presence is a symbolic indication of the seriousness of the Bosnian Serb compromise.

Why did Radovan Karadžić agree to the "Patriarch Paper"? At the time of the agreement, the Bosnian Serb political leadership was under tremendous internal and external pressure. Externally, the SDS leaders had incurred the wrath of the international community as well as that of their previous mentor and protector, FRY President Slobodan Milošević. In mid-August, the American negotiators had made it clear that they would "never again deal directly with the Bosnian Serbs."[437]

Internally, the divide between Eastern and Western Srpska had widened. The army was increasingly resentful of SDS interference in military matters. Karadžić and his Pale associates had tried to sack General Mladić and one of his high-ranking officers, General Milan Gvero. The army criticized the petrol black market that was closely tied to powerful politicians. Army generals also spoke out against the politicized allocation of scarce resources. "The army was never funded from the budget as should be. Usually, it was funded on happenstance, excepted maybe for large campaigns."[438] The latent conflict between the army and the political authorities was surfacing. Some observers even blame it for the quick defeat of the military in summer 1995.[439]

At the same time, Western Srpska began to voice its own disagreements with the Pale leadership. The 1993 mutiny had found broad support among the city's intellectual elites. At issue here was the political discrimination exercised by Pale. The only urban center in RS, Banja Luka felt sidelined in decision-making. A former VRS officer whom I

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[437] Holbrooke, *To End a War*, 4.
[438] Milin, author interview.
[439] Perić, author interview.

interviewed recounted witnessing a session of the Bosnian Serb Assembly during which Krajina Serbs supported a motion to make Banja Luka the capital of the RS. "The speaker of Parliament called a break, pressure was applied on the bold MPs, and when the session reconvened, the motion was voted down almost unanimously."[440]

The deck was stacked against the Pale leadership. The conflict between Mladić and Karadžić had returned a victory for the VRS Commander whose support base was increasing. Karadžić's decision to agree to the Patriarch Paper was an effort to address the growing disequilibrium in the internal RS balance of power. Insiders note that when Karadžić attempted to remove Mladić from power the General's strongest card was "Karadžić's fear that a serious split with a popular military leader would bring the RS to the same kind of dead end as was the case with the RSK."[441]

Patriarch Pavle's presence at the signing of this document "gave the illusion that fences between Belgrade and Pale had been mended."[442] Then-President Momir Bulatović of Montenegro recalled, "they were conscious of al the mistakes they'd make and that everything could be destroyed: Republika Srpska could disappear."[443] The "Patriarch Paper" was a desperate attempt by an internally and externally embattled leadership to cling to power. By signing to the joint delegation and deferring authority to Milošević, Karadžić and the SDS leadership were attempting to defuse the threat to their power and control posed by

[440] Ibid.
[441] Darko Mocibob, "The Ongoing Changes in VRS: Analysis and Assessment," Media Analysis, Office of the Commander (COMARRC), Allied Command Europe Rapid Reaction Corps, NATO, 13 November 1996.
[442] Silber and Little, *Yugoslavia*, 365.
[443] *Ibid.*, 366.

Mladić's rising star.[444]

THE DURABILITY OF PEACE: REPUBLIKA SRPSKA BEYOND DAYTON

At Dayton, the Bosnian Serbs did not participate in the negotiations. The settlement that emerged contradicted two of their main war aims. The first was the right of the Bosnian Serbs to decide on the choice of state they wanted to live in. By recognizing the continued existence of Bosnia within its internationally recognized borders, President Milošević closed the door on RS secession and ultimate joining with the FRY.

Bosnian Serb opposition to the terms of the DPA continued unabated over the next few months, even as the leadership signed the annexes in Paris in December. The war presidencies of the Serb-held Sarajevo suburbs of Ilidža, Hadjići, Grbavica, and Vogosca held referenda in which the voters overwhelmingly rejected the DPA clause on the reunification of the city.[445] The Bosnian Serbs repeatedly obstructed the implementation of the DPA. In the most serious incident, in April 1996, General Mladić ordered his troops to cease cooperation with SFOR troops because he accused them of partiality. The major difference was that the Bosnian Serbs did not resort to force in their opposition to the agreement.

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[444] This argument is partially corroborated by the attitudes of French and British diplomats who were increasingly arguing that Mladić might be the Bosnian Serb leader capable of delivering peace in Bosnia.

[445] See for example the wire report of Jovana Gec of the *Associated Press*, 23 November 1995.

Saving Republika Srspka

The Bosnian Serbs clearly failed to achieve their war aims at Dayton. Even as their representatives went to Paris to initial the annexes to the DPA, Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadžić acknowledged that "Dayton represents an overall defeat of the Serbs."[446] "We have not fulfilled large parts of our goals," Karadžić said.[447]

Karadžić and other members of the Bosnian Serb leadership repeatedly stated that the Serbs were not satisfied with the DPA because "our natural aspiration is to remain in Yugoslavia, to join Yugoslavia, to join Serbia."[448] The Bosnian Serbs attempted to interpret the DPA clause that states "The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina recognize each other as sovereign independent States within their international borders" as non-binding for them.

