

Page 4
Nasrallah and Aoun at the Top but with Fewer Supporters
Geagea Moving Ahead among the Maronites
30.9% are willing to emigrate while 8% have applied for emigration

Page 15
2006 Budget:
Attempts to Pass Partial Reforms that might not be Achieved

Page 17
Will Civil War ravage the Country Again?
The Signal Today is Yellow

Page 18
Legal Quorum for Presidential Elections
Two-thirds of Deputies since Independence

Page 19
Legislative Decrees:
Many in the presidencies of Chehab, Sarkis and Gemayel and none after the Taif Accord

Page 22
A Comparison between Parliaments in Six Arab Countries

Page 24
Government Sells its "Remnants"

Page 27
LOTO competing with YANASIB
Is someone lurking in the Shadow?

Page 28
Shia'a Religious Authorities
Traditions and Al-Faqih Authority

Page 29
The Greek Orthodox Confession
77,000 in 1932, 280,000 residents today and 11 civil servants in first-grade positions

Page 32-33 Discover Lebanon
Beshwat - Sarda Wa Aumra

Page 34-35 Historical Documents
The Events of 1840 that Led to the Massacre of 1860

Page 36-37 Case Study
American University of Beirut
Characteristics and Students' Opinions

Page 38-39 Industry & Crafts
For whom the Bells of Beif Chabab Toll

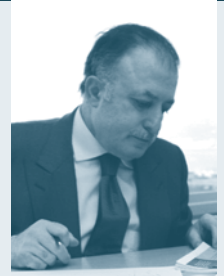
Page 40 Interview
liMonthly Meets Barbara Shahin Batlouni

Page 41 Arab Countries
Syria Health Sector:
A Success in the Pharmaceutical Industry;
a Failure in Managing Services

Page 42 Arab Countries
Health Sector in Egypt
Population Growth Overcoming Health Services

AWORD

A Railway between Sunni and Shia'a so we don't miss the Train



Having received some comments from a descendent of Al-Saifa of A'akkar (accused in school history books of being traitors) on the previous editorial in issue no. 57 "Saints, Traitors, Villains, and Fools with Two Airports", a further examination is required.

In January 2007, we had a leader that Lebanon may soon have two presidents, two parliaments and two prime ministers, so why not two airports? Having seen that "Hariri International Airport" can be easily closed, (like what happened on January 23, 2007), a good 'planner' will make sure that an alternative is available.

"René Mouawad International Airport", is almost ready and the planes can be easily diverted. In the future, as cantonization becomes more probable and alliances shift, a third airport might be called for.

What does this have to do with current fights and debates about democracy, peace, "Shia'a" and "Sunni"?

As always, ideologies are a cover up, a decoy and a cause that people live and die by and for. Before and after World War I, Pan-Arabism and independence were convenient banners to fight the Ottomans and insure that minorities run to the "West" for protection. The "ideological wars" went on. In order to fight communism, we sometimes resorted to the "Arab Nation" and at other times to "Islam".

Today, our leaders are hiding behind banners of "Freedom, Sovereignty and Independence" on one side and "Arabism, Dignity and Accountability" on the other side.

Friends, enemies, crises and wars were and still are made under those banners.

During World War I, T.E. Lawrence befriended King Faisal I to oust the Ottomans, blew up the Hijaz railway and participated in paving the way for British and French dominance in the region. Consequently, coups d'états were launched in the region starting with Husni Al-Zaim, Jamal Abdel Nasser to Abdel Karim Qasim and the Ba'ath Party in Syria and Iraq to Libya and Sudan. The leaders of the Arab Revolt and their descendents were butchered mercilessly.

In the meantime, Sykes-Picot Agreement (with modification) and Balfour Declaration were implemented and are perhaps yet to achieve their full potential, while 'we the people' of the region, were fighting each other and our leaders were studiously abiding by the instructions of external forces.

Even when T.E. Lawrence had something to say on Iraq against his government, his allies in the region were praising Great Britain.

"The people of England have been led in Mesopotamia into a trap from which it will be hard to escape with dignity and honour. They have been tricked into it by a steady withholding of information. The Bagdad communiqués are belated, insincere, and incomplete. A recent proclamation about autonomy circulated with unction from Bagdad.

We say we are in Mesopotamia to develop it for the benefit of the world. How far will the killing of ten thousand villagers and townspeople this summer hinder the production of wheat, cotton, and oil? How long will we permit millions of pounds, thousands of Imperial troops, and tens of thousands of Arabs to be sacrificed on behalf of a form of colonial administration, which can benefit no body but its administrators?"

Even when T.E. Lawrence expressed his doubts about Sykes-Picot geographical rationales, his allies were singing praise and queuing for positions in the newly founded states.

