LEGITIMATING PAST ACTIONS THROUGH STRATEGIC MANOEUVRING: A FRAMEWORK FOR INTEGRATING THE DISCOURSE-HISTORICAL APPROACH AND PRAGMA-DIALECTICS

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BY

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STATEMENT OF ORIGINAL AUTHORSHIP

The work contained in this thesis has not been previously submitted for a degree or diploma at any other higher education institution. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made.

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Legitimating Past Actions Through Strategic Manoeuvring: A Framework for Integrating the Discourse-Historical Approach and Pragma-Dialectics

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Abstract

This thesis is mainly interested in the legitimation of controversial past actions and/ or decisions. The thesis examines the discursive means used to regain legitimacy in contexts of controversy. The thesis approaches Hassan Nasrallah's argumentative discourse from an interdisciplinary perspective. It, therefore, proposes a model for incorporating pragma-dialectics into the analytical toolkit of the Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA). Moreover, insights from cognitive pragmatics, in particular research related to epistemic vigilance, are incorporated into the model. The main objective of the model is to investigate the construction of in/out-groups through carrying out argumentative analysis.

To this end, four speeches delivered by Nasrallah at moments of heightened controversy are analysed based on the proposed model and the procedural steps for implementation. The findings are then discussed in order to evaluate the feasibility of the proposed model and Nasrallah's retrospective argumentation.

Keywords: Representation strategies, argumentative strategies, epistemic vigilance, rescue narrative

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Chapter 1

Hizbollah: Historical and sociopolitical context

1. Introduction

In this chapter, I present an overview of Hizbollah's emergence, rise to power and the alleged transformation in its political ideology. The chapter traces the major political events that are pivotal in the movement's transformation and ascension to power. My aim is to pinpoint the main ideological and political tenets that played a role in the formation of Hizbollah as a resistance movement. This step seems crucial because it provides the ideological and political background against which the speeches are analysed. It is also important in examining how specific articulations of Hizbollah's nationalist identity are promoted, by its supreme leader, Hasan Nasrallah, to appeal to multiple audiences. Moreover, the chapter offers a snapshot of unilateral actions and decisions taken by Nasrallah (or on behalf of his political party), which were severely criticised. This leads the discussion to the main interests of this thesis and guiding research questions. Finally, the chapter concludes by briefly outlining the content of the thesis.

2. The emergence of Hizbollah

There has never been a consensus regarding the legitimacy of Hizbollah's (translates as: the Party of God) armed wing, neither internationally nor at the national or pan-Arab levels.[1] In contrast, the acknowledgement of Hizbollah's political power and its role as

[1] The US and most European countries differentiate between Hizbollah's political agenda and its military wing. The former is considered legitimate, while military actions, in particular those that are carried against Israel, are classified as acts of terror (Harb & Leenders, 2005). At the domestic level, opponents consider

one of the major actors in the region, especially after the 2006 Israeli war on Lebanon, is undisputed (Alagha, 2011; Matar & Khatib, 2014). Researchers interested in the 'Hizbollah phenomenon' attribute the establishment of Hizbollah and its unprecedented rise to power to various sociopolitical factors. Hizbollah emerged in the context of continued marginalization and deprivation of Lebanese Shiites, which lasted from the establishment of the Lebanese Republic after gaining independence from France in 1943 until the late eighties, when Hizbollah successfully brought them out of "political and social despair by directly challenging Lebanon's longstanding internal political hierarchy" (Dalack, 2010, p. 4).

The Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 is, undoubtedly, one of the most important factors in the creation of Hizbollah as an Islamist-jihadi group fighting Israeli occupation and repeated aggressions, as well as resisting Western/US imperialism, colonialism, and domination (Alagha, 2006; Bergh, 2015; Matar & Khatib, 2014). Indeed, the Israeli occupation of South Lebanon and the western province of the Beqaa Valley, as Saad-Ghorayeb (2003) asserts, constitutes the very backbone of Hizbollah's intellectual structure.[2]

Hizbollah as serving Iran's interests with a total disregard for Lebanon's security and stability. Recently, and after Hizbollah's intervention in Syria, Iraq, and Yemen, most Gulf states consider Hizbollah to be a terrorist organization. As a result, they have imposed sanctions on its leading officials. In contrast, Hizbollah's proponents, whether at the national or pan-Arab levels, consider Hizbollah to be an exemplary movement of heroic and patriotic deeds, with many attributing mystical characteristics to its leader (Matar, 2015).

[2] In contrast, Alagha (2006; 2011) argues that the emergence of Hizbollah cannot only be related to the influence of the Iranian Revolution and the Israeli occupation. Alagha maintains that Shiite political activism and liberation movements which started with Imam Sadr in the 1960s also played a role in the social and ideological development of Hizbollah.

3. Hizbollah's ideology

During the first decade of its establishment (1983–1992), Hizbollah adopted an exclusionary religious ideology that resonates well within the Lebanese Shiite constituency (the primary audience of Hizbollah). To this end, Hizbollah relied heavily on religious and symbolic references that appeal to Shiites – especially the Karbala narrative and the symbolic martyrdom of Imam Hussein (Alagha, 2006; Houri, 2012; Matar et al., 2014; Saad-Ghorayeb, 2002). The objective is to instil in Lebanese Shiites a continued need to strive for social justice and to invigorate an unremitting resolve for defiance and resistance (jihad) attained only through sacrifice and martyrdom – the main themes of the narrative.

Hizbollah is considered, by many political analysts and local and international news outlets, as well as opponents, to be one of the main offshoots of the Islamic Revolution, functioning as "Iran's pawn" in the Arab world (Dalack, 2010, p. 4). Hizbollah published its first manifesto, The Open Letter, in 1985. In this text, Hizbollah explicitly avows its ideological connection to Iran and defines itself as an Islamist-jihadi movement that seeks to establish an Islamic state in Lebanon (Khatib, 2011; Matar & Khatib, 2014; Norton, 2007; Wiegand, 2009). In the Open Letter, Hizbollah invokes the religious term 'Umma' (Muslim nation) to appeal to Muslims, in Lebanon and abroad, and at the same time underscores the Shiite/ Iranian dimension of the movement.[3] The manifesto states:

[3] The term Umma presupposes that the advocated policies or practices are done for the sake of reunifying and consolidating Muslims, not only at the pan-Arab level but around the world. In a nutshell, Islam is taken as a vehicle to unite the majority of Lebanese (Sunnis and Shiites), as well as Muslims around the world.

> Each one of us (members of Hizbollah) is a combat soldier when the call of jihad (resistance/ struggle) demands it and each of us undertakes his task in the battle in accordance with the legitimate and religious responsibility of the Wilayat al-Faqih, the leader.[4] (quoted in Alagha, 2006, p. 224)

Working under the banner of the 'Guardianship of Jurisprudence' (Wilayat al-Faqih) means that Hizbollah must abide by the ideological tenets governing this concept and articulate a political and religious language that conforms with the Islamic Revolution's rhetoric. Among these is the adoption of a Manichean worldview which constructs the West, especially the US, as the source of evil (the Great Satan) and Israel as an illegitimate entity that must be eradicated. Indeed, Islamic revolutionaries were, as KhosraviNik maintains, "the most radical in their Us vs Them categorisation, as they saw the Iranian Revolution as the first historical step in the struggle against the corrupt, colonial West" (2015, p. 26).

In Hizbollah's view, the US and the Zionist enemy/ Israel are the main oppressors against whom jihad is not only legitimate but also a divine and moral duty. As such, jihad is a tool to defend and empower those who are oppressed and do not have the capacity to defend themselves against aggression and injustice (Alagha, 2011, p. 85, 115–118; Dalack, 2010).[5] As a consequence, anti-Zionism, anti-imperialism/anti-colonialism, pan-

[4] Adopting Imam Khomeini's 'Wilayat al-Faqih' ideology entails Hizbollah regarding the Imam as the legitimate successor of the Prophet by virtue of his epistemic competence and leadership qualities; therefore, Hizbollah has a religious obligation to abide by the (religious and political) guidelines set by the Imam (Alagha, 2006, p. 80–98; Harb & Leenders, 2005).

[5] The term oppressed refers not only to the Shiite constituency, which has suffered political marginalization, but also to oppressed nations across the globe who face US/Western imperialism and domination, thereby adopting an inclusive perspective in the pursuit of political and social justice (Alagha, 2011; Dalack, 2010; Khatib et al., 2014).

Islamism, independence from superpowers, resistance, social justice, defiance, and freedom are permanent themes – or 'master frames' (Karagiannis, 2009) – that define Hizbollah's rhetoric. This political ideology, thereof, signifies the contours based on which a political party is labelled as an insider/ally or outsider/enemy. At this stage, the 'Other' or the enemy, against whom acts of resistance/jihad are legitimate, lies outside Lebanese territory, namely, Israel for its occupation of Lebanese territories and the US for its subversive actions in Lebanon.

4. Hizbollah's political transformation

Hasan Nasrallah was appointed Hizbollah's secretary general in 1992, three years after signing the Taif Accord which brought seventeen years of civil war to an end. The agreement redistributed power equally between Christians and Muslims and provided a road map for the different sects (18 religious sects comprise the Lebanese community) and political factions (communists, liberals, Islamists, Progressive Socialists, Arab nationalists etc.) to become involved in the political process. As a consequence, Hizbollah had to shift its status, from an armed sectarian faction fighting Israel to a mainstream political party working within the status quo political system (Alagha, 2006, 2011; Hamdar, 2013; Khatib, 2011; Wiegand, 2009).[6] For example, Hizbollah's participation in parliamentary and municipal elections, as well as its role in assigning ministers who are either active members in Hizbollah or affiliate with it, is intended, as Matar et al. (2014)

[6] After the Taif agreement, pro- and anti-Syrian governments endorsed Hizbollah as a resistance organisation, i.e. as a national resistance movement, and legitimated Hizbollah's right to use military force in its struggle against Israel based on international law, United Nations Security Council resolutions and the 1989 Fourth Geneva Convention (Dalack, 2010; Wiegand, 2009).

argue, to strengthen its identity as a national party and to enhance its domestic position as a civilian political party.

The 'Lebanonisation' of Hizbollah (Alagha, 2011; Hamdar, 201 3; Wiegand, 2009), i.e. the transformation of Hizbollah into a national political party by endorsing the existing political system and participating in its political institutions, necessitates the adoption of an all-encompassing rhetoric to address different Lebanese parties and their audiences. To this end, Hizbollah's nationalist and populist discourse articulates an inclusive political ideology (Alagha, 2011) whereby Hizbollah's nationalism is not only defined in terms of a US-dominated global context, but also encompasses other relevant dimensions that project the specific nature of the Lebanese context (Deeb, 2008).[7] Houri (2012, p. 44–47) sums up the different dimensions of Hizbollah's nationalism. These are: the inclusion of Shiites in the national narrative, a focus on social disparities in the country, liberating and defending Lebanon (anti-Zionism, anti-colonialism etc.), Arabism, and Islamism.[8]

In fact, many researchers attribute the evolution of Hizbollah, from an Islamist resistance movement working in dissociation from the Lebanese political system to a nationalist and

[7] Nationalism in the Levant is mainly based on two ideological strands: Arabism and anti-colonialism. In the Lebanese context, the former signifies that Lebanon is part of the wider Arab world; therefore, its political actions should be in conformity with the stipulations of the Arab League and should serve, and certainly not jeopardize, the interests of other Arab states. The latter means that Lebanon is part of the resistance block that encompasses Iran, Syria and Hamas in Palestine who resist US and Western domination, imperialism and intervention. Nationalism in the Orient carries different ideological assumptions to its Western counterpart.

[8] Pan-Islamism, as Karagiannis (2009) observes, seeks to diffuse the tensions between Sunnis and Shiites and to bridge the gap between Arabs and Iranians. Therefore, it is another strategy used by Nasrallah to address and mobilize an international audience. Karagiannis also notes that the frame of anti-globalisation, as well as the notion of the oppressed, aims to attract the sympathy and support of leftists and human rights activists around the world.

populist party, to Nasrallah's leadership (Matar, 2008; 2014), in particular, his nationalist rhetoric, charisma, and authority (see Chapter 2, section 3).

5. Polarising the political sphere: Creating enemies

Hizbollah's enthusiasm to integrate the movement into the Lebanese political sphere, a process also known as 'political jihad', did not preclude military jihad. In fact, inexorable military acts of resistance against Israel – which lasted for almost fifteen years – resulted in the unconditional withdrawal of Israeli troops from most of South Lebanon on 24 May 2000, known as 'Liberation Day'. Most Arabs and (if not all) Lebanese read this as the first Arab armed group in history to defeat and compel Israel to unconditionally abandon occupied lands. Therefore, the liberation validated and authenticated Hizbollah's image as a populist and national party that represents the interests of most Lebanese (Khatib, 2011; Matar et al., 2014).

From a different perspective, Hizbollah's opponents saw the liberation as a pretext to call for the disarmament of Hizbollah, since the main reason which led to Hizbollah possessing weapons was no longer valid (Israeli occupation). At the international level, Hizbollah's opponents lobbied for the ratification of UN Resolution 1559, on 4 September 2004, which commands Syria to withdraw its troops from Lebanon and disarm all Lebanese militias, including Hizbollah. The political clashes escalated, as Hizbollah regards the Resolution and those who support it as an existential threat. From this point onwards, Hizbollah started to refer explicitly to its (political) opponents as traitors and Israeli collaborators. Thus, Hizbollah's opponents become enemies of national unity (Høigilt, 2007; Khatib, 2014). Warning opponents of the punishment awaiting them,

Nasrallah declared in his speech on 25 May 2005 that he would consider 'any hand (internal opponents) that tries to seize our (Hizbollah) weapons an Israeli hand, and cut it off'.

Hizbollah's image as a national party suffered hugely in the wake of the 2005 Cedar Revolution following the assassination of former prime minister Rafic Hariri (a prominent Sunni figure) in February of the same year. Hariri's proponents, supported by the international community (specifically, France and the US), initially accused Syria – Hizbollah's ally – of orchestrating the assassination. Mass rallies were organised by Hizbollah's political rivals, who formed the anti-Syrian (pro-American) group known as the 14th of March coalition.[9] Demonstrators demanded the withdrawal of Syrian troops, ending Syrian interference and influence in Lebanon, and establishment of an international tribunal to bring culprits to justice. Public pressure and international support succeeded in making Syria withdraw its troops from Lebanon in April 2005 and establishing the UN Special Tribunal for Lebanon (henceforth, STL) to investigate Hariri's assassination.

In response, pro-Syrian demonstrations were staged by Hizbollah and its allies, who formed the 8th of March coalition or the resistance block.[10] Both parties launched political campaigns to justify their political stance and delegitimize the status of their opponents. Therefore, Hizbollah – as the major actor in the 8th of March coalition – portrayed the opposition (the 14th of March party) as a Western-backed group whose actions (e.g. the

[9] The 14th of March party is an anti-Syrian/ Iranian and pro-American block composed of a Sunni majority and major Christian political parties, as well as Druze (a Muslim sect).
[10] The 8th of March party is a pro-Syrian/ Iranian and anti-American block. It is primarily led by Hizbollah and encompasses other Shiite groups and a prominent Christian political party.

STL and calling for Syria to withdraw its troops from Lebanon, among others) realize US plans in the region. In contrast, the 14th of March party branded Hizbollah as an Iranian armed wing and its actions as serving Iran's interests in its struggle with the superpowers regarding its nuclear programme.

The feud over the establishment of the STL turned into an open political confrontation, especially after leaked reports, from the general attorney's office and some international media outlets, revealed that the STL would indict four members of Hizbollah. Hizbollah perceived the would-be indictment of its members in terms of a US and Israeli conspiracy aimed at vilifying Hizbollah's regional and national reputation (the context of the speech analysed in Chapter 8). Hizbollah framed its objection to the STL by claiming that its members were wrongly and unfairly accused, thus Hizbollah had no alternative but to defend itself against injustice.

The Israeli war in 2006 increased the cleavages between the two adversaries. The 14th of March party criticised Hizbollah's unilateral action: the kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers. They considered the action to be an uncalculated adventure intended to take the Lebanese, unwillingly, into an open war with Israel (the context of the speech analysed in Chapter 5). Amid the turmoil, Hizbollah's opponents (the 14th of March coalition) re-emphasized the need to disarm Hizbollah to prevent any future escalations with Israel. Nasrallah saw this demand, in his speech on 14 August 2006, as 'immoral, incorrect and inappropriate', and claimed that such a call came at the 'wrong timing on the psychological and the moral level, particularly before the cease-fire'.

The country was devastated by the brutality of the Israeli aggression, which lasted for 33 days; however, Hizbollah's endurance, steadfastness and exercise of restraint towards its opponents allowed Hizbollah to be seen as victorious. Hizbollah's victory (Nasrallah declared it a 'Divine Victory') in the 2006 Israeli war further substantiated Hizbollah's image as a pan-Arab, populist, and national party. At the domestic level, the war increased the polarisation between the two camps, as it failed to unify them under the banner of defending Lebanon against Israeli aggression.

After the war, Nasrallah called for the establishment of a national unity government that would guarantee more representation for Hizbollah's coalition (the 8th of March group), thereby giving the group the ability to veto decisions threatening Hizbollah or Syria (the context of the speech analysed in Chapter 6). Faced with rejection from the pro-American government, Nasrallah called for widespread demonstrations and sit-ins, which lasted for almost two years. The tension exacerbated with the resignation of six pro-Hizbollah ministers in an attempt to bring about the collapse of Fouad Siniora's government, leaving the constitutional legitimacy of the Cabinet under question.[11] Nasrallah stated that the refusal of the 14th of March coalition to form a national unity government was 'an extension of Israel's war against Lebanon […] so we (Hizbollah) will fight today, but with other weapons and other rules (demonstrations and resignations)'. Thus, Nasrallah placed his internal political opponents on the same level as Israel (Khatib, 2014), namely, as an internal threat to national unity, which he needed to fend off.

[11]The Lebanese constitution stipulates that for a government to gain legitimacy, every major sect should be fairly represented in the Cabinet so as to comply with the requirements of consensus democracy.

The political stalemate evolved into a violent confrontation following two decisions taken by the Siniora's government, which Hizbollah considered a declaration of war (the context of the speech analysed in Chapter 7). This was the first time since the end of the civil war that Hizbollah had used weapons inside Lebanon and against other Lebanese, despite Nasrallah's earlier promise that the group's weapons would not be used inside Lebanon. The confrontation ended with the signing of the Doha agreement in May 2008, which eventually provided Hizbollah and its allies with veto power to monitor governments' decisions. Nonetheless, Hizbollah's 'Occupation of Beirut' demarcates a decisive moment in Lebanon's present history, as violence was used against political rivals. Commenting on the severity of the incident, Larbi (2010) posits that Hizbollah's resistance is not only against a foreign occupier (Israel) or a neo-colonial US-led world, but also against an anti-resistance-bloc, represented by the 14th of March party. Høigilt (2007) observes that Hizbollah's discourse revolves around an axis of inclusion and exclusion, but that its parameters had changed since 1991, i.e. from an outside-the-border enemy (Israel) to an internal or domestic enemy (the 14th of March party).

Resistance, as the most important pillar of Hizbollah's populist identity, became, as Houri (2012, p. 57) maintains, the "new frontier that would […] construct a new hegemonic identity and a populist discourse which will articulate new frontiers of inclusion and exclusion". Liberation, defiance, social justice, dignity, and pride are the other dimensions of Hizbollah's populist identity, articulated via Hizbollah's discourse as a means to unify a number of heterogeneous demands and audiences (ibid.). In fact, Alagha (2011) argues that Hizbollah's political ideology always calls for unity on both the Islamic and domestic fronts. I argue, however, that Nasrallah's discourse oscillates

between calling for unification and solidarity (i.e. the *integrative function* of discourse, see Chapter 2, section 2) achieved via identity-constituting rhetoric and discriminatory formulations that target the 14th of March party, thereby increasing the cleavages among political rivals (i.e. the *disintegrative function*). In other words, the discursive construction of Hizbollah's hegemonic national identity necessitates the discursive destruction (Wodak et al., 2009) of a sub/intra-national identity construct, i.e. the ideological precepts of the 14th of March party. In the following section, I elaborate the main interests of this thesis by pointing out some aspects of Nasrallah's discourse that motivated me to conduct this research.

6. Guiding research interests and goals

Inasmuch as a national identity is a unifying mechanism, it also divides nations and citizens of nation states (Wodak & de Cillia, 2007). Billig (1995) elucidates that to be a member of an in-group entails a "categorical distinction from an 'out group'. The imagining of 'our' community involves imagining, either implicitly or explicitly, 'them' from whom 'we' are distinct" (p. 66). In this view, the construction of national identity is not only based on strategies that harmonise the in-group, but also on stereotyping and negative Other-presentation to villainize the out-group (see Chapter 4, section 2) in order to justify preferential or discriminatory practices (Wodak et al., 2009). Therefore, the construction of an internal enemy (the 14th of March coalition) and the discursive means that Nasrallah exploits in profiling this enemy is one of the interests of this thesis. In analysing the discourse of Nasrallah, I intend to examine how political power is exercised through language and how certain ideologies are replaced by others. It is in this respect that the Discourse-Historical Approach (henceforth, DHA) to critical discourse studies

(henceforth, CDS) is chosen as the overarching framework (see Chapter 3, section 2.1). The DHA is a useful analytical tool through which opaque representations of power, domination, and control, as manifested in language use, are exposed (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001, 2009, 2016). By deconstructing Nasrallah's discourse, the objective is to challenge what seems to be consensual (e.g. resistance as a binding ideology for all Lebanese) or indisputable.

One of the aims of this research is to investigate the argumentative as well as the representation strategies that Nasrallah deploys in his attempts to defend and legitimise controversial past actions and decisions. To this end, pragma-dialectics (van Eemeren et al., 1996; van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 2004), as an analytical template to analyse argumentation aimed at resolving a difference of opinion (see Chapter 3, section 3), provides a guiding theoretical framework. Undoubtedly, accusations are highly damaging to Nasrallah's image. Therefore, the thesis aims to shed light on the *retrospective argumentation* that Nasrallah advances in his attempt to defend his image, in light of accusations raised by opponents, and to re-establish intersubjective agreement (Habermas, 1990) over problematised actions or decisions.

Nasrallah is regarded one of the most charismatic figures in the Arab world. His charisma is not only related to the religious attributes vested in him, but also to the construction of a 'proper image' and ethos (see Chapter 2, section 3) via which his charisma is acknowledged and validated. Charisma is partially constructed, as proposed in this thesis, through strategies pertaining to the legitimation of assertions (Chapter 3, section 6.3.4). According to Hart (2011), these strategies serve to satisfy or overcome audiences' epistemic defences, i.e. provide evidence of internal and external coherence. Thus, a final

interest of this thesis is to examine the effect of Nasrallah's mediated charisma on audiences' epistemic filters.

7. Research objectives and questions

The bulk of literature on Nasrallah's discourse, and more generally Hizbollah's discourse, can be classified under the following headings: (1) Nasrallah's charismatic leadership and its effect on establishing an emotional bond with followers, mainly, the 8th of March audience (Badran, 2010; Houri, 2012; Matar, 2008, 2014, 2015; Thiel, n.d.); (2) the discursive construction and transformation of Hizbollah's national identity (Alagha, 2006, 2011; Daoud, 2012; Khatib, 2011, 2014; Saad-Ghorayeb, 2003; Wiegand, 2009); and (3) the effect of Hizbollah's multi-media platforms on promoting Hizbollah's political ideology (Alshaer, 2014; Hamdar, 2013; Houri, 2012). In this thesis, my main aim is to examine the argumentative, as well as the representation strategies, that Nasrallah employs in his attempts to legitimise past actions or decisions.

To achieve this objective, I propose a framework fully incorporating pragma-dialectics within the DHA to CDS.[12] This framework builds on the commonalities that both approaches share (see Chapter 3, section 4) in order to intertwine the argumentative and the representation functions of language. As such, the thesis is not in alignment with the representation versus argumentation dichotomy (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012) but attempts to show the representation function of some argumentative schemes as well as the significance of representation strategies in constructing premises for arguments (see

[12] Although pragma-dialectics provides a theoretical backdrop to the analysis of argumentation strategies in the DHA, it is rarely fully or explicitly operationalised in detailed analysis (see Chapter 4, section 4.1).

Chapter 4, section 4.1). The framework is applied to four speeches given by Hassan Nasrallah in order to address the following questions:

1) How did Nasrallah strategically manoeuvre to resolve disagreement with opposition audiences?
2) How did the different justification/ legitimation strategies enact patterns of prejudicial attitudes towards the out-group? That is to ask:
    a) How did Nasrallah discursively promote a hegemonic identity narrative and how did he position partisans within this construct? Similarly,
    b) How did Nasrallah discursively construct an out-group/ intra-national enemy profile, and how did he position opponents?
3) How might the construction of Nasrallah's charisma have satisfied the epistemic filters of opposition audiences?
4) How effective is the integration of cognitive approaches to legitimation within a model that integrates pragma-dialectics and the DHA?

8. Outline of the thesis

This thesis is organised in ten chapters. The next, i.e. second, chapter describes the main characteristics of the genre of political speeches. This focus on the genre of political speeches relates to the fact that this thesis is primarily interested in political speeches. Political speeches are, more often than not, performed publicly and delivered by charismatic or authoritative speakers. The chapter, then, provides a summary of the main approaches to the concept of *charisma* as it relates to political discourse. The different theories related to the construction of charisma pave the way to hypothesise a relation

between the construction of charisma and audiences' systems of epistemic vigilance. The chapter also sheds light on recent research on Nasrallah's charisma as well as the emotional bond that connects him with his followers. The chapter ends by outlining the criteria for selecting the data to be analysed.

In the third chapter, I lay down the main theoretical frameworks and analytical tools that inform this study. Thus, it details the type of critique pursued in CDS, in particular, the DHA, and the analytical tools used to deconstruct hegemonic discourses. The study also adopts the pragma-dialectical perspective to argumentative discourse. Points of convergence between pragma-dialectics and the DHA are, therefore, discussed. This thesis also draws on findings from cognitive pragmatics. This chapter also outlines the main theoretical assumptions of two models in cognitive pragmatics: Relevance Theory (Sperber & Wilson, 1995) and Epistemic Vigilance (Sperber et al., 2010). Finally, the chapter elaborates on the possible discursive strategies for responding to accusations.

The fourth chapter amalgamates the various analytical tools and theoretical assumptions into a single integrated model. This chapter presents the main reasons behind the appropriation of pragma-dialectics within the DHA, as well as the benefits that each school can gain from such an integrated approach. This chapter also shows how epistemic vigilance and the construction of charisma are relevant to argument analysis. Finally, this chapter offers a provisional structure for *retrospective argumentation* and concludes with outlining the steps for implementing the proposed model.

The analysis of the speeches stretches across four chapters. Therefore, Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8 present a detailed analysis in terms of the proposed model. Four speeches given by

Nasrallah between 2006 and 2011 are analysed. Each chapter opens by detailing the context, which gives an overview of the different views, criticisms, and objections related to the event under scrutiny. In this way, the main points of disagreement are delineated and parts of the speech not related to the points at issue are excluded from the analysis (see Chapter 4, section 4.4). Subsequently, each speech is analysed following the proposed model, with a detailed reconstruction of the argument presented at the end of each chapter.

Finally, in Chapter 9, I return to the research questions and consider how the analyses presented help to answer them. In particular, I discuss how the DHA's representation strategies constitute argumentation moves and contribute to constructing argumentation schemes. I also discuss how legitimation is enacted via invoking different sources of normativity that tap into the moral values and ideological beliefs of the target audience. Lastly, I discuss the potential effects of the discursive construction of charisma, specifically, the construction of ethos and salvation narratives, on audiences' epistemic assessments.

The study concludes by showing how the integrated model may strengthen the explanatory level of the DHA's critique. This chapter also discusses the limitations of the study and suggests possibilities for further research.

Chapter 2

Charismatic leaders and performing political speeches

1. Introduction

This chapter starts by offering a synopsis of the main features and functions of political speeches. In most cases, political speeches are performed, or staged in Wodak's (2011) terms, where the interaction between audience and interlocutor attests to the degree of receptivity of the message. However, what affects the level of receptivity is also related to the nature of the charismatic bond that links political leaders with their followers. Therefore, this chapter underscores the construction and negotiation of charisma and aims to clarify the link between charismatic performances and nationalist and populist ideologies. The aim is to prepare the ground for hypothesizing the effect of charisma on audiences' epistemic vigilance (see Chapter 3, section 6.3.3). The chapter concludes by presenting the criteria for selecting the data to be analysed.

2. Characterising political speeches

The attention that this research gives to the genre of political speeches stems from Reisigl's (2010) acknowledgment of their dual functionality. On the one hand, Reisigl underscores the *integrative* function that political speeches can have in the construction of national identity and in promoting group solidarity. On the other hand, political speeches "can fulfill *disintegrative* and destructive functions by mobilizing addressees to social exclusion and, at worst, to violent attacks against those excluded and denigrated by the orator" (Reisigl, 2010 p. 251, emphasis added). Based on this view, this thesis focuses on

the strategies pursued by Nasrallah to balance the attainment of both functions. In the following section, I present an overview of the genre of political speeches, as examined in critical discourse studies, argumentation theory and classical rhetoric.

2.1. Political speeches as a genre

Dell Hymes (1974) defines a speech community as a group of people who share specific rules for speaking or at least one 'way of speaking' that distinguishes them from other groups. Speech events of a specific group, e.g. academic or medical professions, share certain elements that can be pinpointed in order to provide a descriptive account of the group's linguistic behaviour. Hymes proposes 'SPEAKING' as a mnemonic device to analyse the ways a group communicates in specific speech situations. In this model, 'S' designates the situation, which includes the scene and the setting. 'P' refers to the participants in the communicative activity. 'E' refers to the ends or goals of communicating. 'A' designates the speech acts performed. 'K' refers to the key or the tone of the speech. 'I' refers to instrumentality or the channel of communication used. 'N' refers to the set of rules or norms guiding the speech. And finally, 'G' refers to cultural and/or clearly demarcated types of utterances, such as poems, sermons, and editorials. Hymes argues that "genres often coincide with speech events, but must be treated as analytically independent of them" (1974:61).

Genres are ritualized types of utterances that can be used either in conventional speech situations or outside the usual settings. Swales (1990) perceives genre as referring to a "distinctive category of discourse" (p. 33) involving spoken and written communication. He maintains that a genre is a class of communicative events characterised by discourse

or register, participants, the function of discourse and the environment of its production and reception. According to Swales, what turns this class of communicative events into a genre is "*some shared set of communicative purposes*" (p. 46). Therefore, genre membership is designated by the extent to which these events share similar communicative goals. For example, what unites party political speeches are the shared goals of presenting party policies, countering opposition policies, and mobilizing audiences to vote (ibid.).

From a critical discourse studies (CDS) perspective, Fairclough argues that genre can be characterized as "a socially ratified way of using language in connection with a particular type of social activity" (Fairclough, 1995, p. 14).[13] In his view, "genres are the specifically discoursal aspect of ways of acting and interacting in the course of social events" (2003, p.65). In other words, the analysis of a text as an instantiation of genre is closely related to how this text contributes to and influences social practices and action. According to Fairclough, the various aspects of text organization and features, such as the overall generic structure of a text, text semantics, and the mode of intertextuality, are shaped by genre.

Fairclough (2003) proposes a framework through which genre is analysed in terms of activity (what people are doing), social relations (the type of relations between people), and communication technology (what kind of technological means are used). Wodak (2008) summarises the development of the concept of genre as one that has moved from

[13] In pragma-dialectics, the conceptualization of genre (see Chapter 3, section 3.3), as van Eemeren (2013) explains, remains close to Fairclough's view.

textual characteristics to a more functional approach, and finally, to an approach that focuses on social practices, norms and conventions of use. Reisigl and Wodak (2016) define genre as a "socially conventionalized pattern of communication that fulfils a specific social purpose in a specific social context" (p. 27). Their typology links the multi-varied subgenres of political communication to 'fields of political action'. In their view, the political field is divided into eight different fields of action, such as lawmaking procedures, the formation of public opinion and will, political advertising, political control etc., where each of these fields is associated with a set of sub-genres. For example, election speeches, commemorative speeches, speeches by an MP and so on, delivered with the aim of advertising one's political position, belong to the field of political advertisement.

In classical rhetoric, political speeches are classified based on three classes of rhetorical genre: *judicial*, *deliberative* and *epideictic*. *Judicial* oratory is oriented to the past, thematically focuses on issues related to justice or injustice, right or wrong, and its function is to accuse or defend. *Deliberative* rhetoric is future-oriented, thematically deals with expediency and harmfulness, and its function is to exhort or dissuade. Finally, the *epideictic* genre is associated with the present, thematically with honour or disgrace, and its function is to praise or blame. However, in actual discursive practices, these classes do not occur in pure forms as is theoretically suggested, for the "diversity of topics and temporal references usually results in the simultaneous presence of elements from all three rhetorical categories within one and the same speech" (Wodak et al., 2009, p. 70). Richardson (2007) and Reisigl (2008), similarly, maintain that political speeches exhibit a combination of two or more classes of rhetorical oratory.

From a pragma-dialectical point of view, the field of political communication belongs to the deliberative genre, i.e. it is future-oriented.[14] However, van Eemeren has recently asserted that "political theorists recognize that the argumentation put forward in political discourse is also often about past performances and requires a retrospective account" (2013, p. 28). It follows that identifying the type of rhetorical genre that characterises Nasrallah's argumentation should precede the analysis. This amounts to identifying whether the speeches primarily follow a judicial, epideictic or deliberative genre, or a combination of two or more of these divisions (Richardson, 2007). Nasrallah's speeches, as I claim, (see Chapter 1, section 6) are attempts to legitimise past actions and decisions in order to regain legitimacy in contexts of controversy. Therefore, it might be reasonable to deduce that the speeches selected for this thesis mainly belong to the judicial genre.

In light of Wodak, Reisigl and Richardson's argument (as aforementioned), Nasrallah's speeches also exhibit traces of the epideictic genre, i.e. they assign blame (onto opponents) or praise (partisans). The persuasive and/or manipulative power of political speeches is not limited to specific rhetorical devices or genre-specific characteristics. In my view, what makes political speeches persuasive is the fact that these are performed, more often than not, by charismatic leaders. This is specifically the case in the Lebanese context. In the following section, I outline theoretical frameworks that are relevant to pin down the different characteristics and dimensions of a charismatic personality.

[14] In pragma-dialectics, the deliberative genre is one among several argumentative genres. Adjudication, negotiation, communication-seeking, and disputation are other argumentative genres (van Eemeren et al., 2014).

3. Charismatic leadership

Many theories have been put forward to account for the nature and presumed (affective or cognitive) influence that charismatic leaders have on audiences. In his attempt to understand the sociology of domination, political obligation and obedience, Weber (1978) suggests that for domination to be stable, power must be converted into legitimate authority. He distinguishes between three types of legitimate authority: legal or rational authority (e.g. bureaucracy, democracy), traditional authority (e.g. customs, monarchies) and charismatic authority (special characteristics of an individual). The latter relates to the individualistic personalities of leaders who are "bearers of specific gifts of body and mind" (ibid., p. 1111–1112). In Weber's view, charisma is a "certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is considered extraordinary". Consequently, he is treated as one who is "endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or exceptional powers or qualities" (Schweitzer, 1974, p. 151).

These extraordinary qualities, according to Weber (1987), are of divine origin and the authority of a charismatic leader stems from his/her ability to put them into practice through tangible heroic deeds, exemplary actions or miracles as an attestation of his/her "divine mission" (ibid., p. 1114). Once these are recognized and perceived as such, it means that leaders have "proved their charisma in the eyes of their adherents" (ibid. p. 1112). This highlights the relational dimension of charisma or the 'charismatic bond' that is established between charismatic leaders and their supporters. It follows that charismatic authority is based on being recognized as such by others, and its perpetuation is a function of the continued validation of "personal strength proven time and again" (ibid., p. 1114). Charismatic authority, as a form of legitimate domination, is "the accepted power to lead

and command others stemming from the recognition" of the specific qualities that are attributed to a leader (Hofmann & Dawson, 2014, p. 349). From a Weberian point of view, charisma is a specific quality of an individual personality and its recognition by those "subject to authority, which is decisive" for the validation of charisma (Weber, 1978, p. 242).

In Weber's view, obedience to a charismatic authority is a duty predicated on divine qualities and the virtue of the mission. This recognition entails, as Weber concludes, that followers show unconditional devotion and trust. Moreover, Weber argues that charisma is unstable and subject to erosion, specifically in cases where the leader fails to deliver promises or achieve the goals aspired to. Consequently, adherents might withdraw their recognition as the leader is no longer recognized as the "god-sent master" (Weber, 1978, p. 1114). It can, thus, be deduced that Weberian charisma is a quality that is attributed to leaders, and not only a quality that they inherently possess.

Weber's conceptualization of charisma has been criticized for its emphasis on the psychological dimension of charisma (Eatwell, 2007). In fact, Weber (ibid.) acknowledges the effects of social factors on shaping charismatic personalities, such as the effects of a troubled childhood, schooling and the cultural environment. In this view, Eatwell (2007) criticises reducing the study of charismatic authority to examining the influence of social factors on a leadership personality, as it limits the analysis of political action and decisions to personality development. Despite Weber's emphasis on the psychological dimension of charisma, and to a lesser degree on social factors, he sees the socio-political/ economic dimension as a prerequisite for the emergence of charismatic leadership. Weber (1978), thus, highlights the importance of social, political and

economic crises in catalysing the emergence of charismatic leaders and in facilitating identification with a leader.

Based on this view, Weber observes that charismatic leaders, such as Vladimir Lenin, Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, among others, emerged at times of economic, ethical and/or political distress or disorder. Crises, in Weber's view, form the social situations necessary to encourage the attribution of charisma, as the leader comes to embody the promise of salvation. Therefore, crises are would-be opportunities that can be exploited by leaders, and through these they can construct charisma by performing heroic or miraculous deeds. Following Weber, Bass (1985) asserts that charisma "carries with it a challenge to the old order, a break with continuity, a risky adventure, continual movement, ferment, and change" (p. 36).

3.1. Narrative dimension: Charismatic leaders as salvationists

In distressful situations, as Tucker (1977) expounds, a charismatic leader presents to sufferers a "formula for salvation [which] may arouse their intense loyalty and enthusiastic willingness to take the path the leader is pointing out" (p. 388). Tucker continues to explain that in moments of crisis a charismatic leader becomes a saviour who embodies hope for salvation. Consequently, followers "tend to revere him and surround him with that spontaneous cult of personality which appears to be one of the symptomatic marks of the charismatic leader-follower relationship" (1968, p. 746-747). The notion of receptivity to the leader's message depends on the strategic exploitation of crises, inasmuch as a charismatic leader is capable of articulating and imposing a vision for salvation (Hofmann & Dawson, 2014).

A culturalist view of charisma (Smith, 2000 & Willner, 1984) conceptualizes charisma as a cultural phenomenon, the construction of which compels the leader to draw on myths, common symbols, cultural frames and shared meanings. From a culturalist perspective, the presence of social anomie, as a precondition for the emergence of charismatic leaders, is not a sufficient condition because charisma is the product of social and cultural contexts (Willner, 1984). Smith defines charisma as "a moral bond of duty linking followers to leaders" and argues that this bond should be understood in terms of symbolic structures (2000, p.103). Smith asserts that charismatic authority is "underpinned by binary cultural codes which elaborate and oppose sacred and evil grammars of motivations […] along with narratives which employ events within a salvation framework" (ibid., p. 103). In this respect, salvation narratives – based on a binary code of good versus evil – are the main facets of charismatic authority through which events and actions acquire new meaning and come to have moral significance (ibid.). It follows that the role of a charismatic leader is to create and identify an 'evil' entity, the destruction of which forms the basis of the salvation narrative. Therefore, charisma is constructed via salvation narratives that exploit cultural-specific symbols and myths.

To put it differently, the moral bond between charismatic leaders and their followers seems to be predicated on a shared hatred and fear of an identified evil against which they have to fight. From a culturalist perspective, the presence of an enemy or evil adversary is pivotal for the construction of charismatic authority, which will therefore "attain its greatest force when images of evil are at their most threatening" (ibid., p. 105). The constructed evil is, thus, a unifying mechanism that consolidates and unites a community around a common desire to fight the threat. In this respect, the moral dimension of

charismatic discourses is given prominence as the battle is essentially between good/right versus evil/wrong. In his attempt to understand how (fascist) charismatic leaders prepare the scene for ethnic cleansing and genocide, e.g. the holocaust and ethnic cleansing in Serbia, Eatwell (2006a, 2006b) proposes a social-constructivist approach in which he outlines four traits that define the nature of a charismatic personality.

First, charismatic leaders are visionary and driven by a mission (e.g. national unification), which is often linked to foundation myths and the construction of a national identity. Therefore, leaders embody a special mission that is characterised by quasi-religious language and images that employ the semantic field of salvation, such as redemption, rescue and rebirth. Second, charismatic leaders portray themselves as ordinary men or women who obey the wishes of the people, and they explicitly express what the common people think in private to foster the leader-follower bond or 'symbiotic hierarchy'. According to Eatwell, the charismatic bond links fascist leaders and followers via the construction of a broad 'ideological matrix', i.e. the creation of a new man, a holistic nation and state. Third, enemies and scapegoats are discursively constructed and identified – 'Manichean demonization'. The Other is portrayed as an imminent threat, whereby salvation is sought via the path (salvation narrative) outlined by the charismatic leader. Finally, there is the leader's personal presence or magnetism, which includes not only physical traits but, more importantly, the ability of the leader to portray the 'correct image' of himself (ibid., p. 144–148). In this view, the charismatic bond is no longer defined in terms of emotions, an affectional relation, but is proactively negotiated between leader and followers.

It seems possible to conclude that charismatic leadership depends on successful attempts to articulate and impose a hegemonic national identity via the construction of salvation narratives in which various ideologies, e.g. populist, nationalist, fascist etc., are exploited to bind a community of followers or a nation. In this respect, charisma is not only a relational (socio-emotional) product, it is also built around moral values and ideological constructs such as nationalism, fascism, populism etc. (Breuilly, 2011; Eatwell, 2006b; Hofmann & Dowson, 2014; Kallis, 2006; Musiedlak, 2009). For example, Breuilly (2011) examines the relation between charisma and an anti-colonial nationalist ideology. Taking Gandhi as an example, he emphasizes that charismatic domination develops when "strong existing nationalist sentiments" are faced with a "massive crisis [that] has undermined the modern institutions of power. It is on the basis of that nationalist ideology itself […] that a charismatic leader can emerge" (p. 492).

This thesis aligns itself with this strand of thought. Nasrallah's salvation/ rescue narrative, in which the identity of Nasrallah as a saviour and the villainized image of the 'Other' are constructed, is articulated based on aspects of Hizbollah's national identity and political ideology.[15] Eatwell (2006a; 2006b) also emphasizes the effect of charismatic performances and the way leaders present themselves to the public, i.e. how leaders become charismatic. Therefore, the next section outlines the effects of projecting the 'correct image' on the recognition of charisma.

[15] Rescue narratives are discussed in Chapter 3, section 7.1.

3.2. Performative dimension: Constructing image

The recognition of charismatic authority as well as the creation and fostering of the charismatic bond are generated and actively negotiated via charismatic performances which are tailored to meet the social and cultural conventions in which they are embedded. Based on this view, Wodak (2011) examines how politicians, specifically Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), stage or perform politics and assesses the impact of the personalities of individual politicians on their performances. This means that how politicians perceive, and eventually construct their identities, such as active/ passive or proactive/ reactive, affects how they do and perform politics. The need to analyse strategies of performing politics (frontstage performances), as Wodak (2011) expounds, reveal the influence that these performances have on gaining, controlling and retaining political power and authority.[16] In her view, the analysis of political performances has to integrate three theoretical concepts: habitus, community of practice and identity (ibid., p.11–14).

According to Wodak, for a successful frontstage performance, the politician must abide by the cultural practices pertaining to a certain society, group or nation – habitus. Next, the performer has to comply with the rules and conventions related to a specific community of practice, i.e. practices related to a professional setting, e.g. the European Parliament. Finally, how politicians display their individuality, the *self*, influences their performances. In other words, the construction of a politician's (individual and collective)

[16] Wodak (2011) distinguishes between backstage and frontstage performances and examines in detail the strategies pertaining to each and the impact of both on public perception. However, I will limit the discussion to frontstage performances as this research analyses speeches that are addressed to the public.

identity is directly linked to the presentation of the *self,* which in turn affects the performance and validation of charisma.

The discursive construction and performance of identities, as Wodak (ibid., p.78–79) suggests, is established via two linguistic processes: footing and narrating. Footing reflects the different roles (e.g. giving an opinion, telling a story) taken on by the speaker in a discursive event and signals the speaker's discursive identities through the way they position themselves in discourse, e.g. as active agents or victims. Narratives (personal examples or anecdotes) reveal footing, which in turn reveals the speaker's orientation to a specific identity or *self*. The results of Wodak's analysis show that some MEPs position themselves as individuals actively pushing for specific agendas, while others reflect multiple identities (oriented towards both a specific national identity and a supranational European identity). To put it differently, the discursive positioning of a politician's identity realized through certain linguistic cues reveals how politicians perform politics and, more importantly, feeds into how aspects of their constructed identities are perceived and recognized by the public, i.e. how they construct their charisma.

A more pronounced view of the relation between the discursive positioning of identity and habitus and their relation to the construction of charisma is offered in Wodak's recent publication (2105). Following Eatwell's typology for the construction of charisma, Wodak (2015, p. 126-127) observes that the success of right-wing populist parties in Europe can be credited to a successful double positioning strategy. On the one hand, right-wing populist politicians position themselves as saviours who are entitled to save people from perceived threats or social/political predicaments (i.e. they construct salvation narratives), and as being one of the people, on the other. Authenticity entails

that politicians portray themselves as performing the daily activities and duties that ordinary people do (ibid.). The effect of such a portrayal, to use Eatwell's terminology, fosters the symbiotic/ charismatic bond between a leader and his followers via the construction of a proper image. Both strategies indicate that populist and nationalist discourses are one feature of charismatic leadership (Houri, 2012).

In her multimodal analysis (analysis of posture and dress code) of the election campaign of HC Strache during the 2012 Vienna elections, Wodak hints at the multiple identities invoked by Strache on his Facebook page in order to address different audiences. Strache positions himself as a saviour, a sportsman, a youthful Viennese to establish a symbiotic bond with audiences. A similar approach is followed by Matar (2008, 2015) in her analysis of the strategies used by Nasrallah to construct his proper image. Matar observes that Nasrallah oscillates between creating and maintaining two identities: an ordinary man, one of the masses, and an elite individual, i.e. a religious and political leader. According to Matar, this is established through a mode of address that alternates between using vernacular language to establish solidarity with his fellow Lebanese and classical Arabic when he uses Quranic and prophetic verses (ibid.)

I will not elaborate any further on the strategies of constructing image or presence since this research limits itself to specific instances of Nasrallah's linguistic behaviour, rather than taking into account dress code, style, demeanour and physical appearance, among others, as parameters for constructing charisma. Suffice it for now to recognise that the correct image is constructed through a series of linguistic and non-linguistic means which all feed into strengthening the bond between leaders and their audiences.

4. Nasrallah as a charismatic leader

Matar (2005, 2008), who has extensively researched Nasrallah's charisma, observes that Nasrallah's public persona is constructed based on his religious attributes and oratorical skills. These two dimensions allow Nasrallah to adapt his public image and rhetoric to specific political contexts. In her view, Nasrallah's discourse integrates contemporary events with historical and cultural signifiers that resonate with a broad spectrum of the Lebanese audience. Matar (2015) argues that Nasrallah mixes frames of suffering and redemption with resistance, struggle and promises for divine rewards. According to Matar, Nasrallah mixes two basic frames. The first is a religious frame that appeals to the wider Muslim community, invoked through the use of religious terms, such as jihad, martyrdom and the divine promise. The second is an Arab nationalist frame, invoked through terms like 'muqawama'(resistance) and 'oppressed' (see Chapter 1, section 3) in order to appeal to a pan-Arab community.

The different approaches to the notion of charisma outlined above can enrich the analysis of Nasrallah's charisma. For example, Nasrallah can be shown to fit Weber's notion of charisma in at least the following ways. First, where Weber emphasises the divine origin of a charismatic personality, Nasrallah is a highly regarded religious scholar who is believed to be a descendant of the Prophet. Such a view might partially explain the ensuing obligations and duties imputed on followers (the 8th of March audience). Consequently, Nasrallah's words and commands are taken, by followers, as undisputable, unnegotiable and beyond any doubt, thus his followers tend to be less vigilant (see

Chapter 3, section 6.3.3).[17] Second, where Weber focuses on the influence of social factors on a charismatic personality, few studies have examined the effects of Nasrallah's upbringing, social class and schooling etc. on shaping and refining his charismatic personality (see Matar, 2008, 2014, 2015; Thiel, n.d.). Such an analysis might explain Nasrallah's constant endeavour to portray himself as an ordinary man who has passed through hardships and is thus able to articulate people's grievances. This suggests that Nasrallah's charisma fits the different personality traits proposed by Eatwell (see section 3.1).

Nasrallah's charisma can also be shown to fit the culturalist approach. Nasrallah's salvation narratives are constructed around a moral argument (Houri, 2012), the components of which revolve around the values of resistance, pride, justice and liberty, i.e. the components of Hizbollah's national identity (see Chapter 1, sections 3, 4). Indeed, Nasrallah's charisma is predicated on the "manufactured fear and hatred of a purportedly evil adversary, the state of Israel, and Nasrallah's associated narrative frame of salvation" (Thiel, n.d., p. 1).[18] The above discussion, related to the different characteristics and dimensions of a charismatic personality, points to an important implication, i.e. audiences seem to be persuaded by charismatic leaders.

[17] This might explain, at least partially, how violent actions taken against Nasrallah's opponents and their supporters are accepted by Nasrallah's followers and sympathisers. Due to the fact that they take his words on trust, they tend to be less vigilant. However, this research is interested in the relation between charisma and its effects on opponent audiences' epistemic defences (see Chapter 3, section 6.3.3).

[18] Many researchers identify the evil 'Other' in Nasrallah's discourse as the Israeli enemy. However, recent studies hint at a change in the identity of Nasrallah's enemy (Høigilt, 2007; Khatib, 2014) (see Chapter 1, section 5).

It is pertinent at this stage to elaborate on the data, as these form the basis for testing the thesis hypotheses and via which I further investigate the link between charisma and the promotion of nationalist or populist identities. Thus, the following section outlines the steps for data selection.

5. Data

Nasrallah's speeches, from 2000 onwards, are all available on Hezbollah's official website: www.mediarelations-lb.org. The speeches are classified based on the occasion on which they were delivered. For example, there are speeches to commemorate 'Martyrs' Day', 'Jerusalem International Day', '2000 Liberation', 'August 2006 Victory' and the commemoration of 'Hezbollah leaders'. There are also speeches given primarily on religious occasions like Ashura. The speeches analysed in this thesis are retrieved from the sections that are labelled 'General Speeches' and 'July 2006 War Speeches'. Within these two categories, the data are further downsized to those which are delivered at times of heightened political controversy between 2006 and 2014.

More specifically, the data are collected from speeches delivered by Nasrallah as an attempt to restore the legitimacy of controversial past actions and decisions. In total, there are six speeches in which Nasrallah attempts to justify already taken political actions or decisions.[19] Four of these are selected for detailed, qualitative analysis. These four are selected because Nasrallah's speeches are relatively long. The topics of the four speeches and the word count of the original Arabic versions are presented in Table 2.1, below:

[19] The speeches are conveyed via video-conferencing to ensure interaction with the audience who gather in advance in designated areas to watch Nasrallah. Moreover, the speeches are broadcasted on all Lebanese TV channels to ensure that a wider audience receives the message.

Date	Topic of Speech/Occasion	Word Count
25/7/2006	Israeli war	1,982
7/12/2006	Protests against Siniora's government	4,904
15/5/2009	Invasion of Beirut	5,444
16/1/2011	Resignation of pro-Hizbollah ministers	6,022
		Total: 18,352

Table 2.1. Date, occasion and length of speeches analysed

The transcripts of the Arabic versions are available on Hizbollah's official website (mentioned above) and can be easily retrieved. The English versions of the speeches, with the exception of the first speech which can be downloaded from http://www.musicman.com/00pic/nasrallaha.html, are available on Hizbollah's English official website: www.english.alahednews.com.lb. However, the translations are of poor quality. This is because English, in Hizbollah's view, is the language of the imperialist enemy, i.e. the US. Therefore, I have made some changes to the original translations, such as making scrambled sentences comprehensible, adding missing verbs, nouns or phrases and so on.

I am quite aware that the critical stance I am taking in approaching Nasrallah's speeches might influence my interpretation and translation. However, I have tried to minimize this risk by providing literal translation as much as possible and consulting online newspapers that affiliate with different sides of the struggle. Consulting an archive for online newspapers provided the political context specific to each speech, and based on which the analysis is conducted. The online newspapers consulted are: *Almustaqbal* (affiliates with

the 14th of March party), *Alakhbar* (affiliates with the 8th of March party) and *Alanwar* (an independent one).

6. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have presented the main theoretical frameworks relevant to the analysis of charisma. I have discussed Weber's view of charisma, in particular, his emphasis on the divine origin of a charismatic personality. I have also discussed the culturalist view, which emphasises the presence of an 'evil' Other as a precondition for a charismatic personality to emerge. From a culturalist point of view, this evil becomes a focal point around which salvation narratives are constructed, and based on which a charismatic bond is predicated. Finally, I have discussed the social-constructivist approach proposed by Eatwell (2006a, 2006b). In light of these different perspectives on charisma, I have discussed how these can elaborate aspects of Nasrallah's charisma. The aim is to find a link that can bridge research on charisma with epistemic vigilance. This is further elaborated in the following chapter.

Chapter Three

CDS and Argumentation

1. Introduction

In this chapter, I aim to present the different theoretical conceptualizations and analytical tools that inform the framework proposed in this thesis. It begins by sketching out the main aims of adopting a critical perspective to discourse analysis. This leads me to present the different theoretical frameworks that inform my study, namely, the discourse historical approach (DHA) to CDS and pragma-dialectics. The chapter presents points of convergence as well as the contradictions between these two paradigms. Other theoretical assumptions and analytical categories sourced from Relevance theory and Epistemic vigilance are also introduced. The main aim in this chapter is to lay down the basis for a plausible integration of these different approaches to analysing discourse production and consumption. The chapter ends by highlighting the pragmatics of the speech act of accusation and its perlocutionary effects. This is important because Nasrallah's speeches are (indirect) attempts to respond to the opposition's accusations; therefore, a detailed discussion related to denial and legitimation strategies is conducted.

2. Critical discourse studies (CDS): overarching aims and concepts

Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) as a 'school' perceives language in use or discourse as a form of social action (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997). It, thus, postulates a dialectical relation between the micro-level or structure of language and the macro-social structures that shape discursive events. That is:

> Discourse is socially constitutive as well as socially conditioned – it constitutes situations, objects of knowledge, and the social identities of and relationships between people and groups of people. It is constitutive both in the sense that it helps to sustain and reproduce the status quo, and in the sense that it contributes to transforming it. (ibid. p. 258)

To account for these multifarious functions of discourse, different theoretical frameworks and analytical techniques that are oriented towards different types of data and social settings are formulated. Despite this heterogeneity, Wodak and Meyer (2016) assert that all critical approaches to discourse are problem-oriented and share an interest in deconstructing ideologies and power.[20] Discursive events are envisioned to play a role in the construction and perpetuation of a social status quo and/or in transforming and/or dismantling the existing social order (Wodak et at., 2009). These multifarious functions of discourse are realized via the ways in which political actors, actions and policies are represented and positioned, and inasmuch as this created representation is discursively legitimated and accepted as true by the intended audience (see Section 6.3.4).

