

## BOOK REVIEWS

Weinberger, Naomi Joy. *Syrian Intervention in Lebanon: The 1975-76 Civil War*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.

The inherent national character of Lebanon requires an almost unattainable degree of expertise to excise the role of Syria from any discussion of Lebanese political dynamics. There is, hence, a strong connection in the themes of political-military intervention and the two major actors under review. Although Naomi Weinberger, a Yale University political scientist, purports to limit her study directly to the introduction of the Syrian military into the civil fray in Lebanon during the period of 1975 to 1976, she actually attempts to provide a wider array of perspectives.

The mix of various national groups that made up what was historically understood to be Greater Syria was distributed into political forms by European Metropolises following the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire at the turn of the century. What resulted was an unintended combination of explosive forces, issues, and situations making news reporting in the region a continuous priority assignment. Weinberger correctly offers a prominent position to these events in order to permit the reader a level of appreciation of the nature of Syrian foreign policy objectives in the Levant. Superimposed on the general operating political system is the Lebanese confessional arrangement as well as the linkage of the "Palestinian Problem," subsuming a strong nationalist urge combined with a liberation movement. Weinberger capsulates Syrian measures into three distinctive periods: April to December 1975, during which the Syrians employed diplomatic efforts primed to mediation; January to May 1976, in which time Palestinians were used by the Syrians as surrogate pressure; and, still not achieving an acceptable degree of success, direct intervention in the period of June to October 1976.

Syria is set properly in its historical mold and given a particular geopolitical context with Lebanon wrenched from it by a colonial European France. Hence, Syria's role as a power broker in Lebanon has a partially irredentist motive already built within. A second important thrust of the author, indeed the primary theoretical focus, is intervention within the confines of a case study which, it so happens, is a civil war model. Treated only briefly is the Israeli incursion into Lebanon and the impact of that dyadic relationship on Syria.

Weinberger reaches a number of important conclusions that will require further study, to wit:

- 1) a decision to intervene is a wrong one if the action leads to occupation, ostensibly since not only are the two phenomena mutually exclusive but also because:
  - a. of the potential cost in terms of both money and manpower;

b. the action tends to limit foreign policy options; and therefore,

2) intervention, if occupation follows, is *ipso factor* a failure.

Thus, Weinberger finds that Syrian intervention and the extension of its authority into Lebanon ended up being adventurism at its worst and a gamble with an undesired outcome.

Weinberger is conversant in the relevant scholarly literature and the book relies heavily upon a distillation of materials dealing with the general theme of intervention. Yet as the case study deals with Syrian foreign policy it becomes a bit annoying to notice the lack of or even disregard for Syrian sources, official or otherwise, whereas there is a correspondingly greater reliance on Israeli scholarship. The result is a perspective that, in this instance, may be considered suspect. Another defect the reader may register is the quality of the maps employed; all that are used have been culled from various secondary sources and reproduced. The problem is that they are of unequal quality and represent different cartographic styles. Of lesser importance to the lay reader is the system of transliteration of Arabic where there is no distinction made in the use of apostrophe to indicate the guttural and non-guttural aspirate. Despite these problems, considering the interest in the region and the topic of conflict, *Syrian Intervention in Lebanon* is a serious study that should be required reading not only for background but as one of the general studies for any additional theoretical assessment of conflict resolution.

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Darby, John. *Intimidation and the Control of Conflict in Northern Ireland*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1986.

Since the middle of the last century there have been at least nine periods of serious rioting in Belfast. These dramatic episodes of Protestant-Catholic communal violence have usually been accompanied by movements of population as people who live in the 'wrong' ghetto are intimidated into moving. Darby's book is a study of the most recent round of territorial struggles, intimidation and relocation in three areas of Northern Ireland: two in Belfast and one in a quiet country town. Most of the research was conducted in the early 1970s for the Northern Ireland Community Relations Commission.

The book is meticulously laid out. The reader is given some history of riots, intimidation and forced relocation in Belfast, detailed histories and religious geographies of the three areas under examination, a definition of intimidation which adds the useful category of "perceived