

A Bashir Gemayel Presidency...

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Very few in Lebanon and internationally knew or know what would have been the policies and strategies of a Bashir Gemayel Presidency after he was elected and before he was assassinated by Syrian orders. Most of the celebrations we see are symbolic, emotional, and limited to some of his public speeches.

But his advisors at that time, some of them have passed away, his international contacts, knew that what was ahead of such a Presidency was way more daring than the mere resistance to the Syrian occupation.

A Bashir Gemayel Presidency would have never been on the defensive and lost parts of Lebanon to Syrian and Hezbollah advances. It would have restructured Lebanon's constitutional platform, reaching equality but not a la Taef. Syria would have been out by the end of 1983, and the militias disarmed by 1984.

A federal system would have been negotiated, not imposed, for several years. Lebanon's émigrés would have received their rights to vote by 1990. There wouldn't have been a Security Treaty with Assad in 1991 because there wouldn't have been a Syrian invasion in October 1990.

Beirut would have received a partnership with the European Union in the 1990s and a training cooperation with NATO after 9/11.

A Peace process, in parallel, could have been achieved along with Jordan and the PLO. Five generations of Lebanese would have lived in peace and possibly in prosperity.

There would have been a vigorous democratic opposition and social issues would have advanced.

How do we know that? Well those who have been part of the seminars in preparation for that new republic for several years surely know that.

The problem is that after his assassination, the succeeding political establishment didn't follow the path agreed on by the Bashir Gemayel team, and the other problem is that those who were part of the planning never spoke about it, changed direction, passed away, or are silent.

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