Criticality means that this discursively created or mediated social reality – most often by powerful elites who exploit resources and control access to the public sphere (van Dijk, 2006b) – should be challenged and evaluated. The notion of critique in CDS draws on Literary Criticism, traditional Marxist conceptualizations (Fairclough's dialectical approach) and the Critical Theory of the Frankfurt School (Wodak's DHA), among

[20] Different typologies have been proposed to account for the heterogeneity of CDS. The first of these is presented by Wodak and Meyer (2009). However, in an attempt to compensate for the limitations of this typology, Hart and Cap (2014) and Unger (2016) present their own classifications of the different CDS approaches and their respective theoretical attractors.

others, and aims at an informed understanding of societal problems (Fairclough et al., 2011; Reisigl & Wodak, 2009).[21] Being critical entails a perspective and an attitude towards the investigated social problems (Reisigl & Wodak, 2016; van Dijk, 2009), which are manifestations of struggles for power and control (Weiss & Wodak, 2003).

The concept of critique is linked to the notions of power and ideology as they appear in almost all variants of CDS. According to Weiss and Wodak (2003, p.14), ideology is a "means of establishing and maintaining unequal power relations". CDS is interested in deconstructing the latent ideologies that permeate political discourse (Wodak & Meyer, 2009, 2016). To be critical, then, means to "unpack the ideological underpinnings of discourse that have been naturalized over time that we begin to treat them as common, accepted and natural features of discourse" (Fairclough, 1989, p. 20). Ideologies, as van Dijk (1998) states, form "the basis of specific arguments for, and explanations of, specific social arrangements, or indeed influence a specific understanding of the world in general" (p.19). It is this interest in demystifying the discursive function of latent and manifest ideologies (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001), which have become consensual or naturalised, that makes CDS an appropriate framework for examining the way Nasrallah uses Resistance, as a political ideology, to perpetuate and maintain his political power.

In the next sections, I outline the main theoretical assumptions of the DHA and pragma-dialectics, followed by giving reasons for choosing each one as an analytical tool in this study.

[21] A detailed discussion of the normative standards that form the basis of critique in the DHA is presented in Section 4.1, below.

2.1. The discourse-historical approach (DHA) to CDS

The DHA was initially developed, in 1986, to examine anti-Semitic stereotypes and prejudiced attitudes that permeated Austrian public discourse and was gradually modified to analyse structures of discrimination, control, and domination promulgated in European institutional discourse. The DHA seeks to make explicit these structural relations of power abuse, a direct manifestation of which is the discursive construction of a binary opposition between in-groups and out-groups. To this end, the DHA attempts to identify the discursive strategies and the linguistic means through which the dichotomous 'Us' vs 'Them' is realized. To demystify discriminatory practices, the DHA integrates "available knowledge about the historical sources and the background of the social and political fields in which discursive 'events' are embedded" (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001, p. 35).

The DHA adheres to a complex concept of social critique, the socio-philosophical orientation of Critical Theory (discussed below), and integrates three interrelated aspects: a) *text-immanent critique,* aims to discover inconsistencies or paradoxes in text-internal structure; b) *socio-diagnostic critique*, aims to demystify the latent persuasive or manipulative character of discursive practices; c) *prospective critique*, aims to contribute to the improvement of communication or, simply put, it is the practical or applied dimension of the DHA (|ibid., p. 32–34). In the DHA, the principle of triangulation seems a priori to account for the multifarious functions of discourse, where discourse is defined as (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009, 89):

a) A cluster of context-dependent semiotic practices that are situated within specific fields of social action;
b) Socially constituted and socially constitutive;

c) Related to a macro-topic;

d) Linked to argumentation about validity claims, such as truth and normative validity.

The topic-relatedness of discourse entails that discourse is not a closed unit but rather a fluid, dynamic, and semiotic entity that incorporates and is linked to other discourses. This topic-relatedness or *interdiscursivity* accentuates the historicity of discourses whereby temporal and spatial connections among discourses are accounted for. For example, in the speeches analysed, Nasrallah's anti-Zionist discourse incorporates elements of discourses on occupied Palestine, social justice, and national unity. From a DHA perspective, a text is a product of linguistic action, a part of discourse and assigned to a specific genre. Reisigl and Wodak (2016) define genre as a "socially conventionalized pattern of communication that fulfils a specific social purpose in a specific social context" (p. 27). Texts are either directly or indirectly linked to other texts (i.e. intertextuality) via, for example, references, allusions to a topic, event or social actor, or the transfer of an argument from one text to another. The latter is the process of *recontextualization* whereby elements of previous texts are transferred or taken out of specific contexts (de-contextualization) and inserted into a new context to serve political goals.[22]

The interconnectedness of texts, discourses and genres underscores the role of 'historicity' in the production and interpretation of discourse and provides a means to

[22] In pragma-dialectical terms, the *straw man fallacy* is an example of recontextualization, whereby someone's position is intentionally misrepresented.

explore the ways in which genres or discourses are subject to diachronic change. This complex bundle of relations would be impossible to pin down without a multi-dimensional approach to context, such as the one adopted by the DHA. According to Reisigl and Wodak (2016, p. 30–31), four levels of context are integrated to account for the mediation between discursive practices and sociopolitical structures. These are:

1) The immediate language or text internal co-text;
2) The intertextual and interdiscursive relationships between utterances, texts, genres and discourses;
3) The social variables and institutional frames of a specific 'context of situation';
4) The broader sociopolitical and historical context in which discursive practices are embedded.

This study adopts the *four-level model* of context developed by the DHA. As such, it takes into account: the historical development of Hizbollah as a Resistance movement (sociopolitical/ historical context), specific political events which gave rise to the speeches as well as related criticisms and debates (situational context), selected speeches (text-internal or co-texts) and, finally, other texts, discourses, events, arguments and counter-arguments that (might) have influenced the speeches (intertextual and interdiscursive relations). Such an in-depth analysis that takes into account situational frames and knowledge about the historical and sociopolitical background of political agents/ institutions makes it possible to identify and trace the discursive mechanisms that Nasrallah exploits to defend, justify, and promote his (and his political party's)

hegemonic practices. This is the main reason for selecting the DHA as one of the analytical tools in this study.

In the DHA, five discursive strategies are involved in the construction and perpetuation of hegemonic discourses. These strategies are: *nomination, predication, argumentation, perspectivization,* and *intensification* or *mitigation* (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001, p. 44–84). What unites these strategies and dictates their linguistic realization is the overall unifying macro-strategy of positive Self-presentation and negative Other-presentation, or what van Dijk calls the Ideological Square (van Dijk, 1998).[23] *Nomination (or referential) strategies* represent and construct social actors (in-/out-groups) via references to biological, naturalizing and/or other personal/ group characteristics. Referential strategies are enacted via, for example, depersonalising metaphors, metonymies and synecdoches. The main function of these rhetorical and linguistic means is to assign membership categorizations. *Predication strategies* assign (positive or negative) evaluations and attributions to the constructed groups, actors, events or actions. Predication strategies can be realized linguistically via, for example, stereotypes and evaluative adjectives.

Argumentation strategies encompass a fund of topoi and fallacies, the aim of which is to justify and legitimise the adoption of exclusionary actions or policies directed towards the out-group. DHA scholars (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001, p. 75–80; Wodak, 2011, p. 44) present a list of the most common topoi used in justifying discriminatory actions. Some of these

[23] Van Dijk (1998, p. 267) proposes four parameters that constitute the Ideological Square: emphasize the positive information about Us and the negative about 'Them', at the same time, de-emphasize the negative information about 'Us' and the positive information about Them. Typically, in such a polarized discourse the negative information about the behaviours, actions or policies related to the out-group are topicalized while the negative behaviours, actions, or policies of the in-group are de-topicalized (ibid.).

are: *topos of burdening*, *topos of reality*, *topos of history*, *topos of numbers*, *topos of the people*, *topos of authority*, *topos of threat* or *danger*, *topos of definition*, *topos of justice*, *topos of urgency*, *topos of advantage* or *disadvantage*, *topos of humanitarianism*, *topos of culture*, *topos of abuse*.

Perspectivization strategies (framing or discourse representation) reveal speakers' involvement and the way they position their points of view, e.g. through narrating, describing, reporting etc. Finally, *intensification* or *mitigation strategies* are strategies via which actors modify and qualify the epistemic status of a proposition. These strategies serve either to capitalize on and magnify the negative attributions and actions of an out-group or downplay and trivialize the negative actions of an in-group. These strategies can be linguistically realized through adjectives, quantifiers, modals, euphemisms, vague expressions etc. (see Chapter 4, section 2). In the following section, I elaborate on the reasons for choosing pragma-dialectics as an overarching analytical tool to examine Nasrallah's speeches.

3. Pragma-dialectics

Argumentation is a verbal activity that aims to question, justify, or defend a particular point of view.[24] At the same time, it is a social activity addressed to an audience or a second party. Moreover, argumentation is a process of reasoning whereby reasons given in support of claims convey the presumption that a rational account is conferred on the position advocated. Finally, argumentation arises, from a pragma-dialectical perspective,

[24] In a recent publication, van Eemeren et al. (2014) prefer to define argumentation as a *communicative act complex* rather than as a verbal or a linguistic act complex to account for argumentation that is conveyed by nonverbal means.

in contexts of opposition, disagreement, or doubt (as a minimum requirement to initiate argumentation) where discussants presume that their standpoints are not immediately accepted or are met with doubt; thus, they need to be supported with reasons to favour their acceptability (van Eemeren et al., 1996, p. 2–4).

In a nutshell, argumentation, from a pragma-dialectical perspective, is "a verbal, social and rational activity aimed at convincing a reasonable critic of the acceptability of a standpoint by putting forward a constellation of propositions for justifying or refuting the proposition expressed in the standpoint" (van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 2004, p. 1). Based on this view, Nasrallah's responses to accusations as a means to refute opponents' standpoints as well as his justification of past controversial actions and decisions are part of an argumentative dialogue that seeks to convince the audience of the acceptability of his standpoints.[25] Therefore, pragma-dialectics provides an appropriate framework to deconstruct Nasrallah's argumentative discourse.

Four meta-theoretical starting points represent the methodological framework of pragma-dialectics (van Eemeren et al., 2014, p. 523–527). These starting points highlight how the descriptive dimension (e.g. speech act theory) and normative insights (the ideal model of critical discussion) are integrated into pragma-dialectics. First, *the principle of functionalization* amounts to making explicit the functions of speech acts performed, i.e. the communicative function (as illocutionary acts) and the interactional function (as acts aimed at eliciting a response from the audience). This means that, in analysing

[25] In pragma-dialectics, the primary criterion for characterizing a discourse as having an argumentative function is whether it aims, directly or indirectly, to remove or overcome genuine or supposed doubts (van Eemeren et al., 2014; van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 2004).

Nasrallah's argumentation, various speech acts that communicate the standpoints, the arguments advanced and the argumentative moves involved in defending and justifying his position have to be made explicit.

Second, *the principle of socialization* means that argumentation is viewed as a dialogue between a protagonist and an antagonist (whether real or projected) who are involved in a methodological exchange (the ideal model of critical discussion) to resolve a difference of opinion, with the protagonist defending his standpoint against (real or projected) criticisms, doubts or objections raised by an antagonist. The principle of socialization is pertinent to this research as it allows Nasrallah's speeches to be contextualised as a dialogic exchange through which he attempts to respond to criticisms and accusations raised by his opponents. Based on the roles that participants in a dialogic exchange play (protagonist vs antagonist), and from what they express in their discourse, it is then possible to identify the commitments of each party for which they can be held accountable, i.e. *the principle of externalization*.

Finally, *the principle of dialectification* points to the normative standards that govern the critical testing of standpoints. In pragma-dialectics, a non-fallacious argumentative exchange has to follow the dialectical procedures and rules stipulated by the ideal model of critical discussion, whereby standards of reasonableness are observed to ensure a reasonable exchange of speech acts that will eventually lead to a resolution of the disagreement.[26] In actual argumentative practice, however, discussants often deviate from

[26] From a pragma-dialectical perspective, the ideal model of critical discussion is not an unattainable ideal or utopia (van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 2004). On the contrary, various qualitative (e.g. van Eemeren et al.'s (2007) research on the clues that arguers use to indicate the functions of the various moves they make) and quantitative research has examined the extent to which the norms of the ideal model correspond to argumentative reality. In an empirical study carried out by van Eemeren, Garssen and Meuffels (2009), the

these normative standards. A critical approach to analysing argumentation involves identifying such sites of deviation or 'unreasonableness'. The principle of dialectification is, therefore, fundamental to this study, as the dialectical norms stipulated by the ideal model of critical discussion (stages and rules) form the basis for reconstructing, analysing, and evaluating Nasrallah's argumentation.

3.1. The ideal model of critical discussion

The ideal model of critical discussion specifies the different stages that arguers have to pass through and the ensuing dialectical obligations of the parties involved in the argumentative exchange to arrive at the resolution of a difference of opinion.[27] Moreover, the model identifies the different speech acts constituting the argumentative moves specific to each of the four stages outlined below and the rules that have to be observed to check whether the standpoints are indeed tenable vis-à-vis criticism or doubt.

The ideal model of critical discussion comprises the following four stages. In the confrontation stage, the difference of opinion or standpoints to be defended or refuted (realized, for example, by assertives) and the respective criticisms or doubts are externalized (communicated through, for example, commissives). In the opening stage, the material (e.g. eliciting concessions) and procedural (distribution of roles, protagonist vs antagonist) starting points relevant to the initiation of the discussion are established. In

aim was to show the extent to which ordinary arguers judge the reasonableness or fallaciousness of moves to be in accordance with the norms stipulated by the rules of the ideal model. The results of these experiments indicate that the dialectical norms of the ideal model are intersubjectively valid among language users.

[27] From a pragma-dialectical perspective, resolution means that agreement has been reached regarding the acceptability of the standpoint, i.e. either the antagonist has been convinced of or the protagonist has withdrawn the standpoint as it failed to withstand the other party's criticisms.

the argumentation stage, arguments in support of standpoints are advanced and tested. Finally, in the concluding stage, the outcome of the discussion is formulated. This means that either the antagonist retracts his criticism, or the protagonist withdraws her standpoints as they fail to withstand the critical responses put forward by the antagonist.

Thus, the ideal model of critical discussion serves as a heuristic and analytic tool based on which an argumentative activity is reconstructed, analysed, and evaluated. As an evaluative tool, the model of critical discussion provides a platform against which reasons given in support of claims can be assessed as reasonable or fallacious. Assessment is the result of checking the extent to which argumentative moves and arguments adduced conform with the rules of critical discussion. The ideal model of critical discussion encompasses ten rules that form a *code of conduct* (van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 2004, p. 135–157), whereby arguers' adherence to these rules leads to a reasonable resolution of a disagreement. The ten rules of the code of conduct are:

- Rule 1 (Freedom Rule): Discussants may not prevent each other from advancing standpoints or from calling standpoints into question.
- Rule 2 (Obligation to Defend Rule): Discussants who advance a standpoint may not refuse to defend this standpoint when requested to do so.
- Rule 3 (Standpoint Rule): Attacks on standpoints may not bear on a standpoint that has not actually been put forward by the other party.
- Rule 4 (Relevance Rule): Standpoints may not be defended by non-argumentation or argumentation that is not relevant to the standpoint.
- Rule 5 (Unexpressed Premise Rule): Discussants may not falsely attribute unexpressed premises to the other party, nor disown responsibility for their own unexpressed premises.

- Rule 6 (Starting Point Rule): Discussants may not falsely present something as an accepted starting point or falsely deny that something is an accepted starting point.
- Rule 7 (Validity Rule): Reasoning that is in an argumentation explicitly and fully expressed may not be invalid in a logical sense.
- Rule 8 (Argument Scheme Rule): Standpoints defended by argumentation that is not explicitly and fully expressed may not be regarded as conclusively defended by such argumentation unless the defence takes place by means of appropriate argument schemes that are applied correctly.
- Rule 9 (Concluding Rule): Inconclusive defences of standpoints may not lead to maintaining these standpoints and conclusive defences of standpoints may not lead to maintaining expressions of doubt concerning these standpoints.
- Rule 10 (Language Use Rule): Discussants may not use any formulations that are insufficiently clear or confusingly ambiguous, and they may not deliberately misinterpret the other party's formulations. (van Eemeren et al., 2014, p. 542–544)

The ideal model of critical discussion will form the descriptive and normative framework for the reconstruction, analysis, and evaluation of Nasrallah's argumentative discourse. Based on this model, in some cases, Nasrallah's argumentative moves can be judged as reasonable if they adhere to the rules of critical discussion and, thus, allow the critical testing of standpoints. In other instances, Nasrallah's moves may hinder the critical testing of standpoints, e.g. by silencing opponents through casting doubt on their expertise or threatening them (ad hominem and ad baculum, respectively). These moves are said to be *fallacious* because they represent a violation of the first rule of the ideal model of critical discussion – the Freedom Rule; hence, they obstruct the critical testing of standpoints.[28] During an argumentative exchange, as van Eemeren and Houtlosser

[28] A list of the different fallacies that violate the ten rules of critical discussion is provided in Appendix A

(2000) elucidate, participants are committed to simultaneously achieving dialectical (reasonable) aims by complying with the rules of critical discussion to resolve disagreements and rhetorical aims, i.e. to have their standpoints accepted, and the perlocutionary effects of their speech acts serve their own strategic interests. To balance the attainment of both goals is an instance of *strategic manoeuvring*.

3.2. Winning an argument through strategic manoeuvring

Parties involved in an argumentative exchange will attempt "to exploit the opportunities afforded by the dialectical situation" in order to steer the discussion rhetorically to their advantage (van Eemeren & Houtlosser 1999, p. 482). Conceived in this manner, strategic manoeuvring serves as a mechanism for balancing the attainment of rhetorical aims against the backdrop of complying with the standards of reasonableness.[29] Van Eemeren and Houtlosser (2003) maintain that the simultaneous pursuit of both aims creates tension. Therefore, strategic manoeuvring is a reconciliatory mechanism "directed at diminishing the potential tension between pursuing at the same time a dialectical as well as a rhetorical aim" (p. 392).

Each discussion stage has both a dialectical aim and a rhetorical counterpart. For example, in the confrontation stage, the dialectical aim is to formulate a reasonable definition of the difference of opinion. Once formulated, this opens up a set of possibilities related to presenting the confrontation in the most effective way, i.e. a rhetorical aim (van Eemeren, 2013). While dialectical aims are grounded in the normative

[29] Pragma-dialecticians prefer the term effectiveness rather than persuasiveness, because the latter only pertains to the rhetorical effectiveness of argumentative moves advanced in the argumentation stage, while the former encompasses the rhetorical effect of all the stages of critical discussion (van Eemeren, 2013).

standards (rules) of critical discussion, rhetorical aims are realized by making expedient choices concerning the three aspects of strategic manoeuvring: *topical potential*, *adaptation to audience*, and *presentational devices*. As such, the analysis of strategic manoeuvring reveals how the opportunities available at a certain dialectical stage are exploited to favour the protagonists' interests (van Eemeren & Houtlosser, 1999).

Topical potential represents the repertoire of options (*topoi* or *loci*) that are available at a certain discussion stage and which form the basis for selecting moves (van Eemeren, 2010).[30] Topical potential reflects the perspective, angle, or viewpoint that the arguer takes regarding the content of her discourse (ibid.). In the confrontation stage, topical potential amounts to making the most effective choices among the potential issues for discussion, i.e. exploiting and restricting the 'disagreement space' (ibid.). This means that the confrontation is defined in terms of the arguer's preferences which are attained, for example, by choosing a topic that she finds it easier to handle or by evading the burden of giving an explicit definition of the disagreement.

In the opening stage, the arguer aims to create a broad 'zone of agreement' that represents the most advantageous material and procedural starting points for the discussion. To this end, the arguer aims to elicit helpful concessions or to secure agreement through reference to implicitly assumed endoxa.[31] In the argumentation stage, the arguer selects the appropriate argument schemes (causal, symptomatic, comparison schemes) that best suit her line of defence or attack. Finally, in the concluding stage, topical potential

[30] A more detailed discussion of the relation between topoi, loci and topical potential is presented in Section 4.2, below.
[31] Endoxa are commonly held views, beliefs and values that are culture-specific (van Eemeren, 2010).

amounts to determining the 'scope of conclusiveness' related to the outcome of the discussion by showing, for example, the implications of the positive consequences of accepting her line of argument, or capitalising on it (van Eemeren, 2010, Ch. 4).

The second aspect of strategic manoeuvring is adapting the arguer's moves to meet audience preferences and frames of reference. Adaptation to the audience requires that moves connect with the views and perspectives that are most agreeable to the audience, so that these moves attain the widest agreement. In the confrontation stage, the arguer aims to avoid mentioning contradictions or to limit disagreement to a non-mixed difference in order to secure communion.[32] One strategy is to present conflict over values as being conflict over facts, because facts are easier to handle. In the opening stage, adaptation to the audience entails referring to widely-shared values and value hierarchies that pertain to the respective audience. The objective is to establish material and procedural starting points that the audience is willing to accept or to appeal to those that are already part of the audience's value systems and beliefs, i.e. exploiting endoxa. Reference to shared background knowledge and values, as well as adopting the other party's arguments (*conciliatio*) to support one's position, creates empathy with the audience since the stated premises are already part of the audience's or the other party's commitments and hence need no justification. Similarly, in the argumentation stage, the arguer may refer to arguments that conform with the audience's interests or appeal to sources that the audience respect and trust. In the conclusion stage, the arguer may

[32] A non-mixed difference of opinion is an argumentative confrontation in which one party advances a standpoint and the same party has the obligation to defend it. In contrast, in a mixed difference of opinion, two parties advance contradictory standpoints and both have the obligation to defend their standpoints (van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 1992).

emphasize the joint responsibility of accepting her standpoints and/or avoid mentioning consequences that the audience do not favour (van Eemeren, 2010, Ch. 4).

For optimal rhetorical effect, arguments that are reframed to meet audience preferences must be presented in such a way as to induce acceptance. This involves exploiting a range of presentational devices. Presentational devices, such as rhetorical questions, metonymies and metaphors, serve "the purpose of framing the argumentative move that is made in such a way that it introduces a particular perspective" (ibid., p.126). The three aspects of strategic manoeuvring are realized in every stage of critical discussion, where the outcome of maintaining a balance between dialectical and rhetorical (effectiveness) aims leads to winning the discussion in a reasonable way.

However, in certain instances of actual argumentative practice, this tension is not resolved and the rhetorical aim is achieved at the expense of abiding by the rules of critical discussion. In such cases, as van Eemeren and Houtlosser (2003) state, the "commitment to the critical ideal may be neglected due to assiduity to win the other party over to one's own side" (p. 394). Due to this imbalance, strategic manoeuvring can derail when an argumentative move is characterised as *fallacious*.

3.3. A pragma-dialectical view of fallacies

In pragma-dialectics, fallacies are derailments of strategic manoeuvring because they not only constitute violations of the ten rules of critical discussion, but they also indicate discussants' failure to balance the attainment of rhetorical effectiveness with that of reasonableness, with the balance tipping towards the former. Based on this view, the evaluation of Nasrallah's responses to accusations and criticisms can be considered

reasonable if his choice, for example, in selecting a favourable definition of a difference of opinion, in the confrontation stage, does not hinder critical testing; otherwise, it is a fallacious move. In other words, Nasrallah needs to convince the audience of the untenability of his opponents' standpoints without forcing the acceptability of his arguments through, for example, silencing or threatening opponents (i.e. obstruct critical testing).

However, strategic manoeuvring, as van Eemeren and Houtlosser (2003) observe, takes place in multifarious communicative practices that have become, more or less, formally conventionalized. In their view, many communicative practices, such as the legal domain, are formally conventionalized. Communicative practices in the political domain, however, are less likely to be so formalized. C*ommunicative activity types* are "conventionalized communicative practices whose conventionalization serves to meet the institutional exigencies of the communicative domain in response to which they have developed" (van Eemeren et al., 2014, p. 557). It is through the implementation of the appropriate genre of a communicative activity (e.g. the genre of deliberation is related to the political domain) that a communicative activity type, such as Prime Minister's question time, can realize its 'institutional point' (van Eemeren, 2013). The different communicative activity types related to the political domain share the institutional objective of preserving democracy through deliberation (van Eemeren, 2013).[33] The effect of institutional macro-contexts lies in creating preconditions and imposing constraints on arguers' strategic manoeuvring. This means that the rules and conventions

[33] Pragma-dialecticians adopt a Habermasian view to deliberation in which formal and informal contexts, such as ordinary citizens' discussions, are important for rational democratic politics (van Eemeren et al., 2014).

of an argumentative activity type constrain arguers' choice of topics, adaptation to audience, and presentational devices. At the same time, institutional constraints help the analyst to have a better account of the resources that arguers can exploit at a given point in discourse.[34] van Eemeren and his co-authors (2014) note that in cases where the argumentative characteristics of a particular speech event are the main focus of the analysis, then, institutional constraints on arguers' manoeuvring are excluded from the analysis.

This is the view that I adopt in this thesis. Consequently, the analysis of Nasrallah's speeches will not take into consideration the institutional constraints imposed by the macro-context on the way he strategically manoeuvres.[35] In the following section, I outline points of interest that pragma-dialectics and the DHA share.

4. Pragma-dialectics and the DHA: Commonalities and shared vision

Ihnen and Richardson (2011) posit that the DHA and pragma-dialectics converge in their interest in argumentative discourse, not only in the critical view of political discourse they each take, but also on pragmatic and evaluative levels. In addition to the emphasis that both approaches put on context and the conceptualization of discourse as a goal-oriented activity, I believe that problem- solution and practical applications are further aspects of the pragmatic orientation of both approaches. As for the context, both approaches link the meaning of an utterance to various levels of context. In the DHA, texts are analysed in

[34] Recently, three studies have examined the effect of institutional constraints on arguers' strategic maneuvering in specific macro-contexts (Andone, 2010; Lewinski, 2010; Mohammed 2009). In these studies, the analyses focus on arguers' choices in terms of being either suitable/permissible or inappropriate in light of the rules and conventions of the argumentative activity type under scrutiny.

[35] This is also because the analysed speeches belong to a variety of political (sub)genres, such as commemorative speeches, election speeches, war speeches and so on.

relation to four levels of context (see Section 2.1): immediate co-text, intertextual and interdiscursive relations, social variables and institutional frames and, finally, the broader sociopolitical and historical context. A pragma-dialectical analysis of discourse also relates the meaning of argumentative moves to the linguistic micro-context, the situational meso-context, the institutional macro-context and the intertextual context in which these moves are made (van Eemeren, 2010, p. 16-19). Moreover, both approaches acknowledge the strategic functions of language, i.e. language as a goal-oriented activity. Speakers are, thus, expected to mobilise linguistic and non-linguistic resources in order to get their messages accepted and achieve political goals. In pragma-dialectics, unreasonable persuasion occurs when the pursuit of dialectical aims is overridden by rhetorical aims. Resultant fallacies, seen as obstructions to the resolution of a difference of opinion, lead to a "false resolution" (van Eemeren et al., 1993, p.14). From a DHA perspective, discursive strategies are analytical categories that help the analyst to identify the ideological dimensions of strategic discourse. More importantly, these strategies are vehicles for persuasion. That is, they are exploited by speakers in persuading audiences of a standpoint, policy, or action (e.g. immigration should be reduced).

A primary aim on the DHA's critical agenda is highlighting the social effects of discursively perpetuating hegemonic ideologies. To this end, the DHA examines texts that contribute to the creation of specific social problems. The DHA focuses on examining discursive forms of representations that are partly or directly responsible for the creation of discriminatory and prejudicial attitudes towards minorities. Crucial to the DHA is its commitment to emancipation and empowering those who are oppressed and marginalized. By siding with those who are suffering and making explicit the discursive

means by which they are subdued, the DHA, thus, contributes to the transformation of existing social structures that have given rise to undesired social inequalities (Wodak, 2001). Similarly, Van Eemeren et al. (1993) assert that practical research in argumentation aims to "empower ordinary discussants to engage in argumentation that more closely approximates ideal standards" (p.24), as a means to foster and enhance (deliberative) democratic practices. Therefore, arguers can, in principle, select argumentative moves that are persuasive and reasonable at the same time.

According to pragma-dialecticians, the normative reconstruction of argumentative discourse is not an end in itself. In other words, proposing a normative and a procedural model – the ideal model of critical discussion – based on which an argumentative behaviour is assessed, is not the end result of pragma-dialectical analysis. Pragma-dialectics has a practical agenda that is directly associated with the normative standards of the ideal model, namely, improving argumentative practice (ibid.). From a pragma-dialectical perspective, improving argumentative practice can be achieved on both individual and social levels. Improving individual competencies can be attained through the "development of a discussion-minded attitude" (van Eemeren et al., 1993 p.25), whereas at the social level, this can take the form of examining and evaluating institutional or social structures that "can constrain an argumentative practice for good or ill" (ibid.).

A more pronounced commitment to the "improvement of communication within public institutions" (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001, p. 34) is voiced by the DHA founders. Wodak (2001) calls for the application of results to communication problems in schools and hospitals, in setting guidelines for avoiding sexist, discriminatory and prejudiced

language behaviour, e.g. in writing schoolbooks (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001). In this respect, pragma-dialectics' commitment to improving a discussion-minded attitude echoes the DHA's goal of raising critical language awareness. That is, being aware of unreasonable arguments empowers the public to apply greater scrutiny to discourses to which they are exposed. It might be safe to conclude that improving communication and empowering citizens to be more involved in the discursive public sphere are shared interests of the two approaches.

The DHA and pragma-dialectics share a further interest in evaluating or critiquing argumentative discourse. In pragma-dialectics, the reconstruction and evaluation of the reasonableness, or fallaciousness, of argumentative moves are carried out in accordance with the stages and rules specified by the ideal model of critical discussion, which also form the basis for normative critique. Following pragma-dialectics, argumentative strategies (topoi and fallacies) in the DHA are also evaluated in terms of the ten rules of rational arguing, since these, as Reisigl and Wodak state, "form the basis of a discourse ethics on which a political model of discursive, deliberative democracy can be grounded" (2001, p. 71). However, from the DHA's perspective, the evaluation of whether an argument scheme/ topos is reasonable or fallacious is not overtly related to specifying violations of the ten rules of critical discussion. This is because the DHA is primarily interested in evaluating the extent to which a specific representation justifies and legitimizes domination, repression, marginalization etc., instead of focusing on specifying violations of rational means of arguing.

Forchtner and Tominc (2011) claim that the DHA's use of pragma-dialectics as a point of reference for its normative critique is the main point of divergence, which results in

contradictory positions. In Forchtner and Tominc's view, in pragma-dialectics, a discriminatory practice or policy is justified if it is supported by reasonable arguments (ibid.). This does not fit with the DHA's emancipatory agenda, which, in addition to the ideal model of critical discussion, adopts a Habermasian view to critique (ibid.). In my view, the alleged contradiction at the level of evaluation might, in principle, be valid. However, argumentative reality provides evidence that attests to the contrary. Critical studies of discriminatory discourse have, more often than not, revealed the fallaciousness of the arguments deployed in the justification of preferential treatment of minorities.

This suggests that a deeper understanding of the normative and epistemological positions of both approaches could build a bridge between them. Therefore, in the following section, I elaborate on the theoretical conceptualizations specific to each approach.

4.1. Epistemological and normative positions

The DHA subscribes to the socio-philosophical orientation of the Frankfurt school and to Habermas's conception of deliberative democracy (Reisigl, 2014; Reisigl & Wodak, 2001, 2009), whereas pragma-dialectics subscribes to Popper's critical rationalism (van Eemeren et al., 1993; van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 2004). From a critical rationalist point of view, knowledge and the approximation of objective truth can be reached through methodological scepticism, i.e. through critical examination, testing or falsification. Therefore, a rational approach based on procedural testing and the elimination of mistakes will eventually improve knowledge and approximate truth. This entails the continuous testing of hypotheses through critical discussion or debate. Based on this view, the dialectical nature of pragma-dialectics calls for the resolution of

contested issues through the "methodological exchange of discussion moves" (van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 2004, p. 22), i.e. the procedures formulated for the critical testing of standpoints. It is through following the ideal model of critical discussion that points of view are critically tested, and based on this, a conclusion as to whether these are "defendable in light of critical doubt and objections" is reached (ibid., p. 52). Therefore, a good argument, from a pragma-dialectical perspective, is one that withstands critical testing.

Forchtner and Tominc's (2012) contention relates to the integration of critical rationalism, the main theoretical tenet of pragma-dialectics, into the DHA's theoretical framework. In their view, this integration leads to inconsistencies not only on the epistemological level but also in the normative grounds informing the DHA's critique. According to Forchtner and Tominc, Popper's justification of a rational attitude through which knowledge is advanced relies, epistemologically, on "a subjective choice based on an irrational *faith in reason*, a subjective preference" (p. 34). This contrasts with Habermas' Discourse Ethics, which is grounded on rational consensus attained through moral argumentation.

To redeem or ground validity claims, according to Habermas (1990), means to be engaged in an argumentative exchange with the aim of reaching rationally motivated agreement. This communicative activity takes place against the backdrop of the counterfactual presuppositions that form the Ideal Speech Situation: inclusivity, absence of external constraints, freedom to agree or disagree and truthfulness (ibid.). It is a form of communication that "rules out all external or internal coercion other than the force of the better argument and thereby also neutralizes all motives other than that of the

cooperative search for truth" (ibid., p. 89). According to Forchtner and Tominc (2012), this speech situation should not be considered an unrealizable ideal but rather the "counterfactually anticipated presupposition of every meaningful debate" (p.36). The importance of arriving at rational consensus by all those affected is because it sets out a platform for opening up the public sphere and promotes dialogue which, according to Habermas, forms the essence of deliberative democracy.

Based on this view, Forchtner and Tominc (2012) suggest that overtly relating critique to Habermas' deliberative democracy rather than to pragma-dialectics' critical rationalist view would provide the DHA with a stronger basis for its emancipatory agenda. To reach rational consensus grounded in Habermas' Discourse Ethics means that the discussion should not be restricted only to those who are involved in the act of arguing (protagonist vs antagonist). Rational consensus is attained when the views of all those who are affected by the consequences of normative claims (e.g. we ought to do X) are taken into consideration, i.e. orientation to difference. This is the main criticism levelled at pragma-dialectics, where the act of arguing is limited to the standpoints advanced by the protagonist and the objections raised by the antagonist, without acknowledging the views of other parties that might be affected by resolution of the disagreement (ibid.).

Reisigl (2014) has recently asserted that while the ten rules of critical discussion are good normative standards, they are not sufficient to ground the DHA's critique. In relation to the epistemological divergence – between critical rationalism and Habermas' deliberative democracy – Reisigl emphasizes that the ten rules of critical discussion are not that far removed from Habermas' Ideal Speech Situation. In fact, Reisigl (ibid.) expounds that some rules of the ideal model of critical discussion implicitly refer to Habermas'

Discourse Ethics and can, thus, be taken to promote rational consensus. For example, the first rule of critical discussion, which refers to the freedom of arguers to put forward arguments and cast doubts, could be expanded, as Reisigl suggests (ibid.), to include the freedom of non-present third parties who may either advance or question standpoints. What is important here is an acknowledgment, coming from one of the founders of the DHA, that the normative standards of the ideal model of critical discussion are good normative standards to assess the persuasive or manipulative character of argumentative discourse.

This does not mean that the analysis of Nasrallah's speeches will not examine how Nasrallah attempts to ignore and silence alternative discourses or weaken his opponents' positions. In fact, the analysis remains faithful to one of the main objectives of the DHA's project, i.e. demystifying ideologies that have become naturalised or consensual (see Section 2). Therefore, the analysis examines how Nasrallah trivialises and/or silences opponents' propositions (e.g. through negative Other-presentation) to sustain his hegemony. Indeed, silencing alternatives and reducing social reality to a limited range of cause-effect relations and solutions are characteristic of hegemonic discourses.

The above discussion shows that the DHA and pragma-dialectics are epistemologically and normatively more closely connected – though often implicitly – than is sometimes supposed. The notion of topoi is another point of convergence, although in each approach they are related to different domains of enquiry. Therefore, the following section briefly outlines the notion of topoi and various understandings of them.

4.2. The concept of topoi

It is worth noting that the concept of topoi is a controversial topic, where consensus among argumentation and rhetoric scholars, from antiquity onwards, as to the nature of the concept seems to be beyond reach. This is clearly reflected in a remark by Leff (2006) who, after spending 40 years examining rhetorical and dialectical traditions, concluded that topoi are ambiguous and multi-faceted. Leff attributes this ambiguity to the many referents that topoi are associated with. In his view, topoi are taken to refer to: modes of inference, aspects of the subject, attitudes of the audience or types of issues or topics, among others. He further explicates that this complication stems from adopting either a rhetorical (arguments on specific topics for a specific audience) or a dialectical (abstract argument schemes or context-independent patterns) perspective to the study of topoi. From a DHA perspective, topoi are "parts of argumentation which belong to the required premises. They are the formal or content-related warrants or 'conclusion rules' which connect the argument with the conclusion, the claim" (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009, p. 110). Wodak et al. (2009) reiterate that they consider "topoi' or 'loci' to be highly conventionalised parts of argumentation which belong to the obligatory elements of argumentation and take the form either of explicit or inferable premises" (p. 34–35).

According to Zagar (2009, 2010), the DHA's characterisation of topoi as both formal and content-related warrants is problematic, as it treats formal rules/ topoi as identical to content-related rules/ warrants. Therefore, he proposes that the DHA should restrict the use of the term topoi to formal schemes (rules) of argumentation. He further notes that the DHA's definition of topoi presupposes that topoi are ready-made arguments that are

widely used, and that the role of the analyst is limited to identifying the arguments of a given text against the backdrop of clearly delineated lists of topoi (Zagar, 2010).

This alleged inconsistency stems from Kienpointner's conceptualization of topoi, which is, in Zagar's view, a hybrid product influenced by Toulmin's (1969) work. In Kienpointner's opinion, "topoi are search formulas which tell you how and where to look for arguments. At the same time, topoi are warrants which guarantee the transition from argument to conclusion" (1997, p. 226). According to Kienpointner (2001), topoi have a selective function (to search for arguments) and a probative function (as an inferential rule or warrant). Zagar (2009, 2010) argues that Kienpointner's view of topoi does not conform with that of Aristotle. This is because an Aristotelian view of topoi entails topoi being of two kinds: (i) context-independent or abstract/ common topoi that can be applied to an unlimited number of arguments (dialectical topoi); (ii) and more specific topoi (rhetorical topoi) that are related to three genres of rhetoric (see Chapter 2, section 2.1): judicial, deliberative, and epideictic (Boukala, 2016; Rubinelli, 2009; Zagar, 2009, 2010).

Rubinelli observes that Aristotle, in *The Topics*, considers topoi to be "argument schemes of universal acceptability" (2009, p. 145). In this view, Aristotelian topoi are "general instructions allowing a conclusion of a certain form (not content), to be derived from premises of a certain form (not content)" (Zagar, 2009, p. 57). Similarly, Stump (1978) notes that Aristotle's topos has to be seen, primarily, as an abstract argument that allows the construction of a number of specific arguments and, secondarily, as a rule or a principle that supports a variety of arguments (van Eemeren, 2010). Zagar (2010) claims that an Aristotelian topos, seen as a general or abstract scheme, enables the arguer to construct an argument for a certain conclusion. This process is possible, Zagar (ibid.)

suggests, because a topos consists of an instruction based on which a rule is formulated. This means that the instruction guides the arguer to frame the argument based on the relation (e.g. definition, genus, property, accident) that exists between the subject and the predicate of a proposition, from which a rule is formulated that functions as a general premise in an *enthymeme* (Zagar, 2009).[36]

Using one of Zagar's examples, *the topos of opposition* is first used as a general or an abstract formula that has the following structure: If action Y is desirable in relation to object X, then, the contrary action Y´ should be disapproved of in relation to the same object X (i.e. instruction function). The application of this topos to a specific subject provides the rule that serves as a general premise in an enthymeme: If it is desirable to act in favour of one's friends, it should be disapproved of to act against one's friends (2010, p. 17–18). As such, a topos, in Zagar's view, is a "general argumentative form or pattern, and concrete arguments are instantiations of this general form" (ibid., p. 17). Following Zagar's suggestion, Boukala (2016) shows how particular content-related warrants that are identified in the DHA lists of topoi are better accounted for based on Aristotle's view of topoi. For example, Boukala elucidates that *the topos of threat* (a recurring topos in most of the DHA lists) and the more specific *topos of internal threat* are instantiations or applications of Aristotle's abstract scheme, the *topos of the consequential*.

In my view, Zagar's criticisms of the DHA's notion of topoi, as well as his suggestions, have clear implications for recent work by the DHA's founders. This can be seen in the attention that DHA's scholars have recently given to argument reconstruction, although

[36] An enthymeme is a syllogism (a deductive argument formed of a major and a minor premise, as well as a conclusion) in which one of its premises or the conclusion is omitted.

such reconstruction is limited to specific argument schemes (Reisigl & Wodak, 2016, p. 50–53; Wodak, 2015, p. 52). More important is the recent distinction between topoi that are labelled as formal schemes (e.g. *topos of opposites*, *topos of definition*, *topos of the consequential* etc.) and those that are labelled as content-related (e.g. *topos of people*, *topos of reality*, *topos of nature* etc.) (Reisigl & Wodak, 2016, p. 35; Wodak, 2015, p. 51–53).[37]

The discussion so far has focused on the Aristotelian conception of topoi; however, the DHA also relates topoi to Cicero's loci. According to Rubinelli (2009), Cicero, in *De Inventione*, is interested in specifying the steps that orators have to follow in order to construct a persuasive speech. These parts are the: *exordium* (the introduction, which announces the subject and the purpose of the discourse); *narrative* (an account of what has happened or what is the case); *partition* (a presentation of the issues that will be discussed); *confirmation* (putting forward arguments in support of a claim); refutation (answering the counterarguments of opponents); and finally, *peroration* (conclusion). Moreover, in De Inventione, as Rubinelli notes, Cicero uses the term 'locus' to refer to different things: topic or theme, subject-matter indicator, argument scheme (or warrant) and ready-made arguments known as *locus communis* (2009, p. 101–107).

[37] From a different perspective, Charteris-Black (2014, p. 135–136) considers the DHA's formal topoi to be equivalent to Toulmin's treatment of warrants, while the more specific content-related topoi pertain to the content of an argument. In his view, formal abstract formulations or warrants allow arguments to be evaluated based on their underlying structure, while content-related topoi are descriptive and do not identify logical structures. It seems that his treatment of the DHA's content-related topoi echoes Zagar's (2009; 2010) criticism, i.e. the DHA's content-related topoi are simply themes or topics, thus, they do not have an argumentative function. In Charteris-Black's view, the *topos of finance*, the *topos of uselessness* and the *topos of burden* provide the contents of arguments; however, the aggregate of these cause-effect relations leads to the identification of a formal warrant, i.e. the warrant of causality, which serves as an inferential rule.

Rubinelli argues that Cicero's *locus communis* should not be equated with Aristotle's topoi, for the latter has universal applicability while the former is mainly effective in judicial, deliberative and epideictic contexts. Rubinelli maintains that *locus communis* does not have an argumentative function as it does not add information. Instead, it is "used to put the audience in a favourable frame of mind by presenting evaluations and interpretations of the facts at issue" (ibid., p. 107). Similarly, van Eemeren (2010) maintains that Cicero's loci do not always have an argumentative function as they are used to identify the contents of different parts of a persuasive speech (mentioned above).

In pragma-dialectics, the three aspects of strategic manoeuvring (see Section 3.2) are the counterparts of three concepts in classical rhetoric: topical selection relates to topoi or loci, adaptation to audience relates to the notion of endoxa, and presentational means refer to stylistic devices. Topical potential or system, according to van Eemeren et al. (2009), refers to the range of topical choices that are available at a given point in discourse where its function is "similar to that of the *topoi* or *loci* in the classical rhetoric of *inventio*" (van Eemeren, 2010, p. 96). Following Cicero's classification of parts of a speech and his concept of loci, van Eemeren asserts that topoi or loci are not limited to the argumentation stage because there are:[38]

> Topoi pertaining specifically to the exordium (e.g. to underline the importance of the subject of the speech), the narratio (e.g. to establish a certain perception of the

[38] Cicero identifies five tasks which an orator has to fulfil in preparing a speech (*officia oratoris*). These are: invention (*inventio*), arrangement (*dispositio*), style (*elocution*), memory (*memoria*) and delivery (*pronuntiatio)* (Reynolds,1993). The different parts of a persuasive speech mentioned in van Eemeren's quote constitute the invention (*inventio*) task.

> course of events), and the peroratio (e.g. to incite pity with the accused in the jury of a law case), so too in argumentative discourse there are specific topical options to choose from for every single stage of the process of resolving a difference of opinion on the merits. (2010, p. 98)

Based on this view, van Eemeren concludes that the scope of the rhetorical topical system in pragma-dialectics is "by no means limited to the *argumentatio* [argumentation] but covers also other parts of the *oratio* [oration] that have different aims, such as the *exordium* [introduction] and (especially) the *peroration* [conclusion]" (ibid., p. 107). Boukala (2016) claims that the DHA's inconsistent treatment of topoi stems, on the one hand, from the DHA's identification of topoi as warrants, and in considering Aristotle's topoi as equivalent to Cicero's loci, on the other. Consequently, she proposes that the DHA's characterization of topoi has to be confined to Aristotle's view of topoi, thus suggesting, erroneously, that pragma-dialectics only follows the Aristotelian tradition.

The aim of this thesis is certainly not to get involved in this highly controversial issue. However, the various points of view surveyed above have specific implications for my treatment of topoi in this research. First, since pragma-dialectics is taken as the main analytical framework for the reconstruction and evaluation of Nasrallah's speeches, it is, thus, reasonable to align with pragma-dialectics' notion of topical potential, which comprises Aristotelian and Ciceronian conceptualizations of topoi, among others. Second, where the DHA provides the other overarching analytical approach, I propose that the DHA's topoi that have clear counterparts in pragma-dialectics, or those that can be shown to fall under Aristotle's abstract schemes, should be identified as such. For example, what the DHA identifies as the *topos of people* (Wodak, 2015) – if it has an argumentative

function, it can be reconstructed as an argument – can be regarded as an instance of *argumentum ad populum*. Similarly, following Zagar's and Boukala's suggestions, the DHA's *topos of threat* or *topos of danger* are instantiations of Aristotle's abstract scheme of the consequential (Boukala, 2016), or causal argumentation in pragma-dialectical terms. I also suggest that the DHA's *topos of illustrative example(s)* echoes the argument scheme from example (van Eemeren et al., 2002), which falls under symptomatic argumentation in pragma-dialectics.[39]

Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) in their proposed model for integrating argumentation theory and CDS choose not to work with the concept of topoi, despite favouring an Aristotelian treatment of the concept. In the following section, I will summarise the main theoretical assumptions of Fairclough and Fairclough's practical argument model and mention reasons for the inefficacy of their model for the purposes of this research.

5. The practical argument approach

Fairclough and Fairclough (2011, 2012) advocate an analytical framework for the analysis of argumentative discourse, which represents a shift from CDS's prime focus on the analysis of representation to the analysis of political action and decision-making. In their view, political discourse is fundamentally argumentative in nature and primarily involves "*practical* argumentation, argumentation for or against particular ways of acting, argumentation that can ground decision" (2012, p. 1). To reach a decision on 'what ought

[39] Three main categories of argument schemes are distinguished in pragma-dialectics. These are: symptomatic (or of the token type) argumentation, comparison (or of the similarity type) argumentation and, finally, causal (or of the consequence type) argumentation (van Eemeren et al., 2014, p. 547–548). All the argument sub-types identified in the argumentation literature, according to pragma-dialecticians, belong to one of these three generic forms.

to be done' (a normative claim), political agents present reasons for or against following a specific course of action, as well as for considering alternatives (ibid.). In so doing, they are involved in practical argumentation, the main objective of which is to propose solutions capable of transforming the current political or economic malaise into an imagined future state of affairs (ibid.).

A practical argument scheme is made up of the following premises: a circumstantial premise, which presents the problem or the current context of action; a goal premise, which articulates a future state of affairs; a means-goal premise, which articulates a proposed action that will presumably lead to the goals aspired to; and a value premise, which invokes the values, concerns or desires that inform the action. The outcome (conclusion) of this chain of reasoning leads either to favouring or disapproving of the adoption of the proposed action or policy. The integration of argumentation theory – Walton's practical reasoning scheme as well as aspects from pragma-dialectics – within Fairclough's dialectical approach to CDS aims, on the one hand, to introduce argumentation analysis and evaluation into the analytical toolkit of CDS, and to strengthen CDS's explanatory and normative critique, on the other (ibid.).

On the explanatory level, as the authors explain, the selection of a certain representation of the context of action – the political or economic problem tackled – is tied to a particular ideology. Similarly, the values and political commitments invoked to legitimize the goals and actions are related to naturalising a specific ideology that serves the interests of dominant social groups (ibid.). In other words, the analysis of practical arguments reflects the way ideologies, beliefs and values are configured as premises for action. In this view, the analysis of practical arguments, according to Fairclough and

Fairclough (2012), feeds into the critique of ideology, and as such it gives CDS greater explanatory power in terms of critiquing the social structures and causes that perpetuate and maintain hegemonic ideologies (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2013).

From a normative perspective, the critical evaluation of arguments might explain how biased and one-sided argumentation influences specific audiences. The normative evaluation of arguments, attained through a set of critical questions designed to evaluate practical arguments, cannot "help but naturally connect with the social explanatory critique" (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2013, p. 341). A normative critique attempts to clarify why arguments that "draw on dominant discourses and ideologies", i.e. are "grounded in unreasonable and rationally indefensible values and goals" (ibid., p. 81), go unchallenged and are accepted by respective audiences. For example, the evaluation of practical arguments questions the validity of a proposed action or policy in light of alternative means of action that have been backgrounded or ignored. The evaluation also brings to the fore the negative consequences of the proposed action or policy that have been ignored or subject to silencing. Such an evaluation, according to Fairclough and Fairclough (2012), explains how dominant ideologies shape practical arguments and how agents drawing on dominant discourses maintain and (re)produce unequal power relations through impartial representations and biased argumentation.

This thesis calls for a systematic integration of pragma-dialectics into the theoretical and methodological toolkit of the DHA, and as such it also holds that pragma-dialectics can strengthen the DHA's explanatory and normative critique. In this respect, the evaluation of Nasrallah's argumentation stretches beyond evaluating the fallaciousness or reasonableness of the adduced arguments to showing how the different tenets of the

resistance ideology are configured as premises that feed into perpetuating Nasrallah's hegemony.

The above discussion might give the impression that Fairclough and Fairclough's model is a plausible one to follow. However, due to the nature of the data and the set objectives of this thesis (see Chapter 1, section 6,7), the practical argument model, despite its obvious advantages, is unable to account for retrospective argumentation (i.e. justifying already taken courses of action). This is mainly due to the deliberative nature of the political sphere that the authors are interested in evaluating (e.g. UK public debates over the global financial crisis), which favours deliberating over issues of public concern. This is, unfortunately, not the case in Lebanon where 'consensus democracy' (i.e. agreement is secured among different political factions and religious sects prior to action) is the main vehicle for political action. Moreover, the speeches analysed are primarily concerned with defending and justifying controversial past actions or decisions. Nasrallah's speeches, as I claim, are attempts to (re)establish the legitimacy of problematized actions or decisions. As such, a model that is predominantly built on weighing the reasons for future-oriented actions does not align with the purposes of this study.

The above discussion only hints at the persuasive nature of fallacious arguments. The proceeding section discusses the persuasive and/or manipulative character of argumentative discourse in more detail.

6. Manipulation versus persuasion

There is consensus among scholars interested in the perlocutionary effects of discursive messages that one of the main features that distinguishes persuasion from manipulation is

the degree of control exerted over recipients' mental states. Persuasion is legitimate because "interlocutors are free to believe or act as they please, depending on whether or not they accept the arguments" (van Dijk, 2006a, p. 361). Similarly, O'Keefe (2002) perceives persuasion as "a successful intentional effort at influencing another's mental state through communication in a circumstance in which the persuadee has some measure of freedom" (p. 5). This means that recipients of persuasive messages enjoy some degree of cognitive flexibility, which allows them to arrive at an epistemic evaluation by questioning the veracity of representations and assessing the rationality of the arguments advanced (van Dijk, 2006a; Jowett & O'Donnell, 2006; O'Keefe, 2002; Reardon, 1991), thereby making resistance possible and acceptable (Perloff, 2010).

In contrast, manipulation has a negative connotation, as it limits recipient's choices "through deceptive tactics" (Reardon, 1991, p. 2) aiming to "mislead the recipient by delivering an overt message that belies its true intent" (Perloff, 2010, p.24). In contrast to persuasion, a manipulative attempt seeks to constrain recipients' cognitive processes and induce them to arrive at the manipulator's preferred interpretation (van Dijk, 2006a; Maillat & Oswald, 2009, 2011; Oswald, 2014). The process of inducing addressees to entertain a certain belief is achieved, as Galasinski elucidates, through controlling access to other relevant information. For Galasinski, "withholding information, controlling it, is the essence of deception in general" (2000, p. 22).

However, scholarly interest has recently shifted from studying manipulation as a speaker-oriented phenomenon to examining how manipulation succeeds in constraining and controlling the cognitive processes underpinning message comprehension. In the following sections, I outline how manipulation and persuasion are conceptualized in

pragma-dialectics, the DHA and cognitive pragmatics, as these fields of enquiry are directly related to the theoretical assumptions adhered to in this thesis.

6.1. Manipulation and persuasion in pragma-dialectics

There is significant variation among argumentation scholars regarding the place of persuasion in argumentation theory. The controversy stems from whether argumentation can be defined in terms of its perlocutionary effect or in terms of the communicative means employed (Nettel & Roque, 2012), i.e. ends versus means. Argumentation scholars, such as Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969), Walton (2007, 2009) and van Eemeren and his co-authors (2009, 2014), consider persuasion to be a fundamental dimension of argumentative discourse.

In pragma-dialectics, argumentation is perceived as a communicative and an interactional complex act. This means that the speech acts performed in argumentative discourse have a dual function. The communicative function aims to bring about the illocutionary effect of understanding, whereas the interactional function attempts to bring about the perlocutionary effect of acceptance (van Eemeren, 2013). In van Eemeren's view, convincing is the associated perlocution of arguing, by which he means using argumentation to get an addressee to accept a standpoint based on a constellation of reasons advanced in support of claims. In other words, participants who engage in an argumentative activity uphold the presumption of reasonableness, and consequently presume that they are being convinced based on the reasonableness of the arguments adduced.

