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DATE: APR 2004

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SUBJECT: NID CABLE FOR 26 JANAURY 2002

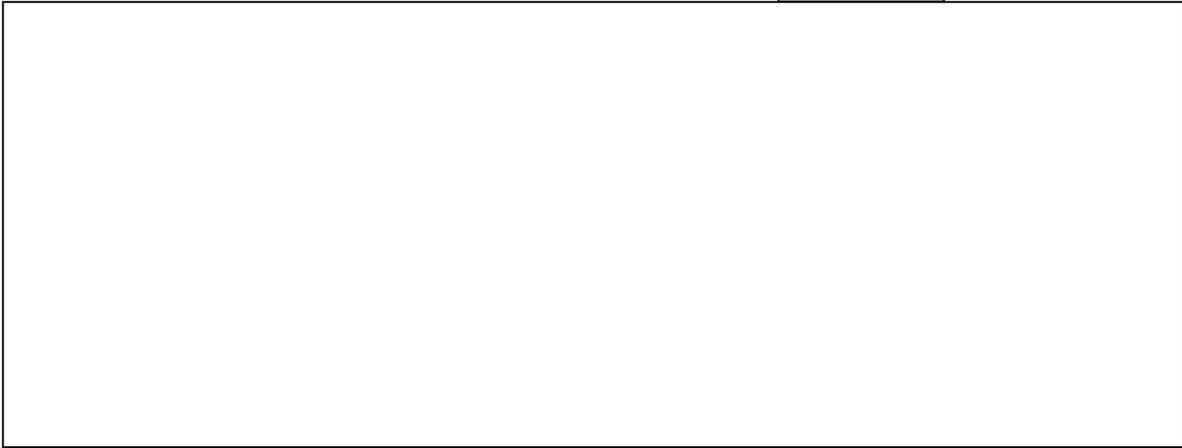
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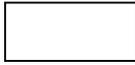
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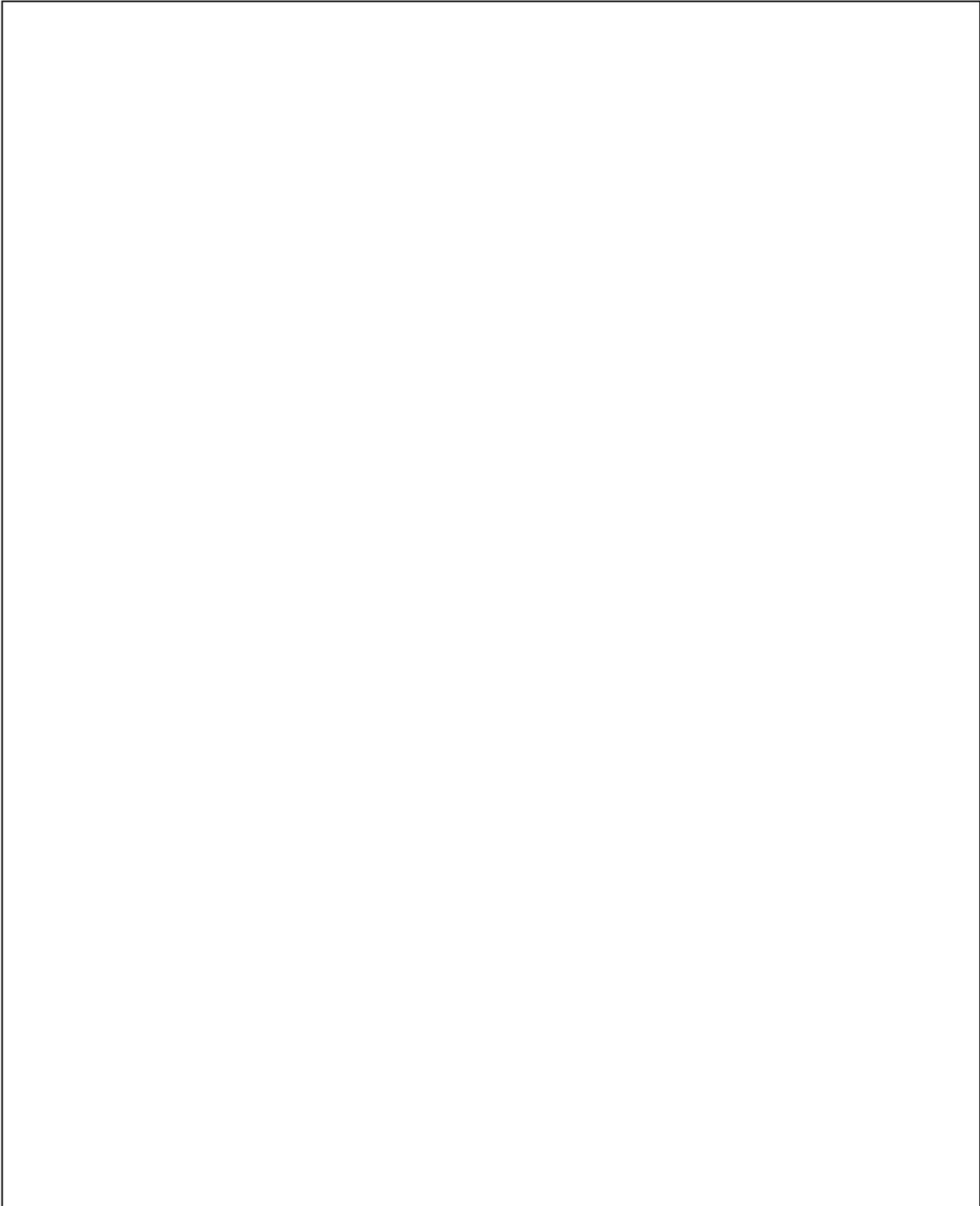
6. LEBANON: MANY SUSPECTS IN ASSASSINATION