Another problem was the fate of Sarajevo. Under the agreement, the Bosnian Serbs had to surrender the four districts of Sarajevo that they controlled to the Federation. It is interesting to note that the re-unification of Sarajevo was high on the list of Bosnian Serb complaints. Just as the DPA was initialed in Dayton, Serb Parliament Speaker, Momčilo Krajišnik described the Dayton maps as "bad, blackmailing and servile." He objected to the fact that the maps "kept Sarajevo unified, allowed a land corridor linking the Bosnian capital with the government-controlled enclave of Goražde and did not give the Serbs a wider

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[446] Jovana Gec, *AP Worldstream*, 17 December 1995.
[447] Jovana Gec, "Bosnian Serb Leaders Seek to Convince Serbs Peace Deal Acceptable," *The Associated Press*, 16 December 1995.
[448] "Karadžić Denies Crimes Committed by Serb Army," *Xinhua News Agency*, 1 February 1996.

corridor linking their lands in the east and west."[449]

However, Dayton recognized Republika Srpska as one of the Entities of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. By so doing, it granted the Serbs as much autonomy as they could expect under the circumstances. The survival of Republika Srpska weighed heavily in the considerations of Bosnian Serb decision-makers. This was the argument used most frequently as the leadership attempted to secure the DPA's approval by the Bosnian Serb Assembly. The creation of a Serb Entity, Republika Srpska, within Bosnia was hailed as a victory. "By recognizing Republika Srpska, the international community has recognized that our fight was justified," Karadžić said. "We got less than we could but the fact is that the state is there."[450] The Bosnian Serb leader also urged his followers "to be brave and go on with the building of our state."

This was not the selfless sacrifice of a man devoted to his cause. Radovan Karadžić and his SDS associates had built a machine from which they derived both power and financial rewards. The SDS leadership sought to protect that machine. The territorial dispensations of the agreement and the recognition of Republika Srpska guaranteed the survival of the civilian and military RS institutions. In the context of a grave imbalance of military power, rejection of the DPA held the prospect that Republika Srpska would suffer the fate of the RSK. The Serbs had already incurred a loss of territory in the northwest that could be attributed partially to their internal squabbles. Should they attempt to resort to

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[449] Dušan Stojanović, "Bosnian Serbs Reject Dayton Agreement, Threaten Accord," *The Associated Press*, 22 November 1995.
[450] Ibid.

force in rejecting the DPA, the Bosnian Serb leaders would not only lose their positions at the top. They would also lose all the material advantages that followed from their control over the institutions of Republika Srpska.

This analysis is corroborated by two events that followed implementation of the DPA: the Bosnian Serb participation in the 1996 elections and the power struggle between Karadžić and Plavšić in the summer of 1997.

The 1996 Elections

The decision of the Bosnian Serb leadership to participate in the 1996 elections would appear quite puzzling in light of their attitude toward the implementation of the DPA during the nine months preceding the elections. By the time elections were held in September, the Bosnian Serb leadership had clearly attempted to delay implementation of many provisions of the DPA. Whereas the Serbs were not alone in dragging their feet, they were by far the most reluctant party. RS authorities tried to obstruct the process of reintegration of Sarajevo by destroying housing, industrial facilities, and essential utilities in Serb-held Ilidža and Grbavica. Bosnian Serb officials continued to resettle displaced Serbs in areas previously purged of non-Serbs in a clear attempt to block the return of Bosniac and Croat refugees to their homes within Republika Srpska. When refugees attempted to visit their properties in Srpska crowds of hostile Serbs physically assaulted them. Several such incidents involved both dead and wounded casualties. Ethnic cleansing continued in Republika Srpska, the most notable incident involving the expulsion of 500 Bosniacs from the town of Teslić in June 1996. The Serb refusal to amend the RS constitution to ensure its

conformity with the constitution of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina indicated a rejection of the RS's subsidiary status to Bosnia and Herzegovina.[451]

At the same time however, the Bosnian Serb leadership demonstrated less reluctance toward the implementation of the military aspects of the DPA. They negotiated amendments to the Inter-Entity Boundary Line, the de facto border separating Republika Srpska from the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. They also complied with a number of other provisions concerning cantonment of weapons, withdrawal of forces behind the IEBL, notification of theirs plans for the deployment of weapons systems and the disbanding of special operations and armed civilian groups to the Federation. This was to be expected inasmuch as the military aspects of the DPA are provisions that separate the parties and do not attempt to reunite them.

Why then would the Bosnian Serb leadership go along with the 1996 elections, a decision that could be interpreted as compliance with a civilian provision of the DPA? An understanding of this decision commands a return to the incentives that drove the same leadership to accept the Patriarch Paper and, by extension, the Dayton Peace Agreement.

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[451] See International Crisis Group, *The Dayton Peace Accords, A Six-Month Review* (Sarajevo: ICG, 13 June 1996).

Although he was forced to resign from the Presidency of Republika Srpska, Radovan Karadžić "retained complete control over the Serb entity and its still thriving black market and smuggling operations [until summer 1997]. After all, his personal enforcer, Interior Minister Dragan Kijać, had twenty-five to thirty thousand police agents under his command."[452] Pale's control rested on two pillars. The top state officials were core members of the 'Pale clique'. At the bottom, a large number of clients benefited from the patronage of the SDS network. The range of benefits extended from the unlawful acquisition of assets belonging to expelled Muslims or Croats to dependence on the SDS for the provision of social services, housing, or jobs.[453]

From that perspective, the elections were not a danger. On the contrary, they played into the hands of Karadžić and his clique. Local authorities organized the ballot. This allowed the Bosnian Serb leadership to manipulate voter registration. In the run-up to elections, the allocation of housing, jobs, and social services became bargaining chips in the hands of the ruling elite. They were used to coerce Bosnian Serb refugees to register in the municipalities where they had re-located instead of the municipalities that they lived in before the war. In the frontline town of Doboj, for example, the official SDS-controlled Commission for Refugees and Displaced Persons decreed that the provision of housing, humanitarian aid, and other benefits depended on presentation of a special certificate that

[452] Weschler, "High Noon at Twin Peaks," 31.
[453] For more details see International Crisis Group, *Inside Radovan's Republika: The Struggle for Power in Republika Srpska* (Sarajevo: ICG, 11 July 1996); Colin Soloway, "Bosnia: Not So Quick Start—Karadžić Continues to Block Integration," *War Report* (June/July 1997).

displaced Serbs could only acquire by showing voter registration form P-2.[454] Some refugees were even told that they would get new houses if they voted for the SDS.[455]

Not only did the SDS have extensive control over voter registration; the party also had a total monopoly over the media. When the Provisional Election Commission drew up an Electoral Code of Conduct for the media, RTV Srpska adapted its rules. The television channel decided to "affirm the sovereignty and integrity of Republika Srpska, determined by the DPA."[456] This reinterpretation of the PEC code of conduct allowed RTV Srpska to refuse airtime to those political parties and factions whose programs were deemed against the national interest. Opposition parties were thus put on the defensive and forced to ward off attacks in which SDS sympathizers intimated that they were traitors to the Serbian cause.