In actual argumentative practice, however, arguers will not only try to sustain the impression that they are playing within dialectical permeates (reasonableness), but they will also seek to "stretch the use of these means so much that the fallacious manoeuvring concerned is also covered" (van Eemeren, 2013, p. 149). Thus, committing a fallacy does not only mean that one or more rules of critical discussion have been violated, it also indicates that the commitment to rhetorical aims is at the expense of maintaining reasonableness or dialectical aims. To put it differently, the presumption of reasonableness that is "conferred in every discussion move will also be operative when a particular strategic manoeuvre is in fact fallacious" (ibid., p.149).[40] Therefore, the deceitful character of fallacies, according to van Eemeren (ibid.), can be attributed to exploiting the presumption of reasonableness where addressees, unwittingly, assume that the communicator is convincing them within the domain of reason which is, apparently, not the case. Fallacies, as van Eemeren asserts, "often manifest themselves as strategic manoeuvres that seem to comply with the critical discussion rules although in fact they do not" (ibid., p. 149).

To conclude, van Eemeren maintains that manipulation seeks to "intentionally deceive one's addressees by persuading them of something that is foremost in one's own interest through the covert use of communicative devices that are not in agreement with generally acknowledged critical standards of reasonableness" (2005, p. xii). As mentioned earlier

[40] From a different perspective, Habermas (1984) argues that whenever we say something meaningful we raise or commit ourselves to claims of truth, normative rightness and truthfulness. That is, recipients counterfactually presuppose that what is being communicated to them is true, right and truthful. Thus, strategic action – manipulation or deception – is only possible because of these 'reciprocally anticipated conditions'.

(see Section 4.1), DHA scholars (Reisigl, 2014; Reisigl & Wodak, 2001, 2009, 2016) adhere to pragma-dialectics' conception of fallacies as violations of the ten rules of rational discussion. However, the DHA's analysis of the persuasive or manipulative character of discourse is embedded within a more ideological framework. In the following section, I summarise the notion of ideological manipulation as perceived in the DHA.

6.2. Manipulation and persuasion from the DHA's perspective

Persuasive or manipulative discourses in the DHA are examined in terms of the ideological and the social effects that these discourses have in (re)producing and sustaining social power relations (Wodak, 2011; Reisigl,& Wodak, 2001; Wodak & Meyer, 2009). In the DHA, manipulation or persuasion is enacted through the five discursive strategies involved in the creation of in/out-groups, guided by the ideological macro-strategy of positive Self-presentation and negative Other-presentation. However, Reisigl and Wodak (2001, pp. 70–71) distinguish between discursive attempts that aim to convince through rational means, i.e. rational persuasion or convincing argumentation, and manipulative attempts to persuade or suggestive procedures of persuasion (i.e. irrational persuasion).[41] Under conditions of suspended rationality, achieved via non-argumentative means, such as emotionalization, propaganda, threatening and so on, acceptability is attained by "repressing the ability of rational and logical judgement" (ibid., p. 70).

[41] It seems that Reisigl and Wodak's distinction between the two types of persuasion echoes the conviction-persuasion dichotomy that permeates classical argumentation scholarship. In this tradition, conviction seeks to influence understanding through rational means, while persuasion seeks to influence the will through evoking emotions to promote behaviour (O'Keefe, 2012).

Rational persuasion refers, as Reisigl and Wodak (ibid.) explicate, to securing intersubjective consensus or reaching rationally motivated agreement, which takes place against the backdrop of the counterfactual presuppositions forming the 'Ideal Speech Situation' (see Section 4.1) (Habermas, 1990). Therefore, Habermas' Discourse Ethics and his theory of Deliberative Democracy are further sources of normativity that inform the DHA's critique, i.e. the normative standards based on which manifest or latent persuasive or manipulative attempts are evaluated (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001, p. 263–266). In light of this view, Reisigl (2014) has recently called for stronger theoretical links to be made with Habermas' theories as well as a more systematic adherence to principles of justice and equality. As such, the delineation of the persuasive and/or the manipulative character of discursive practices is more theoretically justified.

From a cognitive point of view, manipulation is a form of mind control that involves the formation, activation and modification of recipients' personal mental models and social representations (van Dijk, 2006a). In van Dijk's view, manipulation restricts recipients' freedom in such a way as to lead them to activate the mental models that the manipulator wishes them to activate. In this sense, manipulation is characterised as the "illegitimate hindering or biasing of the process of discourse comprehension" (ibid., p.366). The actual comprehension processes involved in such cognitive control are not explicitly described by van Dijk. One recent model that seeks to explain such cognitive control is based on cognitive pragmatics and is the main topic of the following section.

6.3. Manipulation in cognitive pragmatics

From a cognitive perspective, manipulation is possible because it exploits the same cognitive processes and inferential mechanisms used in interpreting the non-strategic use of language (Maillat & Oswald, 2009). In cognitive pragmatics, the study of manipulation focuses on how a speaker attempts to intentionally constrain addressees' cognitive mechanisms so as to "attain a perlocutionary effect the speaker is covertly pursuing" (Oswald, 2014, p. 99). Research in cognitive pragmatics partially draws on relevance-theoretic assumptions. Thus, it is necessary to outline the main tenets of this theory.

6.3.1. Relevance Theory

Relevance Theory (henceforth, RT) stipulates that the human mind tends to be geared to the maximisation of relevance, where relevance is a "property of inputs to cognitive processes which makes them worth processing" (Wilson & Sperber, 2012, p. 62). RT assumes that the presumption of optimal relevance is conferred on every ostensive stimulus. Optimal relevance is defined in terms of the best ratio between the effort required to process an utterance and the expected cognitive effects, i.e. the optimal cost/benefit ratio (Sperber & Wilson, 1995). A stimulus is relevant, according to Wilson and Sperber (2002), when it connects with an addressee's available background knowledge or existing contextual assumptions to yield positive cognitive effects. Positive cognitive effects take several forms, including: (i) accepting new beliefs that are deducible from the input and context together (contextual implications); (ii) modifying the strength of contextually activated beliefs; or (iii) revising contextually activated beliefs in cases where the new information contradicts those beliefs (2000, p. 251–252).

In a relevance-theoretic framework, two dimensions determine the relevance of an input: the greater the positive cognitive effects achieved in processing an input, the greater is its relevance; and the greater the effort required for processing an input, the less relevant it is.[42] In RT, comprehension is regarded as an inferential process, which starts by decoding linguistic stimuli and gradually enriching the context with relevant assumptions to arrive at the speaker's intended meaning.[43]

RT claims that inferential meaning involves the performance of subtasks, each of which is guided by the principle of optimal relevance (the optimal effect/effort ratio). Therefore, to arrive at the speaker's intended meaning, recipients have to: (i) construct an appropriate hypothesis about the explicit content (explicatures) – achieved through decoding, disambiguation, reference resolution and so on; (ii) construct an appropriate hypothesis about the intended contextual assumptions (implicated premises); and (iii), construct an appropriate hypothesis about the intended contextual implications (implicated conclusions). Consequently, interpretation is a multi-layered process through which the derivation of explicit and implicit meaning follows a path of least effort (maximise cognitive effects for the least cognitive effort), until the resulting interpretation meets the addressee's expectation of relevance, which in turn is taken to be compatible with the speaker's intended meaning (Wilson and Sperber, 2002).

[42] These constitute the extent conditions of relevance. Extent condition 1: an assumption is relevant in a context to the extent that its contextual effects in this context are large. Extent condition 2: an assumption is relevant in a context to the extent that the effort required to process it in this context is small (Sperber & Wilson, 1995, p. 125).

[43] In RT, understanding is achieved when the speaker's communicative intention (the intention to inform the audience of one's own informative intention) is fulfilled, which means that the audience has recognized her informative intention. The informative intention is the intention to produce a certain response in an audience (Sperber et al., 2010, p. 365; Wilson & Sperber, 2002).

The *Relevance-guided comprehension heuristic* (Sperber & Wilson, 1995; Wilson & Sperber, 2012) assumes that the derivation of the speaker's meaning is achieved through following a path of least effort in calculating cognitive effects. This means that the representation which is most easily accessible (in terms of effort) or yields more cognitive effects (by being reliable and epistemically strong) will be part of the contextual assumptions against which an utterance is interpreted. The interpretation of the speaker's meaning is, thus, a function of achieving the best effort/effect ratio. According to Wilson and Sperber (2000, p. 254–255), a manipulative attempt involves the speaker's covert intention to guide addressees to select the first interpretation that satisfies their expectations of relevance or the optimal effort/effect ratio.

Following this line of thought, Maillat and Oswald (2011) perceive manipulation as a form of communication that exploits "the inherently fallible and heuristic-based ways in which the human mind processes information" (p. 66). Due to constant pressures seeking efficiency, the human cognitive system has evolved with an automatic tendency to select the most relevant stimuli, activate relevant assumptions and process them in the most productive way (Wilson & Sperber, 2002). Among the tasks that recipients have to perform (explained above) to arrive at the speaker's meaning is the process of constructing the appropriate context – *contextualization* – against which an utterance is processed and interpreted (Sperber & Wilson, 1995).[44]

[44] From a cognitive perspective, context refers to the set of relevant assumptions that recipients select while processing information (Maillat & Oswald, 2011).

6.3.2. The contextual selection constraint model

Context selection is a gradual process that permits the inclusion of different sets of contextual assumptions, provided that the level of optimal relevance is not reached (Maillat & Oswald, 2009). Certain contextual assumptions, as Maillat and Oswald (2009, 2011) argue, will be selected if these are made more accessible, i.e. they are less effortful to activate. Accessibility is one dimension that ensures the inclusion of certain assumptions in the addressee's cognitive environment.[45] The second criterion which might guarantee the inclusion of contextual assumptions is related to the epistemic strength of a representation (Oswald, 2014; Oswald & Hart, 2013). Epistemic strength indicates that the stronger the assumption or representation, the more chances it has to be selected, and hence it becomes part of the addressee's cognitive environment. Therefore, accessibility and epistemic strength define the dimensions according to which the dynamics of the Contextual Selection Constraint (henceforth, CSC) model are described.

The function of these inclusion rules is to ensure that an utterance is interpreted within a limited subset of contextual assumptions. Therefore, a manipulative move tends to be successful if:

> On the one hand, it tries to make sure that every information set that is mobilised in the process is compatible and coherent with the target deceptive utterance, while on the other it strives to keep critical information sets that would defeat the deceptive attempt concealed (i.e. so as to leave them

[45] The cognitive environment is the set of assumptions that are manifest to an individual at a given time.

unprocessed or to get the cognitive system of the addressee to dismiss them). (Oswald et al., 2016, p. 523)

In this view, successful attempts at manipulation or deception, as Oswald (2014) elaborates, necessitate that critical or contradictory information that would lead the addressee to question the veracity of the message or the speaker's motives and intentions must not be accessed during processing.[46] This is because mobilisation of these critical information sets would yield a different cognitive effect or a different modification to the hearer's cognitive environment (Ozols et al., 2015).

From a different perspective, constraining information selection is influenced by cognitive shortcuts or heuristics that affect judgement and therefore lead to biased processing (Maillat & Oswald, 2009, 2011; Oswald & Hart, 2013; Hart 2013). Cognitive heuristics are rules of thumb that help us take decisions and make judgements in a cost-effective way (Hart, 2013; Oswald & Lewinski, 2104). Fallibility is a core feature of cognitive heuristics, due to the fast and frugal way in which information is processed, i.e. yielding results with the minimal allocation of cognitive resources (Oswald & Lewinski, 2014). Building on findings from evolutionary psychology, which claims that under the constraints of efficiency some cognitive processes involved in thinking, memory, perception, decision-making and judgement are subject to errors, Maillat and Oswald (2009, 2011) suggest that the activation of shortcuts and heuristics during processing

[46] More recently, the term deception has replaced manipulation (Oswald, 2014; Ozols et al., 2015) for fear that the latter could be taken for its literal meaning – operating or using an object (Oswald, 2014). However, for the sake of being consistent with the terminology used by the main theoretical frameworks adopted in this research, the DHA and pragma-dialectics, I prefer to retain the term manipulation when analysing and discussing the results of the analysis.

deviates addressees' attention from selecting relevant and critical information and thus leads to judgemental errors. Cognitive shortcuts and heuristics, as Oswald and Hart (2013) argue, lead to errors at the level of epistemic judgement.

Cognitive biases play a pivotal role in making certain contextual assumptions more salient than others; and by virtue of the dynamics of optimal relevance, they eventually become part of the limited subset against which an argument is interpreted and evaluated (Maillat & Oswald, 2009, 2011; Oswald & Hart, 2013). Fallacies, as Oswald and Lewinski (2014) maintain, "block access to critical resources" (p. 326) because of their ability to trigger cognitive biases and heuristics, making some representations cognitively inescapable from being selected. The information contained in these representations is devoid of any critical and relevant information to evaluate the argument (Maillat & Oswald, 2011). Consequently, the fallaciousness of the argument is unnoticed. For example, the *ad populum* fallacy exploits the strategy of strengthening-by-repetition (Maillat, 2013) or the *validity effect*.[47] This cognitive bias means that validity and epistemic strength are a function of repetition. The more a representation is repeated, the more valid it becomes, which in turn increases its cognitive strength. Therefore, it becomes more salient, gets selected during processing and eventually prevents the addressee from questioning the validity of the assertions attributed to the majority (Maillat & Oswald, 2011). In this sense, the *ad populum* fallacy exploits two forms of cognitive bias: the *validity effect* which correlates validity with frequency, and the

[47] The *ad populum* fallacy, as suggested by Oswald and Hart (2013), operates in relation to a conformity bias, which is driven by favouring what the majority generally accepts and values.

mechanism of optimal relevance which tends to select the most salient representations (ibid.).

The Contextual Selection Constraint (CSC) is one mechanism that manipulative communicators can exploit, namely, the dynamics of the comprehension module, which is geared to maximise relevance. Moving from comprehension to believability, i.e. how addressees accept incoming representations as true, is a process governed by another cognitive mechanism: epistemic vigilance (or the logico-rhetorical module).

6.3.3. Epistemic vigilance

Communication, according to Grice (1989), is essentially cooperative. However, cooperation, as Origgi and Sperber assert, is "vulnerable to free-riding, which, in the case of communication, takes the form of manipulation and deception" (2000, p. 161). Therefore, for communication to remain advantageous, as Sperber et al. argue, humans have developed a "suite of cognitive mechanisms for epistemic vigilance, targeted at the risk of being misinformed by others" (2010, p. 359), i.e. a defence mechanism against the risk of deception. Epistemic vigilance is a cognitive mechanism that caters for the calibration of trust towards the source and filters incoming content. Epistemic vigilance, as Cruz (2012) states, denotes a "captious alertness to the believability and reliability" (p. 368) of the communicated message and to the one who dispenses it. Epistemic vigilance directed at the source checks for evidence related to the trustworthiness of the speaker in terms of competence, benevolence, credibility, and reliability. As for the content, epistemic filters monitor the logical consistency of the message and the degree of its coherence with addresses' background knowledge and beliefs (Sperber et al., 2010).

The believability of the newly communicated message, as Sperber et al. (2010) iterate, relies on a subset of background knowledge and beliefs that are activated during comprehension. The authors maintain that the "same background information which is used in the pursuit of relevance can also yield an imperfect but cost-effective epistemic assessment" (p. 374). In this respect, the accessed subset of contextual information (selected through the mechanisms of the CSC), which is devoid of any critical or contradictory information, forms the basis for meaning derivation and evaluation processes (Oswald & Lewinski, 2014, p. 323–325).[48] Recall that for an utterance to be relevant in a context of existing beliefs, it has to yield one of the following contextual effects: acceptance of contextually implied beliefs, modification of the strength of beliefs or revision of existing beliefs. The assessment of this inferential output leads to various judgements depending on whether or not the recipient trusts the communicator. Assessment can lead to one of these possibilities: (i) rejection of new beliefs, if the source is not trusted; (ii) correction of existing beliefs, if these are not held with much conviction, given that the addressee acknowledges the communicator's competence and authority; and (iii) revision of background beliefs or reducing confidence in the source if the addressee has strong convictions in both (Sperber et al., 2010).

Following this line of thought, Oswald and Hart (2013) argue that addressees' failure to spot and assess the fallaciousness of 'source-related fallacies', such as *ad populum, ad verecundiam* and *ad hominem,* can, on the one hand, be attributed to the type of cognitive

[48] This view is based on the mechanisms of the argumentative module, proposed by Mercier & Sperber (2009, 2011), which plays a role in the production and evaluation of arguments. At the production level, the module allows communicators to construct arguments so as to satisfy or exploit addressees' epistemic filters. At the evaluation level, it is responsible for evaluating the validity of the arguments adduced, i.e. identifying the type of relation between premises and conclusion (Oswald & Hart, 2013).

constraints that these fallacies exert on argument processing, which prevent addressees from accessing critical content and hence increase acceptability. On the other hand, these fallacies manage to circumvent addressees' epistemic vigilance by providing apparently satisfactory evidence, therefore preventing addressees from questioning the credibility and/or reliability of the source to whom the information is attributed (ibid.). In *ad populum* and *ad verecundiam*, as Oswald and Hart (ibid.) elucidate, the epistemic strength of the conclusion is derived from the perceived trustworthiness of the source and from the widespread endorsement of the belief, respectively. In contrast, *ad hominem* works by inducing addressees to reject the conclusion by casting doubt on the legitimacy and credibility of the source. Source-related fallacies manage to satisfy addressees' epistemic filters by presenting supporting evidence for the claims advanced, such that the cognitive system is not alerted to invest the more complex processing mechanisms that could point to their fallaciousness.

These fallacies are examples of accepting claims based on the perceived trustworthiness and credibility of a third party. A revision of beliefs is triggered when new information is inconsistent or incoherent with contextually activated beliefs or existing background knowledge. This is because, when these "inconsistencies and incoherencies occur, they trigger a procedure wholly dedicated to such assessment" (Sperber et al., 2010, p. 376). It follows that in cases where the communicator suspects that her addressee will not accept her words out of confidence and trust but will, as Sperber et al. (ibid.) elucidate, exercise some vigilance to check whether her representation coheres with his own beliefs, she then must satisfy or overcome the epistemic defences of her addressee in order to convince him.

When an addressee is reluctant to accept a representation that is incoherent with his background beliefs, the communicator has to induce him to access less highly activated beliefs that weigh in favour of the representation if these are taken into account (ibid.). To put it differently, the communicator will induce the addressee to expand his activated set of contextual assumptions or background knowledge so as to include a set of beliefs that cohere with her claims. To this end, as Sperber et al. (ibid.) argue, the communicator can remind the addressee of these background beliefs or provide other information that the addressee will accept out of trust.

Perceiving a source as trustworthy means that addressees regard what this source is telling them as epistemically strong (Oswald & Lewinski, 2014). It might be safe, then, to deduce a reciprocal relation between the degree of trust ascribed to the communicator and the believability of claims: the more an addressee trusts the speaker, the less vigilant he tends to be, and the less trustworthy is a speaker, the more vigilant her addressee tends to be. One implication of this line of thought for my thesis is related to the nature of the audience that Nasrallah addresses. Nasrallah is primarily interested in convincing the 14th of March audience, who are expected to be reluctant towards accepting his claims out of trust – presumably, due to the actions and decisions that Nasrallah has taken against them and their leadership, and which have negatively affected them.[49] Therefore, their epistemic defences are expected to check whether his justifications and claims are consistent and cohere with their existing beliefs and convictions. To get past these

[49] In pragma-dialectical terms, Nasrallah is addressing primary and secondary audiences. The secondary audience encompasses those who directly affiliate with Hizbollah as well as supporters and sympathisers from different political groups. However, due to the nature of the charismatic bond that relates this audience to Nasrallah, they tend to take his words on trust (see Chapter, section 3.1). Meanwhile, much discursive work is needed to convince the opposition's audience, Nasrallah's primary audience, that the actions and decisions taken against them are acts of heroism and patriotism (as the analysis will show).

defences, as I claim, Nasrallah attempts to induce the audience to expand the activated set of contextual assumptions in order to make them access a less highly activated set, which consists of undisputable and generally accepted background knowledge and beliefs that cohere with his justifications.

At this point, I believe, it is possible to suggest a relation between the construction of charisma and epistemic vigilance. More specifically, salvation/ rescue narratives (see Chapter 2, section 3.1), which are part and parcel of charismatic discourses and via which actions or decisions already taken are reframed in terms of rescuing and saving a community, might provide the link. In other words, in his attempt to justify past controversial actions or decisions, Nasrallah reframes them via salvation or rescue narratives in order to make them cohere with generally accepted moral values and nationalist views, despite the opposition audience's beliefs to the contrary.

The above discussion is related to vigilance towards content. In what follows, I elaborate on the mechanisms of vigilance directed at the source. Epistemic trust directed at the source can be driven by general impressions of trustworthiness, such as the communicator's reputation, or by context-specific considerations (Sperber et al., 2010). The latter means that the allocation of trust, as Sperber et al. (ibid., p. 369–370) explicate, depends on the topic, the nature of the audience and the circumstances. A communicator is deemed reliable and trustworthy if she meets two conditions: competence and benevolence. This means that the calibration of trust is a function of the communicator's character (ibid.), inasmuch as epistemic filters do not provide evidence that points to the contrary. Sperber et al. (ibid.) also note that granting trust to the source of information can be the result of a successful attempt to "project an image of trustworthiness" (ibid., p.

370) that is discursively mediated. The assessment of trust is, therefore, a function of the discursive construction of ethos.

Aristotle (1959) considers ethos to be one of the influential means of persuasion – along with logos and pathos – and defines it in terms of the moral character of the speaker. In the Aristotelian tradition, the moral character of the speaker is primarily constructed through speech, while reputation and authority are considered 'extrinsic' to the art of persuasion (Zmavc, 2012). It follows that ethos is discursively constructed, whereby a trustworthy image of the speaker as benevolent, virtuous and competent is reflected in discourse. It is through discourse that a speaker constructs a "kind of a mask which is socially acceptable and even desirable" (Danler, 2013, p. 40), even if it does not represent the speaker's actual personality (Zmavc, 2012). It seems that the concept of 'image' is the modern equivalent of Aristotle's ethos (Szczepanska-Wloch, 2013).

From a different perspective, Cockcroft and Cockcroft (2005) argue that the construction of ethos is not only contingent on the creation of the speaker's image, but also dependent on the speaker's stance and her level of engagement with the audience. Ethos, then, is not a "fixed set of traits" (Danler, 2013, p. 41) but is, rather, a matter of how these can be differentiated to best suit the topic and audience demands (Szczepanska-Wloch, 2013). According to Danler (2013), ethos is the result of linguistic-discursive construction, whereby ideology, religion, culture and philosophical trends, among others, form the content of discursive texts that eventually convey the facts, truths, values and assumptions of the respective culture.

Two implications can be derived from this view. First, the construction of ethos is inherently linked to the discursive construction of charisma (see Chapter 2, section 3.1, 3.2). This is because the construction of a proper image (personal presence or magnetism) is considered one of the traits that define a charismatic personality (Eatwell, 2006a). The validation of charisma partially relies on projecting an appropriate image of the *self*, which, according to Wodak (2011), is realized through footing and narrating (see Chapter 2, section 3.2). Through the construction of charisma, Nasrallah aims to provide the audience with palpable evidence that attests to his trustworthiness and competence (see below) in order to satisfy audiences' epistemic defences directed towards the source. Another aim is to provide the audience with evidence that satisfies their vigilance directed towards the message. Both aims are realised through the construction of charisma. The first objective is achieved via the construction of a proper image, whereas the second is achieved via rescue or salvation narratives.[50]

The second implication is related to the linguistic means via which the construction of ethos is mediated in discursive texts, i.e. the type of linguistic evidence that constructs the image of the source as trustworthy, competent, and benevolent. Therefore, the next section outlines the linguistic means that speakers employ to influence addressees' epistemic stance.

[50] This is not to say that coherence is the only criterion for acceptability. The members of the 14th of March audience are also expected to check the logical consistency of his claims and arguments. However, I assume that coherence will most likely be the overriding criterion for believability, as Nasrallah's speeches are attempts to respond to opponents' criticisms, counter-claims and arguments which underscore the inappropriateness and undesirability of Nasrallah's actions and decisions because they destabilize and jeopardize Lebanon's security.

6.3.4. Legitimation of assertions

Epistemic vigilance, as Sperber (2001) maintains, is a cognitive mechanism that checks the internal and external coherence of the message. It is designed to "help audiences decide what messages to accept, and to help communicators produce messages that will be accepted" (Sperber 2001). For this constructed account of reality to be taken as true, it has to be supported with "evidence, authority and truth" (Chilton, 2004 p. 23). Strategies underpinning the legitimation of assertions, as Chilton (2004) and Hart (2011) point out, are means through which speaker's guard against the epistemic vigilance of recipients by offering them evidence regarding the truthfulness, rightness and authority of their claims. These strategies, then, tend to satisfy addressees' epistemic filters through displaying aspects of internal and external coherence that they expect addressees to check for (Hart, 2010, 2011). In other words, it is through the stance that speakers take towards the validity of their assertions that aspects of their competence, reliability, and credibility are communicated. Epistemic stance expressions index the way speakers position themselves with regard to the validity of their assertions, as well as their level of engagement with addressees (Marin-Arrese, 2013). Epistemic positioning counts as an attempt by the speaker to influence addressees' epistemic stance towards their assertions through satisfying addressees' epistemic filters, thereby inducing acceptance (Hart, 2011).

Epistemic stance resources include modal auxiliaries and evidentials, which serve the function of displaying external coherence. Through evidential expressions, speakers display external coherence by providing evidence regarding the source of their information. This can be achieved either by providing evidence about the basis of their own knowledge or by attributing this knowledge to experts, specialists etc. through

source-tagging. In Hart's (2011, p. 759–760) analysis of anti-immigration media reports, he demonstrates that speakers may invoke sources belonging to different domains of evidence. Perception offers directly attested sensory forms of evidence. Proof and Obviousness are indirectly derived inferences based on results and reasoning. Public Knowledge is evidence sourced from indirectly reported folklore, and Expert Knowledge from reported hearsay. Finally, Epistemic Commitment indicates evidence that is based on the speaker as a source of authority on the topic.

A second way of providing evidence is through the attribution of assertions to a third party. This is realized linguistically through source-tagging in the form of indirectly reported Hearsay or Mindsay (Hart, 2010), i.e. by reference to what someone else has said, felt or knows. Source-tagging, then, can meta-represent previous public speeches (Hearsay) or meta-represent other mental representations (ibid.). Therefore, source-tagging provides assessments regarding the reliability and credibility of the sources invoked, which in turn convey the degree of the speaker's attitude towards the validity of her assertions. Evidentiality is, as Hart (2010, 2011) suggests, a legitimising strategy of *objectification* because it offers addressees the possibility to check the reliability, credibility, and authority of the assigned source. Epistemic modality is a second strategy involved in the legitimation of assertions (ibid.).

Epistemic modality offers a subjective form of legitimation that depends on the degree of certainty the speaker attributes to events (Hart, 2010), i.e. a strategy of *subjectification*. Epistemic resources include modals conveying various degrees of certainty, such as *must*, *will* and *can*, as well as zero-marked modality. High certainty indicates a strong epistemic commitment to the truth of a proposition. Therefore, epistemic modality can be

conceptualized as a form of epistemic scale that shows varying degrees of commitment, ranging from certain through probable to possible (ibid.). Marin-Arrese (2011) holds a similar view to the function of epistemic modality and its linguistic resources. In contrast, she classifies evidential markers into experiential (e.g. *it is evident, obvious, clear*), cognitive (e.g. *I know, that means*) and communicative evidentiality (e.g. *I say to you, that suggests*). The reliability of these evidential markers varies from high to low. Despite categorical differences, both authors consider the function that epistemic positioning strategies have on addressees' exercise of vigilance and in the construction of the speaker's image. In this study, the legitimation of assertions is embedded within the macro-functions that Nasrallah's speeches are expected to serve, i.e. responding to accusations and legitimating past controversial actions. In this respect, the legitimation of assertions is seen as a preliminary step leading to the acceptance, or otherwise, of Nasrallah's claims and arguments or, as Hart (2011) puts it, "[t]he successful justification of action, […] requires that the hearer accept the justifying assertion as true in the first place" (757).

7. The pragmatics of accusations

Accusations are, undoubtedly, face-threatening acts, as they can have a destructive impact on the accused's perceived image, reputation, credibility etc. Typically, an accusation is an assertion in which the accuser claims that someone (X) has performed a certain action (A). The act of accusing entails that: (X) is deemed responsible for doing (A) and that (A) is wrong as it is seen as an infringement of some norms, values or principles of action. The speech act of accusing serves the communicative purpose of making a charge or an

accusation (illocutionary effect) and the interactional function of eliciting a response from the accused related to the charge raised (perlocutionary effect) (Searle, 1969).

For an accusation act to be successful in achieving both functions, Kauffeld has formulated felicity conditions. The accuser has to: (i) state her charges that some party (A) did (X); (ii) demand that the accused answer the charges through denials, admissions of guilt, excuses, justifications etc.; and (iii) act as if she intends that the charge and her demand provide the accuser with reasons to respond to the accusation (1986 p. 252). In Kauffeld's view, accusations are designed to impose on the accused the obligation to respond to allegations (Kauffeld, 2003). Responses to accusations can take several forms, such as denials, justifications, excuses, admissions of guilt or apologies. It is also possible for the accused to simply ignore the need to respond to charges, i.e. evade the burden of proof.

Responding to accusations, as Austin (1956) notes, involves either defending one's conduct by showing that (A) was a good thing and that it was carried out for good purposes, i.e. admit responsibility, or admitting that (A) was wrong but it is not fair to be accused of doing (A), i.e. deny responsibility. In the former, the objective is to legitimise the action by giving reasons that support the claim: (A) was right. In this case, the speaker attempts to exploit legitimation strategies (see below) to justify the rightness of the action. In the latter, the agent admits that the action was wrong but denies partial or full responsibility (ibid.). In this case, the speaker resorts to denial strategies (see below) to support the claim: (X) did not do (A).

As mentioned above, the accused has an obligation to explain why he acted as alleged. That is, there is a burden of proof conferred on the accused by the performance of the speech act of accusing (Kauffeld 1989, 2003). This is the view taken in this study. The fact that the opposition accuses Nasrallah of doing wrongful actions or taking incorrect decisions is highly damaging to his image. Therefore, Nasrallah is expected to employ strategies related to image repair, such as denying accusations, shifting blame and legitimising actions or decisions, among others. Therefore, the following sections discuss the various legitimation and denying strategies that have been identified by CDS scholars.

7.1 Responding to accusations through denials

Within CDS, van Dijk (1992, p. 92) considers strategies of denying racist or prejudiced attitudes towards minorities to be part of constructing a positive image of the in-group. These strategies are:

- Act-denial ('I did not do/say that at all')
- Control-denial ('I did not do/say that on purpose', 'It was an accident')
- Intention-denial ('I did not mean that', 'You got me wrong')
- Goal-denial ('I did not do/say that, in order to ---')

Disclaimers, such as 'we are tolerant, but', as van Dijk maintains, are forms of denial strategies that aim to promote a positive image of the in-group whilst articulating at the same time negative attributes to those discriminated against. Moreover, offering justifications, excuses, blaming the victim and victim-perpetrator reversal are other forms of denial. In denying racism, the last two strategies are considered the strongest forms because they are used to identify the group that should receive the blame (ibid.). In

contrast, van Dijk notes that mitigation strategies, such as downtoning and euphemisms, are used to trivialize one's negative actions and hence evade blame.

In her analysis of Austrian politicians' attempts to deny anti-Semitic rhetoric and prejudices, Wodak (2105) observes that most of these denial strategies are used. In the context of denying anti-Semitism and constructing blame-takers, Angouri and Wodak (2014) assert that blaming and denying employ various justification strategies. These strategies include: denying direct responsibility, redefining and reformulating actions in terms of accepted moral values, providing fallacious generalizations and false analogies, providing causal explanations, narrating, drawing on collective memories, claiming victimhood, constructing scapegoats, shifting the blame onto others and blaming the victim, etc. The cumulative function of these strategies is to turn blame into credit (Wodak 2006, 2015). Moreover, various argumentation strategies are used to justify and legitimise negative actions taken by the in-group, as well as to delegitimise the actions and policies advocated by the out-group. For example, *ad verecundiam*, *ad populum* and false analogies are used to justify and maintain a positive representation of the Self, whereas *tu quoque*, *ad baculum*, *ad hominem*, *ad misericordiam* and the *straw man* fallacies are used to construct a negative image of the Other. The latter set is most likely employed in creating scapegoats onto whom responsibility is shifted, i.e. victim-perpetrator reversal (*tarjectio in alium*, Reisigl & Wodak, 2001).

Wodak (2015) posits that the construction of a conspiracy is another discursive strategy involved in denying and avoiding blame. In her view, the construction of a conspiracy serves the creation of scapegoats, who are identified as the original culprits, thus shifting the blame onto them, whereas the accused is portrayed as the victim of these

conspiratorial scenarios. In his innovative typology – which synthesizes the different strategies identified for blaming and denying in discourse analysis, politeness research and argumentation theory – Hansson (2015) maintains that ways of framing events through narratives constitute one of the main strategies for creating scapegoats, thereby legitimising shifting blame onto others.

Following Lakoff (2008), Hansson asserts that, through narratives, in particular Rescue narratives, speakers attempt to avoid blame by portraying themselves as performing good and praiseworthy deeds, i.e. construct themselves as saviours, while simultaneously constructing villains/ scapegoats to whom blame is attributed.[51] Rescue narratives, according to Lakoff (2008), have specific semantic roles, such as Hero, Villain, Victim and Helpers. The actions that structure a Rescue narrative are as follows: the Villain harms the Victim, the Hero struggles against the Villain, the Helpers together with the Hero defeat the Villain, the Victim is rescued, the Hero is rewarded and the Villain is punished. Lakoff (ibid.) considers Self-defence narratives to be a variant of the Rescue narrative in which the Hero is the Victim, i.e. the Hero rescues himself. Victimisation or claiming victimhood and defence, then, are the basic elements of Rescue narratives.

To escape blame, accused parties can attempt to reframe events in terms of rescue narratives via which blameworthy deeds are turned into heroic acts. It is through these narratives that the Other/ Villain is constructed as posing an imminent threat, signalling

[51] Hansson also emphasizes the function of the Bad Apple narrative in finding a target to be blamed. According to Lakoff (2008), the Bad Apple narrative is based on the proverb: 'one bad apple spoils the barrel', which evokes a simple moral: get rid of the bad apple and the rest of the barrel will be saved.

that an action of some kind should be taken to alleviate the danger. The evil in these narratives catalyzes the binding of a community or nation around a common desire to fight the threat, provided that the path proclaimed by the leader is followed (see Chapter 2, section 3.1).

In this study, I propose that rescue narratives play a role in legitimating actions, inasmuch as these narratives appear as premises in arguments, such as argument from fear appeal and argument from negative consequences (see Chapter 4, section 4.2). The justification of practices and policies is not limited to strategies involved in denying and avoiding blame. Justification also employs the full range of legitimation strategies (Hansson, 2015). Responding to criticisms and accusations through legitimation strategies is the subject of the next section.

7.2 Responding to accusations through legitimation strategies

The aforementioned strategies serve the macro-strategy of denying full or partial responsibility. In other instances, however, political actors choose to accept responsibility, but simultaneously use a variety of legitimation strategies to provide answers to the following question: 'Why should (or did) we do this in this way?' (van Leeuwen, 2007). Legitimation, a major objective of political discourse (Cap, 2008), is a complex process that involves "providing good reasons, grounds or acceptable motivations for past or present action that has been or could be criticized by others" (van Dijk, 1998, p.263). Two things can be deduced from this definition. First, it presupposes disagreement, opposition and doubt, which are necessary to initiate self-defence responses (van Dijk, 1998; van Leeuwen & Wodak, 1999). Second, it presupposes moral

and normative grounds based on which the action is legitimated, i.e. to gain normative approval (Rojo & van Dijk, 1997). The performance of a legitimation act, as Cap asserts, has to be "grounded in an implicit claim, on the part of the speaker, to inhabit a particular social or political role, and to possess a particular authority" (2008, p. 22).[52]

Discursive legitimation, as Van Leeuwen and Wodak (1999) state, offers explanations, justifications and reasons as to why social practices are or are expected to be conducted in the manner proclaimed by the communicator. To this end, the authors identify four types of strategies involved in the legitimation of practices (van Leeuwen, 2008; van Leeuwen & Wodak 1999). *Authorization* is legitimation achieved via reference to the authority of tradition, custom, law and persons in whom institutional authority is vested. The latter can take the form of referring to experts, opinion leaders, role models or specific people who enjoy a defined social status or role. *Moral evaluation* is legitimation realized by reference to value systems. Abstractions, analogies and evaluations (evaluative adjectives) are some forms of moral legitimation. The objective is to associate 'Our' good practices with publicly shared values or common sense cultural knowledge, thereby transferring the positive values to the proclaimed action or policy. *Rationalization* is legitimation achieved by reference to the goals, uses and effects of social practices (instrumental rationality), or to the knowledge that a given society has constructed regarding the natural order of doing things (theoretical rationality). Finally, *mythopoesis* is legitimation achieved via reference to moral narratives (e.g. protagonists are rewarded

[52] This clearly relates to the construction of the speaker's ethos or image, which is part of the construction of charisma and can be partially realised linguistically through strategies pertaining to epistemic positioning (see Section 6.3.4)

for their good deeds while villains are punished) or cautionary tales that highlight the negative consequences of actions or their inconformity with social norms (ibid.).

Reyes (2011) has recently proposed another typology in which emotions, hypothetical future scenarios, rationality and voices of expertise and altruism (the common good) are identified as strategies serving the legitimation of social practices. As can be seen, there are some commonalities between the two frameworks, such as reference to expertise, theoretical rationalization and moral evaluation. However, this thesis is interested in legitimation achieved through hypothetical future scenarios via which a potential threat or danger is constructed. Typically, this is achieved, as Reyes (ibid.) explicates, via the use of conditional sentences, whereby a sense of urgency and fear is projected onto the actions of the 'Other'.

The different legitimation and justification strategies outlined above overlap with some of the argument schemes and fallacies that are part of the DHA's argumentation strategies. As Fairclough and Fairclough (2012, p. 109–110) observe, some of the legitimation strategies that are identified in the DHA seem to offer explanations and clarifications rather than reasons that appear in premises for arguments. Hence, the terms 'legitimation' and 'justification' are used interchangeably. In Fairclough and Fairclough's view, a justification that attempts to legitimize an action has to invoke "*publicly shared* and *publicly justifiable,* and sometimes even highly formalized, codified, institutional systems of beliefs, values, and norms, in virtue of which the action proposed is considered legitimate" (ibid., p. 109). As such, an action gains legitimacy if it conforms to widely shared values, beliefs, norms, customs and traditions that are themselves publicly recognised and justified.

This thesis aligns itself with this line of thought. To this end, I adopt a definition of legitimation that is consistent with Fairclough and Fairclough's observation.[53] Legitimation, as Suchman (1995, p. 574) argues, is: "a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions". Moreover, holding the perception that judgements of legitimacy are based on shared value systems and beliefs conforms with my earlier claim: reframing events via salvation or rescue narratives necessarily entails drawing on nationalist and populist ideologies or widely held moral values and ideological beliefs (see Chapter 2, section 3.1). In the Lebanese case, this means tapping into the ideological constructs of the Resistance (see Chapter 1, section 4,5).

From a different perspective, CDS scholars interested in the study of legitimation have repeatedly emphasised that legitimation is inherently linked to argumentation (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012; Hart, 2010; Reyes, 2011). Indeed, it is only through argumentation that reasons are given in support of claims that need justification (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012). However, some of the legitimation strategies outlined above include narratives (mythopoesis), explanations and moral evaluations that do not act as arguments and hence they attempt to justify rather than legitimise actions (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012). As such, these strategies are not part of the analytical framework followed in this thesis. However, rescue narratives are an exception because, as I propose, they have an

[53] In fact, Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) follow a politically oriented view of legitimation. In political theory, as the authors expound, legitimation is an argumentative process that involves the public exchange of reasons where a decision concerning 'what ought to be done' is the result of public deliberation, i.e. the decision gains democratic legitimacy.

argumentative function, i.e. they appear as premises in arguments. Legitimation strategies that act as arguments, such as argument from authority (and its fallacious variants), argument from negative consequences, argument from moral values and *ad populum*, are also included in the analysis since these are part of the analytical toolkit of pragma-dialectics.

8. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have presented the overarching theoretical frameworks that inform this study, in particular, the DHA and pragma-dialectics. I have shown that although there are some divergences between these two paradigms, which should not be ignored, there are also commonalities which make their combination a fruitful and felicitous endeavour. I have elaborated on other frameworks based in cognitive pragmatics, including relevance theory and epistemic vigilance. I have also attempted to outline the relationship between epistemic vigilance and the construction of charisma. I claim that salvation or rescue narratives, as a salient feature in the discourse of charismatic leaders, are a means of reframing events in such a way so as to make them cohere with or satisfy audiences' epistemic filters. Moreover, I have suggested that the strategies which speakers exploit to legitimise their assertions feed into the construction of charisma, i.e. by constructing a trustworthy image of the speaker. The next chapter will attempt to synthesize these different concepts into one coherent framework which I operationalize in my analysis.

Chapter 4

Proposal for integrating pragma-dialectics and the DHA, methodology and analytical frameworks

1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, I presented the main theoretical frameworks and analytical tools that inform this study. This chapter further elaborates on how these frameworks will be applied in the present study. It explains the mechanisms of implementation and the particular analytical tools sourced from each discipline. It continues to develop the argument for the need to incorporate pragma-dialectics into the analytical framework of the DHA. It also explains in detail how this integrated model is to be applied, including the procedural steps followed, in my analysis of Nasrallah's speeches.

2. The DHA and its implementation

One of the main aims of the DHA is to deconstruct the hegemonic character of dominant discourses that tend to establish and perpetuate asymmetrical power relations (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001, 2009). To reveal the ideological underpinnings of hegemonic discourses, DHA scholars propose a multi-dimensional analytical framework that constitutes textual meanings and structures. The analytical categories are the *topics*, *discursive strategies* and *linguistic means of realizations*. Following this model, the analysis of Nasrallah's speeches starts by identifying the main *topics* or *contents* of selected speeches; then, *discursive strategies* are investigated; and finally, the *linguistic means* of realization are

examined (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001, 2009, 2016).[54] In chapter 3, section 2.1, I discussed the five discursive strategies involved in the production and perpetuation of discriminatory practices and their means of realization. Figure 4.1, below, gives a more detailed view of the functions of these strategies and possible linguistic means of realization.

Strategy	**Objectives**	**Devices**
REFERENTIAL/ NOMINATION	discursive construction of social actors, objects, phenomena, events, processes and actions	• membership categorization devices, deictics, anthroponyms, religionyms, ideologonyms etc. • tropes such as metaphors, metonymies and synecdoche (pars pro toto, totum pro parte) • verbs and nouns used to denote processes and actions etc.
PREDICATION	discursive qualification of social actors, objects, phenomena, events, processes and actions (positively or negatively)	• (stereotypical) evaluative attributions of negative or positive traits (e.g. in the form of adjectives, appositions, prepositional phrases, relative clauses, conjunctional clauses, infinitive clauses and participial clauses or groups) • explicit predicates or predicative nouns/ adjectives/ pronouns • collocations • comparisons, similes, metaphors and other rhetorical figures (including metonymies, hyperboles, litotes, euphemisms) • allusions, evocations, presuppositions/ implicatures etc.
ARGUMENTATION	justification and questioning of claims of truth and normative rightness	• topoi (formal or more content-related) • fallacies
PERSPECTIVIZATION	positioning speaker's or writer's point of view and expressing involvement or distance	• deictics • direct, indirect or free indirect speech • quotation marks, discourse markers/ particles

[54] A typical DHA analysis of a given discourse specifies the various topics as well as their interrelatedness. However, this is not the procedure followed in this study. This is because, in pragma-dialectics, topics that are not directly related to resolving a difference of opinion are excluded from the analysis.

		• metaphors • animating prosody etc.
INTENSIFICATION OR MITIGATION	modifying (intensifying or mitigating) the illocutionary force and thus the epistemic or deontic status of utterances	• diminutives or augmentatives • (modal) particles, tag questions, subjunctive, hesitations, vague expressions etc. • hyperbole, litotes, • indirect speech acts (e.g. question instead of assertion) • verbs of saying, feeling, thinking etc.

Table 4.1: Discursive strategies and means of realisation, adopted from Reisigl and Wodak (2016, p. 33)

Through these strategies, the identities of social actors are constructed and the categorical distinction between in- and out-groups is maintained. More important, however, is the justification and legitimation of discriminatory and exclusionary policies achieved through the DHA's argumentation strategies.[55] This thesis adheres to the DHA's principles and aims, and as a consequence, it adopts the DHA's discursive strategies and their respective means of realization as an analytical apparatus to examine the means by which Nasrallah manages to simultaneously construct a solidified in-group (the 8th of March coalition) and a disintegrated/ traumatized out-group (the 14th of March coalition).

The construction of in-/out-groups is also enacted via the construction of national identities. Thus, the contours of who belongs to 'Us' (i.e. share similar ideologies, moral values and beliefs) versus who are outsiders (i.e. have different values and beliefs) are marked by the discursive formation of identities. Wodak and her co-authors (2009, p. 33–

[55] Although the DHA conceptualisation of argumentation strategies draws, partially, on pragma-dialectics, pragma-dialectics provides a more regimented analytical apparatus for the analysis of argument schemes and fallacies. In this study, topoi that correspond to specific argument schemes, as identified in pragma-dialectics, are included in the thesis's analytical framework (see Chapter 3, section 4.2).

42) propose four macro-strategies that are employed in the discursive formation of national identities. These are: *constructive strategies*, *strategies of perpetuation*, *transformation* and *dismantling* or *destructive strategies*. Each of these macro-strategies, as Wodak et al. (ibid.) observe, incorporates a set of sub-strategies, topoi and fallacies, as well as respective means of realization.[56]

Constructive strategies attempt to construct and establish a certain national identity by promoting unification and solidarity, as well as differentiation between 'Us' and 'Them'. This macro-strategy might be realized through sub-strategies, such as assimilation/ inclusion strategies (emphasis on sameness and similarity), singularisation strategies (emphasis on national uniqueness), autonomisation strategies (emphasis on national autonomy and independence) and a strategy of avoidance. Moreover, strategies of unification, cohesivation and heteronomisation serve the macrofunction of constructing national identities. The strategies of unification and cohesivation place emphasis on unifying common features and worries, as well as on the need to unite and cooperate against an external threat. Heteronomisation strategies emphasize the dangers of extra-national dependence and thus aim to warn against the loss of national autonomy

Strategies of perpetuation attempt to maintain a threatened national identity and are attained through the sub-strategies of positive Self-presentation, continuation (emphasis on positive political continuity) and defence strategies (emphasis on an imminent threat and negative consequences of certain actions). *Transformation strategies* attempt to transform an established identity into another identity, the contours of which the speaker

[56] At this point, I need to clarify that I will only mention the macro- and sub-strategies that occur in the data; Wodak's typology offers a more detailed account.

has previously defined. Several sub-strategies can be deployed, including autonomisation, heteronomisation and dissimilation/ exclusion.[57] Finally, *dismantling or destructive strategies* aim to dismantle parts of an existing national identity without providing a new model to replace the old one. Strategies of assimilation, heteronomisation and dissimilation, among others, can serve the social macrofunction of dismantling a national identity construct (Wodak et al., 2009, p. 33–42).

The macro-strategies involved in the discursive formation of national identity also serve as a guide to examine the strategies that Nasrallah deploys in the construction and promotion of Resistance as a national identity, i.e. as a means to unify the Lebanese. This identity-constituting rhetoric is clearly seen in rescue narratives, via which controversial actions or decisions are reframed in order to comply with Resistance ideology tenets. In the proposed model, these strategies are incorporated within the analytical toolkit of pragma-dialectics.

3. Pragma-dialectics and its implementation

In pragma-dialectics, the ideal model of critical discussion is a template that guides the reconstruction, analysis and evaluation of argumentative discourse (see Chapter 3, section 3). Applying the ideal model of critical discussion means that the discourse is reconstructed and interpreted in terms of argumentative moves that are relevant to the resolution of a difference of opinion (van Eemeren et al., 2014). To resolve a difference of opinion, arguers must pass through four discussion stages (see Chapter 3, section 3.1**)**

[57] The authors explicate that the same sub-strategy can serve different functions based on the social macrofunction that the sub-strategy aims to realize (construction, perpetuation, transformation or dismantling).

and perform speech acts that are relevant to each move. Based on this view, Nasrallah's responses to the accusations and criticisms raised by opponents are reconstructed as part of an argumentative confrontation.

From a pragma-dialectical perspective, the result of this reconstruction process is an analytic overview that takes on board only those parts of the discourse that are relevant to resolving a difference of opinion and excludes those that are not pertinent to this goal. This means that speech acts that are irrelevant to the resolution of a difference of opinion are not part of the analysis, whereas implicit premises and indirect speech acts that play a role in the resolution of the disagreement are identified and therefore included in the analysis (cf. van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 2004).

Argumentative reality, as Van Eemeren and Grootendorst (2004) observe, does not correspond to the ideal model of critically resolving a difference of opinion in either content or structure. As far as the content is concerned, this can be attributed to the complicated nature of actual argumentative activities during which some parts that are relevant to the goal of resolving a difference of opinion are absent, left unexpressed or presupposed, and they are, therefore, not fully represented in discourse (ibid.). For example, as the authors illustrate, the definition of a difference of opinion, the distribution of discussants' roles and/or the starting points for discussion are most often not stated or expressed explicitly in discourse. On the level of structure, the beginning of a new discussion stage, the relation between different arguments advanced in support of a standpoint, is often left unexpressed (van Eemeren et al., 2014). In other instances, some premises are presupposed as they are presented in disguise in the form of rhetorical questions.

Argumentative reality, moreover, does not follow a linear progression. That is, it does not strictly and explicitly follow the order of the four stages of the ideal model that discussants have to pass through to ensure a reasonable resolution to a difference of opinion.[58] It is, therefore, the analyst's task to recover these elements through the process of reconstructing argumentative discourse, taking the ideal model as a template (van Eemeren et al., 2007).[59] In carrying out such a reconstruction, four types of analytic operations, known as *reconstruction transformations*, are used to identify the parts of discourse that are relevant to the resolution of a difference of opinion (van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 2004, p. 103–104). The first type involves the *deletion* of all the elements of the discourse that are not relevant to resolving the difference of opinion, such as discussion related to other topics or repetition.[60] The second transformation requires the *addition* of relevant elements that are implicit, indirectly expressed or presupposed. The third type is *substitution*, which consists of reformulating, unequivocally, relevant parts of the discourse that are ambiguous or vague. Finally, *permutation* involves rearranging parts of the discourse and argumentative moves in a way that shows their relevance to resolving the difference of opinion, i.e. rearranging them to conform to the four stages of the ideal model.

[58] According to van Eemeren (2010), the fact that in argumentative reality some stages are absent or are left implicit does not mean that the ideal model can be characterised as unrealistic because the dialectical insights concerning the requirements for resolving a difference of opinion contradict such a conclusion (see Eemeren et al., 1993, Ch. 3).

[59] According to van Eemeren et at., the demarcating criteria based on which a discourse is expected to have an argumentative function or not is whether the discourse, directly or indirectly, aims at overcoming doubt (2014, p. 534).

[60] As I mentioned earlier, the analysis of Nasrallah's speeches will only include the topics that are relevant for the resolution of disagreement even though they are relevant from a DHA's perspective.

A faithful reconstruction of argumentative practice should lead to an *analytic overview* that encompasses all the elements of discourse that are relevant to the resolution of a difference of opinion. Therefore, the analytic overview must address the following points:

1. The standpoints at issue in the difference of opinion;
2. The positions adopted by the parties and the procedural and material starting points;
3. The arguments that have been explicitly or implicitly advanced by the parties for each standpoint;
4. The argumentation structure for the whole argument advanced in defence of a standpoint;
5. The argument schemes used to justify a standpoint in each of the individual arguments that together constitute the argumentation;
6. The outcome of the discussion claimed by the parties.

(van Eemeren et al., 2014, p. 536)

The ideal model of critical discussion – comprising the four stages involved in critically testing standpoints and the associated rules of the *code of conduct* (see Chapter 3, section 3.1), as well as the different transformation operations involved in the reconstruction process, will form the basis on which Nasrallah's speeches are reconstructed, (partially) analysed and evaluated.[61] However, before I elaborate on the procedure for conducting the analysis, I have to lay out the reasons and underlying assumptions based on which the

[61] In pragma-dialectics, the ten rules constituting the *code of conduct* provide the dialectical norms that are pertinent to the resolution of a difference of opinion and outline all the fallacies that might hinder this process.

proposed model for incorporating pragma-dialectics into the analytical framework of the DHA is founded. This model forms, as I claim, a main contribution of this research.

4. Research proposal

4.1. Proposal for integrating pragma-dialectics and the DHA

The main starting points for the integration of pragma-dialectics within the analytical framework of the DHA are as follows:

First, this research adheres to Fairclough and Fairclough's (2012) conceptualization of political discourse as fundamentally argumentative in nature. Such a view also conforms with the DHA's view of discourse (see Chapter 3, section 2.1), where discourse is linked to argumentation about validity claims, such as truth and normative rightness, and involves social actors with different perspectives (Reisigl and Wodak, 2009: 89). Despite the DHA interest in the argumentative dimension of discourse, it remains limited to identifying argumentative strategies, in terms of topoi and fallacies, with no attention paid to the rules of rational discussion that these fallacies violate. Moreover, a typical DHA analysis does not require the reconstruction of arguments (Zagar, 2009, 2010), neither is there a clear procedure that describes how such a reconstruction can be operationalised within the DHA's analytical toolkit.[62] For example, Reisigl and Wodak (2001) in their analysis do not spell out the various premises, explicit or implicit, involved in

[62] One of the main criticisms levelled at the DHA is the absence of argument reconstruction that forms the basis for analysing and evaluating argumentative texts (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012; Zagar, 2009, 2010). In response, recent works by DHA scholars (Reisigl, 2014; Reisigl & Wodak 2016; Wodak, 2015) exhibit attempts to reconstruct argument schemes; however, the reconstruction remains confined to single argument schemes without providing a reconstruction of the whole argumentation.

constructing arguments, with no reference to pragma-dialectics or to other forms of argument reconstruction, such as Walton et al. (2008).

In the DHA, the argumentative function of a discursive event, e.g. defending, justifying, criticizing or refuting (as macrofunctions) a political position, proposal or policy etc., are not taken as playing a role in (re)producing, maintaining or transforming social conditions and realities. In the DHA, the emphasis is on ways of representing and how these function in establishing the domination of powerful groups and perpetuating prejudices. However, dominant and hegemonic ideologies do not only constitute representations. It is also in the ways of arguing, i.e. in the ways political actors choose to defend, justify and/or refute their political positions and proposals, that these ideologies are disseminated and, more importantly, gain legitimacy. Indeed, ideologies, van Dijk iterates, form "the basis of specific arguments for, and explanations of, specific social arrangements" (1998, p.19). Thus, I propose pragma-dialectics as a theoretical construct to compensate for these shortcomings. This is because pragma-dialectics offers a theoretical apparatus that accounts for the different moves, stages and elements (implicit premises, arguers' commitments etc.) that constitute argumentative discourse (Ihnen & Richardson, 2011).

