

The Crazy World of Walid Jumblatt

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Lebanon's Hezbollah-backed political bloc—which decisively lost the last parliamentary elections in 2009—has taken power, forcing Saad Hariri from the prime minister's office and replacing him with Hezbollah's choice, former prime minister Najib Miqati.

Hariri has denounced the change of government as a "coup d'état." The crisis has revolved around a United Nations-backed tribunal that is investigating the assassination in February 2005 of Mr. Hariri's father, Rafik, himself a billionaire and former prime minister. By the group's own admission, members of Hezbollah are expected to be named in indictments that were delivered to a pretrial judge last week, though still kept secret. Hezbollah has denied any role, calling the tribunal a tool of the United States and Israel to put pressure on it, and insisted that Lebanon end cooperation with the body, which began its work in 2007. This ouster of Hariri was guaranteed when Lebanese Druze leader Walid Jumblatt—formerly a staunch supporter of Hariri and an outspoken foe of Hezbollah and its Syrian and Iranian backers—threw his party's support to the Hezbollah-backed coalition. "The party will stand firm in support of Syria and the resistance," Jumblatt, head of the Progressive Socialist Party, said at a news conference in Beirut. How craven is Walid Jumblatt? This is from an interview which aired on BBC Arabic TV on May 11, 2010: Interviewer: You have been quoted as saying that you are convinced that the [violent] events of May 7, 2008 will not repeat themselves. Some may ask whether you have any guarantee of that from Hizbullah, which has the weapons you once dubbed the "weapon of treachery." Walid Jumblatt: Back then, tensions were running high, and statements were extremely intense. If your intention is to take us back to the statements of that time—and I hope that we do not return to those accursed statements. Interviewer: Were those statements wrong or based on mistaken information?

Walid Jumblatt: They were based on mistaken information or mistaken analysis. Interviewer: Which were made available to you? Walid Jumblatt: This information was circulating, and the atmosphere was very tense. To grasp how much of a reversal this is, let's take a look at some of Jumblatt's statements from 2006 through 2008, which he now insists were based on "mistaken information or mistaken analysis." Following are excerpts from a speech given by Lebanese Druze Leader Walid Jumblatt, aired on Future TV on February 14, 2006.

Walid Jumblatt: We have come... We have come to say to you, the ruler of Damascus, the tyrant of Syria, and to your friends and allies, that we are not an "insignificant minority," or a "fictitious majority." You yourself are an insignificant, criminal, and hostile minority. [Your allies] assume a fictitious holiness, but nothing is holy except the homeland—and Lebanon. We have come here to say: While forgetting is impossible, forgiving is impossible, impossible, impossible! Do you remember, Abu Bahaa [Al-Hariri]... When you were killed a year ago, do you remember what Beirut said? Yes, it was Beirut that said: "Oh Beirut, we want blood vengeance from Lahoud and Bashar." "Oh Beirut, we want blood vengeance from Lahoud and Bashar." Oh ruler of Damascus, it is you who are the slave, and we are free. ***** Following are excerpts from an interview with Lebanese Druze leader Walid Jumblatt, which aired on Al-Arabiya TV on July 20, 2006. Walid Jumblatt: Hassan Nasrallah made the decision to go to war without consulting anyone.

[...]

Will the weapons of Hizbullah be incorporated into the defensive system of the Lebanese army, and I emphasize the word "defensive"? Or will there be a cease-fire, and then the first article on the agenda will be that we should liberate the prisoners. Then he will say to you: "We want to liberate the Shab'a Farms, and I need to keep my weapons in order to liberate Shab'a." Then he will tell you that we should implement Resolution 194—and the return of the refugees to Palestine. In such a case, Lebanon will become an open battlefield for the Syrian and Iranian regimes. Interviewer: Nasrallah also said he was fighting for the sake of the nation. Walid Jumblatt: No one empowered him to fight from Lebanon for the sake of the nation.

[...]

If Syrian patronage over Lebanon is restored, we will have a dictatorship, like the Syrian and Iranian regimes.

[...]

