

segments of the population. Its exceptional deeds did not pass unnoticed by the Egyptian, or for that matter, the Syrian authorities. The latter took special interest in the activities of the Arab Nationalists. Colonel Abdul Hamid al-Sarraj, then the strongman of Syria, trained and equipped members of the ANM from Syria, Lebanon as well as Jordan, to join the underground movement against the Hashemite monarchy of Jordan.¹⁵

As the Jordanian "battle" dragged on through 1958, the Arab Nationalists were confronted by more urgent problems elsewhere. In the first place, the emergence of the United Arab Republic mobilized a host of political forces ranging from the extreme left to the extreme right against the newly created state. In the second place, the political conflict over Lebanon's stand in Arab and world affairs was dangerously dividing the Lebanese, and the country was on the verge of civil war. These cardinal problems, in addition to some lesser ones dealing with the situation in Iraq and Kuwait, were the subject of serious discussions by the national leadership of the ANM early in summer 1958. It was resolved in the above discussions that Lebanon should be given the priority over Jordan on the agenda of the national leadership because of the deteriorating situation there. The ANM feared that the government of the United States was trying to build a pro-Western bloc against the United Arab Republic by inducing Lebanon and Saudi Arabia to co-operate with Jordan

¹⁵ Statement by anonymous, personal interview, July 21, 1967.