Second, taking pragma-dialectics as the overarching framework for the reconstruction of Nasrallah's speeches presumes that resolving disagreement is the primary function of Nasrallah's argumentative discourse. Through the social activity of justifying and criticising claims, other functions, I argue, are also realized, e.g. the representation function. In this respect, I claim that the representation and legitimation functions of discursive events are linked. This research does not agree with the representation versus argumentation dichotomy and attempts to show the representation function of (some)

argumentative schemes and moves as well as the significance of the DHA's representation strategies in constructing premises for arguments. In Fairclough and Fairclough's (2012) view, representation strategies are subordinate to argumentation designed to deliberate over possible courses of action. However, I do not adhere to this position. In my view, representation and argumentation are linked for the following reasons:

a) Some argument schemes and fallacies, such as arguments from positive and negative consequences, arguments from positive and negative values (Walton & Macagno, 2010), argument from character to action or from action to character, argument from fear appeal (Walton et al., 2008), the three variants of *ad hominem* attacks (abusive, tu quoque, circumstantial), *slippery slope*, *straw man* fallacy, *post hoc ergo propter hoc*, *ad populum*, among others, have concomitantly an argumentative and representation function. In fact, it is hard to envision these as only providing reasons in support of claims and ignore that these also serve positive Self-presentation and negative Other-presentation.

b) Argumentation consists of a constellation of propositions advanced in defence of a standpoint. These propositions are composed of subjects and predicates which assign qualities or properties to subjects (van Eemeren et al., 2014). In other words, these can be referred to as nomination/ referential and predication strategies that construct arguments and standpoints. Therefore, I propose that the DHA's representation strategies – nomination/ referential, predication, intensification and mitigation – and perspectivisation strategies (see Section 2)

> play a pivotal role in constructing arguments and argumentative moves. In his analysis of anti-immigration discourse, Hart (2010) illustrates that predications tend to operate as premises in topoi. Reisigl and Wodak (2001) suggest that predications appear as the first part of conclusion rules. More recently, DHA scholars have shown that nomination/ referential and predication strategies construct premises for arguments (Reisigl 214; Reisigl & Wodak, 2016; Wodak, 2015). However, I extend this view to incorporate perspectivization, intensification and mitigation strategies, suggesting that these too play a role in constructing premises for arguments. Therefore, I consider the four discursive strategies involved in the representation of social actors and actions necessary for a discourse to attain its argumentative function.

As far as the legitimation function of discourse is concerned, I reiterate that I follow the position that considers legitimation (see Chapter 3, section 7.2) to be enacted through argumentation (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012; Hart, 2010; Reyes, 2011). A further fruitful suggestion that this research aligns with is the "potential of strategic manoeuvring for enriching the strategic analysis of DHA" (Ihnen & Richardson, 2011, p. 237). For Ihnen and Richardson, such an analysis should go beyond the analysis of strategic manoeuvring at the argumentation stage (arguments given in support of claims) to include strategies pertaining to strategic manoeuvring in the confrontation, opening and concluding stages. Such an analysis might reveal how particular issues related to the disagreement are highlighted, while others are ignored via defining the difference of opinion in an advantageous way (confrontation stage). It might also show how, in the opening stage, presuppositions and starting points are falsely presented as accepted points

for the discussion (ibid.), all of which feeds into demystifying and deconstructing hegemonic ideologies.

Ietcu-Fairclough (2007, 2008) argues that the analysis of the three aspects of strategic manoeuvring – topical potential, orientation to audience and presentational devices, which manifest themselves in every stage of critical discussion – brings additional insights to the processes of legitimation and recontextualization. In other words, the ways in which arguers strategically manoeuvre to steer the result of argumentation to their advantage underscore what aspects of the disagreement, as well as which arguments resonate well with the audience or are already accepted by the audience, are recontextualized in the argumentation. This research fully endorses this view and further proposes that the three aspects of strategic manoeuvring are also realized through referential, predication, intensification, mitigation and perspectivization strategies. What I am suggesting is that the resolution of a difference of opinion, achieved through the wise management of strategic manoeuvring, depends on the strategic use of representation strategies. Representation strategies, thus, contribute to realizing the macro-legitimation function that strategic manoeuvring is expected to serve. Figure 4.2, below, summarizes the argument so far.

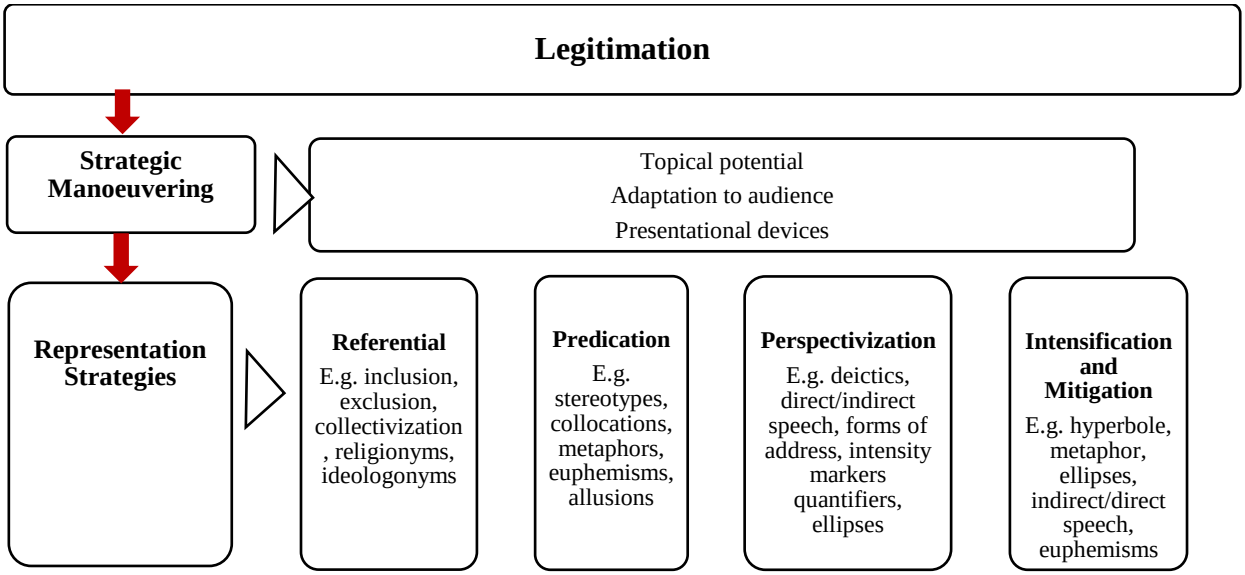

Figure 4.2: Legitimation enacted via strategic Manoeuvring and representation strategies

4.2. Integrating charisma and epistemic vigilance into the model

The integration of cognitive insights into the theoretical framework of this study builds on a body of research that has already established a relation between cognitive pragmatics and argumentation theory. This type of research is interested in explaining the cognitive mechanisms involved in interpreting and evaluating fallacies (Maillat & Oswald, 2009, 2011, 2013; Oswald & Hart, 2013; Maillat, 2013). Other fruitful insights are taken from research conducted by Hart (2010, 2011). Based on the former, the rhetorical effectiveness of 'source-related fallacies' (see Chapter 3, section 6.3.3) is interpreted in terms of addressees' failure to spot their fallacious character due to the type of cognitive constraint that these fallacies exert over argument processing, typically, by satisfying addressees' epistemic defenders. Concerning the latter, the calibration of trust directed

towards a source is achieved via the evidence that communicators provide to attest to their trustworthiness, benevolence and credibility (see Chapter 3, section 6.3.4).

These strategies, as I claim, are part and parcel of the successful construction of charisma (see Chapter 3, sections 3.1, 3.2). Thus, the construction of charisma, as it pertains to this study, plays a role in satisfying addressees' epistemic filters through: (i) the construction of a proper image or ethos via strategies that underscore the credibility and trustworthiness of the source (i.e. legitimation of assertions); and (ii) the construction of rescue narratives via which representations that do not cohere with addressees' background knowledge are reframed so as to make them compatible with their nationalist beliefs and values. In other words, this thesis claims that through the construction of charisma, Nasrallah attempts to induce addressees to expand their activated set of contextual assumptions in order to make them access undisputable and generally accepted background knowledge, beliefs and values (i.e. access a less highly activated set). This is, therefore, one type of legitimation that clearly exploits moral values and culture-specific beliefs. In the following section, I elaborate on Nasrallah's retrospective argumentation strategy.

4.3. Retrospective argumentation

Political communication, within the field of argumentation, belongs to the deliberative genre, i.e. it is future-oriented. However, van Eemeren has recently asserted that "political theorists recognize that the argumentation put forward in political discourse is also often about past performances and requires a retrospective account" (2013, p. 28). Retrospective critique in the DHA tradition aims at an informed understanding of the

discursive reconstruction of the past and its influence on the present (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001). Therefore, some studies focus on the narration of success stories (Heer et al., 2008; Wodak et al., 2009) and the effects of these in promoting unification. Other studies examine apologetic narratives and the effects that these have on the discursive construction of a more inclusive 'We' (Forchtner, 2014).

This study is mainly interested in legitimating controversial past actions and decisions. Past events in this study are not historical events, as in the aforementioned studies, that have become part of the collective memory of a nation. Instead, the past actions and decisions of concern to this study are those that belong to the immediate past and whose social and political effects are still in the making. The data analysed in this study refer to unilateral past actions and decisions taken by Nasrallah (or on behalf of his political party) and that were met with controversy, criticism and discontent. More specifically, this thesis analyses Nasrallah's strategic use of retrospective argumentation, not only as a means to legitimise past actions and decisions but also as a defence strategy to rebut opponents claims. His speeches are, thus, attempts to redeem a problematized validity claim to rightness in order to restore the legitimacy (Habermas, 1990) of already taken actions or decisions.

Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) note that argumentation advanced to justify past actions develops "in relation to a counter-argument, whose claim was that the action should not be performed, because it would lead to negative effects" (p.134). Accordingly, the arguer has to show that negative effects, predicated by opponents, have not materialized and that the intended goals behind the action have been achieved. Consequently, the claim that the action was right is empirically verified (ibid.). Fairclough and Fairclough's proposal for

justifying past actions entails criticisms, in terms of negative consequences, were put forward prior to the doing of the action (deliberation over possible courses of action). The arguer, then, embarks on justifying the criticized past action by showing that the cited negative consequences have not materialized, and in case they have, they have not undermined the intended goal.[63]

Hassan Nasrallah's retrospective argumentation takes a different path. First, Nasrallah's criticized actions or decisions were taken unexpectedly and unilaterally. There has been no prior deliberation concerning the nature of the action or decision, the reasons and motivations underlying them, nor the goals that these actions or decisions are expected to achieve. Second, opponents' arguments and claims are advanced only after concrete, rather than anticipated, negative consequences have emerged and have, in many respects, undermined the goal. Nasrallah's strategy for legitimating a past action or decision can be seen to have the following dimensions: (i) downplaying and trivializing the impact of negative consequences of the action, i.e. showing that the goal is more important than the materialized negative consequences; (ii) capitalizing on emerging positive consequences to show that these outweigh the negative ones cited; and, (iii) magnifying the negative consequences of failing to act via the construction of a hypothetical future scenario.

This set of positive and negative consequences is embedded within an overall legitimating strategy of referring to publicly shared moral values and beliefs, on the one hand, and

[63] From a different perspective, Walton (1990, 2003) maintains that retrospective reasoning is often used in legal and ethical argumentation. In the legal domain, the retrospective use of practical reasoning starts from the agent's actions and reasons backwards to determine what might have been the agent's real intentions and commitments that led to the action. Similarly, retrospective ethical reasoning aims to judge whether a past action can be justified as being right or wrong, taking from the facts or known circumstances a starting point to arrive at a moral/ ethical evaluation (Walton, 2003).

group-specific (Hezbollah's immediate audience) religious duties and commitments that motivated the action/ decision, on the other. This is, in my view, one of the main functions of Nasrallah's charismatic discourses, via which rescue narratives are exploited to unify a disintegrated nation around a threat to national unity. Based on this moral legitimation, the negative consequences of doing an action or taking a decision are provisionally accepted, given the moral and religious values that motivate the criticised actions or decisions. The conclusion of this chain of reasoning is: doing or deciding (A) was right. This, in turn, allows Nasrallah to rebut the oppositions' claim – that doing or deciding (A) was wrong. The overall structure of Nasrallah's retrospective argumentation is presented in Figure 4.3, below.

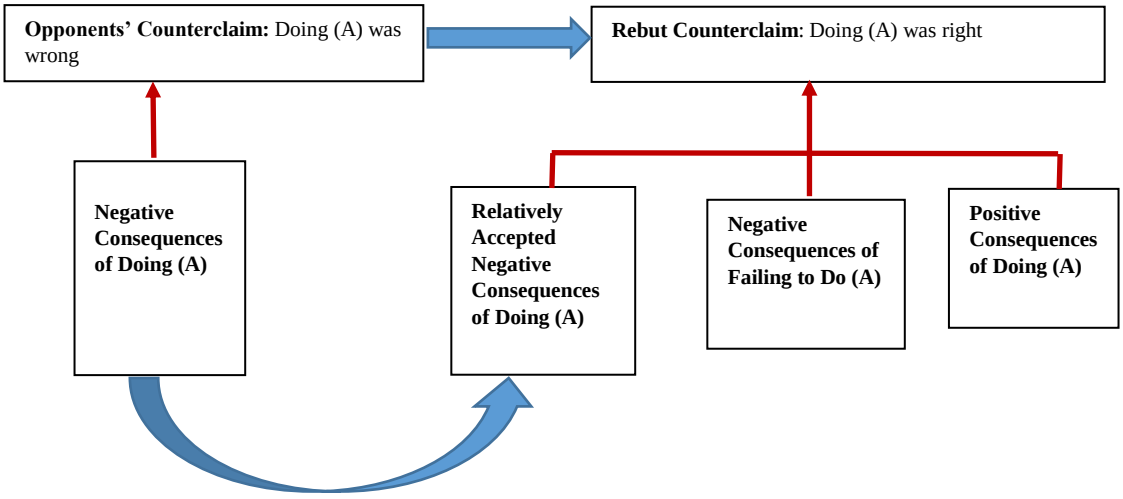

Figure 4.3: Provisional structure of Nasrallah's retrospective argumentation

Before concluding this section, I have to elaborate on the nature of arguments from positive and negative consequences advanced by Nasrallah, since these are predominantly used in his retrospective argumentation. The figure above shows that Nasrallah defends a descriptive standpoint (action A was right) using a normative or evaluative argument, i.e.

premises that point to the (un)desirable consequences of carrying out an action or adopting a policy or a plan. The combination of a descriptive standpoint and a normative argument, as van Eemeren et al. (2009) explicate, leads to an inappropriate use of the scheme of causality. In this case, Nasrallah is using *ad consequentiam*. van Eemeren et al. (2009) identify two variants of this fallacious scheme. The first mimics the argument scheme from positive and negative consequences, while the other mimics the argument scheme *reductio ad absurdum*.[64] This means that Nasrallah's arguments from positive and negative consequences amount to the first variant of *ad consequentiam*. The negative consequences that Nasrallah enumerates as being a result of failing to act amounts to the second variant of *ad consequentiam* (the argument points to the negative consequences of the contrary to of the standpoint).

In this section, I present my model for integrating pragma-dialectics within the DHA's analytical framework. In the next section, I outline the procedure followed in implementing the proposed model.

4.4. Procedure for implementing the model

This research embraces Reisigl's (2014) recent comments in which he acknowledges that the DHA's analytical framework should include more explicit and detailed reconstruction of arguments. Following Reisigl, the thesis offers a detailed reconstruction and analysis of Nasrallah's argumentative discourse based on the critical discussion model proposed by pragma-dialectics. Such a detailed and rigours reconstruction of argumentative texts can

[64] In pragmatic argumentation (argument scheme from positive and negative consequences), a normative standpoint is defended by stating the negative or positive consequences of adopting a certain plan, policy or action. In *reductio ad absurdum*, a standpoint is defended by pointing out that a consequence of the contrary to the standpoint is an undisputable falsity (van Eemeren et al., 2009, p. 172–174).

enrich and strengthen CDS's explanatory critique by adding another source of normativity. That is, it supplements the DHA with further evidence regarding the manipulative character of hegemonic discourses. The analysis of speeches adheres to the following procedure:

- At the level of contextualising argumentative discourse: The criticisms, objections and accusations forwarded by Nasrallah's opponents, i.e. the immediate context which gave rise to the confrontation, are presented in the first section of each of the analysis chapters (i.e. speech context). Thus, the speech context section outlines the speech occasion and the related claims and arguments associated with differences of opinion.

- At the level of locating arguments: This research follows argumentation scholars' differentiation among argumentation, explanation and narration (Fairclough and Fairclough, 2012; Reisigl, 2014; Walton, 2006). In their view, argumentation is related to justifying and defending controversial claims with the aim of convincing or persuading. Explanation aims to make something more comprehensible for the objective of clarifying or specifying things, i.e. the starting point of an explanation is accepted and not contested. Finally, narration can overlap with argumentation when narrative episodes are employed to back up a claim, e.g. illustrative argumentation schemes (Reisigl, 2014). This distinction is important because Nasrallah's speeches have many instances of narration and explanation tied to argumentation. In this case, the parts of speeches that are not related to the

resolution of disagreements are excluded from the analysis. This is presented in the preparatory section of each of the analysis chapters.

- At the level of identifying and recovering argumentative content: The four reconstruction transformation operations (see Section 3) are applied to ensure a faithful reconstruction of Nasrallah's argumentation.

- At the level of reconstruction: The ideal model of critical discussion is the guiding framework for the reconstruction of Nasrallah's argumentation, based on which the different stages of confrontation are reconstructed (confrontation, opening, argumentation and concluding stages). A further guide is the set of (argumentative) linguistic indicators (van Eemeren et al., 2007) that signal the beginning, the various argumentative moves and the ending of each stage.

- At the level of reconstructing argument schemes: In pragma-dialectics, symptomatic, causal and comparison argumentation are the three generic types of which all other argument schemes are sub-types. The analysis also refers to some argument schemes that are identified by Walton et al. (2008), such as argument from values, argument from sacrifice, argument from fear appeal, argument from character to action and from action to character, which all fall under pragma-dialectics generic types. Reference to the aforementioned schemes intends to facilitate the reconstruction of arguments.

- At the level of evaluating arguments: The evaluation proceeds in the following manner. First, following pragma-dialectics, the different argumentative schemes are evaluated based on whether, or not, they conform to the ten rules of critical discussion. Therefore, the evaluation specifies the types of violations involved and their effects in derailing the critical testing of standpoints. Second, the rhetorical effectiveness of some of these fallacies is assessed based on insights from cognitive pragmatics. The objective is to show whether the acceptability of a given representation depends on satisfying, or otherwise, audiences' epistemic vigilance. Third, the evaluation takes into account the effects of strategies underpinning the legitimation of assertions regarding audiences' epistemic assessments (Hart, 2010, 2011), which, as I claim, are part of the discursive construction of charisma. Figure 4.4, below, summarises the steps followed in the implementation of the proposed model.

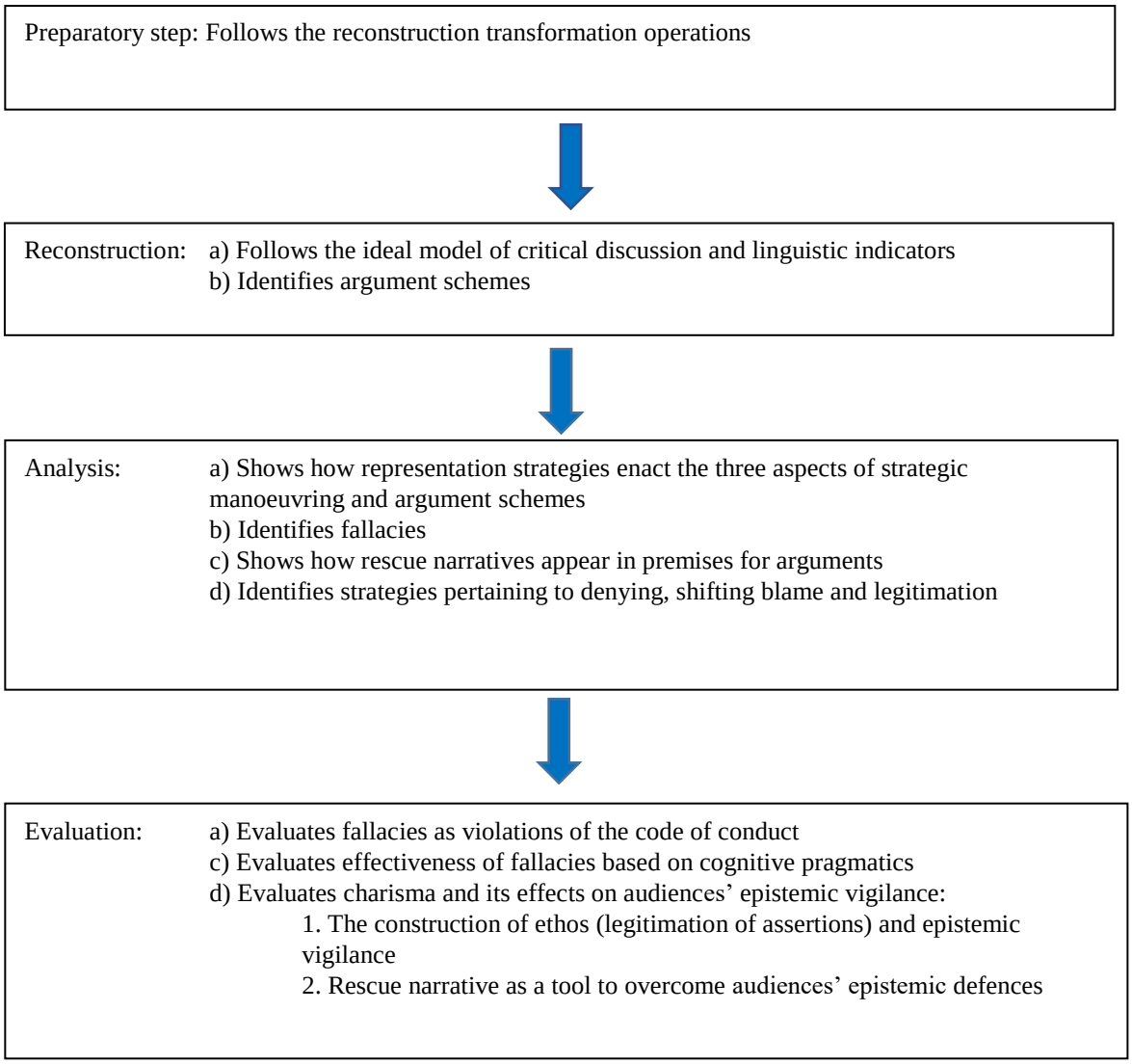

Figure: 4.4 Steps for implementing the proposed model

5. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have presented the main premises for incorporating pragma-dialectics into the DHA's analytical framework. The model perceives the representation and argumentative functions of discourse as linked, rather than dichotomous. I propose that the DHA's representation strategies are involved in the construction of argument schemes and in formulating the three aspects of strategic manoeuvring. I also propose that strategic

manoeuvring has a macro-function that goes hand in hand with resolving a difference of opinion to one's own advantage, i.e. a legitimation function. Moreover, I suggest that rescue narratives have an argumentative function, inasmuch as elements of these narratives are configured in premises for arguments. The chapter also provides a detailed description of the steps followed in implementing the proposed model. My next endeavour is to show the applicability of this model to the selected data and its efficacy in offering appropriate answers to the thesis's research questions. Therefore, the following chapters attempt to implement the proposed model on four speeches given by Nasrallah.

Chapter 5

July 2006 Speech: The Israeli war on Lebanon

1. Speech context

On 12 July 2006, and after a few hours of Hizbollah's sudden military operation – 'the sincere promise' – during which Hizbollah kidnapped two Israeli soldiers, Nasrallah held a press conference. In it, Nasrallah declared that 12 July marked 'loyalty day' for three Lebanese prisoners who had been held captive in Israel for several years (one of them had been imprisoned for more than 25 years) and for 'all Arab brothers who are captives and prisoners in the occupation prisons (Israel)'.[65] Nasrallah declared that this operation was the 'only available means', which was 'not only capable of releasing the three Lebanese prisoners, but also shed light, at the international level, on the enormous suffering, humiliation and tragedy that thousands of Arab, Palestinian and Lebanese prisoners and their families had endured for years'. That is, he emphasised the nobility of the goal (freeing prisoners) and the moral values that motivated the action (kidnapping Israeli soldiers).

Warning his opponents against voicing their objections at such a critical time, he announced that 'any debate concerning the rightness or wrongness of the action' would have to be postponed since 'now is the time for solidarity and cooperation (due to the expected Israeli retaliation)'. Moreover, Nasrallah confirmed that any countermeasures

[65] These direct quotes are taken from Nasrallah's press conference, which can be retrieved from Hizbollah's website: www.english.alahednews.com.lb

taken by Israel would not succeed in freeing the Israeli soldiers and the only possible way to release them was through 'indirect bilateral negotiations to swap prisoners'.

Within a few hours of Nasrallah's press conference, Israel waged war on Lebanon. The main objectives of this military assault, according to an Israeli press release, were to free the Israeli prisoners and dismantle Hizbollah's military power. Within the first few days of the Israeli aggression, hundreds of Lebanese civilians were killed, some were buried under rubble, thousands were injured, hundreds of thousands were displaced, the national airport was attacked, some bridges and power plants were destroyed. As the Israeli aggression increased in its severity and brutality, opponents' (the 14th of March party) criticisms and objections to the kidnapping of the Israeli soldiers dramatically intensified. The opponents' main claim (counterclaim) – kidnapping Israeli soldiers was not the right action – is substantiated by the following reasons: [66]

- The action instigated open war with Israel;
- Nasrallah's monopoly on the decision to wage war (informing neither the cabinet nor parliament) gives him the political and moral responsibility for the decision and ensuing repercussions (death toll, injuries, destruction etc.);
- The cost of freeing three prisoners was extremely high compared with the treacherous consequences;
- Nasrallah ignored alternative actions that could have been taken, such as seeking international diplomatic efforts to swap prisoners – as had been successfully done before.

[66] These arguments are taken from newspaper editorials and news reports concerning the progress of the war, and the political statements of opposition leaders (see Chapter 2, section 5).

On 25 July 2006, after two weeks of Israeli aggression and the controversy that the kidnapping of the Israeli soldiers spurred was exacerbating, Nasrallah gave a speech to respond to those criticisms and to clarify the reasons that motivated him to take action.[67]

2. Speech analysis

2.1. Preparatory step

The analysis will only focus on the political aspects of the speech that are directly related to differences of opinion (see Chapter 4, section 4.4). The parts related to diplomatic efforts to bring about ceasefire (lines 104–125), the latest developments on the battlefield (lines 126–154), such as the types of weaponry used, the names of cities under siege or attack, the types of military fighting taking place on either side of the conflict, and the effects of the psychological war launched by Israel (lines 155–177) are not included in the analysis as they are not relevant to the resolution of disagreements.

This speech is an attempt, by Nasrallah, to restore the legitimacy of a controversial past action, the consequences of which, whether positive or negative, are still in the making. It is an attempt, on the one hand, to rebut the opposition's counter-claim (kidnapping Israeli soldiers was not the right action) by formulating arguments that endow the action with normative legitimacy, and to defend himself against the accusations raised by his opponents, on the other. Given the nature of the charismatic bond that relates Nasrallah to his followers, i.e. they are more likely to be inclined to accept his claims out of trust (see Chapter 3, section 6.3.3), it seems reasonable to suggest that Nasrallah's focus is on the

[67] The translated English version of the speech can be found in Appendix B and the original Arabic version in Appendix C.

14th of March audience, who are swayed by their leaders' untenable arguments and unfair criticisms (lines 6–10). He is, thus, addressing his opponents' audience at a time when the sovereignty of the state is under direct attack.

2.2. Reconstruction and analysis

Confrontation Stage

The speech is divided into two parts. The first is an indirect response to the opposition's accusations and criticisms (lines 1–58), while the second part aims to legitimise and defend the rightness of kidnapping Israeli soldiers (lines 59–103, 178–189). The objective of the quasi-juridical part is to deny Nasrallah's direct responsibility for instigating war with Israel, to absolve himself of moral responsibility for the ensuing human suffering, and to shift the blame onto others, i.e. to show that Nasrallah is not to be blamed. The second part is an attempt to justify the rightness of his action through a series of *argumentum ad consequentiam*. As for the quasi-juridical part, Nasrallah strategically manoeuvres by leaving implicit the main accusations he aims to defend, as these are highly damaging to his image. In this respect, Nasrallah selects from the 'disagreement space' an issue which is easy to handle (topical potential). Thus, he presents the disagreement as if it were a conflict over facts and the appropriate interpretation of them. The 14th of March audience expected Nasrallah to explicitly address the accusations raised against him, especially the cost of freeing three Lebanese prisoners, i.e. the morality of the action. However, he shifts the discussion to the factual basis of his opponents' position and manages to cast doubt on their credibility. Nasrallah formulates his arguments and argumentative moves utilizing the DHA's representation strategies (see

Chapter 4, section 4.1). I will refer to examples of referential, predication, perspectivisation and mitigation strategies in the analyses. However, the main discussion of intensification strategies is presented in Chapter 9, section 5. Where possible, representation strategies are identified using the key presented in Table 5.1, below.

Referential strategies	Single lines
Predication strategies	Double lines
Perspectivization strategies	Dashed lines
Important phrases or clauses	Bold lines

Table 5.1: Key for identifying representation strategies

> We have to know and understand the true reality of this war and the background to the aggression. After two weeks, things are clearer now, with the availability of information, from political speeches, public statements either from officials in the American administration or the Zionist enemy, or from those who rotate within their orbit, and from political analysis and from facts which will all lead to the one obvious conclusion. If we know which war we are now fighting, we can know how to continue the march. (lines 6–12)

Nasrallah presents the purpose of addressing the audience in a highly abstract form: 'there are things that I need to comment on' (line 3–4), 'things are much clearer now' (line 7), 'facts which will all lead to the one obvious conclusion' (line 10), 'If we know which war we are now fighting, we can know how to continue the march' (line 12). This high level of abstraction permits Nasrallah to implicitly refer to accusations and to portray members of the audience as sensible and rational allies who are entitled to know the 'true reality of this war' (line 6). As for the former, Nasrallah is referring to the accusation of instigating an open war with Israel and suggests that there are facts and information that can verify Israel's responsibility. This new information that Nasrallah is about to disclose, which contradicts the 14th of March audience's background knowledge, will lead the audience to

arrive at the 'one obvious conclusion'; i.e. Israel is responsible for instigating war. This means that the 14th of March audience's knowledge about the war, which mainly derives from the 14th of March leaders' statements, speeches, and associated media, is distorted and impaired. As for the latter, Nasrallah suggests that once members of the 14th of March audience have access to the real facts, they will abandon the position of their leaders and adopt Nasrallah's more 'logical and moral' standpoint.

Nasrallah manages, on the one hand, to dissociate the audience from his opponents, and as such, he presents the mixed dispute as being a non-mixed one, i.e. Nasrallah is trying to resolve a disagreement with his political opponents and not the audience. On the other hand, through *argumentum ad hominem*, he indirectly attacks the 14th of March leaders, who do not know the facts, and even if they did they would be unable to arrive at 'the one obvious conclusion' (line 11).[68] This *ad homine*m supports the claim that the arguments and accusations put forward by the 14th of March leaders should not be accepted. This claim is premised on the inability of the 14th of March leaders to have access to the 'real facts' and to arrive at an appropriate interpretation and assessment of these facts, hence they are non-credible sources of information and their claims should be questioned (X is of a bad character; therefore, X is not credible and hence his arguments should not be accepted).

The conclusion that should be derived from the facts – sourced from, for example, the political statements of the Zionist enemy and the US administration (lines 8–11) – is not

[68] This fallacy is a violation of Rule 1, the Freedom Rule, which aims to restrict the other party's freedom of action and eliminate them as rational discussants by doubting their expertise and intelligence (the first example mentioned above) or by casting suspicions on their motives (the second example).

revealed at this stage. It is only declared at the argumentation stage: 'it (the war) was an American decision' (line 58). There is another instance of *argumentum ad hominem (circumstantial)* in: 'those who rotate within their orbit' (line 9–10). By 'those', Nasrallah refers to the leaders of the 14th of March party (Nasrallah's opponents), who are metaphorically presented as those who succumb to American and Israeli will and control. Because of their overt and harsh criticisms of kidnapping Israeli soldiers and their pro-American affiliations, they become suspects of serving the enemy's interests, i.e. he is doubting their motives. Through this *ad hominem*, Nasrallah undermines the credibility and trustworthiness of his opponents claiming that their actions are motivated by serving the interests of the enemy, hence their claims and accusations should not be accepted. Therefore, the negative representation of his opponents is accentuated through *ad hominem* attacks and metaphorical expressions. Moreover, *ad hominem* attacks serve to alert the (14th of March) audiences' epistemic vigilance towards the untrustworthiness of their leaders and their lack of credibility, thereby weakening the acceptability of their claims (see Chapter 3, section, 6.3.3).

Adaptation to the audience is achieved not only through defining the differences as a non-mixed dispute, but also via referential strategies (see Chapter 4, section 2), such as the use of the pronouns 'we', 'you' and the possessive determiner 'our', which serve as a collectivisation strategy (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001). To establish communion and empathy with the (opponents') audience, Nasrallah addresses them using the pronoun 'you': 'I want to talk to you' (line 3).[69] Nasrallah presents them as allies who are ready to continue the battle under his leadership: 'If we (Lebanese) know which war we are now fighting,

[69] In Arabic, you (antoum) indicates familiarity and is a sign of a conversational style.

we can know how to continue the march' (line 11–12). With these assimilation strategies (see Chapter 4, section 2), he positions the 14th of March audience as being part of his defence strategy against the Israeli aggression, rather than being on the other side, i.e. tipping the balance of the audience in his favour. He is thus appealing to the duties and responsibilities that the audience should accept once they are confronted with the facts. Nasrallah praises and flatters the Lebanese, who are qualified as a 'proud and dignified people' (line 2), and their endurance is 'miraculous' (line 1).

In contrast, ideological anthroponyms (ideologonyms, see Chapter 4, section 2) used as referential strategies (Reisigl & Wodak 2009), such as the 'Zionist enemy' (line 9) and 'barbaric Zionist aggression' (line 1), indicate the ideological position and perspective that Nasrallah adopts. A noteworthy presentation device is the level of ambiguity and abstraction conferred on the main issues to be tackled: 'things to comment on', 'attitudes that should be taken, 'things are clearer', 'one obvious conclusion'.[70] This strategic ambiguity, which serves as a mitigation strategy, conforms with Nasrallah's evasion strategy, namely, avoid mentioning points of disagreement. After casting doubt on the 14th of March party's position and credibility, Nasrallah embarks on revealing the sources of his knowledge/ facts.

Opening Stage

At the opening stage, the starting points of the discussion are stated, the roles of the participants in the dispute are delineated, and concessions derived from exploiting

[70] Ambiguity fallacy is a violation of Language Use Rule, Rule 10 of critical discussion, and is caused by referential, semantic or syntactic ambiguity.

common background knowledge and beliefs (endoxa) are established. With respect to participants' roles, Nasrallah is the antagonist of his opponents' counterclaim (the kidnapping was a wrong action) and the protagonist of his own claim (the kidnapping was the right action) at the same time. This stage opens with Nasrallah revealing the sources of facts which lend themselves to the 'true reality of this war' (line 6). Ironically, the source of his factual basis is a statement from the US Foreign Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, in which she declared the birth of the 'New Middle East' (the statement was made a few days after the Israeli assault on Lebanon):

> After the US Foreign Secretary of State's statement about the new Middle East, by which she means the American-Israeli new Middle East, can anyone believe that this huge enormous project (the new Middle East) was born a few days after the Resistance captured the two Israeli soldiers? (lines 13–16)

Nasrallah strategically manoeuvres by (implicitly) eliciting concessions derived from a rhetorical question. The proposition conveyed in the rhetorical question (the new Middle East is a pre-planned project) is, thus, taken as a common starting point for the discussion, instead of being defended. By appealing to the audience's common sense – no one believes that this huge project could have been born within a few days – he presents his claim as if it is self-evident and does not need proof. Thus, he commits the fallacy *of evading the burden of proof.*[71] Nasrallah further substantiates this assumption through an explicit assertion: 'All the evidence confirms that the preparation to launch this project (the new Middle East) started at least one year ago' (lines 17–18). This means that the 14th of March party advanced a false proposition; i.e. kidnapping the soldiers gave Israel a

[71] Presenting a standpoint as self-evident, immunising it from criticism and giving a personal guarantee as to its rightness are argumentative attempts by which the protagonist violates the Obligation to Defend Rule, Rule 2 (see Appendix A).

pretext to wage war against Lebanon is wrong. However, Nasrallah asserts that there are obstacles that impede the implementation of the 'new Middle East' project.

> In the new Middle East, there is no place for any Resistance Movement, so work is needed to remove these obstacles exemplified by the Resistance Movements in Lebanon, Palestine, Syria and Iran. (lines 21–23)

Nasrallah's evidence for the presence of obstacles facing the project is based on American estimations. He states: 'According to American estimations there are obstacles facing the new Middle East' (line 18–19). Nasrallah's strategic ambiguity (estimations, obstacles) makes it hard for the audience to question and evaluate the nature of the evidence and the source of the information. In Nasrallah's view, what Rice means by the 'new Middle East' is an area that will be directly controlled by the US administration and Israel in order to manage and exploit the region's 'resources and wealth' (line 20). Nasrallah finally reveals that the Resistance movements in Lebanon, Syria and Iran are 'the obstacles' that prevent the US and Israel from implementing the project. Though Nasrallah attributes the sources of his information to Rice and American estimations (the supposed enemy), he provides his own interpretation of what the 'new Middle East' project amounts to.

The question that presents itself here is whether Nasrallah misrepresents, distorts or exaggerates the views of the group that his opponents affiliate with (the US), i.e. commits the *straw man fallacy*.[72] Despite the fact that Rice declared the birth of the new Middle

[72] Misrepresenting, distorting or attributing a fictitious standpoint to (fictitious or real) an opponent or referring to the views of the group to which the opponent belongs are violations of Rule 3, the Standpoint Rule.

East, there is no official document or statement from the US administration that clearly defines or clarifies what is meant by it. Nasrallah's reference to statements attributed to American officials aims to satisfy the 14th of March audiences' epistemic filters, due to the latter's overt affiliation to the US, thereby enhancing the acceptability of his propositions. This is because by referring to an expert opinion (Rice), the likelihood of accepting statements attributed to the source is enhanced (source X is an expert in a specific domain that contains proposition A and X asserts that A is true; therefore, A may plausibly be taken to be true). Another instance of adapting to the audience can be seen in paving the way for a hypothetical future scenario presented in terms of obstacles that should be removed (lines 22–23). By defining these obstacles as inherently linked to the Resistance movements in Lebanon, Syria and Iran, he is appealing to common background knowledge and beliefs, in particular, the shared ideology that Lebanon is a Resistance country (Resistance as a binding ideology).

As for presentational devices, the 'new Middle East' is referred to as the 'huge enormous project' (line 15) and it is negatively qualified as being under American and Israeli control (line 19–20) and the place in which there is 'no place for any Resistance Movement' (lines 21–22). Resistance movements are metaphorically portrayed as 'obstacles facing the new Middle East' (line 18–19), which the Americans must remove. The metaphor is purposefully used to propagate fear, which will be further accentuated in the hypothetical future scenario. Referential and predication strategies serve to construct a negative representation of the 'new Middle East'.

Finally, in this stage, Nasrallah manages to establish his credibility and objectivity by emphasising his reliance on facts and attributing propositions to authorities whom the

respective audiences trust (see Chapter 3, section 6.3.3). To enhance his ethical status, Nasrallah constructs himself as helping and saving the Lebanese people through a rescue narrative, which he exploits in the argumentation stage.

Argumentation Stage

The line of defence that is related to the quasi-juridical part of the speech depends mainly on arguments from authority (Rice's statement) and arguments from example. Nasrallah's use of arguments from authority in the form of attributing propositions to Condoleezza Rice (line 13) makes the starting point unquestionable, because the members of the 14th of March audience consider her a credible source. The rhetorical effectiveness of this *ad verecundiam* is achieved by attributing propositions to an external source whom members of the opposition audience are expected to trust, thus satisfying their epistemic filters (Oswald & Hart, 2013) and enhancing Nasrallah's credibility at the same time.[73] As mentioned earlier, Nasrallah claims that the main objective of the pre-planned new Middle East is to eliminate resistance movements in the region (in Syria, Lebanon, Iran and Palestine) (lines 21–23). Therefore, he tries to back up a general claim by illustrating how this is the case in Palestine (lines 24–30), using an argument from analogy.[74] However, drawing such a general conclusion based on evidence derived from one example is an instance of *hasty generalization* or *secundum quid*.[75] To make the

[73] This fallacy is a violation of Rule 8, the Argument Scheme Rule. It presents the standpoint as right because an authority says it is right (van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 1992, p. 213).
[74] The argument from example (Garssen, 2017; van Eemeren et al., 2007) echoes the topos of illustrative examples identified by Wodak et al. (2009). For the difference between argument from example and argument from analogy see (Garssen, 2017 p. 35).
[75] This fallacy is a violation of the Argument Scheme Rule, Rule 8. Its fallaciousness is attributed to the incorrect application of the argument scheme of concomitance by making generalisations based upon observations that are not representative or sufficient.

illustrative example more convincing, it is formulated using cause-effect relations in which one event is, supposedly, the cause of the following event.

> The project started in Palestine. What was required was the termination of the Resistance Movement in Palestine. [---] They (Israelis) killed Palestinian people, starved them, deprived them of humanitarian aid, and they were pushing things to the verge of internal strife. Then, the operation to capture the Israeli soldier in Gaza took place. The importance of this operation is that it pushed away the danger of internal strife, and returned Palestinians to their true and original battle. (lines 24–30)

According to Nasrallah, because the resistance movement (Hamas) won the parliamentary elections, the Palestinians were punished (killed, subject to starvation, put under siege) and pushed to the verge of civil strife. Then, Hamas's operation to capture an Israeli soldier changed the scene, prevented civil strife and redirected the Palestinians back to their original battle. This example shows the pressure that the Palestinian resistance was subject to, despite winning the elections, and seeks to draw a lesson from Palestinians' response to the kidnapping operation. This means that just as capturing an Israeli soldier in Gaza united Palestinians and redirected them back to their original battle (fighting Israel), this should have been the case in Lebanon or how the 14th of March leaders should have reacted to Hizbollah's operation (kidnapping Israeli soldiers). This could also be taken as an indirect *ad hominem* attack on his opponents, who failed to meet the expected measures.

With respect to the Lebanese context, Nasrallah uses the same strategy of enumerating events in the form of cause-effect relations (lines 31–51), which pertain to the efforts made by the US administration and Israel to find a domestic party that will terminate Hizbollah. The objective is to deny his direct responsibility for instigating war and to find a blame-taker, i.e. an entity that Nasrallah can blame for instigating war. For example:

'They (Americans and Israelis) bet, but their bets failed at the local level, for they did not find anyone capable of terminating the Resistance Movement and ending its existence in Lebanon' (lines 33–34). This is because, as Nasrallah states, the Americans 'were surprised by the public support that the Resistance Movement enjoys' (line 35–36). Therefore, they had to bet on the national army to eliminate Hizbollah (lines 36–43), but this also failed due to the patriotism of the Army and its leaders.

Three points are worth mentioning here. First, by presenting the case as if the resistance (Hizbollah) is facing an imminent threat, by virtue of a pre-planned project, he is appealing to the audiences' compassion and empathy through propagating fear. Thus, he is defending his position using *ad misericordiam*.[76] Second, by flattering the audience, other political factions and the army for their patriotic and nationalist views (refusing to take part in terminating Hizbollah), he is appealing to people's emotions by stirring symbols of national pride, i.e. *ad populum* fallacy or pathetical fallacy.[77] Nasrallah plays on the audience' sentiments by using emotively laden language to arose emotions in support of his position (i.e. emotions such as enthusiasm, pride, anger, or disgust are used to express evidence for statement A; therefore, statement A is true). Third, by referring to a set of (internal) political actors who refused to take part in terminating Hizbollah, he is evoking elements of a conspiracy plot prepared by the Americans.[78] Therefore, through the construction of a conspiracy, Nasrallah manages to deny direct responsibility, claim

[76] This fallacy violates Rule 1, the Freedom Rule, by playing on the other party's feelings of compassion.
[77] This *ad populum* violates Rule 4, the Relevance Rule, of critical discussion by exploiting emotions and sentiments, i.e. using non-argumentative means of persuasion.
[78] Recently, Oswald and Herman (2016) assert the argumentative function of conspiracy theories. The authors propose a rhetorical-pragmatic model to analyse the argumentative elements embedded in conspiracy theories.

victimhood (victim-perpetrator reversal strategy in the DHA's terms) and create culprits to blame.

This series of failed attempts led the Americans to conclude that: 'there is no local way they can bet on to terminate the Resistance Movement and wipe out its existence' (lines 52–56). The same is equally true for Hizbollah's regional allies – Syria and Iran – who refused to terminate Hizbollah (lines 48–51). Therefore, 'It was an American decision to wage an Israeli war on Lebanon' (line 58) which, according to Nasrallah, was supposed to take place in 'late September or the beginning of October' (lines 61–62). As a consequence, Nasrallah manages to shift the blame onto the Americans, who hold the responsibility for instigating the war.

Nasrallah's narration of this succession of events in the form of one event following another is highly effective. This is because a cause-effect relation "suggests only a minimum of disputable connections" (van Eemeren & Houtlosser, 1999, p. 491). However, causal argumentation does not seem to offer a conclusive support to the claim – the war was an American decision. To judge the fallaciousness of causal argument schemes, van Eemeren et al. (2007) propose a set of critical questions to evaluate whether the proposed cause does indeed lead to the mentioned (un)desirable result, or whether the proposed effects can be caused by another cause or achieved by other means. Answering this set of critical questions reveals the following. First, presenting the idea of punishing the Palestinian people – which is indeed a fact – due to Hamas's victory in the election, is a biased representation, if not erroneous. There are other causes, such as Hamas's desire for autonomy after taking over Gaza and Hamas's continuous shelling of some Israeli villages. Secondly, Hamas's kidnapping of the Israeli soldier was welcomed by Hamas's

supporters and followers, whereas other Palestinian factions criticised the action and considered it an unwarranted escalation with Israel.

These fallacious cause-effect arguments are based on Nasrallah's own personal observations and understanding of events. These fallacious attempts are instances of the *post hoc ergo propter hoc* fallacy.[79] However, the primary function of these causal relations is to deny his direct responsibility for instigating the war (implicitly responding to the opposition's accusation) and to justify the attribution of blame to another party – the Americans are to blame.

It is at this stage that the speech shifts from an indirect response to accusations to an attempt to legitimate the action of kidnapping Israeli soldiers, i.e. to show that the action of kidnapping Israeli soldiers was a right action. On finally reaching 'the one obvious conclusion' (line 11), that he is not to blame because the Americans had pre-planned and prepared the war, he narrates a fictitious scenario of a presumed pre-planned war.

> The plan (hypothetical scenario) entails that all of a sudden, with or without a pretext (kidnapping the soldiers), the enemy (Israel) [---] launches a wide ground offensive to take full control of the south of Litani region in order to prevent launching missiles. At the same time, the Israeli Air Force strikes the homes of senior Hizbollah officials, Hizbollah's headquarters and institutions, and the infrastructure to cripple the Resistance and the whole country [-----]. This (the plan) was intended to be a harsh blow from which it is difficult to recover. This is the scenario that would have been implemented had we not captured the Israeli soldiers. (lines 65–73)

The causal-relations of this narrative are of the means-goal type. For example, part of the pre-planned war scenario, according to Nasrallah, is a wide ground military invasion to

[79] This fallacy is a violation of Rule 8, the Argument Scheme Rule. It amounts to an incorrect use of the scheme of causality, which leads to inferring a cause-effect relation from the mere observation that two events take place one after the other (van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 1992, p. 213).

the south of the Litani region (a Hizbollah stronghold) with the goal of preventing Hizbollah from launching missiles. Air strikes are expected to hit the homes of senior Hizbollah officials and headquarters with the goal of paralysing Hizbollah's military power, and hence paralysing Hizbollah. According to Nasrallah, the kidnapping of the Israeli soldiers 'prevented the most dangerous plan and the worst war scenario for Lebanon and the Resistance, and the Lebanese people' (lines 75–77).

Through this hypothetical dreadful scenario, Nasrallah constructs the elements of a self-defence rescue narrative (see Chapter 3, section 7.1): the villains are the Americans and the Israelis, the victims are Hizbollah and the Lebanese people, the hero/ victim is Hizbollah who acts to defend himself and the Lebanese nation. The hypothetical scenario invokes fear and a sense of urgency to deal with the looming danger; therefore, it leads the audience to the conclusion that something should be done to eliminate the foreseen threat. The sense of fear that is propagated through the construction of a hypothetical scenario has a dual function. On the one hand, it warns the audience against loss of national autonomy, independence, freedom, and sovereignty. In this case he is warning the public against heteronomy, i.e. exploiting a strategy of heteronomisation (see Chapter 4, section 2). On the other, it unites different sections of the audience in a quest to oppose an imminent threat, i.e. using a unification strategy (see Chapter 4, section 2). From a different point of view, the elements of the rescue narrative seem to configure as premises in the argument from fear appeal. Adopting Walton's et al. (2008, p. 333) scheme, the argument from fear appeal can be reconstructed as follows:

Premise 1:	If Hizbollah did not kidnap the soldiers, then the worst war scenario will take place
Premise 2:	The war scenario is very bad for the resistance and for Lebanon
Premise 3:	Therefore, the scenario ought to be prevented if possible

Premise 4:	But the only way to prevent the worst war scenario is to take Israel by surprise through kidnapping soldiers
Conclusion:	Therefore, Hizbollah had to kidnap the soldiers

The rescue narrative allows Nasrallah to construct himself as a saviour or as the one whose actions will bring salvation to the Lebanese people, i.e. the action should be praised and not criticised. It also frames the action as serving Lebanon's national interest, which is in stark contradiction to opponents' claims. Moreover, the negative effects of the hypothetical future scenario also appear as premises for *argumentum ad consequentiam.* These negative consequences highlight what would be the case had Nasrallah not taken the action, i.e. the worst war scenario would have been implemented.[80]

> In a single moment, the south of Litani is invaded. Homes, centres, and institutions are raided. We (Hizbollah) would thus lose control, the ability to communicate together and the ability to manoeuvre, as a result the Resistance is terminated. (lines 82–85)

This chain of events that the war scenario is expected to trigger takes the form of the *slippery-slope* fallacy.[81] At the same time, Nasrallah defends his descriptive standpoint (kidnapping of Israeli soldiers was right)) by highlighting the positive consequences of kidnapping the Israeli soldiers, i.e. *argumentum ad consequentiam*.[82] One of the most important positive consequences of capturing the soldiers is that the 'Zionist enemy found himself in a humiliating position' (lines 78–79), which caused the Israelis to rush to war instead of continuing their preparations until the 'end of September or the beginning of

[80] This variant of *ad consequentiam* is the fallacious counterpart of the argument scheme *reductio ad absurdum*. The fallacy is a violation of the Argument Scheme Rule, Rule 8. It consists of pointing to the consequences of the contrary to the standpoint (see Chapter 4, section 4.3).
[81] This fallacy is a violation of Rule 8, the Argument Scheme Rule, it uses the scheme of causality incorrectly by erroneously suggesting that by taking a course of action one will be moving from a bad situation to a worse one.
[82] This variant of *ad consequentiam* is a violation of the Argument Scheme Rule, Rule 8. It consists of defending a factual or descriptive standpoint by pointing to the positive consequences, i.e. confusing facts with value judgements (see Chapter 4, section 4.3).

October' (line 62). By going to war earlier than planned, Hizbollah prevented 'the enemy (Israel) from taking us (Hizbollah/Lebanon) by surprise' (line 81). These positive consequences will probably lead the audience to evaluate the action as desirable, since they confirm to the anti-Zionist ideology that most Lebanese subscribe to. Similarly, preventing Israel from implementing the pre-planned war scenario and saving the Lebanese from its horrendous effects might also lead to a positive evaluation of the action.

The second level of legitimation emphasises the moral values that informed the goal, and based on which the action is in turn justified. In this case, Nasrallah is advancing an argument from moral values to justify the goal (Macagno & Walton, 2010; Macagno, 2013), followed by an argument from the nobility of a goal scheme (van Eemeren et al., 2007, van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 1992), to justify the means via which the goal is realised.[83] In an argument from moral values, the goal (saving and protecting Lebanon from the worst war scenario) is justified based on the moral values (Lebanon's freedom, sovereignty, and independence) that motivate the goal (i.e. a value is a reason to retain commitment to a goal), whereas in an argument from the nobility of a goal, the action (kidnapping the Israeli soldiers) is justified based on the nobility of the goal (i.e. contributing to a noble goal is a reason for doing an action). Therefore, the action that was classified by Nasrallah's opponents as falling within the category of actions that ruin and devastate the country is redefined and reframed, through a rescue narrative, as an action that saved and rescued Lebanon and the Lebanese from the worst war scenario. It is at

[83] According to van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1992), the argument scheme from the nobility of a goal is a subtype of causal argumentation. The scheme emphasises the nobility of the goal that the action is expected to realise, thereby justifying the action/ means.

this stage that the relation between salvation/ rescue narratives (part of the construction of charisma) can be related to audience epistemic vigilance (see Chapter 4, section 4.2)

Members of the14th of March audience are most likely against the action, by virtue of the criticisms advanced by their leaders and the materialised negative consequences of the action. Thus, they are expected to exercise vigilance towards a representation that contradicts or is incoherent with their background information related to the action. Therefore, to make his justification coheres with their background knowledge and beliefs, Nasrallah induces them to access a less highly activated set of indisputable beliefs that weigh in favour of the action (see Chapter 3, section 6.3.3). This is achieved, as I propose, through a rescue or salvation narrative. The salvation/ rescue narrative, which invokes nationalist and anti-Zionist ideologies, might trigger members of the audience to revise their previous assumptions or provisionally entertain the new representation.

Based on this view, the action of kidnapping Israeli soldiers, which brought war, has to be regarded as an act of resistance and as serving the goal of saving and rescuing Lebanon from the worst war scenario (line 102). According to Nasrallah, if the project was implemented it would 'bring Lebanon back under American-Israeli domination and control' (lines 94–95). Classifying the action as falling within the category of the praised and honourable actions of the Resistance movement entails the action of kidnapping the Israeli soldiers being honourable and praiseworthy. In this case, Nasrallah is advancing an argument from classification (Macagno, 2013; Walton et al., 2008, p. 68). Nasrallah explicitly states the conclusion of the confrontation, which is presented in value-laden lexes that invoke national sentiments.

> Our destiny is to fight, together with the noble patriots, this horrific project and to prevent this war from achieving its goals and to engage in the battle of liberating the rest of our land and prisoners and to engage in the battle of true sovereignty and true independence [---] nor are we going to accept any formula (ceasefire) that is against national sovereignty, interests and independence, especially after all these sacrifices and no matter how long this confrontation lasts and no matter how huge the sacrifices will be. Our true and basic slogan is dignity first. (lines 99–102, 113–117)

However, the second type of *argumentum ad consequentiam* is concerned with the negative consequences of capturing the soldiers (lines 117–118).[84] It is, therefore, an indirect response to the opponents' accusation related to the number of casualties and the level of destruction. Thus, he speaks about huge sacrifices, destroyed infrastructure and homes. Interestingly, Nasrallah refers euphemistically to the deaths of thousands of Lebanese. Given the set of moral values which underlie the goal, these negative consequences have to be seen as sacrifices in the battle for sovereignty and independence. Accordingly, the negative consequences of capturing the soldiers become premises in an argument from sacrifice (Walton et al., 2008, p. 322). Adopting Walton's et al. argument scheme, Nasrallah's argument from sacrifice can be reconstructed as follows:

Premise 1:	For the thing X (saving and rescuing Lebanon) sacrifice S (human losses, destruction etc.) is made
Premise 2:	If a great sacrifice S has been made for X, then the value V of X will be greater
Premise 3:	A great sacrifice S has been made
Conclusion:	X (saving and protecting Lebanon) is of a great value V

In other words, saving and protecting Lebanon, as well as preserving Lebanon's dignity, sovereignty, and independence, is worthy of these sacrifices. Nasrallah's line of defence for legitimating the action of kidnapping the Israeli soldiers can be reconstructed as shown in Figure 5.2, below.