The question should be directed at Hassan [Nasrallah], and at the Syrians and Iranians with their agenda: Do they really want a Lebanese state, or do they want an open battlefield, which would serve Iran's nuclear interests and expansionist goals in the Gulf? As for Syria, it benefits when Lebanon turns into rubble. The poorer the Lebanese people gets, the more it is destroyed, the more the elite emigrate. How does [Bashar Al-Assad] manage to rule Syria? Through poverty. He rules it through power and intelligence agencies. He rules a people that is wretched, imprisoned. He wants to do the same to Lebanon, because he envies us. He envies our pluralism, our vitality, our culture, and our free press.

What did he do to the Syrian intellectuals? He imprisoned them. Why? Because they had the courage to say:

"Let's made some changes." Interviewer: Hassan Nasrallah is considered a hero by the Arab peoples. Walid Jumblatt: Great, so he's a hero. But I'd like to challenge this heroism of his. I have the right to challenge it, because my country is in flames. Besides, we did not agree... We agreed on an agenda with regard to Palestine. If the agenda changes, that will be another matter. The agenda with regard to Palestine, on which we

agreed, includes the establishment of a [Palestinian] state alongside Israel, the right of return, Jerusalem as the capital, the demolition of the wall of humiliation, and the dismantling of the settlements. This is our agenda at this point in time. In his political speeches, [Nasrallah] says: “l do not recognize the state of Israel, and I want to set out from South Lebanon to liberate Palestine in its entirety.” This is what he is doing. If this is his agenda, I have the right to oppose it. ***** Following are excerpts from an interview with Lebanese Druze leader Walid Jumblatt, which aired on Al-Mustaqbal TV on July 29, 2006. Walid Jumblatt: Whatever happens, Hizbullah will emerge victorious. To whom will Hizbullah dedicate this victory? Will it dedicate the victory to the Lebanese state, to the honoring of international resolutions, to the Taif Agreement? Or will it dedicate it to the Syrian regime, the Syrian-Iranian axis, in which case we will become scorched earth, annexed to Syria and Iran? Each of these countries wants, with this abduction, to negotiate with America over the remains of the Lebanese homeland.

[...]

There can be no honor associated with a fascist regime like the Syrian regime, or, to be more precise, there can be no honor associated with a regime which is semi-divine, like the Iranian regime. Interviewer: You are referring to the principle of the rule of the jurisprudent.

Walid Jumblatt: I don’t want to go into jurisprudent theories… Ultimately, there were civilized peoples… I don’t want to make a comparison, but Adolf Hitler also aroused his people’s sense of honor, and led Germany into war. ***** Following are excerpts from an interview with Lebanese Druze leader Walid Jumblatt, which aired on Future TV on November 16, 2006. Walid Jumblatt: How can you live in peace and stability, when you have a neighbor… when you have a neighbor like Bashar Al-Assad, who is full of hatred?

Interviewer: Is the war with Bashar Al-Assad one of life and death? Walid Jumblatt: He is irresponsible. Yes, it is a battle of life or death. To be or not to be. Samir Qassir was right to say that Lebanon will have no peace as long as there is no democracy in Syria. We will have no peace.

[...]

The difference between Bashar and Hafez [Al-Assad], is that Hafez, who played an important role, had a certain degree of credibility. My experience and that of the Lebanese with Hafez was bad, seeped in blood, but sometimes, when he said “yes” it was yes, and when he said “no” it was no. Bashar’s personality, on the other hand, is full of contradictions. Therefore, I advise the West that if they want to sign a deal with him, they should bear in mind that he is incapable of keeping his word. He is known, among the Arab leaders I have met and in the West, to be someone who does not keep his word. ***** Following are excerpts from an interview with Lebanese Druze leader Walid Jumblatt, which aired on Al-Arabiya TV on December 28, 2006. Walid Jumblatt: We should treat the Syrian regime the same way it treats us. It uses car bombs, assassinations, destruction, sends terrorists – the most recent were the “Fath Al-Islam” – and uses threats of Al-Qaeda [attacks in Lebanon]. It is only natural and logical for us to treat them the same way.