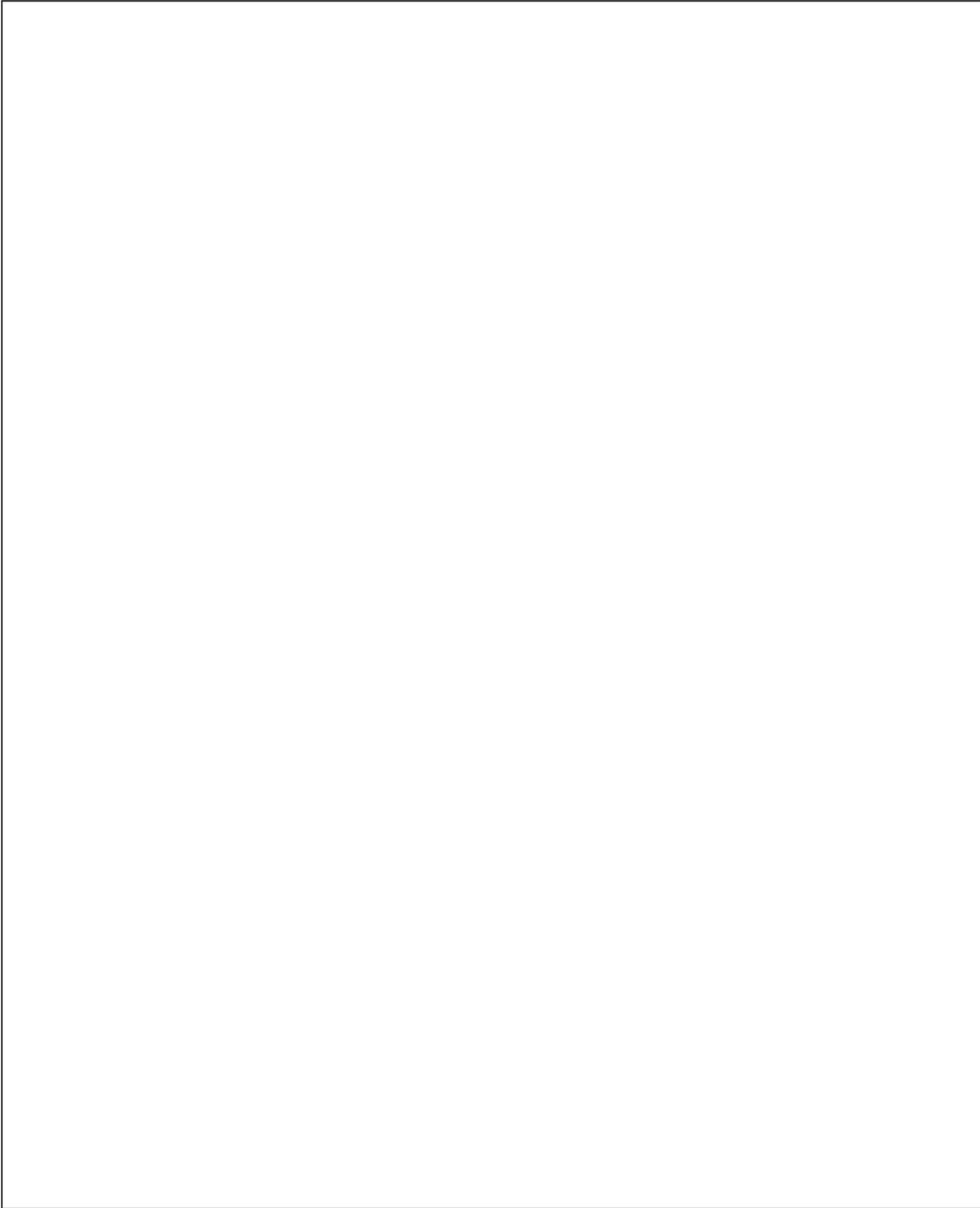
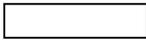
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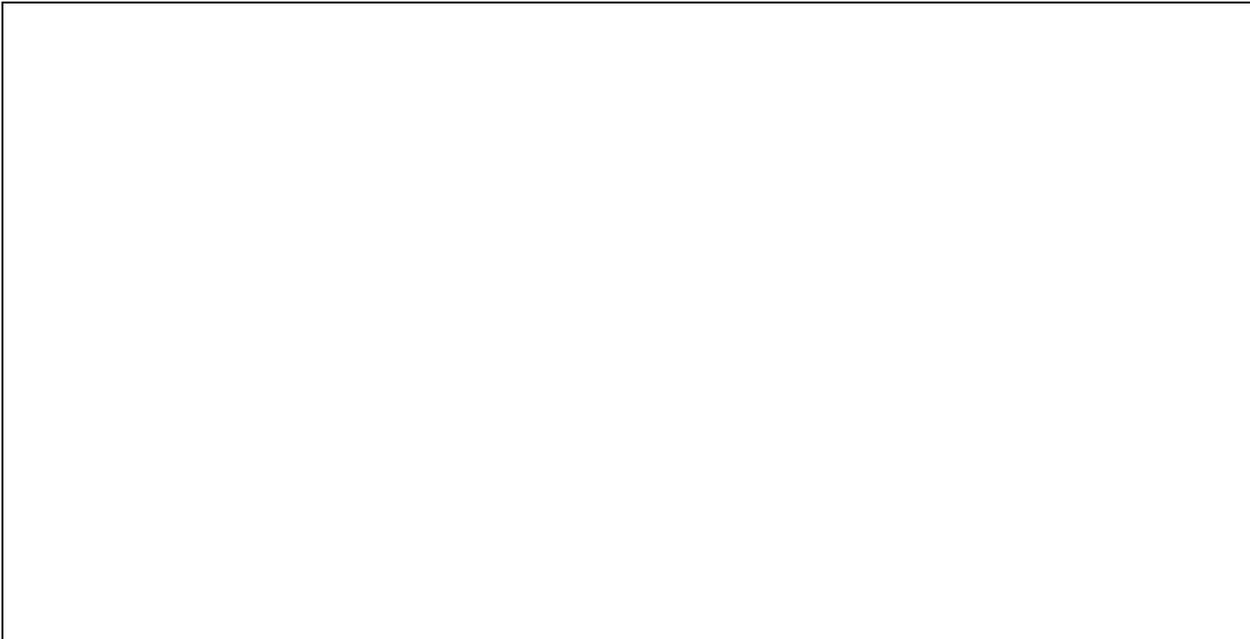
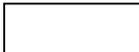
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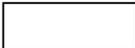
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6. LEBANON: MANY SUSPECTS IN ASSASSINATION