[84] This variant of ad consequentiam is a violation of the Argument Scheme Rule, Rule 8. It consists of defending a factual or descriptive standpoint by pointing to the negative consequences, i.e. confusing facts with value judgements.

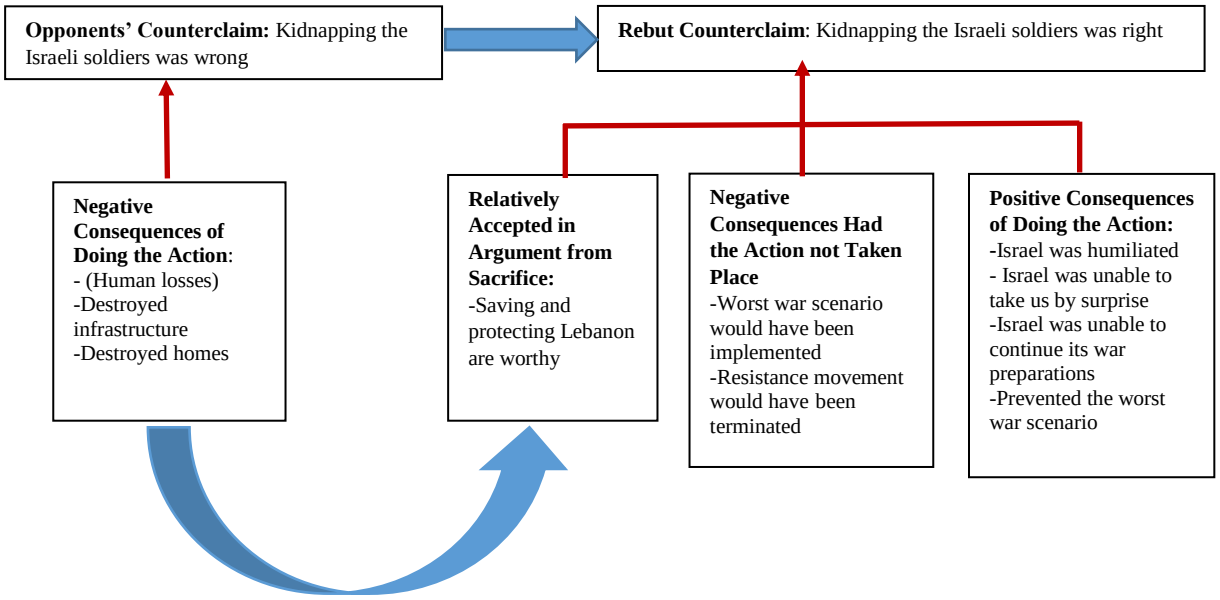

Figure 5.2: Positive and negative consequences of kidnapping the Israeli soldiers

The aforementioned arguments are formulated to suit the audience's preferences. In the part related to denying direct responsibility and shifting the blame, Nasrallah exploits anti-Zionist and anti-American sentiments. Through narrating past events that took place in Palestine and Lebanon, Nasrallah constructs a regional in-group (Lebanon, Palestine, Syria and Iran) that is in a constant struggle to defeat American and Israeli plots. At the national level, what caused the defeat of these plots is the unity, solidarity, nationalism, and patriotism of the 'dear Lebanese people' (line 90). Similarly, in the part related to legitimation of the action, Nasrallah constructs a horrifying and frightening scene of what the situation would be had the action not taken place. This is also emphasised by the negative attributions with which the plan/ project is predicated, 'most dangerous plan', 'the worst war scenario'.

In his presentation of the arguments, Nasrallah manages to construct two contrasting scenes. The first relates to the calamities of the would-be-scenario contrasted with the advantages gained by capturing the soldiers. Had Hizbollah not captured the soldiers and the pre-planned scenario been implemented, a 'wide ground offensives' and air strikes (line 67) would have 'crippled' (line 70) the resistance and made it 'lose control'. At the national level, the objectives of the scenario are to 'bring Lebanon back under American-Israeli domination' (line 95) and to dissociate Lebanon from its 'history, commitment, culture and real identity' (lines 96–97). This is immediately contrasted with humiliating Israel, thus forcing it to start the war. Given all these invaluable gains of the action, what the 'Resistance did is guided by Divine mercy' (line 93). At this level, Nasrallah alludes to religious convictions that not only guide this action but also provide a third level of normative legitimacy.

Concluding Stage

Nasrallah explicitly states the conclusion of the discussion, 'We (Hizbollah) are determined to continue fighting and to stand up to protect our dignity and our sovereignty and our freedom' (lines 179–181). In this assertion, Nasrallah presumes that he has successfully refuted the accusations raised against him and presented conclusive evidence that weighs in favour of the action. To put it differently, Nasrallah's statement implicitly asserts the righteousness of the action. Thus, the practical conclusion that can be drawn is to continue along the same lines. In this case, Nasrallah commits the fallacy *of making an absolute of the success of the defence*.[85] Nasrallah concludes the confrontation by

[85] This fallacy violates the Concluding Rule, Rule 9, by concluding that a standpoint is true merely because it has been successfully defended.

selecting lexical terms that convey religious convictions. On the one hand, this gives legitimacy (fighting Israel is a religious duty) to the action, and on the other it emphasises the need for more sacrifices to attain the noble goal of saving and protecting Lebanon.

Interestingly, at the level of religious legitimation, the register shifts from the more inclusive 'we', which encompasses all Lebanese irrespective of their political affiliations, to the use of pronominals and determiners that refer only to Hizbollah fighters and their direct community. This can be deduced from Nasrallah's reference to 'martyrdom' (line 179) and the 'promised victory' (line 182), which alludes to the 'Divine Promise' (religionyms, Reisigl & Wodak 2001). In this view, martyrdom 'creates victory' (line 179) and 'all this blessed blood must win over the sword' (line 187–188). This means that the Almighty has promised Hizbollah, being God's party, victory, which is only attainable through sacrifice, steadfastness, and patience. This is an effective way of adapting to Hizbollah's immediate audience. After all, it is Hizbollah's fighters who are on the battlefield and Hizbollah's audience who are paying the highest price and whose blood 'will win over the sword' (line 187–188).

3. Conclusion

The analysis of this speech illustrates the mechanisms that Nasrallah deploys to take advantage of the rhetorical opportunities afforded by the dialectical situation in each stage. Nasrallah's strategic manoeuvring is evident through the careful selection of topical potential, adaptation to the audience and presentational devices that he exploits in his attempt to attain two interrelated goals: responding to accusations and restoring intersubjective recognition of a controversial past action.

In the confrontation stage, Nasrallah manages to manipulate the 'zone of disagreement' by implicitly responding to accusations and presenting differences of opinion in terms of conflicts over facts instead of moral values. In this respect, he chooses to defend himself against blame for instigating war with Israel, while ignoring the issue of his moral responsibility for human losses. In dealing in an indirect way with some accusations, he is thus using an evasion strategy that permits him to avoid contradictions with respective audiences. In fact, flattering the audience and presenting them as rational allies who are ready to adopt his standpoints once they are confronted with the 'reality of things' were the dominant strategies in the opening stage.

Manipulating the audience's emotions, such as fear, was fully exploited in the argumentation stage. The construction of a hypothetical future scenario and presenting himself (and Hizbollah) as the saviour of the Lebanese people allows Nasrallah to deny responsibility for instigating war, and to construct blame-takers. This portrayal feeds into a favourable evaluation of the action. In addition, the positive consequences of kidnapping the Israeli soldiers seem to indicate that these outweigh the negative consequences that have already materialised. Moral values, in the form of indisputable political ideology as well as group-specific religious convictions, were also deployed to legitimise the action. The speech concludes by reminding the audience of their duty to defend the country and by an overwhelming assertion of victory.

However, what is omitted or subject to silencing is of equal importance from a DHA perspective. Although the text is, in essence, a response to opponents' criticisms, there is no direct reference to them. Opponents are only implicitly criticised due to their lack of facts and misreading. Nasrallah only implicitly deals with the accusations levelled against

him, i.e. opponents as social actors and their criticisms are backgrounded. Similarly, opponents' claim that there is another way in which Lebanese prisoners can be released (diplomatic efforts to swap prisoners) is absent from the discussion. Therefore, Nasrallah's presentation of the disagreement amounts to creating a *false dilemma* through which alternative means of action are ruled out of the discussion (either A or B is true and A is not true; therefore, B is true). Nasrallah reduces the range of options to deal with the anticipated Israeli war to either wait for Israel to continue its preparations to wage war on Lebanon in September/ October or take Israel by surprise and drag it into war. According to Nasrallah, granting Israel time to continue its war preparations is not the Resistance preferred option. Therefore, forcing Israel to start the war and preventing it from taking the Lebanese by surprise is the right choice. This strategy feeds into justifying the rightness of the action of kidnapping the Israeli soldiers.

The analysis shows the significance of the DHA's representation strategies in constructing premises for arguments as well as argumentation stages. Referential strategies (e.g. Zionist enemy, martyrs, inclusive we etc.), predication strategies (e.g. the orbit metaphor, evaluative adjectives and allusions) and intensification and mitigation strategies (vague expressions and presuppositions), as well as perspectivisation strategies (e.g. deictics, indirect speech, and intensifying adverbs), were exploited by Nasrallah throughout his argumentation. However, a more detailed discussion of the relation between representation strategies and their role in argumentation is presented in Chapter 9 section 5.

Reconstruction of the argument

- Quasi-juridical defence to avoid blame:

(1.) (I/Nasrallah should not be blamed for instigating war)

1.1 We should know the facts and the true reality of war

1.1.1 Condoleezza Rice announced the birth of the new Middle East

1.1.1.1a The new Middle East project was not born within few days of kidnapping the Israeli soldiers

1.1.1.1a.1 It was a pre-planned project

(1.1.1.1a.2) (Those who believe that the Israeli war was a response to the kidnapping of the soldiers are wrong)

1.1.1.1a.3 The war was intended to start later this year

1.1.1.1a.4 Israel was continuing its preparations

1.1.2 The project aims to terminate Resistance movements in the region

1.1.2.1a. The project started in Palestine

1.1.2.1a.1 Hamas's kidnapping of the Israeli soldier reunited Palestinians

(1.1.2.1a.2) (The opposition should have embraced the action instead of criticising it)

1.1.3 In Lebanon, the bets to find someone to terminate Hizbollah failed

1.1.3.1a No internal party is capable of terminating Hizbollah

1.1.3.1a.1 The army refused to have a confrontation with Hizbollah

1.1.3.1a.2 It was the American decision to wage an Israeli war on Lebanon

-Legitimation of action:

(2.) (The action of kidnapping the Israeli soldiers was right)

(2.1) (The worst war scenario should be avoided)

2.1.1 It is the worst war scenario

2.1.1.1a Hizbollah would be terminated

2.1.1.1b Lebanon would be under Israeli domination

2.1.1.1c This would jeopardise Lebanon's safety, unity, freedom and independence

(2.2.) (Avoiding the worst war scenario is the right thing to do)

2.2.1 We have to protect Lebanon's freedom, independence, and sovereignty

2.2.2 Our goal is to save and rescue Lebanon from the worst war scenario

2.2.2.1a. (Kidnapping the soldiers is a means to achieve the goal)

(2.2.2.1a.1) (Hizbollah had to kidnap the soldiers to save Lebanon from the worst war scenario)

2.3 The kidnapping of the Israeli soldiers is an act of resistance

2.3.1 It is against US and Israeli ploys in Lebanon

(2.3.1.1a) (Acts of resistance are honourable and praised)

(2.3.1.1a.1) (The kidnapping is an honourable and praiseworthy act)

(2.3.1.1a.2) (The kidnapping should be positively evaluated)

(2.4) (The kidnapping of the Israeli soldiers saved Lebanon from the worst war scenario)

2.4.1 The kidnapping prevented Israel from continuing its war preparations

2.4.2 Israel was humiliated

2.4.3 Israel was deprived of taking us by surprise

2.4.4 Israel was unable to continue with its war preparations

2.4.5 (The action should be positively evaluated)

2.5 Our true and basic slogan is dignity first, no matter what the sacrifices are

2.5.1 Homes and infrastructure were destroyed

(2.5.2) (Hundreds of innocent civilians were killed)

2.5.3 Martyrs from different groups paid with their lives

2.5.4 Lebanon's dignity, freedom and independence are worthy of these sacrifices

2.6 We are determined to continue fighting and to stand up to protect our dignity, sovereignty and freedom

2.6.1 We have been promised victory

2.6.1.1a (The Almighty has promised us victory)

2.6.2 We will win this battle, this blessed blood will win over the sword.

Chapter 6

December 2006 speech: The formation of a new government

1. Speech context

The Israeli war on Lebanon (analysed in Chapter 5) ended on the14 August 2006 with the ratification of United Nations resolution '1707'. The resolution calls for the: (1) immediate cessation of hostilities by both sides; (2) withdrawal of Israeli troops from newly occupied territories; (3) withdrawal of Hizbollah's fighters from the Litani zone; (4) disarmament of all armed groups in Lebanon; (5) deployment of new UN troops (UNIFIL) to monitor violations. On the 14 August 2006, Nasrallah gave a speech – known as the 'Victory Speech' – in which he praised the Lebanese people for the unity, solidarity, warmth, and empathy that they had shown to their fellow displaced citizens. In the same speech, Nasrallah called for the formation of a new national unity government, with the power of veto, with the 8th of March party (Hizbollah coalition), i.e. securing a third of the quorum. The objective was to veto decisions that could be threatening to Hizbollah or its regional allies.

The 14th of March party (holds a majority in Cabinet and parliament) rejected Nasrallah's call for the formation of a new national unity government, claiming that the current one was the result of the 2005 democratic elections and in which all parties, including Hizbollah, were represented based on the number of parliamentary seats gained. Nasrallah responded by threatening the 14th of March coalition with sweeping demonstrations and sit-ins in the centre of Beirut to topple the (pro-American, anti-Syrian/Iranian) government or force the Prime Minister, a prominent Sunni figure, to

resign. This was seen by the 14th of March party as an unexpected political escalation and a clear indication of Nasrallah's desire to profit from Hizbollah's victory at the domestic level. The 14th of March party criticised Nasrallah's call for the formation of a new unity government and considered it a coup that aimed at:

- Changing the current political distribution of power as stipulated by the Taif Accord to

  tripartite rule;
- Disrupting the work of the Special Tribunal for Lebanon (STL);
- Targeting the political gains that the Taif Accord had granted to Sunnis.

Amid this turmoil, the Speaker in Parliament (part of the 8th of March coalition) called upon all parties to participate in a 'National Dialogue' and reach a reconciliation. After 10 days of negotiations, the dialogue reached a deadlock and ended with the resignation of six pro-Hizbollah ministers from the Cabinet. From this point, the 8th of March coalition officially became the anti-government party or the Opposition Front. According to Nasrallah, the Cabinet was unconstitutional and illegitimate because a major political party (the 8th of March party) and a major religious sect (Shiites) were not represented. On 1 December 2006, the 8th of March party led demonstrations and sit-ins to besiege the Prime Minister's headquarters.

Counter-demonstrations organised by the 14th of March coalition (the pro-government party) were staged to support the Prime Minister, Fouad Siniora (see Chapter 1, section 5). Due to the obscene and derogatory chants and slogans raised in the Hizbollah-backed demonstrations, riots and acts of violence spread through the streets of Beirut, which resulted in the death of one Hizbollah follower as well as many injured on both sides.

With the increase in violence between Shiites and Sunnis, the 14th of March party accused Nasrallah of exploiting demonstrations to enflame intra-sectarian strife.[86] As a consequence, Nasrallah gave a speech on 7 December 2006 to respond to the 14th of March party's accusations and defend his decision to form a new national government with veto power over the 14th of March party's decisions.[87]

2. Speech Analysis

2.1. Preparatory step

In this speech, Nasrallah is addressing his immediate audience (the 8th of March audience) as well as the 14th of March audience.[88] The need to address both audiences can be attributed to the gravity of the situation and the looming threat of intra-sectarian strife, which must be controlled because 'all Lebanese will lose in civil war or in sectarian sedition' (line 160). Thus, this speech is an opportunity to examine how Nasrallah manoeuvres to meet the frame of reference of multiple audiences and achieve multiple goals. However, to remain faithful to the aims set for this thesis (see Chapter 1, section 7), the primary focus will be on the strategies that Nasrallah deploys in his attempt to persuade the 14th of March audience. This means that the focus will be on how Nasrallah attempts to convince members of the 14th of March audience of the rightness of his decisions and actions taken against their leaders.

[86] For the process of contextualisation, identifying events and associated debates, I consulted newspapers that affiliate with both sides of the struggle (see Chapter 2, section 5).
[87] The translated English version of the speech can be found in Appendix B and the original Arabic version in Appendix C.
[88] In this speech, Nasrallah also addresses an Arab and a wider Islamic audience (lines 237–240, 249–251) where the majority follow the Sunni tradition. However, the analysis will only focus on the Lebanese audience, since Nasrallah attempts to resolve a difference of opinion with them.

In this speech, Nasrallah attempts, on the one hand, to shift the blame onto his opponents and hold them responsible for the current dilemma, at the same time appealing to the 14th of March audience's (Sunni majority) emotions and moral values. On the other hand, he attempts to mobilize his followers (Shiite majority) and galvanize support for the rallies while denying accusations of fuelling intra-sectarian conflict. Identifying the main points of disagreement (the decision to form a new unity government and the intra-sectarian conflict propagated by the demonstrations) makes it possible to exclude parts of the speech not related to the disagreement (see Chapter 4, section 4.4). This means that the religious address at the beginning of the speech (lines 1–4) and Nasrallah's declaration of a fatwa, a religious order concerning Friday prayers, towards the end of the speech (lines 418–428) are not included in the analysis. Similarly, Nasrallah's criticism of his followers' behaviour, such as firing guns as an expression of exaltation while giving his speeches (lines 11–20), is also excluded.

As mentioned earlier, Nasrallah's speech is an attempt to legitimise his decision to form a new unity government by rebutting the pro-government party's counterclaim (the decision to form a new unity government was wrong). The speech is also an attempt to respond to the 14th of March party's accusations, in particular, that Nasrallah's decision to form a new unity government was a coup against the Taif Accord and his responsibility for fuelling intra-sectarian conflict.

2.2. Reconstruction and analysis

Confrontation Stage

This speech is divided into two parts. The first is a quasi-judicial defence against the 14th of March party's accusations, while the second attempts to legitimise the decision to form a new unity government. In the first part, Nasrallah chooses to address two accusations: the decision to form a new unity government represents a coup against the Taif Accord and his responsibility for enflaming intra-sectarian struggle exacerbated by demonstrations and sit-ins. Nasrallah attempts to refute the latter by: (1) showing that he has made every effort to avoid resorting to the streets (demonstrations or sit-ins); (2) shifting the blame onto his opponents; (3) redefining the act of demonstrating to conform with Resistance ideology and nationalist views.

With respect to the first point, Nasrallah's attempts to bring about reconciliation met with 'monopoly and authoritarianism' from the 14th of March party (lines 124). Nasrallah manages to shift the blame by holding the ruling party responsible for the death of one of his supporters and propagating riot: 'They (the 14th of March party) resorted to riot, they sent their gangs' (line 212). Finally, Nasrallah reframes the act of demonstrating in order to comply with the Resistance ideology and present demonstrations as the 'only solution that can save and rescue Lebanon' (line 112). Concerning the second part, Nasrallah attempts to legitimise his decision to form a new government with the right to veto by highlighting: the political, moral and religious values that motivated the decision; the positive consequences of forming a new government; and finally, the negative consequences of falling to comply with Nasrallah's demands.

Due to the sensitivity of the intra-sectarian topic, it seems reasonable to anticipate that Nasrallah would refrain from explicitly mentioning points of disagreement at this initial stage. In fact, Nasrallah manages to present the confrontation in terms of a conflict between the political and moral values that motivate Hizbollah and those of the 14th of March party (topical potential). Therefore, it is the 14th of March party's monopoly, authoritarianism and exclusivity versus the participation, cooperation, reconciliation, and solidarity that Hizbollah calls for (lines 34–36). This direct *ad hominem attack* on the 14th of March leaders aims to construct them as unreliable politicians who cannot be trusted to lead the country.[89] The negative Other presentation conveyed through the *ad hominem* attack alerts the audience to the unreliability of the 14th of March leadership, thereby weakening the acceptability of this group's claims by the audience.

In the opening lines of his defence, Nasrallah greets the protestors and emphasizes the nobility of the goals that these demonstrations are expected to serve.

> Dear brothers and sisters, dear demonstrators picketing for the sake of Lebanon, for the sake of Lebanon's sovereignty, Lebanon's independence, Lebanon's dignity and Lebanon's freedom [---] what you (demonstrators) are doing is a great and honourable thing because it (demonstrations) serves a noble, honourable and national goal, which is rescuing Lebanon. (lines 5–7, 32–33)

Framing demonstrations in that way stands in direct contrast to the 14th of March party's accusations of fuelling intra-sectarian conflict. Moreover, Nasrallah states that demonstrations and sit-ins are taking place 'in one of the squares of honour and in one of the squares of steadfastness and resistance' (lines 7–8). Therefore, Nasrallah presents the

[89] This fallacy is a violation of Rule 1, the Freedom Rule, which aims to eliminate opponents as rational discussants by doubting their expertise, intelligence and good faith.

act of demonstrating against the 'illegitimate government' (line 74) as an act of resistance, the aim of which is to save and rescue Lebanon from the ruling party. Based on this view, the victim, Ahmad Mahmoud, who died in a demonstrations-related riot, is considered a martyr.

> Martyr of the Resistance par excellence. He is not a martyr who gave his life in a street fight, he is a martyr who died for the sake of defending Lebanon's independence, Lebanon's sovereignty, a martyr of the public movement to rescue Lebanon. (lines 24–27)

Presenting the death of one of the demonstrators as a price paid to rescue Lebanon, Nasrallah is appealing to the 14th of March audience's feelings of compassion through *argumentum ad misericordiam* to win their sympathy.[90] In fact, rescuing and saving Lebanon (rescue narrative) is the perspective that Nasrallah exploits in the argumentation stage.

In terms of adapting to the audience, Nasrallah addresses his immediate audience as 'Dear brothers and sisters, dear demonstrators' (line 5). Thus, he positions his immediate audience (the 8th of March audience) as members of his big family in order to establish communion and empathy. Forms of address are perspectivisation strategies because they indicate the degree of the speaker's involvement or detachment from the addressees. Demonstrators are portrayed as social actors with the highest virtuous qualities, people who only participate in honourable and highly valued actions: 'You (demonstrators) are the most honourable people, the most pure people, the most lovable, and the dearest of

[90] This fallacy is a violation of the Freedom Rule, Rule 1, and aims to put pressure on the audience by playing on their feelings of compassion.

all' (lines 28–29). Moreover, members of Hizbollah's audience are denied any physical traits that have negative qualities and are attributed with qualities indicative of the group's perseverance, determination and unbeatable strength (predication strategy): 'Fear has no place in your (Hizbollah's audience) hearts', 'You (Hizbollah's audience) are a diligent and inexorable nation' (lines 40–42), 'We (Hizbollah audience) don't know weariness', 'we defeat hunger and boredom', 'we are stronger than rockets, 'we are stronger than war' (lines 56–58).

References to members of the 14th of March party audience are restricted to their positive role in supporting the displaced during the Israeli war: 'You (Hizbollah's audience) were embraced by your fellow Lebanese from all the Lebanese districts, areas and from all sects' (lines 47–48). This acknowledgment aims to dissociate the 14th of March audience from their political leadership, who are negatively portrayed and whose actions jeopardize the national interest.

> They (14th of March party) have tried during the past few days, through provocations, riot and attacking protestors, which resulted in killing the martyr Ahmad Mahmoud, to instil fear into your (demonstrators') hearts, to prevent you from picketing in the squares. (lines 37–39)

The above examples show Nasrallah's reliance on loaded adjectives, superlatives and quantifiers, which are used as perspectivisation strategies to reveal the degree of Nasrallah's involvement in his discourse. The use of the 'yes-but' structure intensifies the division between Nasrallah's party and the pro-government party: 'Yes, from the first day, they (the 14th of March party) asked us (Hizbollah party) to surrender, but we (Hizbollah party) refused to surrender. They bet on our defeat but we were not defeated'

(lines 49–50). Other presentational devices are metaphors and personifications, which also serve to widen the disparity between the two adversaries. For example, Nasrallah's 'honourable goal', i.e. rescuing Lebanon, entails the restoration of Lebanon's dignity, pride, and freedom. Similarly, demonstrations are taking place in the squares of honour and steadfastness (lines 7–8). There is a set of presuppositions exploited at this stage that falsely presume agreement. For example, the proposition that demonstrations aim to save and rescue Lebanon presupposes that Lebanon is indeed in crisis and that demonstrations are the solution. In fact, the demonstrations and sit-ins caused the crisis. Therefore, Nasrallah escapes the burden of proof by presenting his claim as enjoying agreement. In the opening stage, presuppositions are also used as common starting points for the discussion instead of being defended.

Opening Stage

In the confrontation stage, Nasrallah uses representation strategies as well as *ad hominem* attacks to construct an out-group (the 14th of March party) that is worthy of blame. Casting doubt on opponents, scapegoating, shifting blame onto opponents and claiming victimhood are the strategies utilised in this stage. From a pragma-dialectical perspective, this stage is, dialectically speaking, oriented towards eliciting concessions, establishing common starting points for the discussion and identifying participants' roles. In this speech, Nasrallah explicitly states the starting points of the discussion. In Nasrallah's view, gaining knowledge about 'the political realities' and 'facts on the ground' (lines 72) are key factors in assessing the extent to which his decision to form a new government fuelled intra-sectarian strife.

Nasrallah reaffirms his role of providing the Lebanese (particularly, the 14th of March audience) with the facts by stating: 'I (Nasrallah) will tell the Lebanese [---] who are the ones pushing things to the verge of civil war' (lines 157–158). Thus, he positions himself as a credible source of information and implicitly suggests that the audience is ready to reassess their position once confronted with the facts. These facts are sourced from Nasrallah's personal knowledge and from statements attributed to Israeli ministers.

The aim is to cast doubt on the motives and credibility of the 14th of March leaders before Nasrallah explicitly accuses them of instigating intra-sectarian conflict. Concerning the first point, Nasrallah claims that the ruling party is receiving direct support from the US administration: 'Your (ruling party) reliance on American and Western support will do you no good' (lines 74–75). This claim is falsely taken as a starting point for the discussion. This is because a section of the audience (the 14th of March audience) does not accept the ensuing implication: the 14th of March leaders favour American/ Western interests at the expense of the Lebanese. Even though the 14th of March party is a pro-American/ Western group, it does not follow that this group favours and realises American interests in Lebanon – Nasrallah's unexpressed premise.

> This government [--] received support and is still receiving support from the US and the West, which no other government in Lebanon's history has ever received. Doesn't this raise doubts and evoke suspicions? Why is this American passion with this government and its prime minister? (lines 85–88)

Nasrallah formulates his claim in a non-falsifiable way to make it immune to criticism, i.e. no one can falsify the fact that the 14th of March party affiliates with the US and the

West.[91] However, the problem lies in the unexpressed premise, which is emphasized in subsequent rhetorical questions. The second type of fact relies on attributing statements to Israeli ministers in their endeavour to find means to assist the ruling party.

> How can we (Israeli government) help this failing government in Lebanon. Some of them (Israeli ministers) said that we can help them (Lebanese government) by withdrawing from the southern part of occupied Ghajar town. Others (Israeli ministers) said that we can withdraw from Shebaa farms to present them as a gift and as a sign of political and psychological support for the ruling party in Lebanon. [--] Doesn't this American, Western and Israeli support call for contemplation? (lines 94–100)

Nasrallah presents this evidence in the form of statements attributed to Israeli ministers during their Cabinet meetings. However, there is no evidence in the form of official statements, press releases or news reports that confirm Nasrallah's allegations. Falsely attributing statements to a source amounts to committing the *straw man* fallacy.[92] The function of these statements is to scapegoat the ruling party, even if accusing them of treason has significant life-threatening effects.[93] As aforementioned, no one can deny the fact that the 14th of March party is a pro-American group, but this does not necessarily mean working against the national interest.

In this stage, Nasrallah manages to dissociate the 14th of March audience from its leadership. In so doing, he portrays the members of this audience as potential allies who are ready to change their positions once confronted with the facts. These facts are also formulated to meet the frame of reference of the audience. The accusation that Israel

[91] This fallacy is a violation of the Standpoint Rule, Rule 2, by which the protagonist evades the burden of proof through immunising the standpoint against criticism.
[92] Misrepresenting, distorting or attributing a fictitious standpoint to (fictitious or real) opponents or referring to the views of the group to which the opponent belongs are violations of Rule 3, the Standpoint Rule.
[93] Accusing someone of having direct or indirect contact or relation with Israel, the supposed enemy, is punishable by the Lebanese constitution.

supports the 14th of March leaders aims to invoke nationalist and anti-Zionist sentiments. This might alert the 14th of March audience to the risks of sympathising with a group backed by Israel. It is within this anti-resistance and nationalist view that the act of demonstrating is reframed as an act of resistance in the argumentation stage.

The use of rhetorical questions in this stage is highly effective (presentational devices). The presuppositions conveyed in these questions help Nasrallah to falsely assume agreement that is not in place. This covert representation of claims serves as a mitigation strategy, the effect of which is to overcome the epistemic filters of the 14th of March audience. If the claim (14th of March leaders serve American and Israeli interests) was stated explicitly, this would have alerted the 14th of March audience to the falsity of the proposition. Referential strategies encoding distance, e.g. 'your' (the ruling party), are used to emphasize the binary opposition between the two groups. Moreover, predication strategies are used to demonise the 14th of March party leaders: 'Your reliance on American and Western support will do you no good' (lines 74–75). The objective is to provide the audience with conclusive evidence that points to the need to change the government and form a new one, which complies with Nasrallah's terms.

Argumentation Stage

In the quasi-judicial part of the speech, the primary accusation that Nasrallah aims to defend is Hizbollah's (and the 8th of March party's) role in inciting intra-sectarian conflict, propagated through demonstrations. To this end, Nasrallah selects four lines of defence to falsify this claim. The first shows that Nasrallah has exhausted all possible efforts to arrive at a resolution, but his attempts were frustrated by the 14th of March

party's monopoly and authoritarianism: 'When the doors of dialogue were shut, and negotiations were stopped, and we (Hizbollah's party) were faced with monopoly and authoritarianism (of the ruling party), our only solution was going into the streets' (lines 123–125). This means that Nasrallah (and his political party) should not be blamed because he was forced to do so. Moreover, Nasrallah assigns the identity of the blame-taker, i.e. the 14th of March leaders should be blamed.

The second line of defence consists of revealing facts only accessible to Nasrallah. As mentioned above, the first type of facts depends on Nasrallah's personal knowledge and expertise as a major political actor. Nasrallah claims that the pro-American government is receiving support from the US administration: 'Your (government's/ ruling party's) reliance on American and Western support will do you no good' (lines 74–75). Instead of providing evidence to support his claim, Nasrallah exploits his own qualities as an authoritative and political expert: 'This government [--] received support and is still receiving support from the US and the West, which no other government in Lebanon's history has ever received' (lines 85–86). Therefore, Nasrallah is advancing a fallacious ethotic argument, a variant of *argumentum ad verecundiam*, where the authority that he has in the eyes of the audience – his acknowledged credibility and reverence – enhances the acceptability of his claims.[94] Nasrallah continues to warn the 14th of March leaders of the consequences of depending on Western support, taking Iraq as an example. According to Nasrallah, 'failure, disintegration, sectarian war with no horizon' (lines 81–82) are the results of American support in Iraq. The lesson (American support will do you no good),

[94] This fallacy violates the Relevance Rule, Rule 4, because the standpoint is defended by non-argumentative means through parading one's own qualities.

which is emphasised through the Iraq example, is presented via an argument from analogy combined with an *argumentum ad consequentiam*.[95]

Nasrallah's claim is further asserted through rhetorical questions: 'Doesn't this raise doubts and evoke suspicions? (line 87–88), 'Doesn't this American, Western and Israeli support call for contemplation? (lines 100). These questions presume that this government is serving US and Israeli interests in Lebanon. According to Nasrallah, this is the main reason behind the government's refusal to comply with his demand to form a new unity government. Nasrallah is falsely presenting the issue of serving American and Israeli interests (the claim) as a starting point for the discussion instead of proving it. By concealing the claim in rhetorical questions, he treats matters under debate as already established, i.e. he commits the *many questions* fallacy.[96]

Nasrallah defends his claim/standpoint (your reliance on American and Israeli support will do you no good) by offering premises that repeat or paraphrase the claim: 'This government [--] received support and is still receiving support from the US and the West, which no other government in Lebanon's history has ever received' (lines 85–86). In this case, Nasrallah presents premises that amount to the same thing as the standpoint, i.e. he is committing the circular reasoning fallacy or *petitio principii* (premise A has the same meaning as the conclusion/claim. Thus, what is to be proved has already been assumed in the premise).[97] The claim that the 14th of March party serves Western and Israeli

[95] This fallacy is a violation of the Argument Scheme Rule, Rule 8. It consists of casting light on the (un)desirable consequences of a factual or descriptive claim.
[96] This fallacy violates the Starting Point Rule, Rule 6, by making unfair use of presuppositions through asking questions.
[97] This fallacy violates the Starting Point Rule, Rule 6. It consists of presenting arguments that amount to the same thing as the standpoint.

interests is reiterated in the second type of evidence, which Nasrallah presents in the form of statements attributed to Israeli ministers during their cabinet meetings.

> How can we (the Israeli government) help this failing government in Lebanon? Some of them (Israeli ministers) said that we (Israeli ministers) can help them (Lebanese government) by withdrawing from the southern part of occupied Ghajar town. Others (Israeli ministers) said that we (Israeli ministers) can withdraw from Shebaa farms to present them as a gift and as a sign of political and psychological support for the ruling party in Lebanon. (lines 94–98)

By attributing statements to a source, Nasrallah is advancing a fallacious variant of the argument from authority – argumentum *ad verecundiam*.[98] Nasrallah claims that Israeli ministers are discussing ways in which Israel can support the ruling party. Nasrallah's claim is re-emphasized through the following rhetorical question: 'Is there something behind this (Israeli) praise that we (Lebanese) are not aware of?' (lines 90–91). Nasrallah exploits the opportunity to supply the Lebanese with facts to cast doubt on the credibility and trustworthiness of the ruling party (14th of March party). This seems to be a preliminary step, leading to the reversal of blame (or victim-perpetrator reversal in Wodak's terms), i.e. the 14th of March leaders are responsible for inciting intra-sectarian struggle. This is the main objective of the third line of defence.

In his attempt to assert the peaceful nature of Hizbollah-led demonstrations and sit-ins, Nasrallah implicitly admits that obscene language and insults were indeed factors inciting violence.

> No insults. Some fervid demonstrators use derogatory slogans when talking about some ministers, and we (Hizbollah party) refuse any personal insult to anyone. Any insult, any obscene or unethical expression should not come from your sit-ins. We (Hizbollah party) reassert the civilized and peaceful nature of our sit-ins.
> (lines 143–146)

[98] This fallacy violates the Argument Scheme Rule 8. The fallacy entails using an argument scheme incorrectly by presenting the standpoint as right because an authority says so.

He immediately dismisses this admission of responsibility (obscene language and insults incited violence) by shifting the blame onto his opponents and making them responsible for instigating riot. In this case, Nasrallah commits the fallacy *of denying an unexpressed premise*.[99] This means that Nasrallah retreats from holding his group responsible for inciting violence – the unexpressed premise – which was implicitly invoked when he was reprimanding his followers for the use of insults and obscene language.

> Your movement (demonstrations and sit-ins) is a civilized one, as acknowledged by the whole world. [---] What did they (the ruling party) do? How did they react? They resorted to riot, they sent their gangs [---] They sent their gangs to attack you during your return journey and kill the martyr Ahmad Mahmoud and injure others. (lines 209–210, 212, 216–217)

Nasrallah claims that by killing one of Hizbollah's supporters the ruling party aimed to drag Hizbollah into civil war. Nasrallah repeatedly affirms that the 8th of March party (Hizbollah group) refuses to be dragged into war.

> We (Hizbollah party) will not be dragged into any conflict, even after you (ruling party) have killed Ahmad Mahmoud, even if you killed thousands like Ahmad Mahmoud. We will not raise our weapons in the face of anyone. (lines 164–167)

Nasrallah supports his claim by citing evidence from past actions presented in the form of argument from analogy. He reminds the ruling party of Hizbollah's nonviolent reaction to the killing of Hizbollah's supporters in the 1993 demonstrations (lines 168–170). This means that just as Hizbollah did not react violently to the killing of its members in the 1993 demonstrations, this will also apply to the current incident of killing Ahmad

[99] This fallacy violates the Unexpressed Premise Rule, Rule 5, by refusing to accept a commitment to an unexpressed premise.

Mahmoud. In this case, Nasrallah is supporting a general claim (we will not be dragged into any conflict) by evidence derived from one example. This is an instance of *hasty generalisation* fallacy (or *secundum quid*).[100] Nasrallah takes the killing of one of his supporters (Ahmad Mahmoud) as evidence to point out the discrepancies between the 14th of March party's words and deeds: 'They (ruling party) were not able to withstand the democracy (right to demonstrate) that they claim to protect' (line 217-218), 'Is this (killing and riot) democracy? Is this freedom?' (line 220–221).

Nasrallah is referring to the set of moral values that guides the actions of the 14th of March party. Democracy, freedom of speech and liberty are among the prophesied values of the 14th of March party. It follows that preserving the right to demonstrate and protecting protestors are the direct manifestations of the commitment to these values. In showing an inherent inconsistency between the guiding values of the 14th of March leaders and their current actions, Nasrallah is undermining their credibility, and hence decreasing the acceptability of their claims (X advocates argument Q, which has proposition A as its conclusion. X is committed to the opposite of A as shown in his actions. Therefore, X's credibility is put into question, and hence the plausibility of X's arguments is decreased). Nasrallah, thus, launches an *ad hominem* attack of the *tu quoque* type, which is contrasted with the consistency of the 8th of March party's previous and current actions.

[100] This fallacy is a violation of Rule 8, the Argument Scheme Rule. Its fallaciousness is attributed to the incorrect application of the argument scheme of concomitance by making generalisations based upon observations that are not representative or sufficient.

Assuring the audience that Hizbollah will not use its weapons at the domestic level, Nasrallah asserts the power of the people and their sacrifices in bringing about victory: 'With our voices we (demonstrators, Hizbollah party) defeat you (the ruling party). With the blood of Ahmad Mahmoud we defeat you' (lines 172–173). Therefore, through *argumentum ad populum,* Nasrallah is appealing to the masses to win their support.[101] A series of hypotheses attributed to the 14th of March leaders, followed by *ad populum* fallacies, are used to mobilize demonstrators for the forthcoming rallies, on the one hand, and to discredit opponents by showing the inappropriateness of their assumptions and assessments, on the other.

> They (ruling party) bet that with time you (demonstrators) would be weary and bored, but they don't know that you are a diligent and inexorable nation. [---] they said that they are expecting screams of surrender to come out from your squares due to the cold and rainy weather. [---] However, they have forgotten how you, in the near past (Israeli war), endured the most violent and brutal air strikes ever seen in recent decades during the 33-day war (Israeli war). [---] Tell them (the ruling party) that we (demonstrators, Hizbollah) don't know weariness and that we defeat hunger and boredom. We are stronger than rockets, so how about words? We are stronger than war, so how about intimidation? (lines 40–58)

Nasrallah claims that the 14th of March leaders bet that with time exhaustion, weariness and boredom will discourage demonstrators. Nasrallah responds by praising the audience and appealing to their emotions: 'They don't know that you are a diligent and inexorable nation, we don't know weariness and that we defeat hunger and boredom, we are stronger than rockets'. By exploiting emotively laden language to arose emotions in support of his position, Nasrallah is using an *ad populum* (i.e. emotions such as enthusiasm, pride,

[101] This fallacy is a violation of the Relevance Rule, Rule 4. It consists of appealing to the masses and playing on their emotions, instead of using relevant argumentation, i.e. using non-argumentative means of persuasion.

anger, or disgust are used to express evidence for statement A; therefore, statement A is true). Through references to the Israeli war in 2006, Nasrallah flatters his (immediate) audience and commends their steadfastness and valour during that war. Thus, Nasrallah is advancing an argument from analogy in order to show the group's exemplary deeds during the Israeli war. This means that what Hizbollah's members and audience expect to face while demonstrating is nothing compared to defeating the strongest army in the region. Nasrallah's emphasis on the demonstrators' endurance and inexorable strength when facing hardships seems to prepare them for the conclusion: 'We (demonstrators and Nasrallah as one of the group) will remain in the streets', 'we will not vacate the streets before we achieve the goal (a new unity government) that rescues Lebanon' (lines 140–141). Despite this announcement, Nasrallah reassures the 14th of March audience of the peaceful nature of the demonstrations. In fact, Nasrallah vows to protect them from any harm.

> The blood of every Lebanese is like ours, the honour of every Lebanese is like ours, the money of every Lebanese is like ours, the house of every Lebanese is like ours. This is the red line that we protect with our blood, even if you kill us, [---] and if you want to drag us into war, we will not fall into this trap. (lines 190–195)

Through this assimilation strategy (see Chapter 4, section 2), Nasrallah aims to promote unification and solidarity with the 14th of March audience. Nasrallah reasserts his call for unification and solidarity with the leaders of the 14th of March party, even though he directly accuses them of killing demonstrators: 'They (the ruling party) are killing us (Hizbollah party) and yet we say to them, we want to be with you and we want you to be with us, to be together' (lines 175–177). Having emphasised the peaceful nature of the demonstrations, Nasrallah moves on to

redefine the act of demonstrating to make it comply with the resistance ideology and nationalist views. This is the fourth line of defence that Nasrallah puts forward.

Interestingly, Nasrallah begins his speech by announcing that demonstrations are acts of resistance that take place in one of the sites of resistance and steadfastness. In this case, Nasrallah is advancing an argument from classification (Walton & Macagno, 2010), which confers on demonstrations all the positive attributes related to acts of resistance. It follows that demonstrations that were defined by opponents as acts of resistance should be honoured and admired.

> Dear demonstrators, picketing for the sake of Lebanon, for the sake of Lebanon's sovereignty, Lebanon's independence, Lebanon's dignity and Lebanon's freedom. I wish I were among you (demonstrators) in one of the squares of honour and in one of the squares of steadfastness and resistance. [---] What you (demonstrators) are doing is a great and honourable thing because it (demonstrations) serves a noble, honourable and national goal, which is rescuing Lebanon by ending the state of monopoly, authoritarianism and exclusivity, and this will pave the way for establishing a national unity government to ensure participation and cooperation and achieve reconciliation and solidarity. (lines 5–7, 32–36)

According to Nasrallah, these demonstrations are legitimate because the 14th of March-led government is 'the government of the American ambassador' (line 287). In this view, the act of demonstrating against the 'illegitimate government' (line 74), which is seen by opponents as a threat to Lebanon's stability (by inciting intra-sectarian conflict), is reframed to conform with the overarching Resistance ideology and nationalist views that bind the Lebanese together. Nasrallah highlights the moral values that motivate the act of demonstrating as well as the noble goals that these demonstrations are expected to achieve. In this case, Nasrallah is advancing an argument from moral values (Macagno & Walton, 2010; Macagno, 2013) to justify the pursued goal (rescuing and saving Lebanon),

combined with an argument from the nobility of a goal scheme to justify the action or means (demonstrations) used to realise the goal (form a new government).

As for the former, the goal is justified by virtue of the moral values (preserving Lebanon's dignity, freedom, independence etc.) that underlie the goal (a value is a reason to retain commitment to the goal). As for the latter, the argument from the nobility of a goal scheme justifies the means via which the goal is realised. Demonstrations are, thus, desirable because they contribute to the achievement of a noble goal (Hitchcock & Wagemans, 2011; van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 1992; van Eemeren et al., 2007). In this case, Nasrallah falsely presents demonstrations as a solution to the problem. In fact, demonstrations are the cause of the current problem which Nasrallah is addressing in his speech. By presenting demonstrations as actions that save and rescue Lebanon, Nasrallah constructs the elements of a rescue narrative.

In this narrative, the villains are the 14th of March leaders (ruling party) who rejected Nasrallah's demand to form a new government. The victims are not only the Hizbollah party, but the whole country. The hero/ victim is Nasrallah (and his political party) who takes courageous action (demonstrations) to rescue Lebanon from a 'state of monopoly, authoritarianism and exclusivity'. Through this narrative, Nasrallah manages to present the audience of the 14th of March party as victims who need to be saved from the self-centredness of their political leadership. As a consequence, members of the 14th of March audience, who were originally against demonstrations, are encouraged to review their position. Members of the 14th of March audience are expected to exercise vigilance towards a representation that is incoherent with their background information, especially information related to the events that preceded and followed the demonstrations.

Therefore, to make his justification coheres with their background knowledge and beliefs, Nasrallah leads members of this audience to access a less highly activated set of indisputable beliefs that weigh in favour of action (see Chapter 3, section 6.3.3). This is achieved through reframing the demonstrations to conform with the Resistance ideology. At this point, Nasrallah's argumentation shifts from responding to accusations to legitimating the call for the formation of a new national unity government with the power of veto over the Hizbollah party.

In the second part of the argumentation stage, Nasrallah attempts to legitimise his decision to form a new unity government by showing that it was a right decision. He thus embarks on providing reasons that attest to the rightness of this decision. These reasons are presented in the form of *argumentum ad consequentiam*.[102] The first set of reasons relates to the negative consequences of failing to form a new unity government (the fallacious counterpart of *reductio ad absurdum*): 'a single-party government and the domination of one political party had always led Lebanon to a deadlock' (lines 103–105). However, the main negative consequence of failing to form a new unity government is presented in the form of a hypothetical situation, based on which the ruling party is accused of having made commitments to Israel and the US: 'if we (Hizbollah party) were the majority, we would give with confidence any opposition a third of the quorum because [---] we don't have any international or regional commitments' (lines 119–121).

[102] The first variant mimics the argument scheme of *reductio ad absurdum*. The second variant of the *ad consequentiam* mimics the argument scheme from negative and positive consequences. Both cases are violations of the Argument Scheme Rule, Rule 8. In the first, a factual standpoint is defended by pointing to the negative or positive consequences of the contrary to the standpoint. In the second, a descriptive standpoint is defended by an evaluative argument that highlights its positive or negative consequences, i.e. confusing facts with a value judgement (see Chapter 4, section 4.3).

This implicitly suggests that the 14th of March leaders' refusal to form a new unity government is due to their commitments to the US and Israel. This also suggests that a new government with the power to veto decisions has to be formed, otherwise, the 'government of the American ambassador' (line 287), or the government that has made commitments to the US and Israel, will continue to rule. In Nasrallah's view, this is the main reason that explains the ruling party's preference for single-party rule. This accusation is an implicit *ad hominem* attack on opponents. According to Nasrallah, 'who officially asked America, [--] to wage war on Lebanon' are some leaders of the 14th of March party (lines 202– 303). The evidence that Nasrallah provides to support his claim (14th of March leaders' collaboration with Israel) is taken from statements allegedly made by the Israeli Prime Minister during the Israeli war.

> Some parties in the Lebanese government contacted us (Israeli officials) and asked us to continue our fight against Hezbollah. Olmert spoke the truth and we (Nasrallah) know who they are (some leaders of the 14th of March party), and I hope the day when I (Nasrallah) will be forced to disclose these names in front of the world won't come. (lines 344–347)

There is no record, however, of such statements being made, neither by Olmert (Israeli prime minister) nor by any other Israeli official. Nasrallah enhances the acceptability of his claim (14th of March leaders collaborated with Israel) by attributing statements to an authoritative and expert source (source X is an expert or authority in subject domain S containing proposition A. X asserts that proposition A is true; therefore, A may plausibly be taken to be true). Through *argumentum ad verecundiam,* Nasrallah attributes a fictitious standpoint to an authority, i.e. committing the *straw man* fallacy. The cumulative effect of these statements is to hold the 14th of March leaders responsible for the Israeli war and depict them as those who totally disregard the national interest.

Therefore, a new unity government, with the third of the quorum to the Hizbollah party, is needed to monitor decisions of the would-be government. Based on this view, Nasrallah asserts that the new unity government is the only way to prevent foreign tutelage.

> We (Hizbollah party) want a national unity government because it is the only way to prevent any foreign tutelage. Let the whole world know that we want a Lebanese government to be led by Lebanese leaders and to take decisions based on Lebanon's interests. This is what we are looking for and this government will be the guarantee that secures Lebanon's safety, future, security, stability, prosperity and unity. (lines 106–111)

The proposition that Lebanon will be under foreign tutelage aims to propagate fear in all sections of the audience. Via this assertion, Nasrallah alludes to the French mandate in Lebanon which ended in 1943. On the one hand, it reminds the audience of the atrocities, sorrows and oppression that the French occupation caused. On the other hand, it evokes nationalist sentiments related to the fear of losing national autonomy and jeopardising Lebanon's stability. In this case, Nasrallah is utilising a strategy of heteronomisation (see Chapter 4, section 2), by which he warns the audience of the dangers of foreign domination. The threat of losing national autonomy also serves to unify different sections of the audience around the desire to elevate the danger, i.e. a unification and cohesivation strategy (see Chapter 4, section 2). Indeed, the construction of a threat and the propagation of fear are means that charismatic leaders employ to unify a community around their rescue missions (see chapter 2, section 3.1). As mentioned earlier, Nasrallah presents the decision to form a new unity government as the 'only way to prevent any foreign tutelage'. To put it differently, a new government with the right to veto decisions will rescue Lebanon from foreign domination. This new government will, in turn, secure Lebanon's safety, stability and unity.

Nasrallah is, therefore, constructing the elements of a second rescue narrative. The villains are some leaders of the 14th of March party, because they participate in realising foreign domination and interests. The victims are the Lebanese, whose national autonomy is threatened. The hero is Nasrallah (and his party) who will save the country through veto power in the would-be government, which will in turn safeguard Lebanon's interests. Moreover, elements of the rescue narrative configure as premises in an argument from fear appeal (Walton et al., 2008, p. 333). Nasrallah's argument can be reconstructed as follows:

Premise 1:	If a new government is not formed, then Lebanon will be under foreign tutelage
Premise 2:	Foreign tutelage is very bad for Lebanon
Premise 3:	Therefore, foreign tutelage ought to be prevented if possible
Premise 4:	But the only way to prevent it is to form a new government with veto power over government's decisions
Conclusion:	Therefore, a new government has to be formed

Through a rescue narrative, Nasrallah induces the audience to reinterpret the decision to form a new government within nationalist views. Therefore, members of the 14th of March audience, who are against forming a new government because it represents a coup against Taif (threatens the Sunni leadership of the country) are encouraged to envision this proposal as a guarantee of Lebanon's security and stability. Preventing foreign tutelage is one of the positive consequences of forming a new government. Securing Lebanon's safety, security, stability and unity are the other positive consequences cited (line 111). Finally, Nasrallah claims that the new government will 'ensure participation, cooperation [---] reconciliation and solidarity' (lines 35–36), thereby ending monopoly, authoritarianism and exclusivity (line 34). In this case, Nasrallah is defending his decision

through *argumentum ad consequentiam* (a variant that mimics the argument from positive consequences).

As aforementioned, the decision to form a new unity government, with a third of the quorum to the Hizbollah party, was criticised because it was a coup against the Taif Agreement (it threatens the Sunni leadership of the country). Nasrallah refutes this claim by saying that it is a 'slur and a lie' (line 245). In other words, it is not true that a third of the quorum is a coup because it is a lie. Nasrallah's refutation is also a direct *ad hominem* attack on opponents (portraying them as liars), which is immediately followed by *ad baculum*.[103] Nasrallah threatens the 14th of March leaders with taking more coercive measures if they do not comply with his demands. That is, either the government immediately agrees to form a unity government with a third of the quorum going to the Hizbollah party, or Nasrallah's party will topple the government, call for early elections and assign a pro-Hizbollah Sunni figure to lead the new government (lines 401–407). Nasrallah's threat amounts to creating a *false dilemma,* because his representation reduces the range of possibilities that can be taken to reach a resolution to only two options: acceptance or sanctions.

One of the most significant strategies in this speech is Nasrallah's oscillation between threatening opponents and showing clemency. Towards the end of the speech, Nasrallah states that the 14th of March leaders are 'traitors who have to be taken to trial' (line 380). Despite the dire consequences of this accusation (death sentence), Nasrallah uses

[103] This fallacy is a violation of the Freedom Rule, Rule 1. It amounts to putting pressure on opponents by threatening them with sanctions.

unification and cohesivation strategies to soothe their worries. To this end, appeals to cooperation, pulling together and solidarity are used.

> Work with us (Hizbollah party) to change this government to a national unity government, we (the 8th of March party) want to be with you (ruling party) and we want you to be with us [---], we will continue to ask them (the ruling party) to cooperate with us to form a national unity government (lines 175–176, 297–298).

This emphasis on the will to unify is due to the moral and religious values to which the group subscribes: 'the world will be surprised, we (the Hizbollah party) are the offspring of these values and this culture (Shiite Islam), a culture that calls for unity, forgiveness and love' (lines 381–382). Nasrallah is appealing to group-specific values, emotions and beliefs. This *ad populum* is combined with the argument scheme from action to character (Walton, 2006 p. 194).[104] According to Nasrallah, the group's actions can be described as forgiving, loving and unifying; therefore, they are forgiving, caring and aim at unification. Nasrallah concludes his argumentation by restating the moral values that motivate the decision to form a new government as well as the noble goal that this decision is expected to achieve.

> We (Hizbollah party) will remain in the squares until we form a national unity government, which represents a guarantee for Lebanon, for all Lebanese, which will rescue Lebanon, [---] We will make them hear that we insist on our goal, and we will continue no matter what the sacrifices are. (lines 437–443)

In Nasrallah's view, rescuing Lebanon is a morally virtuous act and the price (loss of human lives) of realising it can be religiously justified. Therefore, the Hezbollah party is

[104] According to Walton, the scheme for the argument from action to character is as follows: (1) agent A did something that can be classified as fitting a particular character quality, (2) therefore, A has this character quality.

ready to pay what is deemed necessary to rescue Lebanon from domination and monopoly by the ruling party: 'we (Hizbollah) remain faithful to our cause (a new government with a third of the quorum), to our nation and to our people, and for whom we sacrifice our blood, our souls and our children' (lines 271–272). In this respect, Nasrallah is advancing an argument from sacrifice that can be reconstructed as follows:

Premise 1: For X (rescuing Lebanon) sacrifices S (human losses) are made
Premise 2: If a great sacrifice S has been made for X, then the value V of X will be greater
Premise 3: A great sacrifice (human losses) has been made
Conclusion: Rescuing Lebanon is of a great value V

The argumentation that Nasrallah puts forward to legitimise the decision to form a new government with the power to veto decisions can be reconstructed as shown in Figure 6.1, below.