[...]

Since all [Bashar] understands is murder, assassination, car bombs, and destruction, we should treat him the same way – Bashar and his family… sorry, Bashar and his regime.

[…]

Does he have the right, by means of his yes-men – Hassan Nasrallah and others – to open war whenever he wants, to arm half the country, and set up a country within a country? Who gave him the right?

Interviewer: But Hassan Nasrallah is a Lebanese, a Lebanese leader. Walid Jumblatt: He is not Lebanese. Forget it, he is not Lebanese. He gets his orders from the Syrian regime and from the Republic of Iran. If he wants to be Lebanese, he should accept the legitimate Lebanese authority. Hassan Nasrallah has his own country, his own weapons, his own public, his own treasury, his own economy, and his own culture, which is completely different from our culture. This is a culture of martyrdom-seeking, which is, ultimately, a culture of sorrow, death, and despair. It is not like our culture of love, hope, and life.

[…]

I support Lebanese independence from Syrian and Persian hegemony. I am against making the country an eternal battlefield to serve the aspirations and designs of the Syrian regime and Persian imperialism.

[…]

Yes, I accuse [Hizbullah] of being behind some of the assassinations, if not all of them.

[…]

With the Syrian regime, there are no guarantees. [Bashar’s] father, who was also highly skilled in crime, would keep his word, at least with some Arab leaders, especially King Abdullah. This one is a liar. He is known around the world, and among the Arabs, to be a liar. ***** Following are excerpts from an address delivered by Lebanese Druze leader Walid Jumblatt, aired on Al-Jazeera TV on February 14, 2007. Walid Jumblatt: We have come to Freedom Square to tell you, oh tyrant of Damascus, you ape unknown to nature, you snake from which even the snakes have fled, you whale vomited by the ocean, you wild desert beast, you creature that is only half-man, you Israeli product at the expense of the corpses of the South Lebanese, you liar and arch-killer in Iraq, you criminal blood-shedder in Syria and Lebanon – we have come to say that the words of the great poet Nizar Qabani apply to you. He said: “Every twenty years comes an armed man to slaughter unity in its cradle and to kill the dreams.”

[...]

This year, however, the [international] tribunal will come, bringing with it punishment, justice, and the death sentence.

Long live Lebanon. ***** Following are excerpts from an interview with Lebanese Druze leader Walid Jumblatt, which aired on LBC TV on February 23, 2007: Walid Jumblatt: We are facing someone [Iran] who has an army, money, and a political plan for the Arab Islamic Middle East, and one of its frontline bases is Hassan Nasrallah and Hizbullah in Lebanon. When we consider their ideological writings, such as the books by Hazem Saghiyeh and Naim Al-Qassem, we realize that we and they cannot meet half way. Interviewer: It is impossible to meet half way with this plan? Walid Jumblatt: Yes, because this is a plan of abolishment. Interviewer: Abolishment of whom? Walid Jumblatt: It is a plan to establish a Hizbullah state in Lebanon, at the expense of pluralism, of the Taif Agreement, of free economy, and of the free press.

[…]

[Hizbullah] said its weapons were “sacred weapons,” and we disagreed. Now they are talking about “divine weapons.” A truck [with Hizbullah weapons] was driving around Beirut – and it was confiscated in Al-Hazmiya. [Hizbullah] said it was loaded with “divine weapons,” and demanded their return. With all due respect to Hassan Nasrallah and the others, we participated, unfortunately, in the civil war in the past, and we know that the range of 60 mm mortars is 500 meters at most. It is meant for urban warfare, not for Haifa, “beyond Haifa,” or “beyond beyond Haifa.” It is meant for urban warfare.

[...]