Given the context of elections, SDS victory was not in doubt. From the leadership's perspective, once it became clear that the lead-up to elections allowed the SDS enough room to control developments, there was no reason to boycott the elections. On the contrary, the SDS leadership could prevail and get the added benefit of international legitimation of its control over the institutions of Republika Srpska.[457]

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[454] P-2 was the application form used to vote in a different municipality than the one in which they lived in 1991. The introduction of this application was intended to make these cases the exception rather than the rule.

[455] Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia, *Registration of Bosnian Refugees for the September Elections* (Banja Luka: HCHR, 31 July 1996), 1.

[456] Institute for War and Peace Reporting, *IWPR Monitoring Report*, 10 July 1996, 6.

[457] Hence the acrimonious debate over the decision of the OSCE to describe the elections as free and fair.

Pale vs. Banja Luka

The organizational and financial interests of the Pale clique would become apparent in the merciless fight between Biljana Plavšić and Radovan Karadžić as each attempted to wrest control of the RS from the other in July 1997. Faced with an American ultimatum, "put your house in order or lose it," Plavšić proceeded to dismiss Karadžić's man at the helm, Interior Minister Kijać. When Karadžić retaliated by stirring trouble in the Bosnian Serb Assembly where the SDS maintained a majority of seats, Plavšić dissolved the Assembly. The power struggle essentially revolved over the control of two key institutions: the police and the media. These were the institutions that the Pale leadership used (and abused) to remain in control. At that time, the RS had become

> a state in which the budget actually does not exist, where police are involved in smuggling and stealing from their own state, and where a majority of the population is living in abject poverty. ... While bribes and illicit profits coursed regularly into the pockets of a few individuals, the state, bereft of revenue, was unable to pay its teachers or its doctors, or even to bankroll the proper upkeep of its Army.[458]

Plavšić went public with charges of corruption and money laundering. She produced documents showing that, for the revenue year 1997 alone, 87 percent of the high duty transits to Republika Srpska had escaped taxation. These transactions were handled by a handful of companies owned and operated by high-ranking SDS officials including the police chief of Trebinje, Miroslav Duka, and Ministers Kijać and Miroslav Kovačević.[459] The conflict split RS in two. The loyalty of the police force and the media was divided. Two

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[458] Weschler, "High Noon at Twin Peaks," 33.
[459] The charges, details of the tax evasion scandals, and supporting documents were included in a special report published by the Banja Luka Reporter. "Dokumenti" *Reporter*, June 1997, 25-34.

distinct police forces and two television stations emerged.[460] The conflict was so acute that SFOR (the NATO-led Stabilization Force) intervened twice, seizing transmitters from Pale and helping police loyal to Plavšić secure control of the police headquarters in Banja Luka.

The abuse had happened at the confluence between the SDS and the State. "This battle was fought in 1997 eventually, however, it started in 1992-1993."[461] It was a battle over the institutions of the RS. However, this time around, Biljana Plavšić did not attempt to save the institutions for power or money. "She understood that we [the Bosnian Serbs] will end up like the Serbs of the Krajina if we maintained business as usual."[462] Whether she won or lost this battle is still early to determine.[463]

In Summary

In summary, it is my contention that a thorough understanding of the Bosnian Serb decision to accept the DPA cannot sideline the role of institutional interests. This analysis established that securing control over the institutions of the RS was paramount in the minds of the Bosnian Serb leadership. "The decision to [ultimately] accept Dayton was a rational calculation by each side as to whether they were getting the best deal they could."

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[460] The best coverage of the split is a special issue of *War Report*. "Republika Srpska Splits," *War Report* 55 (October 1997).

[461] Stewart-Howitt, author interview.

[462] Milin, author interview.

[463] The election of Nikola Poplašen to the post of President of Republika Srpska in September 1998 reflects the disaffection of many Bosnian Serbs with the pro-Western inclinations of Plavšić. Poplašen is the head of the Serbian Radical Party, a hard-liner Serb nationalist party close to Karadžić's SDS.

When asked about their rejection of the Contact Group map and subsequent acceptance of Dayton, Karadžić, Krajišnik, and other Bosnian Serb leaders said that "in 1994 they rejected 49 percent of the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina because they thought they could get more; in 1995 they accepted the same 49 percent out of fear of losing more and ending up with nothing."[464] However, they did not measure loss only in terms of territory. Narrower interests in power and money were also at stake. The Bosnian Serb leaders sought to maintain control over the institutions of the state because this control was narrowly intertwined with financial gain.

While the RS leadership dragged its feet when it came to implementing contentious civilian aspects of Dayton, they complied with the military aspect of the agreement. This is not unreasonable according to observers. "The reason why [the DPA's] military part is most successful is not because of SFOR but mainly because this is the only element in the DPA which is directed to what delineates the parties rather than what should be bringing them together."[465] The most perceptive assessment of the Serb position is that the Serbs do not implement the DPA. They still consider themselves a state. At the moment, the Serbs are the status quo power in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

> For the Serbs, Dayton gave them half of the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina though they form only 35 percent of its population; it also provided them with a single contiguous territory, allowed to have their own laws, army, etc. They comply with the military aspect of Dayton and do not really care should the IEBL become a border. They ... are pleased with its constitutional provisions, which afford them a large degree of autonomy. What they are unhappy about is the return of refugees and, consequently, they obstruct the implementation of Annex 7. They, as well as other parties,

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[464] Harland, author interview.
[465] UNHCR official, author interview, 7 September 1998. (Identity and posting withheld at the request of the interviewee).

see Dayton as a menu from which to choose certain items ... and from which to reject whatever is not in your interest. They therefore accept and interpret Dayton to reinforce their own political imperatives.[466]

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[466] Harland, author interview.