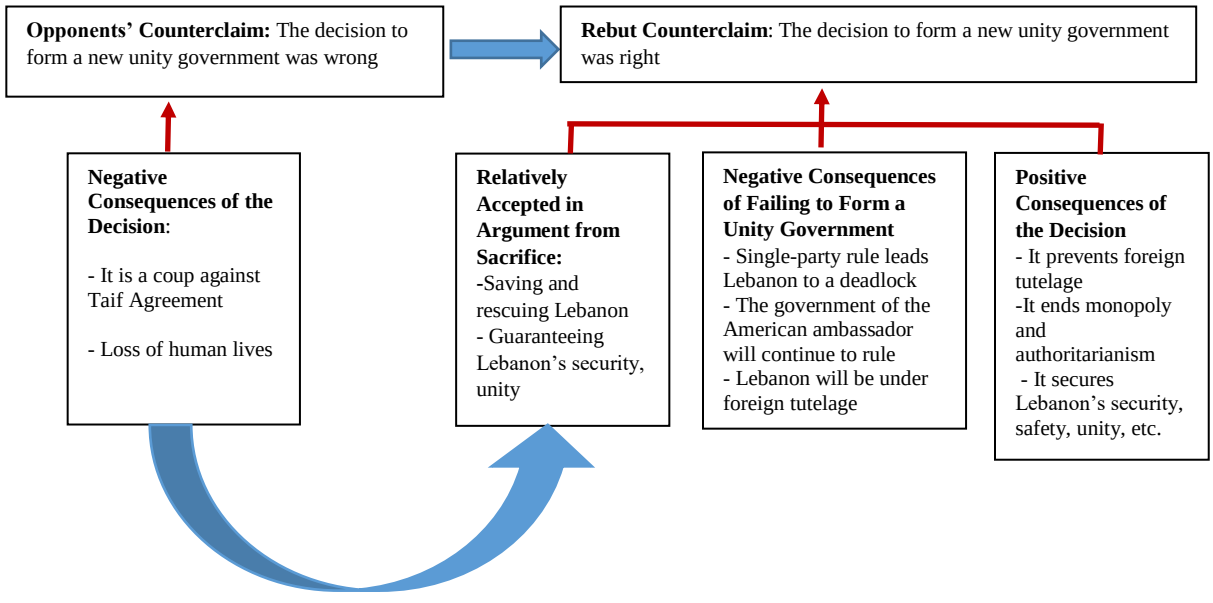

Figure 6.1: Positive and negative consequences of forming a new government

In his attempt to adapt to members of the 14th of March audience, Nasrallah dissociates them from their unreliable and untrustworthy leadership. Nasrallah gives them every assurance that his decisions and actions do not target them. Nasrallah implicitly flatters them when he acknowledges their role in embracing the displaced during the Israeli war. Nasrallah even vows to protect them from harm: The blood of every Lebanese is like ours, the honour of every Lebanese is like ours [---] This is the red line that we protect with our blood' (lines 190–192). This sense of solidarity is reiterated through unification and cohesivation strategies, the aim of which is to unify the Lebanese against the threat of a foreign mandate. This is achieved via a rescue narrative that Nasrallah exploits. Through this strategy, Nasrallah manages, on the one hand, to portray members of the 14th of March audience as victims of their own leadership. On the other hand, Nasrallah presents his rescue mission (a new government with veto power) as serving the common good and the welfare of the Lebanese nation, instead of serving group-specific goals. To this end, Nasrallah frames his responses to accusations, and the arguments via which he legitimises his decision to form a new government, so as to be in conformity with resistance principles and nationalist views.

In his presentation of the arguments, Nasrallah manages to construct a profile of his enemies to whom acts of resistance (demonstrations) are directed, and which is contrasted with positive Self-presentation. This is achieved through referential, predication, perspectivisation and intensification/ mitigation strategies. The 14th of March camp are portrayed as those who always make wrong choices and decisions and rely on false assumptions. In contrast, the Hizbollah party is portrayed as those who have a noble cause and whose actions are governed by moral and religious principles. Nasrallah relays on

personal pronouns, demonstratives and possessive pronouns, which serve as referential strategies as well as value-laden words, and also superlatives which serve as predication strategies. The 14th of March party is predicated with negative attributes and the 8th of March party with positive qualities. For example, 'they (14th of March leaders) resorted to riot', 'they sent their gangs', 'you (14th of March party) have killed Ahmad Mahmoud', 'traitors who have to be taken to trial', 'those who sat down with the Americans and requested Israel to wage war on us (Hizbollah party)'. Nasrallah mentions that the 14th of March leaders are traitors, but refrains from giving specific names. This strategic vagueness aims to cast doubt on each leader in the 14th of March party.

In contrast, Nasrallah's group holds the most admired qualities: 'you (Hizbollah audience/ party) are a diligent and inexorable nation', 'we (Hizbollah party) are stronger than rockets', 'we are stronger than war', 'you endured the most violent and brutal air strikes ever seen in recent decades'. Moreover, through pronouns, Nasrallah distances himself from the out-group and at the same time creates communion and empathy with the in-group. In this case, pronouns serve as a perspectivisation strategy. The exaggeration in attributing positive qualities to Nasrallah's group also serves to underpin intensification strategies. Rhetorical questions, allusions, referential vagueness and indirect speech are also presentational devices used in this stage. These devices also serve as mitigation strategies, inasmuch as they are forms of covert representation. Finally, Nasrallah ends this stage by invoking group-specific religious and moral values that are accentuated in the concluding stage.

Concluding Stage

Nasrallah concludes his defence by emphasising the moral values that underlie his decision and the goal that it is expected to serve: 'we (Hizbollah party) will not surrender, we will remain in the squares until we form a national unity government that represents a guarantee to Lebanon, to all the Lebanese, which will rescue Lebanon, which will defend Lebanon' (lines 437–440). This assertion has a dual function. On the one hand, it implicitly suggests that the decision (forming a new government with veto power) was right. On the other hand, it states the practical conclusion that should be derived from Nasrallah's defence, namely, that demonstrations will continue until the goal is achieved. This statement also suggests that Nasrallah has conclusively rebutted his opponents' claims and accusations. Therefore, Nasrallah is making an absolute of the success of his defence. He is thus committing the fallacy of *concluding that a standpoint is true because it has been defended successfully*.[105]

The moral argumentation that Nasrallah advances in the previous stage made it clear that the decision to form a new government is morally virtuous and that the price paid to achieve it is religiously justified. In this respect, Nasrallah confers a higher-order level of legitimacy on his decision. It is sacrifices that will bring victory: 'by Allah's (the Almighty's) will you (demonstrators) will be victorious. And as I used to promise you victory before, I again promise you victory' (lines 444–445). In this stage, Nasrallah addresses his direct community, thus he selects lexical terms that convey group-specific religious convictions, such as 'martyrdom', 'promised victory' and 'sacrifice'

[105] This is a violation of the Concluding Rule, Rule (9). It amounts to meddling with the conclusion by emphasising that a standpoint is true because it has been defended successfully.

(religionyms, see Chapter 4, section 2). This victory is the result of a battle which is metaphorically presented as a 'battle of defending Lebanon's identity, unity and safety' (line 446).

3. Conclusion

In this speech, Nasrallah attempts to achieve multiple goals: deny the accusation of inciting intra-sectarian conflict, shift the blame onto opponents, mobilise supporters for future rallies, and appeal to the 14th of March audience's emotions and convictions. These goals are achieved within the macro-strategies of responding to accusations and legitimating the decision to form a new government with veto power over the 14th of March party's decisions. Nasrallah takes advantage of the rhetorical opportunities afforded in each argumentation stage. In the confrontation stage, Nasrallah chooses to limit the 'zone of disagreement' by presenting the conflict in terms of conflicting moral values, i.e. rescuing and defending Lebanon, vis authoritarianism and monopoly. As such, Nasrallah evades mentioning the main points of disagreement to avoid evoking unwarranted contradictions with the 14th of March audience. In the opening stage, Nasrallah indirectly flatters the 14th of March audience and manages to dissociate them from their untrustworthy leadership. In both stages, Nasrallah relies on representation strategies and *ad hominem* attacks to disparage and vilify the 14th of March leaders.

In the argumentation stage, Nasrallah attempts to shift the blame onto his opponents and defend the rightness of his decision. With respect to the latter, a rescue perspective is exploited via which Nasrallah manages to: deny accusations, construct himself (and his group), as well as the 14th of March audience, as victims, and create scapegoats. His

defence of the decision rests on identifying the positive consequences of forming a new government as well as the negative consequences of falling to do so. This represents the first source of normativity against which the decision is legitimated. Moreover, moral values, nationalist views and religious convictions are other sources of normativity. With respect to the former, a set of arguments from authority and arguments from analogy, via which facts are presented, are utilised to construct a negative representation of Nasrallah's opponents. The concluding stage presents an image of the 'promised victory' that aims to dispel any doubts regarding the rightness of the decision. During the analysis, I have identified some of the referential, predication, perspectivisation, intensification/ mitigation strategies that play a role in constructing arguments and argumentation stages. A more detailed discussion regarding the role of the DHA's representation strategies in advancing arguments is presented in Chapter 9, section 5.

Reconstruction of the argument

- Quasi-juridical defence to avoid blame:

(1) (Nasrallah and his party should not be blamed)

(1.1) (Nasrallah and his party should not be blamed for enflaming intra-sectarian struggle)

1.1.1 All efforts were made to avoid going into the streets

1.1.1.1a These were faced by the monopoly and authoritarianism of the ruling party

1.1.2 Lebanese should be acquainted with the political realities and the facts on the ground

1.1.2.1a I will tell Lebanese who is pushing things to the verge of civil war

1.1.2.1a.1 The government's reliance on American and Western support will do it no good

1.1.2.1a.2 No government in Lebanon's history has received this amount of support

1.1.2.1a.2.1a This support raises suspicions and doubts

(1.1.2.1a.2.2a) (The government is serving US and Israeli interests in Lebanon)

1.1.2.1b. Take Iraq as an example

1.1.2.1b.1 Failure, disintegration and civil war are the outcomes of Bush's support in Iraq

1.1.2.1b.2 This is the fate of any country that bets on American support.

(1.1.2.1b.3) (The US support for the 14th of March party will lead to similar outcomes)

1.1.2.1c Israeli ministers are discussing ways to support the government during their cabinet meetings

1.1.2.1c.1 Some ministers propose withdrawing from Shebaa or Ghajar Farms

1.1.2.1c.2 There is something behind the Israeli praise for this government

(1.1.2.1c.3) (The government is serving Israel's interests)

1.1.3 Our demonstrations and sit-ins are peaceful and civilised

1.1.3.1a They resorted to riot, sent their gangs and killed the martyr Ahmad Mahmoud

1.1.3.1a.1 We forgive them and ask them to cooperate with us and form a new government with us

1.1.3.1a.2 We are the offspring of this culture

(1.1.3.1a.2.1a) (We are a forgiving and caring group)

1.1.3.1b They wanted to drag us into civil war

1.1.3.1b.1 We refuse to be dragged into war just as we did in the 1993 demonstrations

1.1.3.1b.2. We will protect Lebanese with our blood

1.1.3.1c We insist on remaining in the streets despite their bets

1.1.3.1c.1 They bet on our weariness and being tired

1.1.3.1c.2 The Israeli war is an example of our endurance and steadfastness

(1.1.3.1c.2.1a) Demonstrations are nothing compared to rockets

1.1.4 (Demonstrations are honourable and admirable)

(1.1.4.1a) Demonstrations are acts of resistance

(1.1.4.1a.1) (Acts of Resistance are honourable and praiseworthy)

1.1.4.1b Demonstrations serve an honourable and national goal

1.1.4.1b.1 Our goal is to rescue Lebanon from the ruling party's monopoly and authoritarianism

1.1.4.1b.1.1a We have to defend Lebanon's dignity, pride and freedom

1.1.4.1b.1.2a Demonstrations are a means to achieve the goal

1.1.4.1b.1.3a Demonstrations will continue until the goal is achieved

1.2 A new government with veto power over government's decisions is not a coup against the Taif Agreement

1.2.1 This is a lie and a slur

-Legitimation of Decision:

(2) (The decision to form a new government with veto power over government's decisions was right)

2.1 Depriving Hizbollah from the power to veto decisions is not desirable

2.1.1 A single-party role will lead Lebanon into a deadlock

2.1.2 This is the government of the American ambassador

2.1.2.1a The government has made commitments to the US and Israel

2.1.2.1a.1 Olmert's statements during the Israeli war prove this

(2.1.2.1a.2) (The government should not continue to rule)

2.1.3 Lebanon will be under foreign tutelage

(2.1.3.1a) (Foreign tutelage is very bad for the Lebanese)

(2.1.3.1a.1) (The French mandate was horrible)

(2.1.3.1a.2) (Foreign tutelage in the future should not be allowed)

2.1.3.1a.3 A new government is the only way to prevent such tutelage

(2.1.3.1a.4) (The decision to form a new government should be positively evaluated)

2.2 The formation of a new government will save Lebanon

2.2.1 It will prevent foreign tutelage

2.2.2 It will secure Lebanon's security, safety, unity and stability

(2.2.3) (The decision to form a new government should be positively evaluated)

2.3 The formation of a new government is not a coup against the Taif Agreement

2.3.1 We insist on achieving the goal despite the sacrifices

2.3.2 Ahmad Mahmoud paid his life

2.3.3 We are ready to make more sacrifices

(2.3.4) (Lebanon's stability, security, safety and unity are worthy of these sacrifices)

2.4 We will continue the battle to defend Lebanon's safety and unity

2.4.1 I promise you victory

(2.4.2) (We will win this battle)

Chapter 7

May 2009 speech: The invasion of Beirut

1. Speech context

Demonstrations and sit-ins in the centre of Beirut's financial and business centre (see chapter 6, section 1) lasted from 1/12/2006 until the ratification of the Doha Agreement on 21/5/2008. What gave rise to this agreement was a series of systematic assaults, the most significant of which was the 'Invasion of Beirut'. This operation was carried out by Hizbollah against highly populated Sunni areas in Beirut (Shiites are a minority in Beirut) and other co-inhabited cities. The 'Invasion of Beirut' was Hizbollah's response to two decisions taken by the (pro-American) government on the 5 May 2008. The first decision was the expulsion of the Director of Airport Security Apparatus (affiliated to Hizbollah) after reports accusing Hizbollah of monitoring the airport with private cameras, i.e. Hizbollah was tightening its security control over the national airport. The second decision is related to dismantling Hizbollah's illegal telecommunications network. These decisions were seen by Hizbollah as a declaration of war. Nasrallah gave a speech, on 6 May 2008, in which he gave the government two options: reverse these decisions or war (known as the 'Invasion of Beirut').

In Nasrallah's view, the government's decision to sack the Director of Airport Security Apparatus was an attempt to 'target the Shiite community' and, more importantly, 'to facilitate the government's plan in making the airport a base for American and Israeli

intelligence services'.[106] Similarly, the dismantling of Hizbollah's telecommunications network exposed Hizbollah's officials and military leaders to being tracked by Israel, and hence their assassination. Nasrallah warned the government that if the two decisions were not reversed, 'arms would be used to defend arms'. The government did not comply with Nasrallah's request. As a result, Nasrallah declared the start of war (the 'Invasion of Beirut') on 7 May 2008. This miniature civil war resulted in besieging the capital and attacking financial and media institutions and residential areas of prominent figures of the 14th of March party. Street fighting broke out between highly populated Sunni districts and Shiite ones and lasted for almost two weeks, leaving 71 dead and hundreds injured.

The devastating nature of this war led the Arab League to propose a political initiative in order to arrive at a peaceful resolution to the conflict. This initiative resulted in the signing of the Doha Agreement on 21 May 2008 by both parties. Based on this agreement, the two decisions taken by the government were reversed, the siege over the capital and other facilities was lifted, demonstrations and sit-ins were brought to an end, a president of the republic was elected, a new law for June 2009 elections was adopted, the use of Hizbollah's armoury at the domestic level was prohibited, and a new government with veto power over the 8th of March party was formed. From the moment of signing the Doha Agreement, both parties were involved in a blame-game relating to the responsibility of each in causing the escalation (Invasion of Beirut). The 14th of March party considered the 'Invasion of Beirut' a coup that aimed at:

- Seizing power;

[106] For the purposes of contextualisation, identifying events and associated debates, I consulted newspapers that affiliate with both sides of the struggle (see chapter 2, section 5).

- Undermining state sovereignty;
- Changing the current power sharing formula to tripartite rule;
- Promoting intra-sectarian cleansing;
- Serving the interests of the Resistance axis, Syria and Iran.

The 'invasion of Beirut' and its aftermath became the foci of electoral campaigns and speeches of both parties. Each party presented its election campaign based on the conviction that the 'Other' was part of a foreign project, thereby unworthy of holding office or gaining control. During the 14th of March party campaign that coincided with the first commemoration of the 'Invasion of Beirut' (7 May 2009), the leader of this coalition declared that Hizbollah's 'Invasion of Beirut' was a 'trap to lead Lebanon to civil war' and a preamble leading to 'recalibration of the Taif Accord'. In other words, the 'Invasion of Beirut' aimed to change the power-sharing formula from Muslim-Christian parity, as the Taif Accord stipulates, to a tripartite (Sunni-Shiite-Christian) division of power. On 15 May 2009, Nasrallah gave a speech to respond to the accusations raised by the 14th of March party and to announce his party's electoral programme.[107]

2. Speech analysis

2.1. Preparatory step

Nasrallah gave this speech during the graduation ceremony of 2,883 university graduates who were members of Hizbollah. In the speech, Nasrallah exploits the ceremonial nature

[107] A translated English version of the speech can be found in Appendix B, and the original Arabic version in Appendix C.

of the event to achieve the following interrelated goals: mobilize voters for forthcoming elections, publicize his party's electoral programme, respond to the 14th of March leaders' accusations, and legitimise the 'Invasion of Beirut'. The speech is divided into three overlapping parts. In the ceremonial part, Nasrallah greets the graduates and applauds their academic success (lines 1–79). In the part related to elections, Nasrallah announces his party's political programme (lines 111–351); thus, he addresses the Lebanese public at large. Finally, the third part relates to responding to accusations and defending the rightness of the 'Invasion of Beirut' (lines 80–110, 356–525). The first and second parts of the speech are not included in the analysis as these are not directly linked to the main point of disagreement. This means that neither part plays a role in resolving the difference of opinion related to the 'Invasion of Beirut'. However, I will briefly mention the main topics of these two parts.

Nasrallah's electoral manifesto highlights his futuristic outlook of the would-be state with a detailed description of the different political measures that should be taken to 'build a strong and a fair state' (line 113). Nasrallah's political agenda consists of a set of measures that would eventually guarantee the establishment of a strong and capable state. These measures are: the adoption of a new election law based on proportionality to ensure fair representation (line 214), the formation of a new government with veto power over the 14th of March party (lines 272–289), and reformation of the juridical system (lines 233–247). In the part related to greeting the graduates and praising their academic achievement, Nasrallah extends his gratitude to the graduates' families due to the financial, social and psychological burdens they had had to endure (lines 32–41). Moreover, Nasrallah's praise of academic achievement is presented within the

perspective of religious duties and obligations. Thus, educational achievement amounts to 'jihad in the path of the Almighty' (line 29–30).[108]

In the third part, Nasrallah attempts to rebut the 14th of March party's accusations and defend the rightness of the 'Invasion of Beirut'. This part is in turn divided into two sections. The first section is an indirect response to accusations and an attempt to shift the blame onto opponents. According to Nasrallah, the 14th of March party should be blamed for the causes which led to the 'Invasion of Beirut' – the two decisions taken by the government. The second section relates to justifying the rightness of the action that was severely criticized, i.e. an attempt to restore intersubjective agreement regarding Hizbollah's 'Invasion of Beirut'.

2.2. Reconstruction and analysis

Confrontation Stage

As aforementioned, the argumentative (i.e. third) part of the speech is divided into two sections. In a quasi-judicial section, Nasrallah chooses to respond to two accusations: enflaming intra-sectarian conflict that spread with the 'Invasion of Beirut', and changing the power-sharing formula to tripartite rule. As for the former, Nasrallah indirectly refutes it through creating and promoting a correct image of Hizbollah and shifting the blame onto opponents. To this end, Nasrallah highlights the moral values that govern the actions of Hizbollah, as well as the noble goals that these actions realize (lines 82–91). As for the latter, Nasrallah falsifies it (changing the power-sharing formula) by denying full

[108] Jihad in the Islamic view is the constant striving of the self for improvement at all levels, while military jihad against invasion or enemies has only one form.

responsibility using act-denial (see Chapter 3, section 7.i). In the second section of the argumentation part, Nasrallah chooses to defend the rightness of the 'Invasion of Beirut' through a set of *argumentum ad consequentiam.*

The main standpoint that Nasrallah attempts to defend in this section is not explicitly announced in the confrontation stage. It is, however, implicitly stated towards the end of the argumentation stage, where Nasrallah declares that the '7th of May (Invasion of Beirut) was a glorious day' (line 486–487). This statement implicitly suggests that the 'Invasion of Beirut' was the right action. As for the first section, the standpoint that Nasrallah aims to refute remains largely implicit throughout his argumentation. This evasion strategy permits Nasrallah to present the confrontation as if it were a conflict over two contrasting visions and images (topical potential), i.e. Hizbollah's (and his party's) views, aims and actions versus the 14th of March party's views, anticipation and actions. Taking advantage of the occasion (a graduation ceremony), Nasrallah claims that the graduation of Hizbollah's members is a faithful and genuine representation of Hizbollah's true image, i.e. as educated and well-informed citizens whose actions are guided by moral values. This image stands in direct contrast to the image that Hizbollah's opponents are promoting – killing other Lebanese. As such, it is an indirect response to the accusation of enflaming intra-sectarian strife.

> This large number of male and female graduates from the heart of this faithful procession of Jihad presents to Lebanon and to all the world one of the true faces of this procession and one of the shining faces that reflects the Resistance march in Lebanon, and its faith, humanitarianism and patriotism, its sincerity and dedication, its diligence and perseverance, its knowledge and labour. (lines 80–85)

To support his claim (Hizbollah and its members are humane, civilised, moral and well-informed), Nasrallah compares the actions of Hizbollah with those of other resistance movements. To this end, Nasrallah brings to mind the actions of the French resistance after its success in ending the Nazi occupation of France and compares them to those of Hizbollah after the latter's success in liberating most of Lebanese occupied territories in 2000.

> We did not do what other Resistance movements did. All Resistance movements in history held trials and punished collaborators and traitors, nationals of their own homeland except the Resistance in Lebanon. [---] I said to the French ambassador that the Resistance in Lebanon is much more civilized, humane and moral than the French resistance because yours back then held field trials, executed thousands of French nationals without trial, those who were charged with collaborating with the Nazi army, while we (Hizbollah) in Lebanon did not even kill a chicken from Antoine Lahad's Army (a brigade that split from the national army and collaborated with Israel during the civil war). (lines 248–260).

Through this analogy, Nasrallah depicts Hizbollah as a peaceful, tolerant and benevolent group that does not seek vengeance. This is an indirect response to the accusation of killing other Lebanese during the 'Invasion of Beirut' (intra-sectarian conflict). This constructed image of Hizbollah is juxtaposed with the image of the14th of March leaders. They are portrayed as those who rely on false assumptions and arrive at inaccurate assessments. For example, Nasrallah claims that his opponents are doubtful about Hizbollah's ability to rule Lebanon, should Hizbollah (and its party) win the forthcoming elections. Nasrallah asserts that the graduation ceremony is the best response to these doubts. Thus, this is another instance of exploiting the occasion.

> You (graduates) also present a strong scene and send a clear message to all those (14th of March party) who doubted the power of the opposition party (Hizbollah's party) to manage Lebanon's affairs in all fields and disciplines, [---] If you (14th of March party)

> are betting on the failure of the opposition (Hizbollah's party), the only answer is this (graduation ceremony), and this is one out of many ceremonies and one stage out of many stages, with 2,883 graduates in all fields of specialization. (lines 91–94, 99–101)

Academic achievement, as exemplified by the graduation ceremony, attests to Hezbollah having the necessary competence, knowledge and expertise to rule the country. Nasrallah's response also implies that the 14th of March party's wrong expectations stem from their failure to arrive at a proper assessment of Hizbollah's points of strength and capabilities; i.e. doubting the intelligence and expertise of his opponents. Nasrallah supports his claim (Hizbollah is capable of ruling the country alone) with evidence from the last Israeli war.

> The hearts, minds, souls, willpower and determination (of Hizbollah), which defeated the strongest army (Israel) and the strongest country (Israel) in the region [---], are more than capable of managing a country a hundred times larger than Lebanon [---] and as we (Hizbollah) were able with our Lebanese minds and hearts, with our Lebanese willpower and sacrifices to liberate our land and prisoners and protect our country, we are able yet the most able [---] to build our country and nation and promote development. (lines 101–110)

The reference to the Israeli war, on the one hand, insinuates that lessons should be derived from this experience. The call to learn lessons from history promotes a negative representation of Nasrallah's opponents, as it portrays them as incapable of arriving at the right conclusions. As such, it is another instance of *ad hominem* attack on opponents. On the other hand, reference to Hizbollah's victory over Israel is further evidence that supports the image that Nasrallah is constructing.

The religious perspective that Nasrallah begins his speech with also extends to the confrontation stage. This perspective aims to meet Hizbollah's audience frame of reference. To this end, Nasrallah selects lexical terms that refer to Islamic convictions.

These religious anthroponyms serve as referential strategies (religionyms, see chapter 4, section 2), e.g. ‘sacrifices’ (line 108), ‘by Allah’s (the Almighty’s) will’ (line 109), ‘asceticism and modesty’ (line 96). The last set refers to religious values that are only reached through a high level of unblemished commitment to Islamic ideals. The negative representation of the 14th of March coalition is emphasized through predications that attribute negative qualities to them: ‘those (14th of March party) who doubted the power of the opposition’ (lines 92–93) and ‘they (14th of March party) bet on the opposition’s (Hizbollah party’s) failure’ (line 94). Furthermore, Nasrallah refers to his opponents using the demonstrative ‘those’ and the pronoun ‘they’. These indicate spatial distance, and as such serve to realize a perspectivisation strategy. In contrast, Nasrallah’s party and his immediate audience (the 8th of March party) are predicated as those who ‘defeated the strongest army and the strongest country (Israel) in the region’ (lines 101–103) and who are ‘more than capable of managing a country a hundred times larger than Lebanon’ (lines 103–104).

Nasrallah manages to establish communion with his immediate audience through pronouns, such as ‘you’ and ‘we’, to indicate proximity; thus, they serve referential as well as perspectivisation strategies: ‘Today you (Hizbollah audience) also present a strong scene’ (line 92), ‘we were able with our Lebanese minds and hearts’ (line 107). In contrast, (in)direct references to the 14th of March audience are completely absent in this stage. However, there are ample references to the 14th of March audience, especially to citizens of Beirut, where the dramatic actions took place, in the argumentation stage. This is because, in this stage, Nasrallah aims to convince them of the rightness of the violent actions taken against them (‘Invasion of Beirut’).

One of the salient presentational devices in this stage is the use of quantifiers that indicate exaggeration, such as ‘more’ and ‘most’. Exaggeration is also realized through the use of comparative and superlative adjectives: ‘the strongest country’, ‘the strongest tyrant in this world’ (lines 102–103), ‘a country a hundred times larger than Lebanon’ (lines 103–104). Moreover, exaggeration is also achieved through the use of personification, e.g. ‘willpower and determination which defeated the strongest army’ (line 102), ‘Lebanese willpower’ (line 108). Exaggerations realised through adjectives and personifications realise both intensification and perspectivisation strategies. Nasrallah’s reference to the Israeli war is used to elicit concessions (due to the widespread belief that Hizbollah defeated Israel in the 2006 war). In the opening stage, more concessions and common starting points of the discussion are laid out.

Opening Stage

In the opening stage, Nasrallah intensifies the binary opposition between the in-group (Hizbollah party) and the out-group (14th of March party) through evidence derived from past events. Nasrallah constructs a denunciatory image of the 14th of March party by calling to mind the historical event of signing the 17th of May Treaty with Israel in 1983. He reminds the Lebanese people of the political leaders who signed the Treaty ‘from a weakened, defeated and servile position’ (line 360). This image is contrasted with those who stood against the Treaty. This historical event is presented in the form of rhetorical questions.

> Who signed the treaty, who wanted to attach Lebanon to Israel through the May 17th treaty? Who are the leaders and political parties involved in crowning Lebanon forever as a country that belongs to the Zionist project? (lines 362–364)

Nasrallah does not explicitly name the leaders who signed the Treaty. The leaders whom Nasrallah is leading the public to identify are, primarily, Christian politicians and some Sunni leaders. Those leaders are prominent figures in the 14th of March coalition. On the one hand, the presuppositions conveyed in rhetorical questions serve as common starting points for the discussion. On the other, they remind the audience of the disgraceful past of some of the 14th of March leaders. It is, therefore, used to point out an inherent inconsistency between the convictions and actions of some of the 14th of March leaders. Nasrallah confirms this conclusion with an assertion: 'those (some of the 14th of March leaders) who wanted to subjugate Lebanon forever to Israel are now themselves symbols of independence, sovereignty and freedom (the 14th of March party's slogan)' (lines 371–372). This is an *ad hominem attack* of the *tu quoque* type, which aims to discredit some of the14th of March figures by shedding light on their dishonourable past; i.e. their past relation to and collaboration with Israel versus their current yearning for liberty, freedom and independence (X advocates argument Q, which has proposition A as its conclusion. X is committed to the opposite of A as shown in his actions. Therefore, X's credibility is put into question, and hence the plausibility of X's arguments is decreased). Through reference to a past event, Nasrallah constructs the 14th of March party as a blameworthy group in order to shift the blame onto them and, eventually, to hold them responsible for the 7th of May 2008 events ('Invasion of Beirut'). Similarly, a positive representation of Nasrallah's group is achieved through rhetorical questions that pertain to the same event, signing the 17th of May Treaty.

> Who opposed the 17th of May Treaty, whose blood was shed to announce Lebanese people's rejection of the 17th of May treaty, who were the clergy, the men and women? (lines 364–365)

The expected answer, which also serves as a common starting point, is the Shiites of Lebanon. This conclusion is emphasized by Nasrallah's direct reference to the insurgency that started in 'Bir al-Abed' (line 366), as well as to the 'martyr Mohamed Najdeh' (lines 367–368), who died in the clashes that took place with the army in the aftermath of signing the Treaty. In both cases, the presuppositions contained in rhetorical questions are presented as common starting points of the discussion, and as such Nasrallah falsely presumes that agreement is established.[109] Thus, Nasrallah escapes the burden of proof by presenting his claim as enjoying agreement, i.e. fallacy *of evading the burden of proof*.[110] Moreover, this Treaty is evidence of the 8th of March party's nationalist and patriotic deeds.

> It is a pity and very unfortunate [---] that those who stood against May 17th Treaty (Shiites), those (Hizbollah) who sacrificed their blessed blood for the liberation of Lebanon are now the titles of subordination, treason and foreign dependence (Syria and Iran). Isn't this historical injustice? (lines 357–358, 372-374)

Nasrallah sees the impertinent charge of the 14th of March party – the 'Invasion of Beirut' serves the interests of Iran and Syria – as an unjust accusation. Through *argumentum ad*

[109] In fact, the Treaty was signed by ministers and parliamentarians belonging to different religious sects and not exclusively Christians or Sunni leaders. Ironically, two Shiite MPs who signed the Treaty are now members of the Hizbollah coalition. The question that presents itself is why the public might have picked up the referents that Nasrallah favoured. Relevance Theory might provide a plausible answer. It has been a repeated practice in the media that belong to or affiliate to Hizbollah to emphasize the role of Christians and, to a lesser degree, Sunni figures, while ignoring the role of Shiites in approving the Treaty. Similarly, the role of Shiites in resisting the Treaty was overemphasized while the role of other sects was subject to silencing. Therefore, this repeated one-sided interpretation of a historical event increases the strength and validity of these propositions in the cognitive environment of the audience. Consequently, Nasrallah's favoured interpretation is selected (see Chapter 3, section 6.3.1).

[110] The attempt to present standpoints as self-evident amounts to the fallacy of evading the burden of proof. This fallacy is a violation of the Obligation to Defend Rule, Rule 2.

misericordiam, Nasrallah appeals to the 14th of March audience's feelings of compassion to win their sympathy. To put it differently, Hizbollah is seen by the 14th of March party and its audience as a perpetrator because of Hizbollah's use of weapons against other Lebanese. Thus, Nasrallah's appeal for empathy and the call to do his party justice are examples of victim-perpetrator reversal (Reisigl &Wodak, 2001).

Nasrallah adapts to the Hizbollah audience by underscoring the patriotism and nationalism of the 8th of March party leaders. A clear example is their rejection of the 17th of May Treaty with Israel. In contrast, Nasrallah's opponents (the 14th of March party) are depicted as those who collaborated with Israel to 'subjugate Lebanon forever to Israel' (line 341). The positive representation of Nasrallah's party is emphasised through predications and value-laden words, e.g. 'stood against the Agreement' (line 359), 'whose blood was shed to announce Lebanese people's rejection of the 17th of May treaty' (lines 366–367), 'sacrificed their blessed blood for the liberation of Lebanon' (lines 372–373). In juxtaposition, the 14th of March camp is negatively predicated: 'signed the agreement from a weakened, defeated and servile position' (line 360), 'involved in crowning Lebanon forever as a country that belongs to the Zionist project' (line 363–364).

These negative and positive attributions serve a predication strategy. Rhetorical questions are the main presentational devices exploited in this stage. Nasrallah manipulates a historical event by relying on presuppositions (the 14th of March party's collaboration with Israel and signing the 17th of May Treaty) conveyed in rhetorical questions. These presuppositions act not only as common starting points but also indirectly assert the culpability of some leaders of the 14th of March party. Interestingly, Nasrallah resorts to rhetorical questions in order to make his claim (the Treaty was signed by Christians and

some Sunni leaders) go unnoticed by the 14th of March audience. Had Nasrallah stated this claim overtly, it would have alerted their epistemic filters to the falsity of the proposition, because it contradicts their background knowledge and beliefs. This covert representation of claims serves as a mitigation strategy.

Argumentation Stage

As mentioned above, the argumentation stage is divided into two sections. In the first one, Nasrallah attempts to refute his opponents' criticisms, shifts the blame onto opponents and holds them responsible for the causes of the invasion of Beirut, i.e. the two decisions taken by the government. As for the former, Nasrallah indirectly refutes accusations through creating and promoting the correct image of Hizbollah. The latter is also achieved through constructing a disgraceful image of opponents and by supplying the audience with facts about the 'Invasion of Beirut'. In both cases, Nasrallah relies on arguments from example, arguments from analogy and arguments from authority.

Nasrallah starts his defence by exploiting the ceremonial nature of the graduation event. According to Nasrallah, the ceremony is a true and faithful representation of Hizbollah's (members and audience) actions and goals: 'This large number of male and female graduates [---] presents to Lebanon [---] one of the true faces of this procession [---] and one of the shining faces that reflects the Resistance march in Lebanon' (lines 80–83). Nasrallah provides further evidence that weighs in favour of the image of Hizbollah constructed. It is presented in terms of an argument from analogy, through which the actions of the French resistance are compared to Hizbollah's actions. According to Nasrallah, the French resistance convicted and executed those who collaborated with the

Nazis. In contrast, Hizbollah handed over those who collaborated with Israel to Lebanese judiciary authorities in order to receive fair trials.

> Resistance in Lebanon is much more civilized, humane and moral than the French resistance because yours back then held field trials, executed thousands of French nationals without trial, those who were charged with collaborating with the Nazi army, while we (Hizbollah) in Lebanon did not even kill a chicken from Antoine Lahad's Army. (lines 256–260).

In this case, Nasrallah is supporting a general claim: Hizbollah is peaceful, tolerant and does not seek vengeance, through evidence derived from one example. This is an instance of the *hasty generalisation* fallacy or *secundum quid*. Nasrallah contrasts the image constructed of Hizbollah with that of his opponents. To this end, Nasrallah depicts them (14th of March leaders) as those who rely on false assumptions and arrive at the wrong conclusions. Nasrallah claims that the 14th of March party anticipates the failure of Hizbollah's party in ruling the country should they win the forthcoming elections: 'those (14th of March party) who doubted the power of the opposition party (Hizbollah party) to manage Lebanon's affairs' (lines 92–93). Nasrallah is attributing a fictitious standpoint to a source; thus, he is committing the *straw man* fallacy. Nasrallah responds to this hypothetical scenario through an argument from analogy in order to assert Hizbollah's capabilities and its readiness to handle such a task.

> The hearts, minds, souls, willpower and determination (of Hizbollah), which defeated the strongest army (Israel) and the strongest country (Israel) in the region [---], are more than capable of managing a country a times larger than Lebanon' [---] and as we (Hizbollah) were able with our Lebanese minds and hearts, with our Lebanese willpower and sacrifices to liberate our land and prisoners and protect our country, we are the most able [---], to build our country and nation and promote development. (lines 101–110)

In this example, Nasrallah is referring to Hizbollah and its audience's heroic deeds during the Israeli war on Lebanon in 2006. These patriotic and heroic acts are taken as evidence to show Hizbollah's capabilities and level of preparedness. Nasrallah reasserts his party's nationalism and patriotism versus the 14th of March party's subjugation to and collaboration with Israel by referring to the 17th of May Treaty, which was endorsed by some leaders who are prominent figures in the 14th of March party. In this case, Nasrallah is using an argument from example combined with *hasty generalisation* in order to support his claim (14th of March leaders collaborate with Israel). Using rhetorical questions (explained above), Nasrallah manages to: cast doubt on the 14th of March party and exempt his party from any wrongful actions. Nasrallah exploits the previous collaboration of some of the 14th of March party's leaders to discredit and disparage that party. Thus, Nasrallah is transferring the negative attributes of a part to the whole. In this case, Nasrallah is committing the fallacy of *composition*.[111] Similarly, due to the patriotism and nationalism of some Shiite leaders, who rejected the Treaty, these qualities are transferred to the 8th of March party as a whole (both cases are fallacious representations, as explained above).

Two points can be deduced from Nasrallah's reference to the 17th of May Treaty. First, Hizbollah and its party have an honourable past; thus, they cannot be accused of serving foreign countries (Iran and Syria) through the 'Invasion of Beirut'. In this respect, Nasrallah is simultaneously advancing two argument schemes where the conclusion of the first becomes a premise in the second. The first is an argument scheme from action to

[111] This fallacy is a violation of Rule 7, the Validity Rule. It amounts to confusing properties of parts and wholes by ascribing a relative or structure-dependent property of a part of the whole to the whole (van Eemeren and Grootendorst, 1993, p. 213).

character, while the second is an argument scheme from character to action (Walton, 2006, p. 194–195).[112] That is, Hizbollah and its political party rejected the shameful Treaty with Israel; therefore, they are patriotic and nationalists. This conclusion forms the premise of the second argument scheme through which a prediction about the group's future actions is justified. That is, Hizbollah and its party are patriotic and nationalists; therefore, their future actions (e.g. the Invasion of Beirut), are likely to be patriotic and serve the national interest. Indeed, this is the perspective that Nasrallah exploits in the rescue narrative (see below).

Second, the negative representation of the 14th of March party also takes place at the level of these two argument schemes. That is, some leaders of the 14th of March party collaborated with Israel by signing the Treaty; therefore, they are traitors and unpatriotic (scheme from action to character). Having such a character quality means that the 14th of March party's political aspirations and future actions are likely to be unpatriotic and not serve the national interest (scheme from character to action). In fact, Nasrallah explicitly states this conclusion: 'this history has to remain present, to benefit from it in the future' (lines 377–378) in order to 'prevent ourselves from being misled or lost again' (line 378). In other words, Nasrallah presents the two decisions taken by the government as actions that serve Israeli interests, thereby asserting the 14th of March leaders' collaboration with Israel. This claim is substantiated through a fallacious variant of argument from authority.

[112]According to Walton (2006), the argument scheme from action to character consists of the following premises: (1) agent A did something that can be classified as fitting a particular character quality; (2) therefore, A has this character quality. The argument scheme from character to action consists of the following premises: (1) Agent A has a character quality that has been defined; (2) therefore, if A carries out some action in the future, this action is likely to be classified as fitting under that character quality.

Nasrallah emphasizes the moral obligation that he holds towards the public, i.e. supplying them with the truth. He, therefore, constructs himself as a credible and trusted source of information. What Nasrallah is going to disclose is his personal view and assessment concerning the events that preceded and followed the 'Invasion of Beirut' on the 7 May 2008. On the one hand, this is an indirect appeal to the 14th of March audience's duties, whereby they are encouraged to review their positions in light of the truth provided. On the other hand, this is an indirect way in which Nasrallah dissociates the 14th of March audience from their leaders.

> I (Nasrallah) find it my duty to comment on this issue (the Invasion of Beirut) in honour of the blessed blood of the martyrs who fell on May 7th, so no one gets confused in Lebanon or outside Lebanon, and to bring some light back to the truth.
> (lines 396–398)

Nasrallah constructs the 14th of March party as a group worthy of blame in order to shift the blame onto them, i.e. they are responsible for the 'Invasion of Beirut'. As such, Nasrallah shifts the focus from discussing what Hizbollah has done to the citizens of Beirut to what others have done instead. Nasrallah establishes a causal relation between the two decisions taken by the government on 5 May 2008 and invading Beirut two days later on 7 May 2008.

> I want to remind those (the14th of March party) talking about the 7th of May (Invasion of Beirut) to remember what they did on the 5th of May (two decisions taken by the government). (lines 400–401).

To support his claim, Nasrallah provides evidence presented in the form of *argumentum ad verecundiam*. Nasrallah exploits the conclusions of the 'Winograd Commission Report' to

launch a direct *ad hominem* attack on the 14th of March party.[113] According to Nasrallah, the 'Winograd Report' states that Hizbollah's telecommunications network is the most important element in Hizbollah's victory over Israel.

> If we (Lebanese) review the Winograd report which states that among Hezbollah's elements and points of strength that Israel must dismantle is Hezbollah's telecommunications network [---] the most important weapon of the Resistance in the July war (Israeli war in 2006) was the telecommunications network, because it is immune to eavesdropping and to Israeli breaches to an extremely large degree. (lines 401–403, 408–412)

It follows that the government's decision on 5 May 2008 to dismantle Hizbollah's telecommunications network serves Israeli interests. This means exposing Hizbollah's officials to being tracked by Israel. In Nasrallah's view, the government should be ashamed of itself because 'the 5th of May (the two decisions) is a mark of disgrace stamped on its (government) forehead throughout history, because it (government) wanted to do what Israel failed to accomplish over thirty-three days of war (Israeli war in 2006)' (lines 418–420). In this respect, Nasrallah manages not only to present Hezbollah as a victim, instead of being the perpetrator, but also to villainize his opponents. Through this fallacious evidence, Nasrallah justifies the attribution of blame and absolves himself (and his party) of responsibility. In this case, blaming the 14th of March party rests on attributing a fictitious standpoint to a source, the 'Winograd Report'. This is another instance of the *straw man* fallacy.[114]

[113] The Winograd Commission was an Israeli-led investigation seeking to assess alleged failures in the performance of the Israeli government and army during the Israeli war on Lebanon in 2006.

[114] A thorough review of the Winograd report, which is published online, reveals that the report assesses the failings and shortcomings of the Israeli decision to wage war on Lebanon in 2006, such as flaws in preparedness, in the decision-making process, and the army's performance. The report does not mention the need to dismantle Hizbollah's telecommunications network nor does it assert its effectiveness during the war. On the contrary, Hizbollah is only mentioned for its ability to decide on the time of escalation with Israel and its growing missile arsenal.

The 14th of March party also accused Nasrallah of changing the power sharing system from a Christian-Muslim party to a tripartite rule. This is the second accusation that Nasrallah aims to refute. To falsify this accusation, Nasrallah shifts the burden of proof onto his opponents.

> This concept (tripartite) was fabricated by them (14th of March party), [---] No one in the opposition (Hizbollah's party) spoke about the tripartite issue [---], I tell you that I do not understand their precise meaning. [---] they proposed the issue of tripartite rule only to put the opposition in a defensive position. I wish that the opposition [---] would ignore this fabrication. All they want is to make us defend ourselves. We (Hizbollah party) didn't propose this issue, end of discussion, and their (14th of March party) claim does not have any factual basis at all.
> (lines 312–325)

Nasrallah claims that Hizbollah (and his party) is not calling for a tripartite type of governance. In fact, Nasrallah mentions that he does not understand what is meant by tripartite rule. Nasrallah accuses the 14th of March party of inventing the issue of tripartite rule. He also asserts that the 14th of March party cannot provide evidence to support their claim. In this case, Nasrallah is appealing to ignorance. This means that Nasrallah's claim (we did not propose this issue) should be accepted as true as long as the other party is unable to provide evidence that attests to the contrary (they do not have any factual basis to prove it). In this case, Nasrallah is shifting the burden of proof through *argumentum ad ignorantiam*.[115] At this level, Nasrallah's argumentation shifts from responding to accusations to legitimating the 'Invasion of Beirut'.

The 14th of March party criticised Hizbollah's 'Invasion of Beirut' because it enflamed intra-sectarian conflict, i.e. the 'Invasion of Beirut' was a wrong action. Therefore,

[115] This fallacy is a violation of Rule 2, the Obligation to Defend Rule. It amounts to shifting the burden of proof by requiring the other party to show that the protagonist's standpoint is wrong.

Nasrallah attempts to rebut this claim through a set of *argumentum ad consequentiam* and show that the 'Invasion of Beirut' was right. In the second section of his argumentation, Nasrallah is directly addressing the 14th of March audience, in particular, the citizens of Beirut, where most of the clashes between Shiites and Sunnis took place. Nasrallah starts his defence by urging Beirut citizens to ask themselves a set of questions. The objective is to cast doubt on this group's information related to the 'Invasion of Beirut' and to prepare them for new information that Nasrallah is going to disclose.

> I want to address our people in Beirut and urge them to ask: who were those (the 14th of March party) who turned Beirut into a city for militias under the heading of security companies, and who filled the city with centres for dispatching arms under the cover of this title? [---] Does anyone still doubt that thousands of fighters were brought to Beirut prior to the government's decision? What was being planned? (lines 427–436)

In these rhetorical questions, Nasrallah is referring to Sunni citizens (fighters) who came from different cities in an attempt to end Hizbollah's siege of Sunni districts in Beirut, yet, they failed to do so. This is another instance of shifting the blame onto the 14th of March party and an implicit denial of Hizbollah's responsibility for enflaming intra-sectarian conflict. In other words, Nasrallah implicitly suggests that the 'Invasion of Beirut' was an act of defence, and not an offensive as his opponents claim. This view is further exploited in the rescue narrative (see below). Nasrallah's new information is presented in the form of three hypothetical future scenarios, which, according to Nasrallah, were planned by the government.

Each scenario consists of Hizbollah's reaction to the government's decisions and the latter's response. To make these scenarios more convincing, Nasrallah narrates the events in the form of cause-effect relations. In the first scenario, the government expects

Hizbollah to resort to demonstrations and sit-ins as a response to the government's decisions. According to Nasrallah, if this were the case, then the government would win and 'this would be a preparatory step as whoever confiscates the telecommunications network, will later on confiscate other weapons' (lines 440–441). In the second scenario, the government expects Hizbollah to reject the decisions, thus, a 'confrontation will take place between Hizbollah and the army' (lines 443–444). According to Nasrallah, this is a confrontation that Hizbollah will not be involved in, and as a result the government will succeed in implementing the decisions.

In the third scenario, the government anticipates that Hizbollah will resort to violence, and thus be involved in civil strife. If Hizbollah chooses a violent response, then 'thousands of fighters' – with instructions on 'which areas they have to take over, the areas they have to cut off to separate them from other areas' (lines 462-463) – are ready to confront Hizbollah. According to Nasrallah, if Hizbollah was involved in civil strife, then the government would take this as a pretext to call for foreign intervention.

> These events (intra-sectarian conflict) were meant to be taken as a pretext to demand the intervention of foreign forces under the title Sectarian war in Lebanon, to raise the call to the world saying 'Please help us stop the war, this is what was planned. (lines 464–467)

In Nasrallah's view, the third scenario (foreign intervention) is the most dangerous one. Moreover, Nasrallah implicitly suggests that this scenario would have been implemented had Hizbollah not acted in the way it did on 7 May – the 'Invasion of Beirut'.

> It (the invasion of Beirut) put a quick end to a sectarian war they had planned for, and for which they had made preparations. It brought a quick end to a plan to burn Beirut by sedition and civil war, it put a quick end to a major conspiracy that was prepared for this resistance. The 7th of May spared Beirut bloodshed, preserved the official

> institutions of Beirut, the homes and families of Beirut, which they wanted to destroy and burn on the 5th of May. (lines 478–483)

The hypothetical scenario that Nasrallah narrates constitutes the elements of a rescue narrative: the villains are ministers, who affiliated to or are members of the 14th of March party, and who supported endorsement of the two decisions, the victims are Hizbollah and the Lebanese people who will endure the consequences of foreign intervention, the hero/victim is Hizbollah who takes a pre-emptive measure to rescue itself and the Lebanese people. Through the rescue narrative, Nasrallah claims victimhood and presents members of the 14th of March audience, in particular the citizens of Beirut, as victims of a conspiracy prepared by their own leaders. The proposition that some Lebanese officials would call for foreign intervention evokes fear in all sections of the audience. This proposition alludes to the Syrian intervention during the Lebanese civil war.[116] It thus reminds the 14th of March party, as well as its audience, of the negative consequences that they faced during the Syrian domination (e.g. marginalization, imprisonment and assassinations). Therefore, the consequences of foreign intervention evoke fear as well as nationalist and patriotic sentiments.

The sense of fear which is propagated via the construction of a hypothetical scenario aims, on the one hand, to warn the audience of losing autonomy. Thus, it is used as a heteronomisation strategy. On the other hand, it urges the Lebanese to unify based on shared worries. Therefore, it is used as a unification strategy. In this case, the different

[116] In 1976, the then Lebanese government asked Syria to intervene in the Lebanese civil war in an attempt to limit Palestinian presence in Lebanon. The Syrian occupation ended in 2005 as a result of the Cedar Revolution organised by the 14th of March party (see Chapter 1, section 5).

elements of the rescue narrative appear as premises in an argument from fear appeal. Adopting Walton's et al. (2008) scheme, the argument can be reconstructed as follows:

Premise 1:	If Hizbollah did not invade Beirut, then sectarian strife would spread and foreign forces/ countries would intervene
Premise 2:	This scenario is very bad for the resistance and for Lebanon
Premise 3:	Therefore, the scenario ought to be prevented if possible
Premise 4:	But the only way to prevent this scenario was to invade Beirut in order to save the citizens of Beirut;
Conclusion:	Therefore, Hizbollah had to invade Beirut

Through the rescue narrative, Nasrallah constructs Hizbollah as a saviour or as the one whose actions bring salvation to the Lebanese people, especially to the citizens of Beirut. It follows that the 'Invasion of Beirut' is an act that should be praised and not criticised. To arrive at this conclusion, Nasrallah advances an argument scheme from moral values to justify the goal (saving Lebanon from foreign intervention). This means that sparing Beirut bloodshed and preserving families, homes and institutions in Beirut are reasons to evaluate the desirability of the action. This is an implicit call for the 14th of March audience to review their positions in light of Nasrallah's new information. The 14th of March audience, especially citizens of Beirut, were against the 'Invasion of Beirut'. Therefore, to make his justification cohere with their background knowledge and beliefs, Nasrallah leads them to access a less highly activated set of indisputable beliefs that weigh in favour of the action. This is achieved through reframing the 'invasion of Beirut' in such a way as to make it conform with nationalist and patriotic sentiments, i.e. via a rescue narrative.

The events of the third hypothetical scenario constitute the elements of a rescue narrative and are configured as premises in an argument from fear appeal. The third scenario is also configured as premises for *argumentum ad consequentiam* (a variant which mimics the

argument scheme *reductio ad absurdum*). Foreign intervention is the negative consequence cited, had the 'Invasion of Beirut' not taken place. The scenario also outlines the positive consequences of invading Beirut. These constitute the premises for *argumentum ad consequentiam* (a variant which mimics the argument scheme from positive consequences). In addition to putting a quick end to sectarian war, to burning Beirut and to a major conspiracy etc., Nasrallah enumerates the positive effects of the 'Invasion of Beirut' on Lebanese politics.

> This is the greatness of our martyrs' blood. [---] I declare the 7th of May as one of the glorious days of the Resistance in Lebanon. And as a consequence, the 7th of May placed Lebanon on the path to resolution, and brought Lebanon out of the stymie they had placed it in, the 7th of May compelled them to return to dialogue table which they had previously rejected, the 7th of May led to the election of a president and the formation of a national unity government, the relative stability which Lebanese have enjoyed during the last year is one of the blessings of 7th May, thanks to the martyrs' blood who fell in the 7th of May. (lines 484–493)

This means that the 'Invasion of Beirut' was carried out for the sake of achieving noble goals. In this case, *argumentum ad consequentiam* (a variant that mimics the argument scheme from negative consequences) is combined with the argument scheme for the nobility of a goal, via which actions are justified. Nasrallah mentions the negative consequences of the 'Invasion of Beirut' in terms of martyrs who belong to his political party and audience.[117] It follows that the 'invasion of Beirut' is morally virtuous and religiously justified. This is also invoked through the use of lexis that conveys religious meanings, such as blessings and glory. Consequently, the positive consequences of the

[117] Martyrdom is a religious concept that can only be understood in relation to the Islamic concept of Holy Struggle or Jihad**,** i.e. actions carried to defend Muslim nations, lands and sacred places, among others. In a speech that followed the 'Invasion of Beirut', Nasrallah declared that those who died from the other group are 'victims for whom we are deeply saddened'.

'Invasion of Beirut' are realised due to those martyrs who sacrificed their blood for the sake of saving Beirut. Therefore, Nasrallah is advancing an argument from sacrifice (Walton et al., 2008, p. 322) that can be reconstructed as follows:

Premise 1: For the thing X (saving Beirut and sparing Beirut blood) sacrifice S (martyrs) is made
Premise 2: If a great sacrifice S has been made for X, then the value V of X will be greater
Premise 3: A great sacrifice S has been made
Conclusion: X (saving Beirut and spearing Beirut blood) is of great value V

The overall argumentation that Nasrallah puts forward to legitimise and defend the Invasion of Beirut can be reconstructed as presented in Figure 7.1, below.