We see their rallies. These are not rallies of sorrow and grief for the days of Karbala. There is a kind of activity that is legitimate to express grief over Hussein, but when you see how they salute with their fists… It reminds me of the films by director Leni Riefenstahl, who used to film Adolf Hitler’s rallies. Adolf Hitler, no more no less… When Hassan Nasrallah speaks, he speaks to himself. He doesn’t speak to the public, but to himself… Interviewer: How come? Walid Jumblatt: Who is he addressing? Let’s forget about Hassan Nasrallah for a moment. There is nothing more dangerous than mass rallies, because anybody might forget himself there. Interviewer: Including you? Walid Jumblatt: Yes, including me. Nothing is more dangerous. Interviewer: Do you regret what you said on February 14, 2007? Walid Jumblatt: No, but the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty against Animals contacted me, and said that they reject the comparison of snakes, whales, and wild beasts to Bashar Al-Assad. I apologize to that society. But I don’t regret anything else I said. ***** Following are excerpts from a speech delivered by Lebanese Druze leader Walid Jumblatt, which aired on Al-Manar TV on August 13, 2007. Walid Jumblatt: In the summer of 2004, the greater criminal idiot, Bashar Al-Assad, invited Rafiq Al-Hariri, and in that famous meeting, he said to him: “Renew Lahoud’s term in office, because Lahoud is me, or else… Renew the term in office of the lesser criminal idiot because he is just like me, the greater criminal idiot.”

[...]

Syria never accepted that Lebanon is an independent entity. Never. From the start, from 1920, Syria never acknowledged that Lebanon does exist. Interviewer: You’re not going to give [the opposition] the veto power, because you are scared you might lose your popularity… Walid Jumblatt: I’m not going to give up the veto power for a military group, for Hizbullah. No. Okay? Is that clear? They can take it by force, over our dead bodies, but I will not give up the veto power for the sake of Hizbullah, their allies, and the Syrian regime. I think I’m clear.

[...]

Interviewer: So you are accusing Hizbullah of being behind these assassinations and car bombs. Walid Jumblatt: I have said it before – it’s not a secret – and I will say it again. Yes, I’m accusing Hizbullah of facilitating or ignoring Syrian car bombs and killings. ***** From an interview with Lebanese Druze leader Walid Jumblatt on Future TV, February 12, 2008 Walid Jumblatt: In my opinion, it is impossible to coexist with Hizbullah. Interviewer: What do you mean?

Walid Jumblatt: I’m not talking about all the Shiites. Interviewer: So your speech was directed towards Hizbullah? Walid Jumblatt: I am not talking about the Arab, Lebanese, Shiite citizens, who are essential for this country – the Shiites who were educated by Musa Sadr and Muhammad Mahdi Shams Al-Din, and other great scholars from Jabal Amal. The social and political Shiite revolution started in Jabal Amal.

[...]

In my opinion, we cannot coexist with such a totalitarian party. If we go to war, we will destroy the country. Interviewer: But in your speech, you said: “We are ready for war.” Walid Jumblatt: In my opinion, we need to find a way to have a friendly divorce.

Interviewer: What do you mean by “divorce”? The partitioning of Lebanon? Walid Jumblatt: This country is too small to be partitioned. Interviewer: So what is the way? Walid Jumblatt: Hizbullah, which gets its orders from that world of evil in Iran – Ahmadinejad and all the others… We see the dictatorship of the Iranian Mullahs against the reformists. [This dictatorship] passes through Syria, where there is a man and a regime that do not recognize Lebanon or its identity. In my opinion, we have no choice but to reach a formula that says: Keep your weapons, your culture, your media, and the areas you control, but let us live our lives.

[...]

When Hassan Nasrallah talks about body parts, he is not threatening just the Jews. He is threatening us too. I’m sad to say that the agents of Syria have turned Antoine Ghanem, Walid ‘Ido, and others into body parts. Nasrallah says: Beware, we have body parts of the Jews, and I will turn you into body parts too. Okay, we got the message. We are not asses, we are not stupid. He shouldn’t pretend that he doesn’t know what’s going on. He pretended to be nice and said that no security compounds were left. He has turned the entire country into compounds. We’ve begun to be suspicious of each and every building. His security agency is everywhere, controlling everything. Surely even Jumblatt’s most fervent supporters in Lebanon’s Druze community must be having

doubts about their leader now. <http://hurryupharry.org/2011/01/25/the-crazy-world-of-walid-jumblatt/>?