CONCLUSION: TOWARD A NEW UNDERSTANDING OF CIVIL CONFLICT-RESOLUTION

This dissertation started with a puzzle. Why do militias that derive power, financial benefits, and legitimacy from the condition of civil war accept peace settlements? The research examined the choices of Bosnian Serb and Lebanese Christian militia leaders to uncover the calculus underlying their decisions to accept or reject three separate deals in each case. It demonstrated that militia institutions affect the preferences of leaders. They also change the environment of the conflict. Institutions strengthen many of the military and political capacities of militias, yet they tend to reduce overall militia ability to withstand negative changes in the balance of power on the ground. The case studies of the Lebanese Forces and the Bosnian Serbs illustrated this dynamic vividly.

In this concluding chapter, I reflect on the broad theoretical and practical implications of the study. How do the findings of this dissertation affect our approach to militias? How do they change the study of conflict-resolution? What are the theoretical contributions of this research? On a practical level, what does it suggest for the crafting of sustainable peace agreements? Does it give us a better handle on the issue of actors' commitment to peace? Last but not least, where do we go from here?

FANATICS, MERCENARIES, BRIGANDS ... AND INSTITUTION-BUILDERS: BRINGING THE STUDY OF MILITIAS INTO MAINSTREAM POLITICAL SCIENCE

The recent but growing literature on militias treats militia decision-makers as fanatics, brigands, or mercenaries. Instead, this dissertation focused on their role as institution-builders. I argued and presented evidence that militia leaders build their group's organizational and financial capacity for a number of inter-related reasons—to increase fighting efficiency, drum up popular support, and project legitimacy in the international arena. Thus, the Lebanese Forces were primarily created to improve military coordination between a number of disparate Christian militias in the early years of the Lebanese Civil War. The LF later established a number of civilian departments in an effort to build bridges with the population of the areas under their control. These bridges would improve the daily lives of citizens but they would also serve to increase popular support for the militia. Finally, the LF adopted some of the trappings of a state, including representation offices outside of Lebanon, in order to impress upon regional and international actors the seriousness of their cause and the need to include them in any peace negotiations. Institution building happens across the range of groups that qualify as militias. This is one of the common threads that bring together groups as disparate as the Palestine Liberation Organization, El Salvador's Frente Farabundo Martí de Liberación Nacional (FMLN), the Irish Revolutionary Army, the Lebanese Forces, and the Bosnian Serbs. [467]

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[467] On the organization of the FMLN and Peru's Shining Path, see Cynthia McClintock, *Revolutionary Movements in Latin America: El Salvador's FMLN and Peru's Shining Path* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1998). On the PLO, see Rex Brynen, *Sanctuary and Survival*.

Institution building is an important aspect of militias not only because it is a common characteristic of many such groups but also because it allows us to bring these actors within the fold of current political science theories. For instance, the work of Charles Tilly suggests several parallels between militia attempts at institution building and between the attempts of medieval European warlords to establish power. The initial focus of all these actors on military organization and revenue generation is noticeable. In Lebanon and Bosnia, the respective leadership of the Lebanese Forces and the Bosnian Serbs gave primacy to military recruitment and organization as well as revolutionary taxation. Nor is this phenomenon limited to the two cases under study in this research. Most recently, the Kosovo Liberation Army provided yet another illustration to support the contention that contemporary militias are in many ways similar to their medieval predecessors.

The warlords of Europe unintentionally sowed the seeds for state building. Statehood has since become the only legitimate form of politico-territorial organization. Finnemore argues that this has affected present-day conflicts in significant ways. Indeed, this dissertation contends that many a militia build proto-states in order to give their claims to nationhood more substance, a contention illustrated by the connection between the establishment of Republika Srpska and the findings of the 1992 Badinter Commission.[468] Similarly, the PLO, the KLA, and other such groups have resorted to such institutions as shadow governments or governments-in-exile to the same ends.[469]

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[468] See the discussion in chapter seven of this research.
[469] Some groups such as the Indonesian militias in East Timor or the Interhawme in Rwanda do not need the build such institutions because of their intimate connection to forces in the State. This does

Much as the decision-making of state leaders becomes constrained by the institutions of the state, militia institutions influence the decision-making of militia leaders. This is yet another juncture at which we can draw on the existing literature to understand militias as political actors. State actors are situated at the cusp between the domestic realm and the international sphere.[470] Putnam's "two-level games" approach to international bargaining is but one of many insightful attempts to capture the constraints that such a position imposes upon state actors. This dissertation used the logic of two level games to uncover the impact of institutions on the intra-communal and extra-communal considerations that militia leaders bring to the negotiating table.

The dissertation took earlier observations about the nature of domestic politics in civil war situations one step further. Civil wars blur the differences between the order of domestic politics and the anarchy of the international system. Therefore, analysts have drawn the conclusion that, under such conditions, the security dilemma will be more intense.[471] The logic of anarchy has been transposed from the study of international wars to that of internal conflicts. Realist-oriented studies focus on the acuteness of the security dilemma as a primary obstacle to civil conflict-resolution.[472] This dissertation acknowledges the similarities between international politics and domestic politics under conditions of

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not prevent them from institutionalizing but it would be expected that their path of institutionalization would differ from the militias that I have studied in this dissertation.

[470] For a discussion of the implications of such a position see, Evans, Rueschemeyer and Sckocpol, *Bringing the State Back In.*

[471] In civil war situations, Barry Posen argues that anarchy creates two conditions that underpin the acute manifestation of a security dilemma: the offense-defense balance tilts in favor of the former but the differences between offense and defense are concurrently blurred. Barry Posen, "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict."