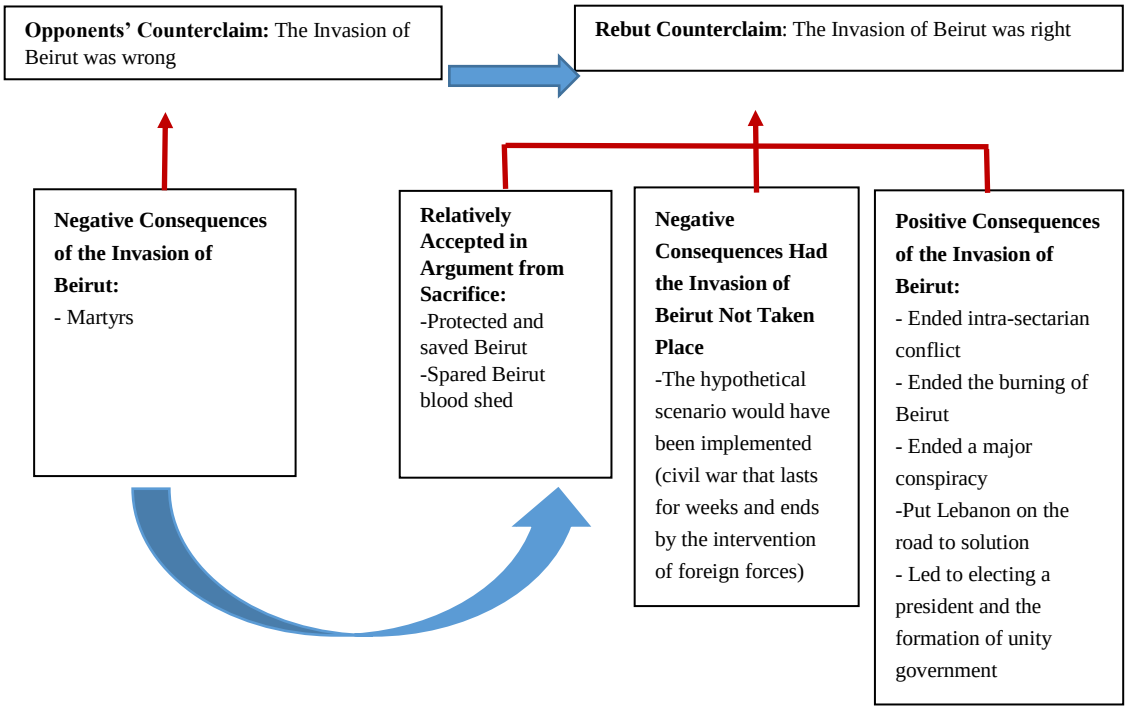

Figure 7.1: Positive and negative consequences of invading Beirut

In this stage, Nasrallah is directly addressing the 14th of March party, especially the citizens of Beirut: 'I want to address our people in Beirut' (lines 427–428), 'I want to ask

Beirut citizens' (line 423). Nasrallah manages to establish communion with this audience through referential strategies, such as the pronoun 'our': 'to our dear people in Beirut' (line 478). Moreover, Nasrallah presents this section of the audience as those who are willing to change their position based on the truth which Nasrallah is supplying. Communion with this audience is enhanced through the events of the rescue narrative. Through this narrative, Nasrallah presents the 'Invasion of Beirut' as an action aimed at protecting and saving Beirut citizens: 'The 7th of May, spared Beirut bloodshed, preserved the official institutions of Beirut, the homes and families of Beirut' (lines 481–483). Adaptation to the 14th of March audience is also evident in the way Nasrallah reframes the 'Invasion of Beirut' so as to meet the frame of reference of this audience, i.e. by invoking patriotic and nationalist sentiments.

In his presentation of the arguments, Nasrallah presents two contrasting scenes. The first is related to the negative consequences had Hizbollah not invaded Beirut (third hypothetical scenario), whereas the second enumerates the positive effects that had already materialised (e.g. sparing Beirut bloodshed, preserving homes and institutions). In the hypothetical scenario, fear is evoked through the use of lexical terms that pertain to war: 'struggle, confrontation, confiscate, weapons, clash with the army, areas to be taken over, intervention of foreign forces, burn Beirut, destroyed'. This dreadful scene is contrasted with the 'Invasion of Beirut', which is predicated with positive attributes. Thus, these serve as predication strategies: 'protected, saved blood, saved homes and families, brought Lebanon out of the stymie'. Despite the pejorative language that Nasrallah uses to demonize his opponents, Nasrallah ends his argumentation by calling

for unity and emphasising solidarity. This is the perspective that is propagated in the concluding stage.

Concluding Stage

In this stage, Nasrallah explicitly announces the result of his argumentation: 'I declare the 7th of May (Invasion of Beirut) to be one of the glorious days of the Resistance in Lebanon' (lines 486–487). This implies that the 'Invasion of Beirut' was not only right but also commendable. Nasrallah is making an absolute of the success of his defence, which amounts to the fallacy of *concluding that a standpoint is true because it has been defended successfully.* Nasrallah re-emphasizes religious values to legitimise the 'Invasion of Beirut'. In Arabic, glorious means that the action is bestowed by Divine blessings, i.e. the action is in accordance with Islamic law/ Sharia. This is the highest level of legitimation that an action can attain from an Islamic point of view. Based on this view, Nasrallah absolves himself (and Hizbollah) of any moral responsibility for killing other Lebanese.

This form of religious justification appeals strongly to Nasrallah's immediate audience. In contrast, Nasrallah dose not acknowledge the sacrifices of the 14th of March audience. There is neither explicit nor implicit reference to their human losses. Despite Nasrallah's efforts to vilify the leaders of the 14th of March party, he ends his speech by emphasizing solidarity and pulling together (unification and cohesivation strategies). This is realised through lexical terms (presentational devices) that convey unification: 'we (Hizbollah) call for cooperation and partnership, to overcome the past to concert efforts, to build our country together [---] to protect it together (lines 514–516, 521).

3. Conclusion

In this speech, Nasrallah attempts to achieve multiple political goals. Among these are publicising the 8th of March party's political programme and mobilising supporters for the forthcoming elections. However, the analysis only focuses on those parts of the speech that relate to responding to accusations and legitimising the 'Invasion of Beirut'. To this end, Nasrallah makes strategic choices: selecting topical potential, adapting to the audience, presenting his arguments. In the confrontation stage, Nasrallah evades mentioning the main points of disagreement. This permits him to present the confrontation in terms of two conflicting images, the image of the 14th of March party versus the image of the Hizbollah party. To construct both, Nasrallah resorts to historical events in order to applaud the decisions and actions pursued by his group and to denounce those of opponents. The lessons and assumptions conveyed in these historical events are taken as common starting points for the discussion. In the opening stage, facts relating to signing the 17th of May Treaty with Israel are manipulated through presuppositions conveyed in rhetorical questions. It might, thus, be safe to conclude that these presuppositions are strategically used to overcome the epistemic filters of the 14th of March audience.

The argumentation stage is divided into two sections. In the first, Nasrallah indirectly responds to accusations through the construction of the correct image of Hizbollah. To this end, Nasrallah resorts to arguments form authority, arguments from analogy and example, arguments from action to character and from character to action in order to highlight the positive qualities of the 8th of March party. Similar types of arguments are used to construct a demonised image of the 14th of March party. In the second section,

Nasrallah attempts to legitimise the ‘Invasion of Beirut’ through exploiting a rescue narrative. Through this narrative, Hizbollah’s actions are reframed as those that brought salvation to Beirut citizens. A second level of justification is achieved via enumerating the positive consequences of invading Beirut as well as the negative consequences that the Invasion of Beirut prevented from materialising. The third type of justification consists of emphasising the moral and religious values that motivated the ‘Invasion of Beirut’. This allows Nasrallah to conclude his defence by announcing that the ‘Invasion of Beirut’ was one of the glorious actions taken by Hizbollah.

Reconstruction of the argument

- Quasi-juridical defence to avoid blame:

(1) (Nasrallah/Hizbollah should not be blamed)

(1.1) (Nasrallah/Hizbollah should not be blamed for enflaming intra-sectarian strife that began with the Invasion of Beirut)

(1.1.1) (This is an incorrect image of Hizbollah)

(1.1.2) (I/Nasrallah will present to you the correct image of Hizbollah)

1.1.2.1a The large numbers of male and female graduates present one of the true faces of resistance

(1.1.2.1a.1) (Hizbollah members are educated and well-informed citizens)

(1.1.2.1b) (Hizbollah is a peaceful, tolerant and benevolent group that does not seek revenge)

1.1.2.1b.1 The French resistance is used as an example

1.1.2.1b.2 The French resistance executed thousands of those who collaborated with the Nazis

1.1.2.1b.3 After the liberation, Hizbollah did not kill even a chicken from Antoine Lahad's army

1.1.2.1b.4 Hizbollah is much more civilized, humane and moral than the French resistance

1.1.2.1c Hizbollah is capable and ready to rule the country alone

1.1.2.1c.1 We tell those who doubted Hizbollah's abilities that we are capable of managing Lebanon's affairs

1.1.2.1c.2 Take the example of the Israeli war

1.1.2.1c.3 Just as we were able to liberate our land and protect our country, we are able to build our country

1.1.2.1c.4 Just as we were able to defeat the strongest army in the region, we are more than capable of managing a country a hundred times larger than Lebanon

1.1.2.1d (Hizbollah is a nationalist and patriotic party)

1.1.2.1d.1 Take the example of the 17th of May Treaty

1.1.2.1d.2 It subjugates Lebanon to the Israeli project

1.1.2.1d.3 Shiite leaders opposed the treaty

1.1.2.1d.4 (This is patriotic and serves the national interest)

(1.1.2.1d.4) (Hizbollah and his party are patriotic and nationalists)

(1.1.2.1d.5) (Our future actions are patriotic and serve national interests)

1.1.3 (The 14th of March party is to be blamed for the causes of the Invasion of Beirut)

(1.1.3.1a) (This is the correct image of the 14th of March party)

1.1.3.1a.1 The signing of the 17th of May Treaty is evidence

1.1.3.1a.2 (Christian leaders and some Sunni leaders were involved in crowning Lebanon forever part the Zionist project)

1.1.3.1a.3 They signed the shameful treaty

1.1.3.1a.4 They subjugated Lebanon to Israeli conditions

(1.1.3.1a.5) (They are traitors and unpatriotic)

(1.1.3.1a.6) (The 14th of March party is unpatriotic and traitorous)

(1.1.3.1a.7) (Their future actions are unpatriotic and against the national interests)

1.1.3.1a.7.1a The conclusions of the Winograd Report are evidence of their collaboration with Israel

1.1.3.1a.7.1a.1 It mentions that the telecommunications network is the most important weapon in Hizbollah's victory over Israel in 2006

1.1.3.1a.7.1a.2 The government wanted to do what Israel failed to accomplish in 2006

(1.1.3.1a.7.1a.3) (The government's decision to dismantle Hizbollah's telecommunication network serves Israel)

1.1.3.1b It is my duty to tell Beirut citizens the truth

(1.1.3.1b.1) (The 14th of March leaders brought militias to Beirut)

(1.1.3.1b.2) (The 14th of March party filled the city with centres for dispatching arms)

1.1.3.1b.3 They brought fighters to Beirut prior to the

government's decision

(1.1.3.1b.4) (The 14th of March party had a plan)

(1.2) (Hizbollah and its party should not be blamed for the tripartite issue).

1.2.1 This concept was fabricated by the 14th of March party

1.2.2 I do not understand their precise intent

1.2.3 Hizbollah and its party didn't propose this issue

1.2.4 Their claim does not have any factual basis at all

-Legitimation of Action:

(2) (The Invasion of Beirut was right)

(2.1) (Hizbollah responded to the two decisions taken by the government to prevent the worst war scenario)

(2.1.1) (Avoiding the worst war scenario is the right thing to do)

2.1.1.1a Sectarian conflict would spread and foreign forces/countries would intervene

2.1.1.1a.1 The government would demand foreign intervention

(2.1.1.1a.2) (Foreign intervention is very bad)

(2.1.1.1a.3) (The Syrian intervention was bad)

(2.1.1.1a.4) Foreign intervention should not be allowed

2.1.1.1a.4.1a Our goal is to save Lebanon from foreign intervention

2.1.1.1a.4.1a.1 We had to spare Beirut bloodshed, to preserve families, homes and institutions in Beirut

2.1.1.1a.4.1a.2 Invasion of Beirut was the only means to achieve the goal

(2.1.1.1a.5) (The Invasion of Beirut should be positively evaluated)

2.2 The Invasion of Beirut saved Beirut, Beirut citizens and Lebanon

2.2.1 It ended intra-sectarian conflict and prevented foreign intervention

2.2.2 It put a quick end to a plan to burn Beirut

2.2.3 It out a quick end to a major conspiracy

2.2.3 It put Lebanon on the path to resolution

2.2.4 It led to the election of a new president and the formation of a new government

(2.2.5) (The invasion of Beirut should be positively evaluated)

2.3 I/Nasrallah declare the 7th of May to be one of the glorious days of the Resistance

2.3.1 Thanks to the martyrs' blood who fell on the 7th of May

2.3.2 They sacrificed their blood to save Beirut

2.3.4 Saving Beirut and its citizens are worthy of these sacrifices

Chapter 8

January 2011 Speech: Resignation from government

1. Speech context

After the assassination of the prime minister, Rafic Hariri (a prominent Sunni figure), in 2005, the 14th of March party lobbied for the establishment of a Special Tribunal for Lebanon (STL). The objective was to carry out an international investigation under the auspices of the UN in order to bring perpetrators to justice.[118] The different phases of the establishment of the tribunal, the juridical proceedings of the International Investigation Committee (IIC) and the contents of the expected indictment were severely and repeatedly criticized by Hizbollah.

After eighteen months of investigation, the International Investigation Committee (IIC) ordered Lebanese judicial authorities to arrest four pro-Syrian/ Hizbollah security officers. Those officers were detained for almost four years and only released after the new pre-trial judge, Daniel Franssen, reviewed the whole investigation process and the testimonies based on which the arrest warrants were issued. That is, the investigation depended on witnesses who falsified, distorted and fabricated facts in order to have arrested those with close ties to Hizbollah and Syria. This is known as the 'file of false witnesses'. The release of the detainees was seen by Hizbollah as evidence of the Tribunal's (SLT) politicization, lack of integrity, partiality and lack of objective

[118] The 14th of March party accused Syria and four pro-Syrian Security commanders, while the 8th of March party considered Israel to be the prime suspect. On 9/8/2010, Nasrallah held a press conference in which he presented evidence of Israel's involvement in the assassination. The conference proceedings are available on Hizbollah's website: www.english.alahednews.com.lb

standards. This view was enhanced through leaked documents, released by WikiLeaks, and media reports in international media outlets, such as Der Spiegel, the Washington Post and the Canadian CBC Channel. These reports revealed the names of some witnesses and the contents of their testimonies and explicitly accused four Hizbollah members of being involved in the assassination.

The controversy over the STL is not restricted to 'the file of false witnesses'. There is also disagreement over Lebanon's part in funding the tribunal and the selection of participating judges, i.e. their political affiliation (pro- or anti-Hizbollah). The crux of the issue, however, is the would-be indictment, which is expected to accuse four members of Hizbollah of being involved in the assassination of Rafic Hariri. According to Nasrallah, such an accusation is 'an open call for sectarian conflict, since four Shiite members would be accused, and later convicted, of assassinating a highly valued Sunni leader'.[119]

To avoid the anticipated turmoil, Nasrallah called upon the 14th of March party to hold talks in order to arrive at a resolution that would spare Lebanon the consequences of accusing members of Hizbollah.[120] This was seen by the 14th of March party as an ongoing effort by Hizbollah to disrupt the mission of the IIC and obstruct justice. Nevertheless, negotiations were held under the patronage of Syria and Saudi Arabia – known as the 'Saudi-Syrian initiative'. It aimed to find means to spare Lebanon the repercussions of the expected indictment. As a result, a set of terms were requested from both sides of the struggle as part of the would-be agreement. The 14th of March party saw

[119] This direct quote is taken from Nasrallah's speech on 28/10/2010, in which he comments on the performance of the International Investigation Committee (IIC). The speech can be retrieved from Hizbollah's website: www.english.alahednews.com.lb

[120] For Hizbollah's view on the SLT and the indictment see Chapter 1, section 5.

Hizbollah's participation in the initiative as an indirect acknowledgment of its role in the assassination. Moreover, the 14th of March party branded its acceptance of the initiative terms a compromise made for the sake of saving Lebanon.

In contrast, Hizbollah's party saw the terms as serving the personal interests of some of the 14th of March leaders. Despite this debate, negotiations continued over several months, but were abruptly suspended. Shortly afterwards, eleven pro-Hizbollah ministers resigned from the unity government in which Hizbollah had veto power. From a constitutional point of view, the resignation of one third of the ministers meant the resignation (or toppling) of the ruling government, whereby its status automatically changes to a 'caretaker government'. The resignation was seen by the 14th of Mach party as a coup against the Doha Agreement, which explicitly prohibits the resignation of either party so that the delicate balance of power is not dissipated. The 14th of March camp portrayed Hizbollah as the party responsible for suspending the negotiations. In their view, Hizbollah's reluctance to accept the initiative terms and fulfil certain demands are the main reasons for ending the negotiations. After widespread discontent over the toppling of the government, Nasrallah gave a speech, on 16/1/2011, in which he responded to the 14th of March accusations.

2. Speech analysis

2.1. Preparatory step

In this speech, Nasrallah aims, on the one hand, to defend himself (and his party) against accusations made by opponents, and to restore the legitimacy of a problematised political action, on the other. As for the former, Nasrallah responds to the following accusations:

(i) Hizbollah's responsibility for ending the Saudi-Syrian initiative; and (ii) its responsibility for toppling the government. Nasrallah attempts to refute the accusations by: denying his (and his party's) role in ending negotiations, casting doubt on the 14th of March party, scapegoating them and, finally, shifting the blame onto them. As for the latter, Nasrallah attempts to legitimise the action of toppling the government by stating the reasons that led to the resignation, highlighting the negative consequences of keeping the ruling government in office, and the positive consequences that the toppling of the government brought to the political arena.

The main differences of opinion are, therefore, related to the suspension of the Saudi-Syrian initiative and the resignation of the Hizbollah party from the government, which eventually led to the resignation (or toppling) of the ruling government. This means that the parts of the speech that relate to the recorded tapes broadcast by Al Jadeed Channel, which revealed how some testimonies were fabricated (lines 228–233), Nasrallah's comments on previous elections (lines 372–405), the political measures that should be taken to form a new unity government (lines 444–512) and Hizbollah's reaction to the expected announcement of the indictment are excluded from the analysis (lines 432–571). This is because these parts are not relevant to the resolution of differences of opinion.

2.2. Reconstruction and analysis

Confrontation Stage

This speech is divided into two parts. The first part relates to refuting accusations, avoiding blame and holding the 14th of March party responsible for ending the Saudi-Syrian initiative, i.e. a quasi-judicial defence. To achieve these goals, Nasrallah defends

the following claims: Hizbollah should not be blamed for ending the initiative or negotiations, and it should not be blamed for toppling the government. To support the first claim, Nasrallah chooses to address three issues: (i) Hizbollah made every effort possible to resolve the dispute (lines 47–70); (ii) Hizbollah accepted the terms stipulated by the initiative (lines 69–101, 178–194); and (iii) the 14th of March party ended the negotiations to comply with American demands (lines 124–141). As for the second claim, Nasrallah addresses the government's inefficacy in solving pressing political, economic and social problems (lines 267–318), thus suggesting that the government is responsible for the reasons leading to the resignation.

The second part of the speech is an attempt to restore the legitimacy of an action that has been severely criticized. This is achieved by rebutting opponents' claim: toppling the government was wrong. Thus, the main claim defended in this part is: Hizbollah's resignation from the government was right. In his defence, Nasrallah advances a series of *argumentum ad consequentiam*, in which he highlights the negative actions of the ruling government and the materialised positive consequences of the resignation.

Nasrallah strategically manoeuvres in the confrontation stage, by leaving implicit the main points of disagreement (toppling the government and opponents' accusations were wrong). This strategy permits Nasrallah to define the confrontation in terms of a conflict over facts and pursued goals (topical potential), i.e. facts presented by the 14th of March party versus facts presented by Nasrallah. In terms of goals, the conflict is between Hizbollah's aim to protect and save Lebanon from the repercussions of the indictment versus personal gains pursued by the 14th of March leaders (e.g. closing the file on false witnesses). Nasrallah starts his defence by claiming that it is his responsibility to provide

the Lebanese, especially the 14th of March audience, with the facts. Nasrallah presents the task of providing the audience with facts as one that lies within the remit of rights and obligations.

> I find myself responsible for presenting the facts and analysing and commenting on them as well as sketching an image as close as possible to the course of events that took place in our country, because it is the right of the Lebanese people, the right of all Lebanese, the right of all those who love Lebanon and care about Lebanon, the right of the people in Lebanon, of the state, of the Resistance and for the future, to be acquainted with and be informed as much as possible about the course of events because the facts and the way things actually progressed can clearly reveal the intentions and the aims and what is being prepared for this country and for all of us. (lines 6–13)

From the beginning of the speech, Nasrallah dissociates the 14th of March audience from their leaders who 'talk about their wishes and not about facts and real events' (lines 26–27), and who 'present unreal things to the people (14th of March audience)' (line 29) for the sake of 'deluding people (14th of March audience)' (line 72). In this case, Nasrallah is casting doubt on the 14th of March leaders, using two variants of *ad hominem* attacks. The *abusive* variant attacks opponents' bad character and unreliability, whereas the *circumstantial* variant casts doubt on opponents' motives. To strengthen the dissociation between the 14th of March audience and their leaders, Nasrallah portrays the former as responsible citizens who, once presented with the facts, will be able to see 'what is prepared for this country and for all of us' (lines 12–13), i.e. appealing to the audience's duty to revise their positions. Moreover, by taking on the role of disseminator of knowledge, Nasrallah positions himself as a credible source of information whose aim is to give the Lebanese a 'clear picture' (line 28) of the situation.

Nasrallah's trustworthiness and credibility are contrasted with the 14th of March leaders' lack of credibility and biased representations, which resulted in their failure to anticipate what was being planned for Lebanon. This implies that there are hidden scenarios, conspiracies or plots that are already planned, whose aim is to target Hizbollah and Lebanon as a country. This is an attempt to claim victimhood, or victim-perpetrator reversal in Wodak's terms, achieved through the construction of elements of a rescue narrative. With respect to goals, Nasrallah presents Hizbollah's participation in the initiative in terms of finding means that would protect and save Lebanon from the repercussions of the indictment, i.e. emphasising the nobility of the goal.

> We (Hizbollah) refuse the indictment, and we believe that it is politicized and we believe that we are targeted by America and Israel via the indictment, but Lebanon is our country and we are keen to protect this country. (lines 45–47)

Hizbollah's nobility is contrasted with the self-centredness of the 14th of March leaders, in particular the prime minister, Saad Hariri (the son of the late prime minister). According to Nasrallah, some of the terms requested by the 14th of March party – as part of the initiative – were for personal gain and 'served the interests of Hariri's political and security team' (lines 186–187). In contrast, Hizbollah's acceptance of the initiative terms aims to protect Lebanon and preserve its safety and interests.

> We (Hizbollah) were ready to concede political and non-political gains to the team of PM Hariri to protect Lebanon and, consequently, yes, we took this position (accepting terms) taking into account Lebanon's safety and interest. (lines 189–191)

In his adaptation to the audience, Nasrallah manages to create communion with the 14th of March audience by constructing them as rational allies who are willing to accept his position, or at least revise their positions in light of the facts revealed. Moreover, creating empathy with this section of the audience is achieved through the use of referential strategies, such as the pronouns 'us' and 'our', which serve as a collectivisation strategy: 'what is being prepared for this country and for all of us' (lines 12–13), 'Lebanon is our country' (line 47). Nasrallah appeals to the audience by emphasising their right to know the facts: 'it is the right of the Lebanese people, the right of all Lebanese, the right of all those who love Lebanon and care about Lebanon' (lines 8–9). However, Nasrallah's interest in revealing the facts is not absolute. For example, Nasrallah refrains from stating the terms that were proposed by the 14th of March party for reasons that he did not disclose: 'for certain reasons I will not reveal these terms' (lines 183–184). This does not only put Nasrallah in a privileged knowledge position and ask the audience to have faith in him, it also implicitly suggests that the facts he wants to disclose are limited to those that support his position.

Nasrallah constructs the 14th of March leaders as those who are only motivated by their own welfare and interests, with total disregard for the national interest. To emphasise the distinction between the two parties, Nasrallah uses pronouns (e.g. they) and demonstratives (e.g. those) that indicate spatial distance, which serves to realise a perspectivisation strategy: 'all those (14th of March leaders) who engage in sophistry' (line 71), 'they (14th of March party) talk about their wishes' (line 27). Moreover, the negative representation of the 14th of March leaders is realised

through predications that attribute negative qualities to the group, such as 'engage in sophistry', 'claim illusionary heroism' (line 29), 'present unreal things to people'. In contrast, Hizbollah's actions aim to support the national interest and are motivated by moral values. Thus, these actions are qualified with positive attributes that serve to realise predication strategies, e.g. 'we (Hizbollah) are keen to protect this country' (line 47), 'we took this position (accepting terms) taking into account Lebanon's safety and interest' (lines 190–191). Nasrallah's claim – what is being prepared for this county – presumes that agreement over pre-existing plans, plots or hidden agendas is already established. In fact, this is a claim that Nasrallah should prove instead of presenting it as a common starting point for the discussion. This strategy is exploited further in the opening stage.

Opening Stage

In this stage, Nasrallah reveals the sources of his information. In his view, being acquainted with the facts and the actual progression of events is necessary in order to 'reveal the intentions and the aims and what is being prepared for this country and for all of us' (lines 12–13)'. Thus, Nasrallah proceeds to reveal the factual basis of his position, and as such, he establishes clear starting points for the discussion.

> I will start briefly with the facts regarding the so-called the Arab Initiative or the Saudi-Syrian effort following the talks related to the imminent announcement of the indictment […] which intends to accuse Hizbollah's members or cadres. (lines 14–18)

Nasrallah's facts are of two types: Facts that are based on Nasrallah's personal knowledge and expertise, as a participant in the negotiations (i.e. expert opinion), and those that are attributed to political figures. In either case, Nasrallah's objective is to cast doubt on the

14th of March party, to present them as blameworthy in order to shift the blame onto them. As such, the process of revealing facts is used strategically to avoid blame. In the quasi-judicial part, Nasrallah's facts seem to support two claims: Nasrallah/ Hizbollah should not be blamed for ending negotiations and toppling the government. Nasrallah starts his defence by casting doubt on the 14th of March audience's pre-existing knowledge, followed by revealing the identity of those 'who thwarted this course (of negotiations) and led things in this direction (ending the initiative)' (lines 112–113).

This suggests that Nasrallah/ Hizbollah is not responsible for ending the negotiations, someone else is. This presupposition is taken as a common starting point for the discussion. The first set of facts relates to denying Hizbollah having responsibility for ending the negotiations. Thus, Nasrallah presents facts related to different stages that the negotiations passed through, the terms demanded by both parties and the terms of a would-be agreement. Nasrallah asserts that Hizbollah's participation in the negotiations is motivated by the will to save Lebanon from repercussions of the indictment. Moreover, Nasrallah elaborates on the different solutions proposed during negotiations and the final terms of the agreement that were approved by the 14th of March leaders. Despite this acknowledgement, Nasrallah ascribes failure in finalising the agreement, and consequently the suspension of the initiative, to the 14th of March party.

> PM Saad Hariri went to America and held meetings with the US administration, and without prior notice the Saudi side called the Syrian side to say that they were sorry and, due to the pressures and circumstances, they were unable to continue their efforts (initiative). (lines 107–109)

According to Nasrallah, an agreement that would save Lebanon from a Sunni-Shiite conflict does not serve American and Israeli interests. Thus, the main function of the first

set of facts is to accuse the 14th of March leaders of complying with American and Israeli demands at the expense of the national interest.

> It's obvious that the Americans and the Israelis were against this Arab effort (initiative) […] they (US and Israel) interfered in a decisive way and they informed that this issue (agreement) should not move on and has to stop, and thus the effort stopped […] the US and Israeli gambling and especially the Israeli gambling on the repercussions of the indictment which accuses members of Hizbollah. Is it possible that the Americans and the Israelis allow the Arab efforts to succeed and to hinder all these expectations and gambling? (lines 125–141)

The effectiveness of Nasrallah's claims can be attributed to the way he formulates them so as to escape doubt or criticism. For example, his claim (it is obvious that Americans and Israelis were against the initiative) is presented as self-evident, i.e. no proof is required. Presenting a standpoint as self-evident amounts to the fallacy of *evading the burden of proof*.[121] Moreover, Nasrallah reasserts this claim by presenting it in a non-falsifiable way. This is achieved through a rhetorical question: Is it possible that the Americans and the Israelis allow the Arab efforts to succeed and to hinder all these expectations and gambling?, via which the claim is made immune to criticism, i.e. no one can falsify the fact that Israel is against Lebanon's interests. This is another instance of the fallacy of *evading the burden of proof*.

The second set of facts relates to denying Hizbollah's responsibility for toppling the government. These facts are drawn from Hizbollah's party unproductive experience in government: 'we (Hizbollah) acknowledge that we are in this government incapable of facing financial and administrative corruption and in executing financial, administrative

[121] This fallacy is a violation of the Standpoint Rule, Rule 2, by which the protagonist evades the burden of proof by presenting a standpoint as self-evident.

and economic reforms' (lines 283–285). Highlighting the difficulties that Nasrallah's party faced in government (lines 267–318) provides concrete evidence to support his claim as well as enhance his objectivity.

Nasrallah's objective position is also enhanced through the use of arguments from authority, indirect speech and passive constructions (presentational devices). These linguistic means do not only promote objectivity but also serve as perspectivisation strategies, i.e. they convey Nasrallah's detachment. This means distancing Nasrallah from having any direct influence or involvement in the course of events that feeds into a strategy of avoiding blame: 'We (Hizbollah) were informed of the presence of an effort (initiative) of this kind' (line 20), the 'Saudi side said that they can't cancel the indictment' (line 36), 'We were told by the Saudi side that they agree' (lines 74– 75), 'PM Saad Hariri made a statement in which he said that the agreement was finalized months ago' (lines 97–98).

In terms of adaptation to the audience, Nasrallah presents facts in the form of statements attributed to sources whom the 14th of March audience trust and respect. Invoking anti-Israeli/ Zionist sentiments is another strategy via which Nasrallah aims to meet the frame of reference of the audience: 'Is it possible that the Americans and the Israelis allow the Arab efforts to succeed and to hinder all these expectations and gambling?' (lines 139–141). This perceptive is further exploited in the argumentation stage.

Argumentation Stage

In his attempts to refute the accusation of ending the initiative, Nasrallah advances three lines of defence, all of which are based on facts that are either accessible to Nasrallah, as

a participant in the negotiations, or attributed to external sources. In his version of the different stages of the negotiations and the terms of the would-be agreement, Nasrallah invokes the authority of the Saudi king, the Syrian president (Bashar Al Assad), the Lebanese prime minister, Saad Hariri (the leader of the 14th of March party). For example, 'the Saudi side said that they can't cancel the indictment' (line 36), 'We were told by the Saudi side that they (14th of March party) agree and that the PM Saad Hariri approved the terms that we proposed' (lines 74–75), 'PM Saad Hariri made a statement in which he said that the agreement was finalized months ago' (lines 97–98). This set of statements attributed to sources supports the proposition that serious efforts were made, especially by Hizbollah, to resolve the dispute in order to protect Lebanon from negative consequences of the indictment.

> We (Hizbollah) were informed of the presence of an effort of this kind (initiative), and we supported it. We bet on this effort (initiative), as did all those who work for the welfare of Lebanon, so that Lebanon may overcome this ordeal (repercussions of the indictment) or the ordeal and sedition planned for Lebanon. (lines 20–24)

Attributing statements to an external source does not only promote Nasrallah's objectivity, it also serves to absolve Nasrallah of any responsibility for ending the initiative. Moreover, invoking the authority of the Saudi king (line19) and the Lebanese prime minister. who are trusted and valued by members of the 14th of March audience, serves to satisfy their epistemic filters, thereby enhancing the acceptability of Nasrallah's propositions. In the statements attributed to the Saudis (mentioned above), Nasrallah reveals that the 14th of March leaders accepted Hizbollah's demands or terms as part of the would-be agreement. According to Nasrallah, these terms are: withdrawing the Lebanese judges from the STL, ending the financing of the STL, and cancelling the STL

agreement with the UN (lines 50–56). In Nasrallah's view, 'if we (Hizbollah and the government) are committed to these three terms, this means protecting Lebanon and saving Lebanon from the repercussions of the indictment' (lines 69–70). In this case, Nasrallah is simultaneously advancing three arguments: argument from positive consequences, argument from fear appeal and the *false dilemma* fallacy.

As for the argument from positive consequences, Nasrallah asserts that implementing the terms will protect and save Lebanon from the repercussions of the indictment. According to Nasrallah, the indictment would 'lead to conflict at the national level' (lines 67–68) if these terms were not implemented. Thus, he is playing on the audience's emotions by instilling fear (argument from fear appeal) and reducing the scope of alternatives to two options (*false dilemma*), i.e. either the government implements the terms or Lebanon will face a horrific scenario. In fact, the negotiations failed and, as a consequence, the terms were not implemented, yet the horrific scenario did not befall Lebanon. This means that the cause-effect relation that formed the basis of Nasrallah's defence was fallacious. Nasrallah's second line of defence relates to the second accusation raised by opponents and which he explicitly states.

> PM Saad Hariri made a statement in which he said that the agreement was finalized months ago […] but there are steps (terms/demands) that are required from the other side (Hizbollah), which the latter have not yet fulfilled. (lines 97–98)

Saad Hariri's statement implies that Nasrallah (or Hizbollah) is the one who is responsible for ending the negotiations/ initiative because he failed to meet the 14th of March party's demands. Nasrallah falsifies this accusation by asserting that he (and his party) had accepted some of the terms while others were subject to further discussions:

'Some of these terms were clear and we accepted them, but others needed further discussion' (lines 82–83). The Hizbollah party procrastination is justified by claiming that some of these terms represent political gains that serve Saad Hariri's interest at the expense of the national interest: 'there are one or two terms that were in line with Lebanon's interest but all the other terms served the interests of Hariri's political and security team' (lines 174–175). Despite this fact, Nasrallah presents his acceptance of some of the 14th of March party's demands in terms of moral values.

> We (Hizbollah) were ready to concede political and non-political gains to the team of PM Hariri to protect Lebanon and, consequently, yes, we took this position (accepting terms), taking into account Lebanon's safety and interest. (lines 185–187)

Nasrallah's defence consists of two argument schemes: argument from moral values which justifies the goal, and argument from the nobility of a goal scheme which justifies the means used to achieve the goal. In other words, Hizbollah's aim – protecting and saving Lebanon – is motivated by the moral value of preserving Lebanon's safety and interests. To achieve this goal, Hizbollah participated in negotiations and accepted some of its terms (i.e. emphasising the nobility of the goal). Nasrallah manages to deny any responsibility by giving the impression that he (and his party) had made painful concessions for the sake of protecting and saving Lebanon. At this point, Nasrallah's defence shifts from denying accusations to explicitly accusing his opponents of ending the initiative. Shifting the blame onto his opponents represents the third line of Nasrallah's defence.

> PM Saad Hariri went to America and held meetings with the US administration, and without prior notice the Saudi side called the Syrian side to say that they were sorry and, due to pressures (exercised by the US) and circumstances, they were unable to continue their efforts (initiative) […] As soon as he (Saad Hariri) went to America, this effort was beheaded […] This poses a very big question which I would like the

> Lebanese to ask. All Lebanese are worried today about the situation in Lebanon. There was a possibility that we might not reach this point, so why have we reached it? (lines 107–109, 158–162)

According to Nasrallah, the US administration exercised pressure over Saad Hariri in order to end the initiative. In Nasrallah's view, there is a link between Saad Hariri's meetings with American officials and ending the initiative. This is another instance of *post hoc ergo propter hoc* fallacy, in which a causal relation is based on observations and coincidence. To support this claim, Nasrallah presents facts derived from his own observations and knowledge as an expert in negotiations. Nasrallah claims that the US and Israel commanded the 14th of March leaders to end negotiations.

> It's obvious that the Americans and the Israelis were against this Arab effort (initiative) […] when they realized that the process (negotiations) was yielding very positive results, they (the US and Israel) interfered in a decisive way and they informed (Saad Hariri) that this issue (agreement) should not move on and had to stop, and thus the effort stopped […] the US and Israeli gambling and especially the Israeli gambling on the repercussions of the indictment that accuses members of Hizbollah. Is it possible that the Americans and the Israelis allow the Arab efforts to succeed and to hinder all these expectations and gambling? (lines 125–141)

Nasrallah asserts that his observations and conclusions are based on facts and American and Israeli statements, yet, he provides none. In this case, Nasrallah promotes the acceptability of his propositions by exploiting his authority as an expert in negotiations, and in Lebanese and international politics. Therefore, Nasrallah is advancing a fallacious ethotic argument, a variant of *argumentum ad verecundiam.*

> Based on the facts and based on available data, US and Israeli statements that preceded the efforts and followed stopping the efforts […] This is obvious from the announced statements, which they make day and night. (lines 135–139)

In Nasrallah's view, 'this is the only interpretation' (lines 134–135) that explains the sudden suspension of negotiations, asking 'whoever has another interpretation' (line 134) to present his claim. In this case, Nasrallah's defence has features of *argumentum ad ignorantiam* fallacy. This means that Nasrallah's standpoint is accepted as long as the opposite to the standpoint is not proved to be true.[122] Therefore, Nasrallah shifts the blame onto the 14th of March leaders who submitted to US/Israeli pressure. This strategy also allows Nasrallah to construct himself (his party and Lebanon) as a victim.

Nasrallah claims that either 'the PM Hariri and his team from the very beginning refused this course (initiative) and did not want this agreement' (lines 163–164) or that 'they (PM and his team) were going along with the king and the Saudi side but there was a US force majeure' (lines 167–168) that compelled them to stop negotiations. In either case, Nasrallah launches direct *ad hominem* attacks in order to discredit the moral character of the 14th of March leaders.

> This team (14th of March leaders) cannot be entrusted with Lebanese decision-making nor with safeguarding Lebanon's interests or Lebanon's stability, and they do not have the ability to help Lebanon or lead the country out of any impasse or difficulty that Lebanon might face if months-old efforts were put to an end during a one hour-stay in the USA. (lines 173–177)

Nasrallah emphasises the untrustworthiness and unreliability of the 14th of March leaders by exploiting two argument schemes: the argument scheme from action to character, and the argument scheme from character to action (Walton, 2006, 194–195). That is, the 14th of March leaders, especially Saad Hariri, worked against national interests by ending

[122] This fallacy is a violation of the Concluding Rule, Rule 9, by which a standpoint is considered true because the opposite has not been successfully defended.

negotiations and complying with American and Israeli demands; therefore, they are conspirators, unpatriotic and self-centred (i.e. argument scheme from action to character). Having such character traits means that the 14th of March party's future political actions are most likely to be unpatriotic and seek to jeopardize national interests (i.e. argument scheme from character to action). The different arguments presented above are related to shifting the blame for ending negotiations onto the 14th of March leaders, represented in the person of Saad Hariri. This leads Nasrallah to the final accusation that he aims to refute, as part of a quasi-judicial defence, i.e. being blamed for toppling the government. Nasrallah supports this claim with evidence presented in the form of cause-effect relations.

> After we were informed of this (ending initiative) and we were also informed that the indictment will be issued soon and that it might be issued within days, we consulted our allies […] and we unanimously agreed that it is our duty […] to resign from the government and consequently topple the government. (lines 114–117)

This means that toppling the government came after ending negotiations and after news of the imminent announcement of the indictment. More importantly, the toppling of the government means that 'if the General Prosecutor wants to help the Lebanese, […] it would not then be the job of the Lebanese government to arrest those accused […] which might lead to conflict at the national level' (lines 65–68). This represents one of the advantages of toppling the government. To support his claim (he should not be blamed for toppling the government), Nasrallah provides further evidence based on the Hizbollah party's experience in government. Nasrallah outlines the difficulties that his party faced through during their participation in an 'unproductive' government (line 272). These are: inability to address people's problems, inability to combat corruption, inability to refer

the ‘file of false witnesses’ to the Judicial Council and, finally, inability to deal with the repercussions of the indictment. According to Nasrallah, these are the main reasons that prompted the resignation: ‘based on this diagnosis [---] we decided to resign’ (lines 334–336). At this stage, Nasrallah’s argumentation shifts from refuting accusations to defending the legitimacy of toppling the government, achieved through a set of *argumentum ad consequentiam*.

Nasrallah starts his defence by underscoring the positive consequences of toppling the government: ‘toppling an incapable government […] might open the door to form a capable, responsible, loyal government ready to hold the burden and ready to follow up, address issues and hold responsibilities’ (lines 323–328). Therefore, Nasrallah is advancing a variant of *argumentum ad consequentiam,* i.e. the fallacious counterpart of the argument from positive consequences. In Nasrallah’s view, ‘keeping the government would keep the door closed’ (lines 329). This proposition signals that the discussion shifts to what would have been the case had Hizbollah not resigned from or toppled the government.

> This government is incapable of facing the repercussions of the indictment; on the contrary, this government wants to continue financing a court that is conspiring against Lebanon and the Resistance and its Lebanese judges are accomplices in this conspiracy, and this government will later put itself in a difficult position, especially when the General Prosecutor requests it to arrest, unjustly, falsely and aggressively, Lebanese citizens. (lines 299–304)

According to Nasrallah, the government and the Lebanese judges, who participate in the STL, are part of a conspiracy that aims to target Hizbollah by accusing four of its members. It follows that toppling the government put an end to this conspiracy and saved the unjustly and wrongfully accused members of Hizbollah being arrested. In this respect,

Nasrallah is appealing to the 14th of March audience's feelings of compassion to win their sympathy through *argumentum ad misericordiam*. Moreover, Nasrallah's statements suggest that had Hizbollah not toppled the government, it would have continued to conspire against the Resistance, and as a result, the accused members would have been arrested. Nasrallah is advancing a variant of *argumentum ad consequentiam*, which mimics the argument scheme *reductio ad absurdum*, in order to highlight what would have been the case had Hizbollah not toppled the government, i.e. constructing a hypothetical scenario. The hypothetical future scenario does not only appear as premises for *argumentum ad consequentiam*, it also constitutes the elements of a rescue narrative. Through the construction of a rescue narrative, Nasrallah manages to claim victimhood. However, the victim in this narrative is not only the Hizbollah party (or the Resistance), but Lebanon as a country, including the 14th of March audience, whose national stability and safety are threatened. As such, the 14th of March audience are implicitly constructed as victims of a conspiracy prepared by their own leaders.

> The country will be exposed, for we will not be able to know what the Israelis or the Americans will do, nor those (the 14th of March party) who want to ravage the country from inside and who always bet on sectarian strife and conflict. (lines 308–310).

In this narrative, the villains are the leaders of the 14th of March party who succumbed to American and Israeli demands and ended the initiative. The victims are Hizbollah and the Lebanese people who will face the dire consequences of indictment, i.e. sectarian conflict. The hero is Hizbollah, who acts in advance not only to protect and save the Resistance but also to protect and save Lebanon, thereby fending off the conspiracy. It follows that toppling the government is an act of defence carried out in order to protect and save the

Resistance and Lebanon. This implies that the action conforms with the resistance ideology, and as such it is implicitly redefined as an act of resistance.

Nasrallah's hypothetical scenario, i.e. the threat of sectarian conflict as well as actions that could be taken by Israel or the US, aims to instil fear in the audience, especially the 14th of March audience. On the one hand, Nasrallah's allusion to sectarian conflict reminds the 14th of March audience of a frightening recent past – the 'Invasion of Beirut', and on the other hand, it evokes nationalist sentiments related to the fear arising from jeopardising Lebanon's stability and safety. As such, fear is used as a heteronomisation strategy, by which the audience is warned of the risks of jeopardizing national security, and at the same time, it is a call to consolidate efforts in order to eliminate the source of fear. Thus, fear is used as a unification strategy. The elements of the rescue narrative also configure as premises in an argument from fear appeal. The argument can be reconstructed as follows:

Premise 1:	If Hizbollah did topple the government, then Hizbollah members would be arrested and Lebanon would face sectarian conflict (hypothetical scenario)
Premise 2:	This is very bad for the Resistance and for Lebanon
Premise 3:	Therefore, this ought to be prevented if possible
Premise 4:	But the only way to prevent this is by toppling the government
Conclusion:	Therefore, Hizbollah had to topple the government

Through this narrative, Nasrallah manages to present the Lebanese, including the14th of March audience, as victims who must be saved from a conspiracy that aims to target the Resistance and Lebanon. As a consequence, members of the 14th of March audience, who were originally against toppling a government led by their leader, are encouraged to review their position. To this end, Nasrallah reframes the action in such a way as to make it cohere with generally accepted background knowledge and beliefs. That is, Nasrallah

leads members of the 14th of March audience to access a less highly activated set of indisputable beliefs that weigh in favour of action (see Chapter 3, section 6.3.3). This is achieved through reframing the action of toppling the government so as to conform with a resistance ideology and nationalist views. This perspective is further asserted through Nasrallah's indirect response to the negative consequences of toppling the government, i.e. *argumentum ad consequentiam*, as cited by his opponents.

> Keeping the current governmental status quo was impossible as would be unfair for the sake of the state and also unfair to state institutions and the people, and this (toppling the government) was the utmost national safety procedure and not vice versa (coup against the Doha Agreement). (lines 313–333)

According to the 14th of March party, the toppling of the government violated the Doha agreement and threatened the current power-sharing formula, i.e. causing instability. Thus, Nasrallah indirectly falsifies this proposition by asserting that the toppling of the government 'was the utmost national safety procedure and not vice versa'. This proposition asserts that the toppling of the government was in accordance with the national interest. Nasrallah reaffirms this claim by invoking undisputed sources of normativity, based on which the action is further legitimised. This is achieved through referring to constitutional rights and duties: 'it was our national and moral duty to topple the government' (line 329), 'we (Hizbollah) took a constitutional, legal, democratic and very normal step, and this is our natural right' (lines 336–337). This means that the negative consequences of toppling the government should be evaluated in terms of the constitutional and legal norms that governed the action. The argumentation that Nasrallah puts forward to legitimise the action of toppling the government can be reconstructed as shown in Figure 8.1, below.

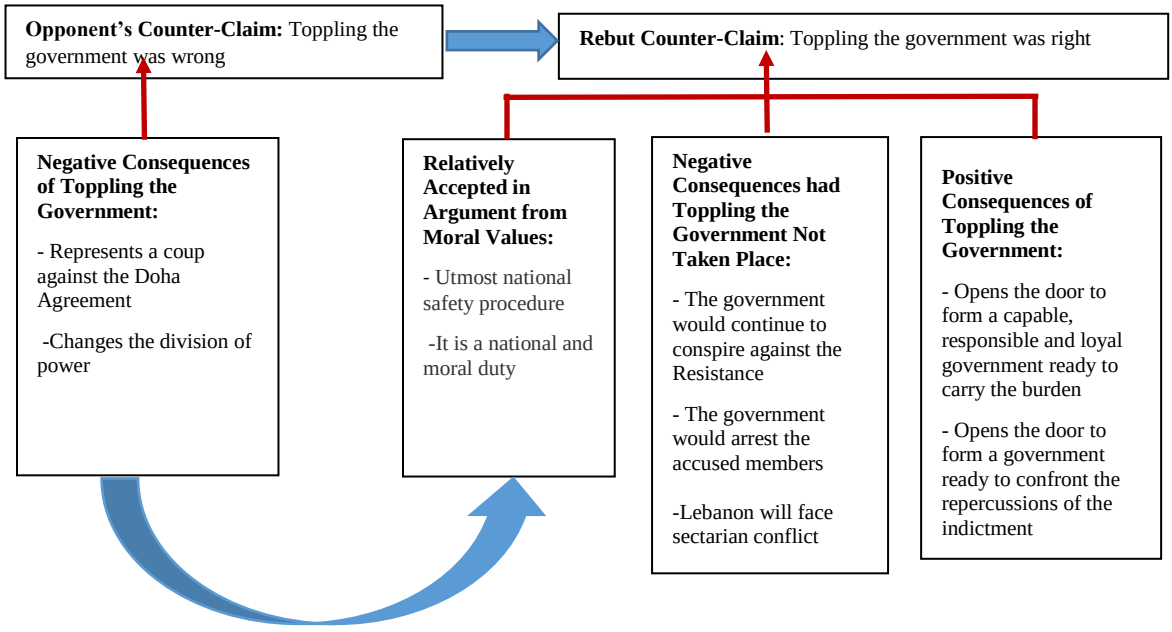

Figure 7.1: Positive and negative consequences of toppling the government

In his attempt to adapt to the audience, especially the 14th of March audience, Nasrallah sketches out an appalling image of the government's performance. Through this presentation, Nasrallah depicts the 14th of March audience (and all Lebanese) as people who have received unfair and unjust treatment from a government led by their own leadership: 'it is unfair for the sake of the state and is also unfair to the state institutions and to the people' (lines 331–332). This is because the government failed to address issues that pertain to the daily affairs of the Lebanese. This view is contrasted with the positive consequences that toppling the government would have on political and social levels: 'open up the door to form a capable, responsible, loyal government ready to carry the burden and ready to follow up and address issues and take on responsibilities' (lines 326–327). Moreover, Nasrallah adapts to the audience by reframing events in such a way as to meet audience's frame of reference. This is achieved through a rescue narrative in

which the action of toppling the government is reframed as an act of resistance. Thus, the action conforms with resistance ideology tenets, to which most Lebanese subscribe.

Rhetorical questions, metaphors and vague expressions are among the presentational devices used in Nasrallah's defence. The main function of rhetorical questions is to promote a negative representation of the 14th of March party by casting doubt on their motives and exposing their self-centredness. For example, 'who are the ones who thwarted this course, and who led things in this direction?' (lines 112–113), 'is this in the interest of the nation or does it serve the interests of a specific political and security party?' (lines 223–224). The construction of the 14th of March group is also realised through predications that attribute negative qualities to them, such as 'this team cannot be entrusted', 'don't have the ability to help Lebanon or lead the country' (lines 173–176). Moreover, Nasrallah's facts are presented in terms of metaphors pertaining to the medical profession. This is based on Nasrallah's 'diagnosis of this incapable and flaccid government', so that he 'decided to resign'. Thus, the situation is presented in terms of an ailment where drastic or urgent measures should be taken. It might, then, be safe to conclude that the metaphorical language used in this stage is in conformity with the rescue narrative that Nasrallah exploited.

Concluding Stage

Nasrallah begins this stage by reasserting that the indictment constitutes an important element in the conspiracy and reemphasising the need for defiance and resistance. To this end, Nasrallah reminds the audience of a series of actions that were carried out by the US and Israel, and Hizbollah's response that resulted in victory. These lessons were learnt,

for example, from the 2006 Israeli war on Lebanon. Thus, Nasrallah ends his argumentation with an image of victory that can only be achieved through defiance and resistance. This means that Nasrallah has successfully defended his position and proceeding along similar lines is the expected conclusion. Thus, Nasrallah is making an absolute of the success of his defence, which amounts to the fallacy of *concluding that a standpoint is true because it has been defended successfully*.

Nasrallah states the conclusion of his argumentation in terms of warning and threatening those who are conspiring against the Resistance: 'we (Hizbollah) will not allow anyone to conspire against (us) […] to unjustly and erroneously accuse us of shedding the blood of martyr PM Rafiq Hariri' (lines 560–562). Through advice cloaked in a threat, Nasrallah appeals to the 14th of March leaders' rationality and asks them to reconsider their position: 'you are miscalculating and if you believe that you might make use of the indictment to target the Resistance, you are extensively miscalculating' (lines 594–596).

3. Conclusion

In this speech, Nasrallah attempts, on the one hand, to shift the blame of ending the negotiations onto his opponents, and to restore the legitimacy of a controversial action (toppling the government), on the other. In the confrontation stage, Nasrallah strategically manoeuvres by leaving implicit the main points of disagreement. This evasion strategy permits Nasrallah to define the confrontation in terms of disagreement over facts and pursued goals. Nasrallah starts his defence by dissociating the 14th of March audience from their leadership. To this end, he portrays the 14th of March audience as rational

citizens who are amenable to change. This view is further exploited in the opening stage, where Nasrallah's facts are presented in terms of statements that are attributed to political figures that this audience trust and highly value. In the argumentation stage, Nasrallah attempts to refute three accusations. These are: his responsibility for ending negotiations, his procrastination in accepting initiative terms, and his responsibility for toppling the government. Nasrallah's main strategies in the quasi-judicial part are to deny any attribution of blame and to shift the blame onto his opponents.

In the part that is related to legitimising the action, Nasrallah presents facts that attest to the desirability of toppling the government. Among the positive consequences highlighted by Nasrallah is saving Lebanon from a conspiracy that could lead to sectarian conflict. Therefore, the action's conformity with national views and the resistance ideology is the first level of legitimacy conferred on the action. The second is the moral values that govern the action, while the third is related to constitutional and legal norms and rights.

In the next chapter, I present the results of the analyses and discuss how the implementation of my proposed model helps in answering the thesis questions.

Reconstruction of the argument

- Quasi-juridical defence to avoid blame:

(1) (Nasrallah and his party should not be blamed)

(1.1) (Nasrallah/Hizbollah should not be blamed for ending the initiative)

(1.1.1) (We have made every effort to reach an agreement)

1.1.1.1a We supported the initiative

1.1.1.2 We wanted Lebanon to overcome the ordeal

1.1.2.1a We are keen to protect this country

1.1.2.1a.1 We want to protect and save Lebanon from the repercussions of the indictment

1.1.1.3 We can protect Lebanon by implementing three terms

1.1.1.3a Implementing these terms will save and protect Lebanon from the repercussions of the indictment

1.1.1.3a.1 If these were not implemented, then Lebanon would face intra-sectarian conflict

(1.1.1.3a.2) (The government must commit to the three terms)

1.2 Nasrallah/Hizbollah should not be blamed for not accepting the initiative terms

1.2.1 We accepted some of these terms, and we were discussing others

1.2.2. Some terms represent personal gains for the prime minister

1.2.3. We (Hizbollah) were ready to concede political and non-political gains to the team of PM Hariri

1.2.3.1a We take into account Lebanon's safety and interest

1.2.3.1a.1 (We accepted some terms for the sake of protecting and saving Lebanon from the repercussions of the indictment)

1.3. The 14th of March party is responsible for ending the initiative

1.3.1 The US and Israel are against the initiative

1.3.1.1a The US and Israel bet on the repercussions of the indictment

1.3.1.1a.1 The agreement does not serve American and Israeli interests

1.3.1.1a.2 Facts, available data, US and Israeli statements prove this

1.3.2 The US administration put pressure on Saad Hariri to end the initiative

1.3.2.1a As soon as Saad Hariri went to America, this effort was beheaded

1.3.2.1a.1 This is the only interpretation

1.3.2.1a.2 Whoever has another interpretation, let him present it to us

1.3.3 The 14th of March leaders worked against the national interest by ending negotiations

1.3.3.1a They submitted to American and Israeli demands

1.3.3.1a.1 They are conspirators, unpatriotic and self-centred

1.3.3.1a.2 Their future political actions are most likely to be unpatriotic and jeopardize the national interest

1.3.3.1a.3 This team (14th of March leaders) cannot be entrusted with Lebanese decision-making and Lebanese stability

1.4 Nasrallah/Hizbollah should not be blamed for toppling the government

1.4.1 We did not reach an agreement through negotiations

1.4.2 We had a bad experience with this unproductive government

1.4.3 It failed to address people's problems, failed to combat corruption etc.

1.4.4 This government is incapable of facing the repercussions of the indictment

1.4.5 This government wants to continue financing a court that is conspiring against Lebanon and the Resistance

1.4.5.1a (The government is involved in a conspiracy against the Resistance)

-Legitimation of Decision:

(2) (Toppling the government was right)

2.1 Hizbollah had to resign or topple the government

2.1.1 (The government is involved in a conspiracy against the Resistance)

2.1.1.1a The government will arrest accused members of Hizbollah

2.1.1.1a.1 Those members are unjustly and wrongfully accused

2.1.1.1a.2 Toppling the government is an act of resistance

2.1.2 Toppling the government saved and protected the Resistance from the conspiracy

2.1.2.1a After the announcement of the indictment, the country will be exposed

2.1.2.1a.1 We do not know what the Americans, Israelis and some of the 14th of March leaders will do

2.1.2.1a.2 Lebanon will face sectarian conflict

2.1.2.1a.3 We will not allow anyone to conspire against us

2.1.2.1a.4 (We had to topple the government to prevent the conspiracy)

2.1.2.1a.5 (The action should be positively evaluated)

2.2 Toppling the government will open the door to forming a capable, responsible, loyal government etc.

(2.2.1) (Toppling the government should be positively evaluated)

2.3 Toppling the government was the utmost safety procedure, and not vice versa

2.3.1 (It is not a coup against the Doha Agreement)

(2.3.1.1a) (It does not aim to change the current power-sharing formula)

2.3.2 It was our national and moral duty to topple the government

2.3.3 We took a constitutional, legal, democratic and very normal step, and this is our natural right

(2.3.4) (Toppling the governement should be positively evaluated)

Chapter 9

Discussion of results

1. Introduction

In the previous four chapters, Nasrallah's speeches were analysed based on my proposed model for incorporating pragma-dialectics into the analytical toolkit of the DHA. To conduct the analyses, I followed the proposed procedure for implementing the model, as presented in Chapter 4, section 4.4. My aim in this chapter is to evaluate whether the proposed model and the associated analytical tools helped in providing answers to the thesis questions (see Chapter 1, section 7). In other words, I want to evaluate the feasibility of the proposed model and to assess whether the basic claims and assumptions that were taken as starting points for my proposal are still valid, or not. In an attempt to synthesize the different results obtained, I start this chapter by sketching out an overview of Nasrallah's macro-, as well as, micro-strategies utilised in responding to accusations and rebutting opponents' claims. This section represents a general summary of the analyses. After this general overview, I return to the thesis questions and clarify how the proposed model delivers adequate answers. Each section then deals with one or more of the thesis questions.