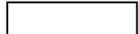
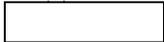


//FORMER LEBANESE FORCES (LF) COMMANDER ELIE HOBEIKA, MURDERED THIS WEEK, HAD MANY ENEMIES.// POSSIBLE CULPRITS INCLUDE FELLOW CHRISTIANS, OTHER MEMBERS OF THE LEBANESE ELITE, PALESTINIANS, AND ISRAELIS.

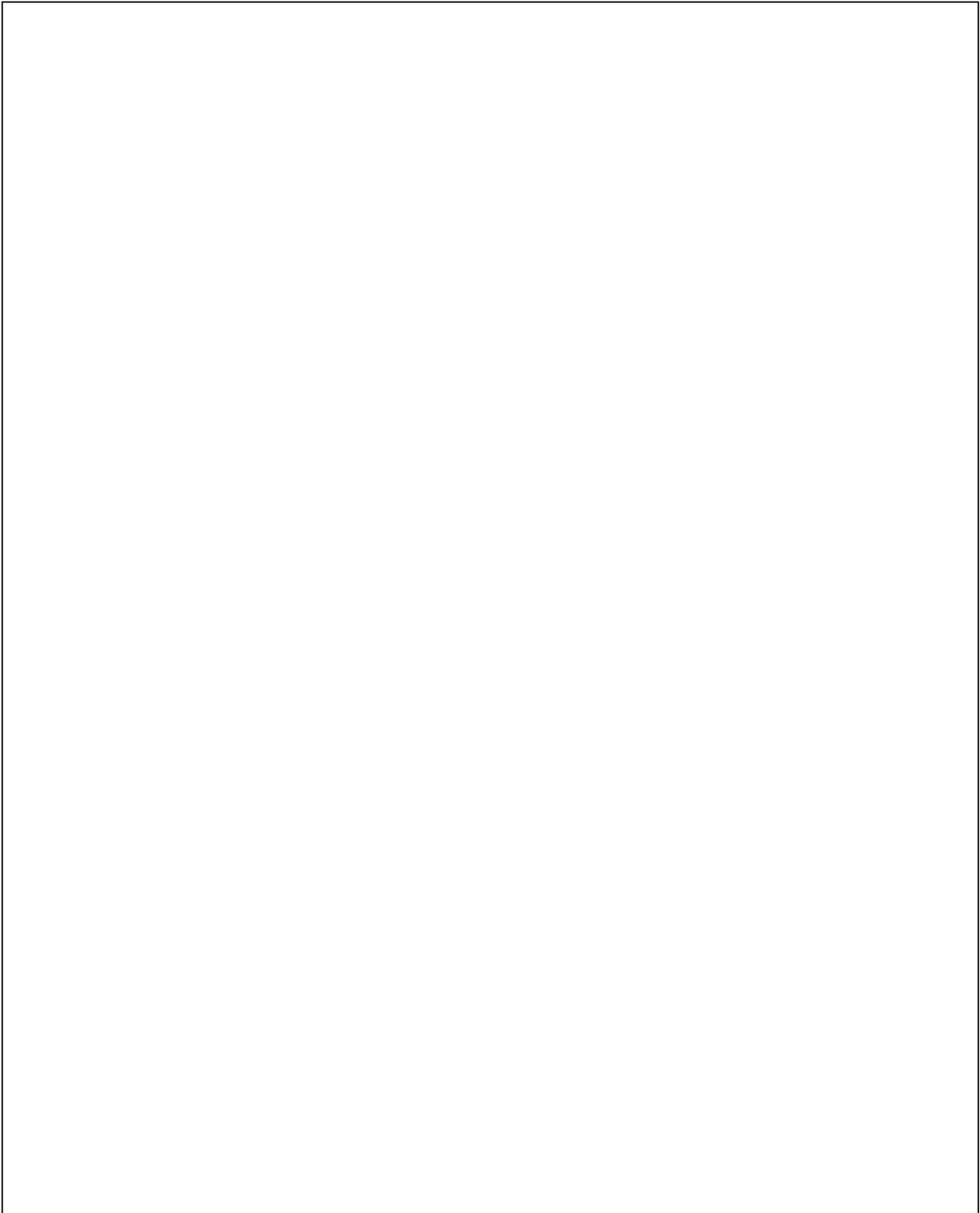
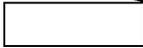


ACCORDING TO A WESTERN NEWS AGENCY, A PREVIOUSLY UNKNOWN ANTI-SYRIAN GROUP, "LEBANESE FOR A FREE AND INDEPENDENT LEBANON," HAS CLAIMED RESPONSIBILITY. THE CLAIM MAY BE ASSOCIATED WITH RIGHTWING MARONITE CHRISTIANS, WHO BORE A GRUDGE AGAINST HOBEIKA BECAUSE HE BETRAYED THE LF AND THE ISRAELIS BY SWITCHING ALLEGIANCE TO THE SYRIANS IN THE MID-1980S. HOBEIKA ALSO WAS ACTIVE IN CHRISTIAN INFIGHTING DURING LEBANON'S CIVIL WAR.

-- PALESTINIANS DESPISE HOBEIKA BECAUSE HE ALLEGEDLY DIRECTED THE MASSACRE OF APPROXIMATELY 1,000 PALESTINIANS IN THE REFUGEE CAMPS OF SABRA AND SHATILLA IN 1982. IN 1983 HOBEIKA WAS ACCUSED OF CARRYING OUT THE MASSACRE.