[472] See Barry Posen, "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict," and Barbara Walter, "The Critical Barrier to Civil War Settlement."

internal war. However, it uses the parallel to other purposes. In the neo-liberal trend, I focus on the potential for achieving cooperative outcomes in spite of the condition of anarchy.

In brief, this research established the usefulness of adding an institutional dimension to our approach of militia actors. Not only does such an approach steer researchers away from uni-dimensional, overly descriptive, and often stereotypical accounts of militias, it also brings these actors more squarely into mainstream political science by drawing on similarities between them and other abundantly studied political forces. This should not, however, be taken to imply that other approaches to the study of militias were totally misguided. Militia ideology and economic considerations do play an important role in shaping the preferences and calculus of decision-makers. It is worthwhile reiterating that, in spite of their growing vulnerability, militia decision-makers remain constrained. Although their own preferences may be to settle, they have to evaluate their decision against the framework of the whole group's win-set. For example, LF Commander Samir Ja`ja` would have accepted the Ta'if Accord in September 1989 had it not been for the widely diverging preferences between the Lebanese Forces and General `Awn. Indeed, militia leaders risk losing their position at the helm if they disregard the preferences of other members of their domestic coalition, a situation sharply illustrated by the fate of LF Commander Ilyas Hubeiqa after he signed the Tripartite Agreement. The Tripartite Agreement clearly fell outside of the LF win-set. Likewise, the Vance-Owen Peace Plan did not take central Bosnian Serb preferences into consideration. On the other hand, both the Dayton and the Ta'if peace agreements provided the Bosnian Serbs and the Lebanese Forces respectively with some of their

ideological demands. And while both agreements also forced these two parties to compromise some of their long-standing objectives, they would not have passed without offering them some gains in other realms.

To summarize, the research established that none of these considerations is a stand-alone factor in the decision-making of militia leaders. In other words, in spite of a growing literature suggestive of these labels, militias are not purely fanatics, nor are they simply mercenaries or brigands. The institutional analysis of this research established that militia motivations are changing and complex. It also demonstrated that institutions provide a framework to make sense of the relationships between different sets of motivations.

INSTITUTIONS AND CHOICE: IMPLICATIONS OF THE INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS FOR EXISTING THEORIES OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION

In chapter two of this research, I argued that existing literature on militias and conflict-resolution suffered from two inter-related gaps. The first was the failure to grasp the significance of the institutional dimension of militias. The second was the tendency to frame the study of conflict-resolution primarily in terms of inter-party bargaining. I argued that an institutional analysis would fill both gaps. It would further provide me with a model of militia decision-making articulating the link between intra-communal politics, extra-communal considerations, and the strategic choice of militia decision-makers at the bargaining table. In other words, the institutional approach allowed me to articulate strategic choices in terms of intra- as well as inter-party bargaining. Although I acknowledge that the

process of bargaining itself may alter the initial positions of actors, I argue that, under a specific set of conditions, militia leaders will actually come to the negotiating table with a serious willingness to compromise. When such conditions obtain, the initial strategic choice of militia decision leaders facilitates the achievement of the desired outcome: a sustainable peace settlement.

The Importance of Intra-Communal Politics for "Ripeness'

This dissertation contributes to the elaboration and specification of the important concept of "ripeness." As mentioned in the literature review, several analysts of conflict-resolution acknowledge the importance of intra-communal politics for ripeness.[473] However, none had yet come up with a set of clearly defined, testable hypotheses, yielding generalizable conclusions about the manner in which intra-communal politics affect ripeness. In this research, I demonstrated that the strength of a leader's internal coalition is an extremely important consideration that enters into their calculus of costs and benefits as well as in their risk assessment.

In the conclusion to his study of Zimbabwe, Stedman refined the concept of ripeness, arguing that it could be a function of internal changes: the emergence of new leaders, the consolidation of a divided leadership, or the division of a government that was previously unified in its war aims.[474] This research provides a framework to make sense of these internal changes and theorize their impact on the strategic choices of decision-makers. Militia institutions affect the strength of internal coalitions in two ways. First, they contribute to the

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[473] Notably William Zartman and Stephen Stedman.

emergence of competing win-sets within coalitions. Institutions change the preferences of militia leaders. They introduce organizational and financial considerations into their calculus, which starts to diverge from that of their internal allies, increasing the probability that strains will develop in these alliances. While the preferences of the Lebanese Front and the Lebanese Forces overlapped in the period between 1976-1978, the process of LF institutionalization ushered in changes that would ultimately put the militia and the Front on a collision course. The first intifada was the direct result of this divergence in preferences. Similar frictions characterized the relationship between the RS political leadership and the Bosnian Serb Army, leading the military leadership to question the strategic choices of the politicians. Second, militia institutions also affect the dynamics of militia relations with members of their domestic coalition. New militia interests raise the specter of intra-militia factionalism, as control of the commanding heights of the militia becomes an increasingly attractive (and lucrative) prospect. Leaders now have to contend with potential challengers both inside the ranks of the militia's leadership and among former allies. The era of *intifadas* within the Lebanese Forces demonstrated the intra-militia struggle for control while the black market's tight association with the political leadership of Republika Srpska was instrumental in heightening the tension between the party and the army.

This dissertation does not only describe the role of institutions in modifying the strength of the domestic coalition of militia decision-makers. I also demonstrate that the strength of a leader's internal coalition is an extremely important consideration that enters into their calculus of costs and benefits as well as in their risk assessment. The growing

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[474] Stedman. *Peacemaking in Civil War.*

concern of Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadžić with the rising star of VRS Commander Ratko Mladić captured this dynamic well. I argue that we can develop predictions relating the strength of domestic coalitions to the leader's propensity to resist or seek compromise.

