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Lebanon: The Politics Of Frustration - The Failed Coup Of 1961 (History And Society In The Islamic World (Paperback))



Synopsis

LebanonÂ examines the ideological, political and social underpinnings of the attempted coup against General Chihab's government in Lebanon in 1961. The author analyzes the role of the Syrian Socialist Nationalist Party, the history of the army in Lebanon and its role in Lebanese politics and the impact of the coup on Lebanese political life. This book providesÂ an extraordinaryÂ insight into the mechanisms of military coups in the Arab world and will be of interest to students and researchers of the history and politics of the Middle East.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

University of Otago's William Harris said that Beshara provides a thorough, well-documented account of a curious punctuation in Lebanon's modern history--the attempt by the small Syrian Social Nationalist Party (SSNP), in cooperation with sympathetic middle rank army officers, to overthrow the regime of President Fouad Chehab on the night of December 31, 1961. The SSNP, founded by the Orthodox Christian Antun Sa'adeh in Beirut in 1932, aimed to combine the new states of the Levant into a Greater Syria; accordingly, he opposed both Arab nationalism and Lebanese sectarian politics. The SSNP gained enough adherents and was sufficiently well organized to make intermittent assertions in Lebanon and Syria in the 1940s and 1950s, though it lacked the public following necessary to make its ambitions realistic. Out of frustration, it became increasingly radicalized, looking to its paramilitary wing, its links with army officers, and strong-arm

tactics to compensate for limited popular weight. Beshara, a historian at the University of Melbourne, has closely examined the SSNP and Syrian nationalist ideology. He here deploys his formidable knowledge of both the party and the Lebanese political environment of the time to place the 1961 coup attempt in a wider context. He investigates the SSNP's emergence as a significant armed backer of President Camille Chamoun in the 1958 confrontation between the Lebanese regime and Nasserite Arab nationalism. He then charts the SSNP's drift into hostility to the regime as the new president, former army commander Fouad Chehab, sought to pacify Gamal Abdel Nasser's Egypt and the mainly Muslim Arab nationalists in Lebanon by updating rather than eroding the country's sectarian political system.

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