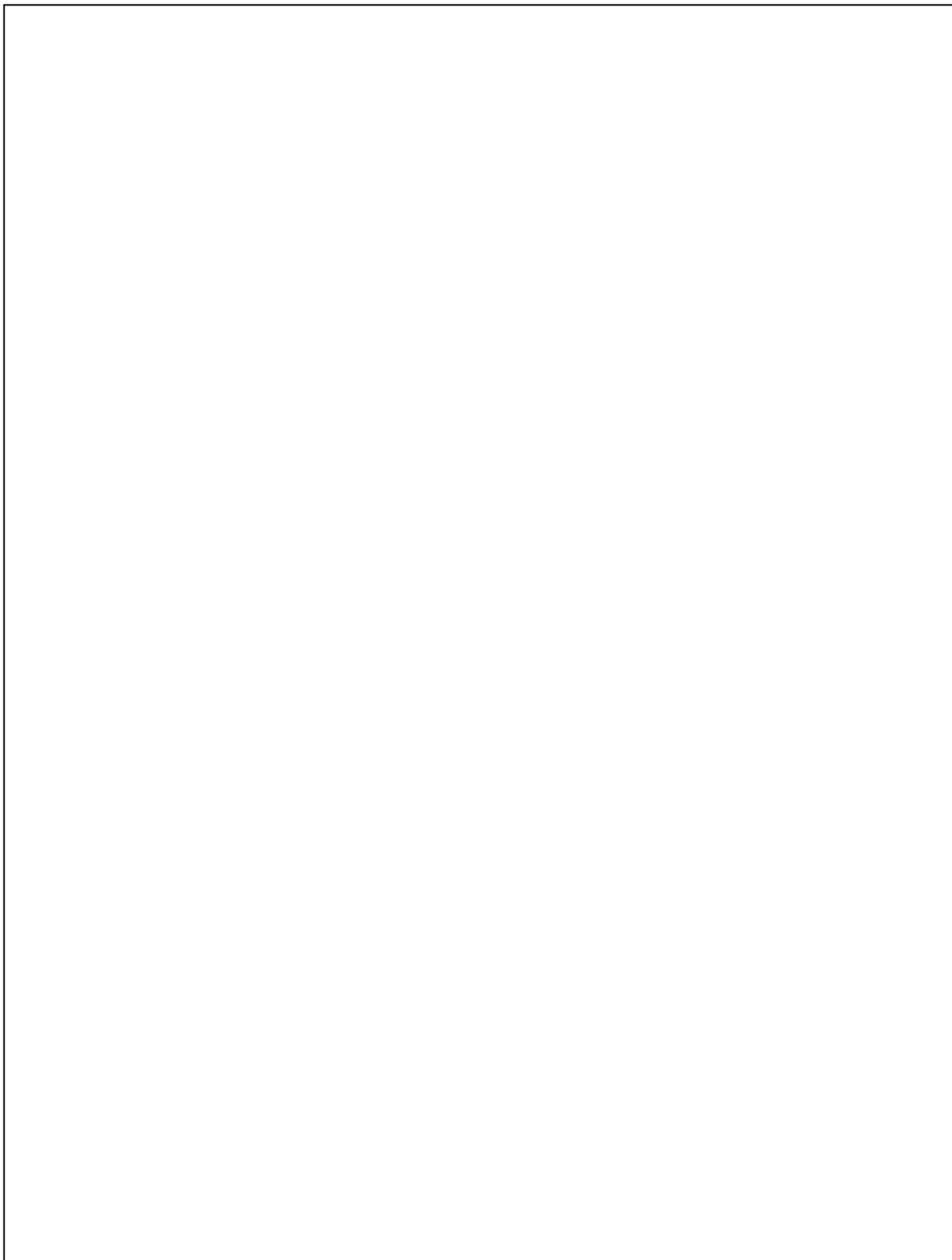
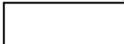


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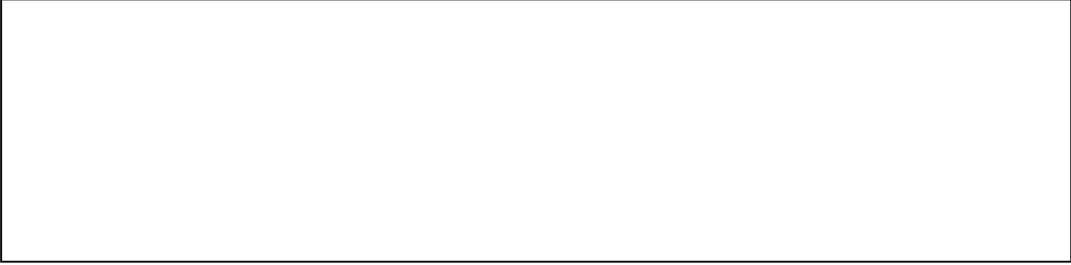
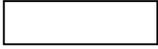
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