Drawing on two-level games, I establish that intra-communal considerations will often trump extra-communal politics in the calculus of leaders whose incumbency depends on their domestic base of support. Thus, in September 1989, the Lebanese Forces did not openly embrace the Ta'if Accord because they were concerned about the reaction of General `Awn and his followers. However, the deal was acceptable to the militia and, once `Awn was out of the way, the LF came out in support of Ta'if. In this respect, I also note the prospect for reverberation, or the attempt by an internally embattled leader to use the achievement of a peace settlement as a means of restructuring power dynamics within his zone of control. However, I also expect reverberation to be highly risky and unsuccessful. Indeed, this strategy relies on the prospect of quick visible gains that would sway popular support in favor of the leader and away from potential contenders. But the nature of peace implementation processes is such that gains are usually long in coming, setting the stage for spoilers who take advantage of this opportunity to reshuffle internal as well as external cards. This was starkly illustrated by the loosing wager of LF Commander Ilyas Hubeiqa on the Tripartite Agreement. Hubeiqa's decision to go ahead with the Agreement in spite of serious Christian opposition to his endeavor was premised on the fact that a 'successful' peace would turn this opposition around.

By developing such a set of predictions, the dissertation theorizes the role of intra-communal politics in bringing about the ripeness that earlier studies rightly identified as an important facilitator in achieving peace settlements. I demonstrate that the attainment of plateaus or precipices does not, in and by itself, constitute ripeness. This sort of extra-communal development needs to be complemented by internal developments such that leaders believe that peace will not be dangerous to their tenure in office.

Raison de la Révolution vs. Raison d'Institution: Understanding Militia Incentives to Settle

The dissertation argues that institutions have an impact on militia leaders' evaluations of intra-communal politics but also of extra-communal considerations. In connection to the latter, I paid particular attention to the impact of institutions on the militias' ability to withstand changes in the balance of forces on the ground. Although militia institutions are initially established to increase the fighting efficiency of the group, they often have adverse effects. In other words, institutionalized militias may be more vulnerable to gunboat diplomacy than less institutionalized ones.

I also showed that, in situations where they were under military duress, leaders of institutionalized militias were particularly sensitive to a dilemma pitting "raison de la révolution" or their professed ideological preferences against "raison d'institution" or the imperative of institutional preservation. The Dayton Agreement may have prevented the Bosnian Serbs from ever joining their kin in Yugoslavia but it preserved Republika Srpska. Likewise, the Ta'if Accord did away with the prerogatives of Maronite presidents but

acceptance of Ta'if provided the Lebanese Forces with the possibility of safeguarding their civilian institutions.

The recognition of this tension between ideological considerations and institutional preservation is one of the central contributions of this research. It provides academics with a contrapuntal perspective on militia decision-making. As discussed at length in chapter two of this research, several analyses of militias emphasize leaders' ideological preferences as the prime constraint on settling conflicts. I disagree with this literature and contend that even the most "radical" militia leaders, even indicted war criminals like Radovan Karadžić and Ratko Mladić, will face the dilemma of institutional preservation if they go down the path of institutionalization.

Strategic Choices and the Problem of Commitment to Peace

As I researched my two case studies, it became apparent that I was faced not with one but with two puzzles. The first puzzle concerned the decision of militia leaders to accept peace settlements. The second was more complex. If militia leaders accept peace settlements to preserve the militia's institutions, why do we later see a divergence of outcomes with some militias upholding their commitment to peace while others walk out on peace agreements during the implementation phase? This puzzle was starkly illustrated by the two case studies themselves. Whereas the Lebanese Forces became increasingly dissatisfied with the implementation of the Ta'if Accord, the Bosnian Serb leadership has not moved to overturn the Dayton Agreement. Could the argument developed to explain

the strategic choices of these two groups account for such a divergence of outcomes? To answer this question, I carried out an analysis of militia decisions regarding participation in the first parliamentary elections.[475]

This post-conflict analysis of militia decision-making was not only important in that it confirmed the role of institutions in the calculus of militia decision-makers. The analysis also corroborated an argument that I made at the outset of my theoretical exposition. In chapter four, I justified my decision to exclude the strategic interaction between negotiators and parties from this analysis on the grounds that the dissertation sought to specify the conditions under which militias came to the negotiating table with a serious will to compromise. I argued further that such an understanding was important to judge the likelihood of success of a given set of negotiations. However, I recognized that a militia leader's strategic choice might be influenced or modified by the attitudes of others at the negotiating table (Level II). In other words, I was claiming that even the most sophisticated analyses of bargaining would not be sufficient to predict the actors' commitment to peace if they did not take the impact of institutions into account. This dissertation suggested a way of thinking about the connection between Level I and Level II analyses of civil conflict-resolution.

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[475] The choice of parliamentary elections was premised on the literature's assumption that these are founding elections laying the ground for democratic institution building. On the subject of post-conflict elections see Krishna Kumar, ed. *Postconflict Elections, Democratization and International Assistance* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1998); Krishna Kumar and Marina Ottaway, *From Bullets to Ballots: Electoral Assistance to Post-Conflict Societies* (Washington, D.C.: United States Agency for International Development, 1997); Jennifer McCoy, Larry Garber, and Robert Pastor, "Pollwatching and Peacemaking," *Journal of Democracy* 2, 4 (1991): 102-114; Shaheen Mozaffar, "Electoral Systems and Conflict Management in Africa: A Twenty-Eight State Comparison," in *Elections and Conflict Management in Africa*, Timothy Sisk and Andrew Reynolds, eds. (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1998), 81-98.

