

It goes without saying that the Kata'ib was influenced by many ideas propagated by Ahmed Husayn. But whereas Ahmed Husayn emphasized the fatherland in terms of Egypt, the Kata'ib was an Arab organization of wider scope. To this extent the Kata'ib had a supra-national dimension and pretension. In fact the Kata'ib recruited among its members militants from Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Iraq and Egypt.<sup>11</sup>

It is true that other influences entered into the formation of the Kata'ib, in particular the retreat of the "old Guard" nationalists parties and the increasing strength of some militant parties whose ideologies were considered prejudicial to the Arab cause by the Kata'ibists such as the Syrian Social Nationalist Party and the Muslim Brotherhood. Nevertheless, this was of little significance to the young radicals who plunged into clandestine revolutionary groups immediately after the defeat of 1948. It is this author's assumption that none of the founding leaders of the Kata'ib was concerned at the time with playing politics let alone competing with existing parties. The Kata'ib was envisaged by its founders as a sort of "pressure group" whose function was to bring pressure on the ruling elite, by intimidation if necessary, so as to reject any peace with the State of Israel as a first step, and prepare for another Jawlah [round] to liquidate that state.<sup>12</sup> They were convinced that

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<sup>11</sup>Interview with George Habash, June 24, 1970.

<sup>12</sup>Dhahi, loc. cit.