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## Talking Points on Lebanon: Post-Assassination Update

1. The Lebanese seem determined to press ahead and elect a new President before Sarkis' term expires on 23 September.
  - Amin Jumayyil, Bashir's fairly moderate brother, seems to be the front runner. The Saudis are pushing for Amin who they think will be more acceptable to Muslims and more discreet in dealing with Israel.
  - The key will be Pierre Jumayyil's position. As Phalange party founder he can anoint Amin and probably get other Maronites to line up.
  - Ex-President Camille Chamoun is the next most likely candidate but, at 82, his health is questionable.
2. The Israelis have overrun West Beirut. Prime Minister Wazzan has sharply criticized the US for not stopping Begin.
  - Despite the problems among moderate Muslims and in its possible effect on the electoral process, the IDF advance into West Beirut may have some short term advantages: it prevents the fighting in the area from getting out of control given overwhelming Israeli/Maronite strength; it prevents a revenge massacre by the Maronites of the Muslim militias; it probably will bring about disarmament of the leftist Muslim militias which otherwise would be difficult indeed.
  - The key now is to secure Begin's agreement for a rapid IDF withdrawal to be followed by a stepped up Lebanese army takeover of the city. The Muslims will want assurances that the Phalange will not follow the IDF into the city.
  - If the Israelis indefinitely stay in West Beirut, US relations with the moderate Arabs will take another beating. The Arabs will charge the IDF takeover violates the Habib agreements.
3. Finally, it will not be lost on Arabs elsewhere that every leader who has come close to a rapprochement with the Israelis -- ex-Jordanian King Abdullah, Sadat, and now Bashir -- has been assassinated.

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