Neither the Lebanese Forces nor the Bosnian Serb leadership were physically present at the negotiating table when the Ta'if Accord and the Dayton Peace Agreement were hammered out. Whereas the Lebanese Forces were clearly consulted on the content of the agreement by representatives of the Christian Lebanese community, President Milošević did not seek the approval of Republika Srpska leaders when making important concessions. This could have led observers to the conclusion that the choices of these parties were irrelevant to the success of the agreements. But it would not have answered the question of the two militias' commitment to the peace processes in their respective countries. Why didn't these actors move to spoil the agreements' implementation? Why did the Lebanese Forces accept to demobilize their forces and withdraw their heavy armament from Beirut? Why, having accepted to demobilize, did they later refuse to take part in the 1992 parliamentary elections? Why did the Bosnian Serbs accept to take part in the 1996 parliamentary elections in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina? How can we account for this compliance with the terms of the DPA, while at the same time accounting for their refusal to abide by the provisions of annex seven regarding the return of refugees? The analysis of these post-conflict situations confirmed that considerations of institutional survival had framed the calculus of Radovan Karadžić and Samir Ja`ja`. The absence of such considerations during earlier attempts at conflict-resolution in Bosnia and Lebanon respectively had allowed both Karadžić and Ja`ja` to spoil earlier settlements. In 1989, institutional preservation had begun to preoccupy the Lebanese Forces' leadership. Similarly, institutional preservation had motivated Radovan Karadžić to mend fences with Belgrade in late July-early August 1995. The changes in the balance of forces on the ground may have precipitated negotiations, but it was the concern of both leaders for safeguarding

their institutions that guaranteed the resulting peace settlements a better chance of success than countless predecessors.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS: CONFLICT-RESOLUTION, PEACE IMPLEMENTATION, AND THE SUSTAINABILITY OF PEACE IN POST-CONFLICT SOCIETIES

Beyond its theoretical implications, this dissertation has a number of policy inferences. It highlights the need to take militias seriously as potential peace partners. Though militias have taken part in a number of peace negotiations, international mediators often prefer to deal with 'legitimate' representatives. For example, it was not until the early 1990s that the PLO was finally accepted by the Israeli government as its best Palestinian interlocutor. However, PLO moderation can be traced back to 1974 and was confirmed by 1988. By this count, the American and Israeli reluctance to deal with an "illegitimate, terrorist organization" may have delayed serious conflict resolution efforts by roughly a decade.

On the other hand, it is important to secure militia acceptance of the terms of peace. In his account of the negotiations leading to the DPA, Richard Holbrooke mentions that the Bosnian Serb leadership initiated three probes in the summer of 1995 to explore the possibility of resuming negotiations with the international community. Holbrooke says, "In view of what was about to happen, it was more than fortunate that we rejected these three probes from Pale. Had we opened any of these doors, the course of the next three months

would have been significantly different."[476] As argued earlier, this assessment exaggerates the role of military force in bringing the Bosnian Serbs to the negotiating table. What Holbrooke and countless other foreign mediators before him missed is the fact that, regardless of the situation on the ground, peace negotiations do not have a chance to succeed if one or more major parties are not interested—for whatever particular set of reasons—in the prospect of peace.

The dissertation also suggests that, in spite of appearances, militias that adopt some of the trappings of states may actually become more rather than less vulnerable. The development of complex organizational structures is often looked upon as increasing the threat posed by militias to other protagonists. Embattled states are particularly weary of such developments. They actively discourage international mediators from acknowledging militias, even as de facto representatives of groups and/or communities. The more organized a militia, the more state-like its institutions, the more nervous the government becomes. However, this dissertation has demonstrated that there are hidden costs to institutionalization. Small guerrilla movements may have less to lose than large organizations and they may thus be less amenable to compromise. The hidden costs of institutionalization make militias vulnerable to the conventional tools of diplomacy.

By focusing on the relationship between strategic choice and commitment to peace, the research has also suggested the existence of a wide range of conditions underpinning

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[476] Holbrooke, *To End a War*, 99.

peace settlements. Policy-makers concerned with the issue of spoiler management should take away three lessons from this research:

1. Because militias are prime candidates for the role of spoilers, it is important to bring them into the fold of peace negotiations.

2. Because it matters greatly for the sustainability of peace whether the various actors accepted a given settlement for tactical or strategic reasons, it is important to understand the incentives of actors to settle.

3. Militias concerned with issues of institutional preservation can be given a vested interest in peace if the terms of the settlement allow them to address these concerns in return for compromising their ideological preferences.

These lessons are borne out by the facts in post-conflict Lebanon and Bosnia. The evidence presented in this research suggested that the Lebanese Forces and the Bosnian Serbs, respectively the most reluctant parties in each case, had vested institutional interests in peace. This indicated that the Ta'if and Dayton agreements would be more sustainable than earlier attempts at conflict-resolution. Four years have passed since the Dayton Peace Agreement was signed; Lebanon has recently celebrated the tenth anniversary of the Ta'if Accord. And while Bosnia is still struggling in the throes of a difficult economic transition, Lebanon has taken successful steps toward economic reconstruction.[477] Yet, observers wonder about the solidity of both agreements. Would the DPA survive in the absence of

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[477] This success prompted some analysts to look to Beirut for answers to the economic plight of Sarajevo. See Nicholas Blanford, Sarajevo looks to Beirut for helpful hints," *The Daily Star* (Beirut), 15 December 1998.

the NATO Stabilization Force?[478] Will Lebanon descend back into war when the Syrian troops withdraw?[479] I would surmise that the answer to both questions is no. However, I would qualify the answer for Bosnia.

Since the signing of Ta'if, peace implementation has threatened the institutional interests of the Lebanese Forces. The governmental crackdown on the militia has forced LF supporters underground. However, the LF did not avail themselves of the option of militarily spoiling the agreement. It is true that, by 1994, the militia was unable to sustain a return to the conflict. Nevertheless, it could have attempted limited disruption of the peace process. Based on the evidence garnered in this research, I contend that the LF concern with institutional preservation proved to be the militia's Achilles heel. While the LF strove to maintain its civilian institutions unscathed, other factions established facts on the ground that sidelined the LF, robbed the militia of its military option, and ultimately resulted in its dismantling. What other Lebanese factions were not able to achieve through war—a clear victory—they succeeded in achieving through 'peace.'[480]

The Bosnian case highlights the impact that external actors can have on such vulnerable polities. The international community has contributed to the political paralysis of

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[478] For a pessimistic evaluation of the Dayton Peace Agreement, see International Crisis Group, *Is Dayton Failing? Bosnia Four Years After the Peace Agreement* (Sarajevo: ICG, 1999).

[479] See Joseph Maila, "The Ta'if Accord: An Evaluation," in *Peace for Lebanon?*, Judith Palmer Harik, "Democracy (Again) Derailed: Lebanon's Ta'if Paradox," in *Political Liberalization and Democratization in the Arab World*, Bahgat Korany, Rex Brynen, and Paul Noble, eds., Volume 2: Comparative Experiences (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1998); Marie-Joelle Zahar, "Peace by Unconventional Means: Evaluating Lebanon's Ta'if Accord," in *Peace Implementation Project—Volume I: Case Studies*, Donald Rothchild, Steve Stedman, and Elizabeth Cousens, eds.. (forthcoming 2000)

[480] This statement is meant as a factual observation. It does not denote the author's personal preference.

the Bosnian central government by reducing the cost to Entity leaders of their reluctance to compromise. The High Representative has repeatedly stepped in to end deadlocks among the Serb, Croat, and Bosniac members of the Presidency. This has allowed all three leaders to reap the economic fruits of cooperation without having to pay domestic political costs for working together with the "enemy." A word of caution is needed here. Foreign implementers can help post-conflict polities lock in common security gains achieved at the negotiating table. These gains can, in turn be used as a baseline for the creation of further gains in other areas. In so doing, the various factions to the conflict create a pool of vested interests in continued cooperation and coexistence. This pool is crucial to the consolidation of peace. In Bosnia, the creation of such a pool has not been achieved. Because of the difficulty of transition to a market economy, there are no economic gains to speak of. In the political realm, attempts to strengthen the central government at the expense of the two Entities have elicited negative reactions from Entity leaderships. The international community's attempt to sideline the radical faction of the Bosnian Serb leadership has not fully succeeded. In spite of an acute power struggle between Biljana Plavšić and Radovan Karadžić in the summer of 1997, Plavšić's victory proved ephemeral. Her replacement by hardliner Nikola Poplašen indicates that radicals still command enough popular support. Unless Bosnians of all stripes are given a vested interest in peace, the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina beyond SFOR remains an open-ended question.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE? SETTING A LARGER RESEARCH AGENDA

This dissertation took a first stab at the impact of militia institutions on the decisions of militia leaders. However, it raised some issues that merit a fuller treatment. Three issues in particular deserve mention. The first concerns variation in militia institutional form. The second concerns variation in the sources of militia revenues. The third explores the impact of peace implementation on the attainment of a just and lasting peace.

In chapter two, I argued that, although many militias adopt the forms and procedures of states there was room for diversity in this process. I suggested two obvious axes of variation: the balance between civilian and military institutions and the type of decision-making procedures adopted by these groups. Civil-military relations and decision-making rules are consequential for factionalism and for the strength of a leader's domestic coalition. In each of these realms, various configurations may encourage or prevent the expression of voice, exit, and/or loyalty.[481] For example, the primacy of the SDS over the Bosnian Serb Army in political decision-making, the Lebanese Forces' decision to give final authority to their Commander-in-Chief, and the PLO's decision to adopt a consensual decision-making procedure have had consequences for intra-militia disagreement. Although the VRS rightly perceived the black market as a threat to Republika Srpska, its loyalty toward the Bosnian Serb leadership prevented the army from taking decisive action in this realm. Before the Oslo agreement, the ability of PLO leader Yasir Arafat to weather numerous crises and remain in control could be partially attributed to the consensual decision rules within the organization. In contrast to this consensual approach, the supreme authority

vested in the LF Commander-in-Chief may well have been responsible for the resort to *intifadas* as a means of settling intra-LF disputes. It is interesting to note that the LF process of military integration and institutional consolidation contributed to silencing the voices of smaller Christian militia partners. This bears striking resemblance to processes currently underway in the PLO. After Oslo, the territorialization of PLO authority, and greater Fatah institutionalization, have undercut the influence of the smaller factions. Such similarities deserve in-depth exploration in an attempt to identify the impact of different institutional configurations on the calculus of decision-makers.

A second area of enquiry deals with the sources of militia revenue. The literature on warlordism in Africa suggests that certain types of revenue are connected to a greater resilience to compromise.[482] In chapter four, I discussed various sources of revenue. Do some sources of revenue encourage or pre-empt specific institutionalization paths? Does reliance on taxation encourage the formation of institutions responsive to popular pressure? Does revenue generation from the diamond or opium trade concentrate power in the hands of a top elite? Do the external links that such revenue affords militias obviate the need to build bridges to the population? This is a rich domain for empirical investigation and theory development.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that this dissertation was primarily concerned with peace agreements because of the violence that characterizes civil wars. In chapter four,

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[481] Albert Hirschman, *Exit, Voice and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970).
[482] Keen, *Economic Agendas in Civil Wars*; Clapham, *African Guerrillas*; Reno, *Warlordism*.

I adopted a minimalist definition of peace, which excluded issues of political democracy and social justice. I justified this decision because of the importance of stopping the killing. This is not to say that the post-conflict reconstruction ought not to address such issues. However, there can be no reconstruction without peace agreements. The longer a conflict goes on, the more difficult the reconstruction process will be. It is therefore crucial to understand the preferences of all actors involved in internal wars. This does not only allow third parties to identify opportunities to bring peace about. More importantly, this is essential to craft sustainable peace agreements.

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