2. Overview of Nasrallah's defence strategies

The analyses of speeches show that Nasrallah's defence revolves around three macro-strategies. The first is a macro-strategy of blame avoidance, achieved through denying responsibility for a criticised action or decision. This means that Nasrallah implicitly

admits that the criticised action or decision is wrong. Nasrallah uses this strategy in order to deny his (and his party's) responsibility for: ending the Saudi-Syrian initiative (4th speech), fuelling intra-sectarian conflict that spreads with Hizbollah-backed demonstrations (2nd speech) and the Invasion of Beirut (3rd speech), and instigating war with Israel (1st speech). To avoid blame, Nasrallah uses a set of denial- and blame-avoidance strategies, such as act-denial, blaming the victim, victim-perpetrator reversal, vague expressions and trivialisations, among others. These strategies are part of van Dijk's (1992) typology for denying racism. Moreover, Nasrallah uses a set of argument schemes, the aim of which is to avoid blame and convey a positive, impeccable image of Hizbollah, e.g. *ad populum*, *straw man* fallacies, argument from analogy or from example, argument from moral values, from character to action and from action to character, etc. Some of these argument schemes are identified by DHA scholars in their research pertaining to avoiding blame (Angouri & Wodak, 2014; Reisigl & Wodak, 2001; Wodak, 2015) (see Chapter 3, section 7.1).

The second macro-strategy is legitimising a problematised action or decision in such a way as to make it enjoy intersubjective recognition (Habermas, 1990). Utilising this strategy means that Nasrallah implicitly admits responsibility for carrying out an action or taking a decision, but denies it was bad. To this end, Nasrallah uses legitimation strategies, e.g. argument from authority, hypothetical future scenario, propagating fear, argument from negative consequences, argument from moral values etc. in order to restore legitimacy in a context of controversy. Most of these strategies appear in Reyes's (2011) typology as well as in van Leeuwen and Wodak's (1999) typology for legitimation strategies (see Chapter 3, section 7.2). Interestingly, the first and second macro-strategies

are the two main strategies involved in responding to accusations as proposed by Austin (1956) (see Chapter 3, section 7).

The third macro-strategy is shifting the blame onto opponents. To achieve this, Nasrallah exploits a set of representation and argumentative strategies, such as *ad hominem*, *tu quoque*, *ad verecundiam*, rhetorical questions, presuppositions, exaggerations, metaphors and so on, in order to discredit opponents, scapegoat them and construct them as worthy of blame. These strategies, according to Reisigl and Wodak (2001), are part and parcel of a negative Other presentation. It seems reasonable to suggest that Nasrallah's macro-strategies are realised through the simultaneous use of representation and argumentation strategies. In fact, this is one of the basic claims of this thesis. The following section discusses how negative Other and positive Self presentation are enacted through representation and argumentation strategies.

3. The discursive construction of in-/out-groups

In his attempts to avoid blame, deny responsibility and shift blame onto opponents, Nasrallah constructs an image of the 14th of March party that is worthy of blame. In each of the four speeches, Nasrallah starts his argumentation by redefining differences of opinion in terms of conflict over facts (1st and 2nd speeches), moral values (3rd speech) or pursued goals (4th speech). This allows Nasrallah to cast doubt on his opponents' knowledge, credibility, motives and positions, all of which are based on biased and distorted representations. In each speech, Nasrallah sketches out two contradictory images, i.e. the trustworthiness, credibility, patriotism, morality and nationalism of the Hizbollah party versus the 14th of March leaders' lack of credibility, untrustworthiness,

self-centredness, collaboration with and subservience to Israel and the US. Both images are created via representation and argumentation strategies. In the analysis chapters, I refer to some of the referential, predication, perspectivisation and mitigation strategies that are involved in the negative presentation of the 14th of March party and the positive representation of Hizbollah's party (8th of March party). In this section, however, I discuss the construction of in-/out-groups achieved via argumentation strategies. I also discuss how representation strategies construct argument schemes (see Chapter 4, section 4.1).

With respect to the negative representation of the 14th of March party, Nasrallah uses *argumentum ad hominem*, argument scheme from action to character, argumentum *ad verecundiam* and *straw man* fallacy. I will illustrate the function of each argument scheme involved in the discursive construction of the 14th of March party through an example. In the fourth speech, Nasrallah denies any responsibility for ending the initiative and considers this accusation as evidence of the 14th of March leaders' manipulation of the facts in order to delude their audience. Thus, Nasrallah claims that the 14th of March leaders: 'talk about their wishes and not about facts and real events' (lines 25–26), 'they present unreal things to the people (14th of March audience)' (line 28) for the sake of 'deluding people' (line 69). In this case, Nasrallah uses two variants of *ad hominem* attacks: *abusive* and *circumstantial*, in order to attack his opponents' moral character and cast doubt on their motives.

A negative representation of the 14th of March group is also realised through *ad hominem* attacks of the *tu quoque* type. In the second speech, Nasrallah accuses the 14th of March party of fuelling intra-sectarian struggle through their violent response to demonstrations.

He, thus, hints at a discrepancy between the 14th of March party's moral values (freedom, sovereignty and independence) and their actions. Nasrallah states: 'They (ruling party) were not able to withstand the democracy (right to demonstrate) that they claim to protect' (line 197). Moreover, Nasrallah manages to construct the 14th of March leaders as conspirators and Israeli collaborators, whose actions serve American and Israeli interests. For example, Nasrallah relies on statements that are falsely attributed – *straw man* fallacy – to Israeli ministers: 'How can we (the Israeli government) help this failing government in Lebanon?' (line 83). Through *argumentum ad verecundiam*, Nasrallah implicitly suggests that Israel is supporting or looking for ways to support the ruling government (2nd speech, line 83).

The aforementioned argument schemes are involved in the discursive construction of the 14th of March leaders as social actors. Other argument schemes, such as argument from example, argument from action to character and from character to action, and *post hoc ergo propter hoc* are employed in the negative representation of the 14th of March party's actions, in particular that their actions serve the interests of the US and Israel at the expense of the national interest. For example, in the fourth speech, Nasrallah relates the sudden suspension of the initiative to Saad Hariri's visit to the US. Thus, he commits the *post hoc ergo propter hoc* fallacy by claiming a causal relation based on personal observation: 'As soon as he (Saad Hariri) went to America, this effort (initiative) was beheaded.' The negative representation of the 14th of March actions is also conveyed through arguments from example. In the third speech, Nasrallah reminds the audience of the shameful Treaty with Israel (17th of May Treaty) in order to reveal the 14th of March leaders' collaboration with Israel. This fallacious argument from example is presented in

the form of rhetorical questions that implicitly refer to the identity of the alleged group that signed the Treaty: 'Who signed the treaty […]? Who are the leaders and political parties involved in crowning Lebanon forever as a country that belongs to the Zionist project? (lines 333–336). This example is taken as evidence of the 14th of March party's collaboration with Israel and, as such, it is exploited to draw a generalisation about this group's conduct, i.e. *secundum quid*.

Argument from action to character is also used in the negative representation of the 14th of March party's actions. In the fourth speech, ending the initiative is taken as evidence to cast doubt on the 14th of March leaders' future actions: 'This team (14th of March leaders) cannot be entrusted […] with safeguarding Lebanon's interests or Lebanon's stability [...] if months-old efforts (initiative) were put to an end during a one hour-stay in the USA' (lines 162–166). According to Nasrallah, ending the initiative indicates that the 14th of March leaders are conspirators and unpatriotic (argument from action to character). This is taken as evidence to conclude that the 14th of March leaders' future actions are most likely to be unpatriotic and seek to jeopardize the national interest (i.e. argument scheme from character to action).

In a similar manner, the positive representation of the 8th of March party is realised via argumentation and representation strategies. The construction of this group as a social actor is promoted through arguments from example and arguments from action to character. In the second speech, Nasrallah accuses the 14th of March party of killing one of Hizbollah's followers and instigating intra-sectarian conflict. Despite this fact, Nasrallah exonerates the 14th of March leaders and calls for unity and cooperation to form a new unity government: 'the world will be surprised, we (Hizbollah party) are the

offspring of these values and this culture (Shiite Islam), a culture that calls for unity, forgiveness and love' (lines 372–373). Thus, Nasrallah shows clemency, which in turn reveals the moral values that he and his party adhere to. Nasrallah's statements also have features of the argument scheme from action to character. This means that, based on the group's actions, group's members can be described as loving, caring and calling for unity.

The discursive construction of the Hizbollah party is also achieved through arguments that promote a positive representation of its actions. Argument from analogy, argument from example, argument from the nobility of a goal scheme etc. are used to promote a positive representation of the Hizbollah's party actions. In the third speech, Nasrallah claims that Hizbollah's party refuses to be involved in intra-sectarian conflict. Nasrallah provides evidence through an argument from analogy in which he compares the actions of the French resistance with the way Hizbollah treated conspirators and traitors after the liberation of the south of Lebanon: the 'Resistance in Lebanon is much more civilized, humane and moral than the French resistance' (lines 235–236). The conclusion of this argument is also exploited to formulate generalisations about the peaceful nature of Hizbollah's activities, i.e. *secundum quid.* In the same speech, Nasrallah uses an argument from example to refer to Hizbollah's heroic deeds during the Israeli war in 2006. Through this example, Nasrallah dissipates the 14th of March party's doubts regarding Hizbollah's capabilities and readiness to rule Lebanon: The hearts […] willpower and determination which defeated the strongest army (Israel) and the strongest country […] are more than capable of managing a country a hundred times larger than Lebanon' (lines 93–96).

One of the salient argument schemes used by Nasrallah to support a positive image of the Hizbollah party is the argument scheme of the nobility of a goal. Through this scheme, Hizbollah's actions are justified in terms of the noble goals that these actions are expected to serve. For example, in the fourth speech, Nasrallah exploits this scheme to justify his party's acceptance of some of the 14th of March party's demands, which represent personal gains for their leaders: 'We (Hizbollah) were ready to concede political and non-political gains to the team of PM Hariri to protect Lebanon […], Lebanon's safety and interest' (lines 176–179). It follows that Hizbollah's actions are governed by moral values and are carried out to achieve noble goals.

In this section, I will not elaborate any further on Nasrallah's moral argumentation as this is one of the main topics of the following section. However, before moving on to the next section, I need to clarify two points. First, the aforementioned examples (and analyses) show that representation strategies play a significant role in constructing premises for arguments, in particular, referential, predication and perspectivisation strategies. In Chapter 4, I proposed that the three aspects of strategic manoeuvring are also realised through the DHA's representation strategies. As a consequence, in the analysis chapters, I discussed in detail how representation strategies (with the exception of intensification strategies) play a role in realising the three aspects of strategic manoeuvring in each of the stages of critical discussion, i.e. the formulation of topical potential, establishing communion and empathy with the audience and presentational devices, e.g. metaphor, vague expressions, presuppositions, allusions etc. Second, the results of the analyses show that the discursive construction of in-out-groups is attained through representation and argumentation strategies. Thus, the discussion so far presents answers to the second

question (see Chapter 1, section 7), namely, how does Nasrallah construct and position partisans and opponents? In this section, I refered to some argument schemes that are involved in the justification of action, e.g. the argument scheme from the nobility of a goal. In the following section, I discuss the different levels of normativity invoked by Nasrallah in order to restore the legitimacy of controversial past actions or decisions.

3. Legitimation of actions or decisions

In Chapter 4, section 4.3, I claimed that Nasrallah's speeches are attempts to restore intersubjective agreement over past actions or decisions that have been severely criticised. Nasrallah's responses are an attempt to rebut opponents' counter-claim, i.e. Nasrallah's/ Hizbollah's action or decision was wrong. Opponents' counter-claim is mainly supported by argument from negative consequences, which underscores the negative effects that have already materialised. Consequently, Nasrallah advances argumentation in which he provides evidence that points to the contrary. In other words, Nasrallah supports his claim: the action/ decision was right via a set of *argumentum ad consequentiam,* which highlights the materialized positive consequences as well as the negative consequences had Hizbollah/ Nasrallah not carried out the action or decision.

In his attempt to legitimize a problematized action or decision, Nasrallah invokes three levels of normativity. These are realised by: (i) capitalizing on emerging positive consequences to show that these outweigh the negative ones cited by opponents; (ii) magnifying the negative consequences of failing to act via the construction of a hypothetical future scenario; and (iii) downplaying and trivialising the impact of negative

consequences, i.e. to show that the goal is more important than the materialized negative consequences.

As for *argumentum ad consequentiam*, Nasrallah highlights the positive effects that have already emerged. Thus, Nasrallah's argument combines causal reasoning related to the consequences of an action or decision with moral considerations about the desirability of these consequences in order to defend a descriptive standpoint (doing A was right). Nasrallah's detailed description of positive consequences can be seen as a direct response to the argument from negative consequences adduced by opponents. The emphasis on positive effects seems to suggest that the positive consequences outweigh the negative ones, which feeds into enhancing the desirability of an action or decision. This is the first level of normativity (i.e. the action was right due to the desirability of the materialised consequences) that Nasrallah exploits in his attempt to legitimise a past controversial action or decision.

Nasrallah's legitimation strategy also consists of highlighting the negative consequences, had not Nasrallah/ Hizbollah taken the criticised action or decision. These negative consequences are presented in the form of a hypothetical dreadful scenario, whose realisation the criticised action or decision prevented. Through a hypothetical scenario, Nasrallah sketches a gloomy picture of what would have been the case, had Hizbollah not acted in the manner proclaimed. One of the main features of Nasrallah's hypothetical scenarios is the propagation of fear. Nasrallah invokes fear on two levels: on the personal level, where citizens are individually threatened by the horrific events narrated; and on the national level, where national sovereignty, security, safety, stability and freedom are threatened, for example, through foreign tutelage or intra-sectarian conflict. To this end,

Nasrallah depicts Hizbollah and the Lebanese people, including the 14th of March audience, as being victimised by the actions carried out by the 14th of March leaders. In this respect, the different events of the hypothetical future scenario construct elements of a rescue narrative.

First, through a rescue narrative, Nasrallah claims that opponents' actions, plans, plots or conspiracies aim to target Hizbollah or the Resistance. In the four analysed speeches, Nasrallah presents these conspiratorial scenarios as being prepared or encouraged by the US and Israel in order to serve their interests. Thus, claiming victimhood allows Nasrallah, on the one hand, to indirectly appeal to the audiences' emotions to win their sympathy (i.e. *argumentum ad misericordiam*), and to invoke anti-Zionist and nationalist sentiments (i.e. *ad populum*), on the other.

Second, through a rescue narrative, Nasrallah constructs himself as a saviour, whose aim is not only to save his political group, but also to save, rescue, and protect Lebanon and the Lebanese. To this end, Nasrallah redefines the criticised actions and decisions as being acts of resistance, i.e. actions or decisions that aim to protect and defend the Resistance, its members, reputation, dignity and existence. Moreover, Nasrallah emphasises the moral values that motivated the action or decision. Nasrallah claims that his (and his party's) actions and decisions are motivated by the moral values of preserving Lebanon's safety, freedom, independence, sovereignty, dignity and interests. Thus, Nasrallah frames the action so as to conform to undisputable background knowledge and beliefs, i.e. resistance ideology and nationalist views. Finally, Nasrallah legitimises actions or decisions by emphasising the noble goals that these actions or decisions are expected to serve. In the four analysed speeches, Nasrallah's goal is saving, protecting

and rescuing Lebanon from projects or plans prepared by the 14th of March leaders, who aim to realise American and Israeli interests. This is the second level of normativity invoked by Nasrallah.

The third level of normativity relates to invoking religious beliefs in an attempt to downplay or relativize the negative consequences of an action or decision. Negative consequences are most often related to human losses (martyrs). In Nasrallah's view, these sacrifices are religiously justified as the path to the 'promised victory' is only attainable through martyrdom (i.e. argument from sacrifice). This is the highest level of normativity by which an action or decision gains legitimacy. However, in the fourth speech, where human losses are not the main negative consequence, Nasrallah invokes the authority of the constitution, the legal system and moral duties. This is also another undisputable or higher-level order of normativity. This means that Nasrallah's actions or decisions gain legitimacy because they conform to widely shared values, beliefs, norms etc. that are themselves publicly recognised and justified. This interpretation echoes Fairclough and Fairclough's (2012) view of legitimation. In their view, an action gains legitimacy through reference to "*publicly shared* and *publicly justifiable*, and sometimes even highly formalized, codified, institutional systems of beliefs, values, and norms" (p. 109) (see Chapter 3, section 7.2).

The three levels of normativity invoked by Nasrallah to regain legitimacy constitute one mechanism by which Nasrallah attempts to persuade audiences, in particular, the 14th of March audience. The above discussion provides partial answers to the first question set for the thesis (see Chapter 1, section 7), namely, how does Nasrallah strategically

manoeuvre to resolve disagreements with opposition audiences? The following section provides additional answers.

5. Charisma and epistemic vigilance

In his attempt to persuade the 14th of March audience, Nasrallah orients himself to meet this audience's frame of reference and establish communion. In the second speech, Nasrallah flatters the 14th of March audience by acknowledging their positive attitude towards the displaced during the Israeli war on Lebanon in 2006. In the third speech, Nasrallah directly addresses and greets the 14th of March audience by saying 'our dear people in Beirut' (lines 439–440). However, the dominant strategy in Nasrallah's adaptation to the 14th of March audience is dissociating the latter from the wrongful and disrespectful actions carried out by their leaders, e.g. the alleged collaboration with Israel. Through this strategy, Nasrallah portrays them as rational citizens who are ready to be acquainted with the facts, and based on which they are expected to assess their positions.

Nasrallah starts his defence by casting doubt on the 14th of March audience's information and upholding the responsibility for offering them the 'true facts'. Thus, Nasrallah positions himself as a credible and trustworthy source of information whose aim is to give the Lebanese a 'clear picture' (4th speech, line 27). To enhance his credibility, Nasrallah's facts are based on statements attributed to sources that the 14th of March audience trust and highly value, e.g. Saad Hariri (leader of the 14th of March party), the Saudi king and Condoleezza Rice (former US Secretary of State), among others. This means that Nasrallah enhances the acceptability of his claims by satisfying the epistemic defences of the 14th of March audience (see Chapter 3, section 6.3.3). In contrast, accusing the 14th of

March leaders of distorting, hiding or misrepresenting facts amounts to *ad hominem* attacks, which serves two interrelated goals. On the one hand, *ad hominem* attacks serve to satisfy the epistemic defences of the 14th of March audience towards the source of information, i.e. Nasrallah, and point to the untrustworthiness and lack of credibility of their leaders, thereby weakening the acceptability of their claims, on the other hand.

Projecting an image of trustworthiness and credibility is also achieved through strategies pertaining to the legitimation of assertions, which feeds into the construction of the communicator's ethos or charisma. In Chapter 3, section 6.3.3, I argued that the construction of ethos (competence, benevolence, and trustworthiness) is linked to the discursive construction of charisma, i.e. projecting a proper image of the *Self*. I also argued that the discursive construction of a trustworthy image is attained through linguistic resources that underpin the legitimation of assertions (see Chapter 3, section 6.3.4), i.e. evidence that the communicator provides in order to show the degree of commitment, reliability, and certainty towards the communicated representation. Following Hart's (2011) typology, I present examples, taken from the four speeches, related to the evidence that Nasrallah provides in order to satisfy the epistemic filters of the addressees, which feeds into constructing his image as a credible and trustworthy source of information (i.e. constructing charisma).

Nasrallah provides evidence for the truth of his claims by using linguistic cues related to the domain of PERCEPTION: 'it seems that these were preparations for the aggression', 'the course of events can clearly reveal for us', 'I want to be very clear so that all Lebanese would have a clear picture.' Evidentials expressing OBVIOUSNESS are used to support the view that Nasrallah's claims are beyond doubt: 'facts that will lead to one

obvious conclusion', 'It's obvious that the Americans and the Israelis were against this Arab effort', 'based on the facts and based on available data, the US and Israeli statements that preceded the initiative'. Moreover, Nasrallah provides PROOF of his objective stance by showing that his facts are taken from external, independent sources, e.g. 'All information confirms' (line 14), 'According to American estimations', 'thwarting the Saudi-Syrian effort has confirmed that this government is not qualified'. Objectivity is also promoted through attributing statements to experts, i.e. EXPERT KNOWLEDGE, e.g. the Winograd report which states that', 'According to the US secretary's speech in which she declares the birth of the new Middle East'.

According to Hart (2011), intensification strategies identified by DHA scholars (see Chapter 4, section 2) can be linked to strategies pertaining to the legitimation of assertions, inasmuch as these qualify or modify the illocutionary force of propositions. In his presentation of facts, Nasrallah relies heavily on zero-marked modality to convey his commitment to truth. For example, 'The enemy was going to this war', 'there are obstacles', 'this is the truth that we have reached', 'we are the most able', 'there was a plan ready to put in place'. Nasrallah's certainty is conveyed through modals showing high probability, e.g. 'we will win', 'our steadfastness will change the reality around us', 'blood must win over the sword', 'history has to remain present', 'so no one will repeat the follies of the 5th of May', 'we must all cooperate and collaborate together', 'this must not be part of any agreement or settlement', 'we will defend our dignity'.

The aforementioned examples show that strategies underpinning the legitimation of assertions serve to satisfy audiences' epistemic vigilance towards the source, as well as playing a role in projecting a credible and trustworthy image of the communicator.

Therefore, through the construction of charisma, i.e. projecting a proper image attained partially through strategies pertaining to the legitimation of assertions, audiences' epistemic filters are satisfied. Hence, the acceptability of Nasrallah's claims by the 14th of March audience is enhanced. Another way charisma can be linked to epistemic vigilance is through the construction of rescue narratives (see section 5). Through these, Nasrallah reframes highly disputed actions or decisions to make them cohere with tenets of the resistance ideology and nationalist views that most Lebanese adhere to. This means that through rescue narratives past actions that threatened national security, e.g. the Invasion of Beirut and toppling the government, are reframed as actions that save, protect, and rescue Lebanon. This means that through the construction of rescue narratives, Nasrallah leads the audience to access a less highly activated set of beliefs and background knowledge that weigh in favour of the actions, thus enhancing their acceptability.

The above discussion focuses on the strategies that Nasrallah employs in his attempt to persuade the 14th of March audience. In this section, I have addressed the first and third questions (see Chapter 1, section 7), in particular, I have shown how Nasrallah manages to resolve disagreements with the 14th of March audience and the effects of charisma on this group's epistemic vigilance.

6. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have endeavoured to evaluate the feasibility of my proposed model for integrating pragma-dialectics into the analytical framework of the DHA. I have also shown how the model provides answers to the questions set for this thesis. In my

discussion, I have addressed the first three questions. The last question, however, is addressed in the final chapter.

Chapter 10

Implications and Conclusion

1. The proposed model as a contribution

In this thesis, my main aim is to examine the argumentative, as well as the representation strategies, that Nasrallah employs in his attempts to legitimise past controversial actions or decisions. To this end, I have proposed a model that fully integrates pragma-dialectics into the analytical toolkit of the DHA. The starting point for the model rests on the assumption that both functions are simultaneously achieved. I further propose that the DHA's strategies play a significant role in formulating premises for arguments as well as in constructing argumentative moves and stages of critical discussion. As such, the proposed model is the main contribution of the thesis. The model aims to make contributions at different levels of enquiry. In particular:

- The model offers a systematic way of integrating pragma-dialectics into the analytical framework of the DHA by suggesting that representation strategies are necessary for a text to attain its argumentative function.

- The model considers strategic manoeuvring as an aspect of legitimation, and thus suggests that resolving a difference of opinion in one's own favour has political and/or social implications, rather than being restricted to the domain of logic or improving individual competency with the aim of persuading others. It is at this stage that pragma-dialectics, I believe, should extend its scope and move from

assessing the fallaciousness or reasonableness of argumentative moves to show how these shape, construct or change political reality. The analyses show that dominant or hegemonic ideologies, beliefs and values – as in the case of this study – are configured as premises in arguments (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012). The analyses also show that resistance ideology precepts, nationalist views, moral values and religious duties are exploited by Nasrallah in order to legitimise Hizbollah's actions and decisions. In other words, the political and moral values invoked by Nasrallah to legitimise actions serve to perpetuate, promote and naturalise Resistance as a hegemonic identity and ideology.

- The model systematically incorporates argumentation analysis and reconstruction into the analytical framework of the DHA, and it claims that such rigorous attention to argumentation enriches the DHA's explanatory critique. The results of the analyses show that fallacies, such as immunising a standpoint against criticism and presenting standpoints as self-evident, which tend to act as vehicles to promote a particular ideology, are rarely touched upon in a DHA analysis. The analyses also reveal that silencing, downplaying and trivialising an opponent's arguments, e.g. trivialising the negative consequences of an action, feed into perpetuating dominant ideologies. Moreover, the analyses show that alternative actions and solutions are completely ignored and Nasrallah's representations, in most of the analysed speeches, have the features of the *false dilemma* fallacy, the aim of which is to marginalise other discursive practices. All these argumentative moves would have been excluded from the discussion, had I conducted only DHA analyses of the speeches. The list could also include presuppositions and

allusions that are exploited in arguments and feed into the analysis of the manipulative character of discursive events.

The model incorporates insights from cognitive pragmatics and proposes connecting research on epistemic vigilance with research on the discursive construction of charisma. Thus, this is also a contribution that can be seen on the following levels:

- The discursive construction of ethos is part and parcel of the discursive construction of a proper image (charisma), which is attained through strategies pertaining to the legitimation of assertions. Thus, the construction of a proper image affects audiences' epistemic filters through providing them with evidence that attests to the trustworthiness and credibility of the communicator.

- The construction of rescue narratives also serves to promote the acceptability of claims through framing events to meet an audience's frame of reference and induces the audience to access beliefs and background knowledge that cohere with the incoming representation.

- Moreover, this model proposes that the elements of a rescue narrative and hypothetical future scenarios appear in premises for arguments, in particular, ad consequentiam and argument from fear appeal. In this case, the pragmatic function of a rescue narrative is acknowledged. This represents a further contribution.

The above-mentioned points also address the last question set for the thesis, i.e. question four. Despite these cited contributions, the limitations of the study as well as suggestions for further research are discussed in the following section.

2. Limitations of the study and suggestions for further research

One of the main limitations of the study is the limited number of analysed speeches. This is because Nasrallah's speeches are relatively long and the thesis focuses on just one dimension of argumentative activity, i.e. retrospective argumentation. Thus, the data are not a representative sample of Nasrallah's argumentative practices; however, they do shed light on one particular aspect (see Chapter 2, section 5). Moreover, the implementation of the model shows that referential, predication, perspectivization and mitigation strategies are involved in formulating premises for arguments but falls short of accounting fairly for intensification strategies. Thus, further research should be conducted, or alternative analytical tools put in place, in order to have a better account of intensification and mitigation strategies. In fact, further research should be conducted on different political contexts and genres in order to assess the feasibility and viability of the model in other contexts, in particular, the integration of pragma-dialectics into the DHA's analytical framework.

Moreover, the provisional structure for the legitimation of an action or decision (see Chapter 4, section 4.3) is applied to discourses produced in a non-democratic type of governance. Thus, further research should be conducted on discourses in political contexts that favour deliberative democracy to see whether similar or alternative strategies are employed. This thesis hypothesises a relation between charisma and

epistemic vigilance, thus further research should be conducted in order to evaluate the effects of charisma on audiences who seem to be persuaded by charismatic leaders.

3. Conclusion

This thesis aims to bring different fields of enquiry into a coherent model. It is hoped that the proposed model and its implementation can open up discussion and encourage further research in order to bring argumentation theory and CDS into a more fruitful dialogue for the benefit of both fields.

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Appendix A

Overview of the code of conduct and the associated violations (adapted from van Eemeren et al., 2014, p. 540-551)

Violations of Rule 1 (Freedom Rule) by the protagonist or the antagonist at the confrontation stage

1 *Placing limits on standpoints or doubts*
- fallacy of declaring standpoints sacrosanct
- fallacy of declaring standpoints taboo

2 *Restricting the other party's freedom of action*

* putting the other party under pressure
- fallacy of the stick (= *argumentum ad baculum*)
- fallacy of appeal to pity (= *argumentum ad misericordiam*)
- fallacy of attacking the other party's person (= *argumentum ad hominem*)
- fallacy of depicting the other party as stupid, bad, unreliable, etcetera (= direct personal attack/"abusive" variant)
- fallacy of casting suspicion on the other party's motives (= indirect personal attack/"circumstantial" variant)
- fallacy of pointing out a contradiction in the other party's words and/or deeds (= *tu quoque* variant)

Violations of Rule 2 (Obligation to Defend Rule) by the protagonist at the opening stage

1 *Shifting the burden of proof to the other party*

* in a non-mixed difference of opinion, instead of defending his or her own standpoint, the protagonist forces the antagonist to show that the protagonist's standpoint is wrong
- fallacy of shifting the burden of proof

* in a mixed difference of opinion the one party does not attempt to defend his or her standpoint but forces the other party to defend their standpoint
- fallacy of shifting the burden of proof

2 *Evading the burden of proof*

* presenting the standpoint as self-evident
- fallacy of evading the burden of proof

* giving a personal guarantee of the rightness of the standpoint
- fallacy of evading the burden of proof

* immunizing the standpoint against criticism
- fallacy of evading the burden of proof

Violations of Rule 3 (Standpoint Rule) by the protagonist or the antagonist at all discussion stages

1 *Attributing a fictitious standpoint to the other party*

* presenting one's own standpoint wrongly as the opposite standpoint
- fallacy of the straw man

* referring to the views of the group to which the opponent belongs
- fallacy of the straw man

* creating a fictitious opponent
  - fallacy of the straw man

2 Misrepresenting the other party's standpoint

* taking utterances out of context
  - fallacy of the straw man
* oversimplifying or exaggerating
  - fallacy of the straw man

Violations of Rule 4 (Relevance Rule) by the protagonist at the argumentation stage

1 The argumentation has no relation to the standpoint under discussion
  - fallacy of irrelevant argumentation (= *ignoratio elenchi*)

2 The standpoint is defended by means other than argumentation

* non-argumentation
  - fallacy of playing on the sentiments of the audience (= pathetical fallacy/ *argumentum ad populum*)
  - fallacy of parading one's own qualities (= ethical or ethotic fallacy/*argumentum ad verecundiam*)

Violations of Rule 5 (Unexpressed Premise Rule) by the protagonist or the antagonist at the argumentation stage

1 Adding an unexpressed premise that goes beyond what is warranted
  - fallacy of distorting an unexpressed premise

2 Refusing to accept commitment to an unexpressed premise implied by one's defense
  - fallacy of denying an unexpressed premise

Violations of Rule 6 (Starting Point Rule) by the protagonist or the antagonist at the argumentation stage

1 Meddling with the starting points by falsely denying that something is an accepted starting point
  - fallacy of falsely denying an accepted starting point

2 Meddling with the starting points by falsely presenting something as an accepted starting point
  - fallacy of making unfair use of presuppositions in making assertions
  - fallacy of making unfair use of presuppositions in asking questions (= fallacy of many questions)
  - fallacy of using an argument that amounts to the same thing as the standpoint (= fallacy of circular etc.
  - fallacy of circular reasoning/*petitio principii* (begging the question)

Violations of Rule 7 (Validity Rule) by the protagonist at the argumentation stage

1 Reasoning in which a sufficient condition is treated as a necessary condition
  - fallacy of denying the antecedent
  - fallacy of affirming the consequent

2 Reasoning in which the properties of parts and wholes are confused
  - fallacy of division
  - fallacy of composition

Violations of Rule 8 (Argument Scheme Rule) by the protagonist at the argumentation stage

1 *Using an inappropriate argument scheme*

- populist fallacy (symptomatic argumentation) (= *argumentum ad populum*)
- fallacy of confusing facts with value judgments (causal relation) (= *argumentum ad consequentiam*)

2 *Incorrectly applying an argument scheme*

- fallacy of authority (symptomatic argumentation) (= *argumentum ad verecundiam*)
- fallacy of hasty generalization (symptomatic argumentation) (= *secundum quid*)
- fallacy of false analogy (comparison argumentation)
- fallacy of the slippery slope (causal argumentation)

Violations of Rule 9 (Concluding Rule) by the protagonist or the antagonist at the concluding stage

1 *Meddling with the conclusion by the protagonist*

- fallacy of refusing to retract a standpoint that has not been successfully defended
- fallacy of concluding that a standpoint is true because it has been defended successfully

2 *Meddling with the conclusion by the antagonist*

- fallacy of refusing to retract criticism of a standpoint that has been successfully defended
- fallacy of concluding that a standpoint is true because the opposite has not been successfully defended (= *argumentum ad ignorantiam*)

Violations of Rule 10 (Language Use Rule) by the protagonist or the antagonist at all the discussion stages

1 *Misusing unclearness*

- unclearness fallacy (implicitness, indefiniteness, unfamiliarity, vagueness)

2 *Misusing ambiguity*

- ambiguity fallacy

Appendix B: The English version of the speeches

1st Speech

The July 2006 Speech: The Israeli war on Lebanon

After two weeks of confronting the barbaric Zionist aggression and the miraculous forbearance of the people, the steadfastness of this proud and dignified people and this brave Resistance, I want to talk to you, because there are things that I need to comment on, and there are specific attitudes that should be taken in order to know how to continue our days ahead.

At the political level, we have to know and understand the true reality of this war and the background to the aggression. After two weeks, things are clearer now, with the availability of information, from political speeches, public statements either from officials in the American administration or the Zionist enemy, or from those who rotate within their orbit, and from political analysis and from facts which will all lead to the one obvious conclusion. If we know which war we are now fighting, we can know how to continue the march.

After the US Foreign Secretary of State's statement about the new Middle East, by which she means the American-Israeli new Middle East, can anyone believe that this huge enormous project was born a few days after the Resistance captured the two Israeli soldiers?

All the evidence confirms that the preparation to launch this project started at least one year ago. According to American estimations there are obstacles facing the new Middle East. This project means that the region is going to be under the American control, so the US will solely exploit its resources and wealth and where Israel will be its first partner. In the new Middle East, there is no place for any Resistance Movement, so work is needed to remove these obstacles exemplified by the Resistance Movements in Lebanon, Palestine, Syria and Iran.

The project started in Palestine. What was required was the termination of the Resistance Movement in Palestine. Elections were held, and the Resistance Movement won the elections, and this fact embarrassed them. They killed Palestinian people, starved them, deprived them of humanitarian aid, and they were pushing things to the verge of internal strife. Then the operation to capture the Israeli soldier in Gaza took place. The importance of this operation is that it pushed away the danger of internal strife, and returned Palestinians to their true and original battle.

In Lebanon, and throughout the previous year, there were direct and indirect American efforts. The Americans were closely monitoring the developments of the internal situation in Lebanon. They bet, but their bets failed at the local level, for they did not find anyone capable of terminating the Resistance Movement and ending its existence in Lebanon. They were surprised by the public support that the Resistance Movement enjoys. They had to find another option and within a year they assessed the situation of

the Lebanese Army, and we know that there were many military delegates who visited and asked a lot of questions. They were surprised that this national Army can't be involved in such a battle because it is a national and patriotic Army. Its leaders, officers, and soldiers are patriotic as well. Because of the Army's ideology and convictions, the Army refused to engage in this conspiracy, and the Army commanders and leaders acted wisely during this critical situation which Lebanon has passed through.

They bet that Hizbollah's participation in the government will make Hizbollah busy with political positions and projects, which will lead Hizbollah to abandon its jihadist responsibilities, yet this didn't happen.

Therefore, all information concerning the local situation proved that there is no way to bet on this. They waited for the results of the national dialogue. They were closely following the details, and they reached the conclusion that they can't achieve their goal. The Americans were convinced that there is no local way they can bet on to terminate the Resistance Movement and wipe out its existence.
At the regional level, they bet a lot on our friends in Syria and Iran, and despite all lies, they found that neither Syria nor Iran is ready to terminate the Resistance in Lebanon or Palestine. They reached the inescapable decision: There is one way that we can depend on to terminate the Resistance in Lebanon and Palestine, so later on they will isolate Syria and Iran to threaten them.

The Israeli War
Based on this reading it was an American decision to wage an Israeli war on Lebanon, and the data that we have confirm that the enemy's military drills during the last few months, especially in the north and south of Occupied Palestine, were preparations for the aggression on Lebanon, which was designed or planned to take place either at the end of September or the beginning of October. They were also in need of sometime to continue gathering information from intelligence services to complete their warfare plan.

The plan entails that all of a sudden, with or without a pretext, the enemy - keeping in mind the international support that the Israeli enjoys around the world - launches a wide ground offensives to take full control of the south of Litani region in order to prevent launching missiles. At the same time, the Israeli Air Force strikes the homes of senior Hizbollah officials, Hizbollah's headquarters and institutions, and infrastructure to cripple the Resistance and the whole country in order to provoke the people against the Resistance, and to prevent the Resistance from taking the initiative. This was intended to be a harsh blow from which it is difficult to recover. This is the scenario that would have been implemented had we not captured the Israeli soldiers, and I am clear and transparent. We are asked whether we expected such a response or not.
When the capturing operation took place, the Resistance, unknowingly, prevented the most dangerous plan and the worst war scenario for Lebanon and Resistance, and the Lebanese people.

This is the truth that we have reached. Because of the capturing operation the Zionist enemy found himself in a humiliating position as this is an unacceptable blow. Therefore, they rushed the war which they had already prepared. The importance of this lies in the first place in depriving the enemy from taking us by surprise. They expected that we will be sleepy and in oblivion. In a single moment, the south of Litani is invaded. Homes, centres and institutions are raided. We would, thus, lose control, the ability to communicate together and the ability to manoeuvre, as a result the Resistance is terminated with minimal losses from the enemy's side. The first scenario is foiled and the enemy lost the element of taking us by surprise. This was the most dangerous element which the scenario depended on. Moreover, the enemy was forced to go to this war before completing the preparations which would have helped a lot.

Dear Lebanese people and the peoples all around the world who are whole heartedly with us, we have now realized, more clearly and precisely, the backgrounds and the goals of this war, and so all this argument. The enemy was sooner or later going to this war and what the Resistance did is guided by the Divine Mercy. Today the project, based on which this war was grounded and planned, intends to bring Lebanon back under American-Israeli domination and control, meaning, it is worse than the 1982 Invasion and the 17th of May Agreement. What is required is to extract Lebanon entirely out of its history, commitment, culture and real identity. To be under the control of the Americans and the Zionists through American facades that would only obey and follow orders. Our destiny is to fight, together with the noble patriots, this horrific project and to prevent this war from achieving its goals and to engage in the battle of liberating the rest of our land and prisoners and to engage in the battle of true sovereignty and true independence and this is what we have declared in the last few days.

Today political and diplomatic efforts started and they have given the enemy the time needed and they will give him more time. Before Rice many delegates visited us, and all those who came they provide us with the American-Zionist conditions and terms, however, they did not offer compromises or resolutions for the current crisis and the current struggle.

I will not embark on discussing the propositions nor the terms because we prefer to leave this discussion to the private meetings and agreed upon mechanisms, this is because this file is being followed by people whom we trust and on whom we depend. But just a quick comment to make it clear for the whole world: I want to ascertain that we are not going to accept any condition or term which will humiliate the country or our people or our Resistance nor are we going to accept any formula that is against national sovereignty, interests and independence, especially after all these sacrifices and no matter how long this confrontation lasts and no matter how huge the sacrifices will be. Our true and basic slogan is dignity first. Houses were destroyed and they will be rebuilt by Allah's Will, the infrastructure was destroyed and it will be rebuilt by Allah's Will. But we can't accept humiliating terms. We are open to political solutions and to political debates and we work with responsibility and flexibility. But there is a red line. After the visit of Miss Rice to Lebanon and

then to the Occupied Palestine she gave the enemy another chance. A week or 10 days is before us, as the Israelis themselves say, we are in front of decisive and critical days during which we are in need of more steadfastness, unity, self-control and patience, and they bet and the whole issue is who cries first.

We are going to continue the fight, and I want to declare from here for now I move to discuss issues related to the battle field. After all this aggressive assault from the Israeli enemy, we are now moving beyond the Haifa phase. I announce that we are going to strike beyond the Haifa province, and this means that we have entered a new phase of the struggle. Yes, we will not be confined to sending rockets to the boarders of Haifa no matter what the reaction of the enemy was. We will now move to areas beyond Haifa district and if things deteriorated, then, we will choose the time when we will start a new phase that stretches beyond the Haifa district.

This is the first thing that I wanted to mention. Secondly, the jihadists of the Resistance made great accomplishments in the battle field and they nailed the enemy down: in terms of casualties from soldiers to officers as well as destroying a large number of tanks and airplanes. Now we are fighting in Bent Jbil and we will fight just as we did in Maroun Alrass, and as we will fight in every village, town or position. We are not a classic army and we don't defend in a traditional manner. We follow the guerrilla warfare type or tactics. The most important criteria in the battle field is the amount of losses that we inflict on the enemy. And no matter where the invasion reaches we will not stop sending rockets to the Israeli settlements in the north of the Occupied Palestine. I say to you that despite the accomplishments that the enemy might have during his ground invasion to Lebanese territories, the enemy will not achieve his goal which is: preventing us form sending rockets to the north of the Occupied Palestine. Every newly invaded inch will be a new motive to us to continue fighting. If the Zionist enemy steps on our ground, this will make him more vulnerable. It will widen the scope of immediate combat and leads to the attrition of the enemy forces. The enemy likes to stay behind barracks and only uses its Air Force power to destroy villages and to kill more women and children. In the ground battle, we will have the upper hand. Any land the enemy occupies we will definitely restore it. So, for the ground battle we are prepared and ready for it and we bet on The All Mighty and on those brave hands and hearts full of faith and those knowledgeable minds and the souls that aspire to meet the All Mighty.

In this battle, we have to be aware of the psychological aspect of the war. I am being transparent and honest. If any of our leaders or fighters died we will proudly announce the news. If we have many martyrs we will be proud to announce this. If we have casualties or injuries we won't deny. If the enemy took some of us as prisoners we will announce that. We do not deny facts. When we were fighting in Maroun Alrass we declared that and when we withdrew, we said that the battle was over. You have to listen to us and not to the psychological war which the Zionist enemy is promoting. Two days ago, the enemy said that they took over Bent Jbil but they were unable to occupy Bent Jbil and there are, till the moment of recording this speech, jihadists in this village fighting and defending the land.

The enemy speaks about hundreds of martyrs from Hizbollah, where are those hundreds? The enemy talks about capturing 20 prisoners, where are they? Few days ago, they spoke about two prisoners in Maroun Alrass and then they released them because they were civilians and they do not have any relation whatsoever with the Resistance.

So, the enemy will speak about invading cities, towns and villages and the killing of a huge number of people to affect the morale of the jihadists and the people. I say that all these are lies and you should not listen to these allegations. Listen to us. When we have a martyr, we will announce his death. When we leave a city after a heroic fight, we will announce that we had withdrawn form that city. We do not lie at our people, but the enemy does. It is he who imposes censorship on his media. It is he who does not tell the truth to his people. This is a proof of weakness. The fact that we are being honest and transparent with our people is an evidence of our strength and willpower. In any case, when we have chosen this road we knew that this road is full of thorns and that it is the road of martyrdom which creates victory. We are determined to continue fighting and to stand up to protect our dignity and our sovereignty and our freedom and the freedom of our country. What is needed is patience, more fighting for things will not be the same. We have been promised victory by the All Mighty, and we will win this battle just as we won before. Our steadfastness will change the reality around us, and the reality of the region as well as the international one. At the end, this blessed blood of innocent civilians from women and children, from the jihadists and the fighters either from the Resistance Movement or from the national Lebanese Army or in any position that requires sacrifice, this blessed blood must win over the sword. This is Allah’s tradition. And may the mercy and blessings of Allah be upon you.

2nd Speech

December 2006 speech: The formation of a new government

In the name of Allah, the all-merciful, the all-compassionate. Praise be to Allah, Lord of the Lords, to him I raise prayers, and peace be upon our Prophet, the Seal of the prophets, Abu Qassim Mohamed Bin Abi Abdullah, on his infallible household, on his chosen companions and on all the prophets and messengers.

Dear brothers and sisters, dear demonstrators picketing for the sake of Lebanon, for the sake of Lebanon's sovereignty, Lebanon's independence, Lebanon's dignity and Lebanon's freedom. I wish I were among you in one of the squares of honour and in one of the squares of steadfastness and resistance. Despite the cold weather, the ambience is full of warmth, love, cooperation, the warmth of brethren, of those who gathered for the sake of Lebanon and for the sake of the nation.

I hope, by Allah's Will, that someday I will be able to join you in this square. Before I start my speech, and taking notice of the limited time allotted to this speech, unfortunately, we, Lebanese, have a bad habit of firing arms during celebrations. I hope that those who are listening to me now, will not fire arms after I finish my speech. We have to give up this bad habit. We have to avoid firing arms in any direction even if it is directed towards the sky. Bullets should only be directed to the chest of Lebanon's enemies - the Israeli enemy. Therefore, and as a precaution, I hope, and I insist on, and I consider any one who fire arms at the end of my speech a conspirator whose aim is to offend me, offend us and all the Lebanese opposition's front.

First, I want to extend my condolences to the parents of the martyr Ahmad Mahmoud, and I want to say to them that their son died in the battle of defending Lebanon, defending Lebanon's dignity, and Lebanon's pride, in the battle of liberating Lebanon. The martyr, Ahmad Mahmoud, is the martyr of the Resistance par excellence. He is not a martyr who gave his life in a street fight, he is a martyr who died for the sake of defending Lebanon's independence, Lebanon's sovereignty, a martyr of the public movement to rescue Lebanon.

I also have to thank you. You are the most honourable people, the most pure people, the most lovable, and the dearest of all. I have also to thank those who gathered on Friday in Riyad-Solh Square and in Martyrs Square for the sake of rescuing Lebanon, and those who are gathering every night for the sake of rescuing Lebanon. I say to you that what you are doing is a great and honourable thing because it serves a noble, honourable and national goal, which is rescuing Lebanon by ending the state of monopoly, authoritarianism and exclusivity and this will pave the way for establishing a national unity government to ensure participation and cooperation and achieve reconciliation and solidarity.

Dear brothers and sisters, they have tried during the past few days, through provocations, riot and attacking protestors, which resulted in killing the martyr Ahmad

Mahmoud, to instil fear into your hearts, to prevent you from picketing in the squares. They failed. They have forgotten that fear has no place in your hearts. Today they bet that with time you would be weary and bored, but they don't know that you are a diligent and inexorable nation.

Yesterday, they said that they are expecting screams of surrender to come out from your squares due to the cold and rainy weather. However, they have forgotten how you, in the near past, endured the most violent and brutal air strikes ever seen in recent decades during the 33-day war. You stood up and you didn't give up despite being displaced from your home towns, despite the killing and the massacres. You were embraced by your fellow Lebanese all the Lebanese districts, areas and from all sects. Yes, from the first day, they asked us to surrender, but we refused to surrender. They bet on our defeat but we were not defeated and we remained here in our land. We remained strong and proud in the land of our fathers and forefathers, we didn't bow and our will was not broken, we didn't get bored, tired or become weary for the sake of Lebanon and for the sake of the nation. Tell them, today, from 48 the demonstration square, tell them, tomorrow, on Friday's prayer, tell them every night, on Sunday, on the biggest rally ever, that those who bet on our surrender, they are deluded, deluded, deluded. Tell them that we don't know weariness and that we defeat hunger and boredom. We are stronger than rockets, so how about words? We are stronger than war, so how about intimidation? We are a nation who in the battle of will shall not be defeated.

Dear brothers and sisters, it is not a coincidence that the political powers, with all its different religious, political and sectarian factions, which embraced the Resistance and its audience during the July-August war, are those themselves who today form the Lebanese opposition front and support the Lebanese Opposition Front. Neither is it a coincidence that the governments, nations and nobles of the world who sided with the Resistance during the war, are now standing with and supporting the Resistance. On the other hand, it is no coincidence that all those who supported Israel in its war on Lebanon, are the same ones who now support this failing government. I call on your behalf, the Arab countries who care about Lebanon not to interfere by supporting one party at the expense of another. Those who care about Lebanon's safety and Lebanon's unity and salvation ought to embrace all the Lebanese parties and that they should not depend solely on their ambassadors' reports. Come to Lebanon and be acquainted with the political realities, facts on the ground and the public support and then direct your appreciated efforts to help Lebanon and to rescue Lebanon. And I tell the government, or those remaining in office, the illegitimate government, that your reliance on American and Western support will do you no good. Today, those on whom you rely, especially George Bush is the one who needs help and he is the one who is in need of others to rescue him.

Let's take Iraq as an example. In Iraq, there are more than 150,000 American soldier and billions of dollars are spent in Iraq. In Iraq, the whole US administration closely monitors and follows the situation in Iraq. Iraq is not like Lebanon, a file in the drawers of the US State Department. Nonetheless, what is the result in Iraq? Failure, disintegration, sectarian war with no horizon, these are the outcomes and this is the

fate of any country that bets on Bush's support, on his army or his administration. What can America offer you while it is drowning in the region's mud from Afghanistan to Iraq to Palestine to Lebanon? This government, and for the last one and half year, received support and is still receiving support from the US and the West which no other government in Lebanon's history has ever received. Doesn't this raise doubts and evoke suspicions? Why is this American passion with this government and its prime minister? But what raises more doubt and intensifies the suspicion is the daily Israeli commendation to the ruling party in Lebanon. Is there something behind this praise that we are not aware of? Isn't it shameful that the Israeli-Zionist government convenes, which usually meets when there is a serious matter threatening Israel's security or interests; isn't it shameful that the Israeli government meets to discuss a single item on its agenda, which is: how can we help this failing government in Lebanon? Some of them said that we can help them by withdrawing from the southern part of occupied Ghajar town. Others said that we can withdraw from Shebaa farms to present them as a gift and as a sign of political and psychological support for the ruling party in Lebanon. But what did they really do? They didn't withdraw neither from Ghajar nor from Shebaa. They were even reluctant to give this psychological support. Doesn't this American, Western and Israeli support call for contemplation? Dear brothers and sisters, we, in the Lebanese Opposition Front, reemphasize our demand and our goal which is the formation of a real national unity government. But why? Because Lebanon's plurality and diversity means that a single-party government and the domination of one political party had always led Lebanon to a deadlock. Lebanon can't be governed unless all parties cooperate, participate, and have their say in the decision-making process but not through monopoly. We want a national unity government because it is the only way to prevent any foreign tutelage. Let the whole world know that we want a Lebanese government to be led by Lebanese leaders and to take decisions based on Lebanon's interests. This is what we are looking for and this government will be the guarantee that secures Lebanon's safety, future, security, stability, prosperity and unity. This is what we aspire. We refuse any kind of tutelage be it a friend or a foe. This is the truth.

Today, they ask us the following question: if you, the current opposition party, someday won the majority in the parliament, and you formed the government, will you give us the third-quorum or the veto-power? I tell them, on behalf of Hizbollah, and as a party in the opposition, I say, yes. We are with giving any Lebanese opposition the third-quorum because we belief in participation, we belief in cooperation and we don't believe in single-party rule at the expense of other groups. And if we were the majority, we would give with confidence any opposition a third of the quorum because we are not afraid of anything or anyone, and we don't have any international or regional commitments. We want Lebanon's interest, and the Lebanese interest is the one which is reached through consensus. Dear brothers and sisters, when the doors of dialogue were shut, and the negotiations were stopped, and we were faced with monopoly and authoritarianism, our only solution was going into the streets. Although we are in streets, in sit-ins, in demonstrations, we continued the dialogue and we didn't close the doors of negotiations. To all those who are asking us to continue negotiations, I tell them, yes. The doors of dialogue are open in order to negotiate with the opposition leaders and we are ready to discuss any initiative, but

certainly we are not in need of a fancy dialogue just to waste of time. We will not get out of the streets to have a dialogue through which we will be deceived again. We will remain in the streets, and those who want to negotiate or want to have discussions with the opposition can meet the opposition's leaders and their doors will always remain open.

Today, there is an initiative proposed by the Council of the Maronite Bishops. We believe that this initiative holds a lot of positive elements and some of its items worth to be discussed, so we can accept what we believe is fair for us and refuse others. The door is open for negotiations and it is not true that the opposition party doesn't negotiate, debate or discuss. All options remain open to discussion. I want them to negotiate, discuss and have a debate with us, but, on behalf of all those who gathered tonight, yesterday and tomorrow, we will not vacate the streets before we achieve the goal that rescues Lebanon.

Dear Brother and sisters, as we continue in our sit-in, I want to reemphasis the rules or regulations which we had already talked about from the first day. No insults. Some fervid demonstrators use derogatory slogans when talking about some ministers, and we refuse any personal insult to anyone. Any insult, any obscene or unethical expression should not come from your sit-ins. We reassert the civilized and peaceful nature of our sit-in, off course, by killing the martyr Ahmad Mahmoud, they wanted to drag us into an armed conflict. But, in the name of the martyr Ahmad Mahmoud, and on behalf of all his colleagues, on behalf of every man and woman, every child and elderly who affiliates with the Lebanese national opposition, I tell the ruling party and its political forces, and I regrettably mention its militias too that: we refuse to be dragged into civil war. We refuse any strife between sects and any discord between political parties. We refuse to be involved in any type of street conflict. We wanted a civilized and peaceful movement. We proved this on Friday in the unprecedented rally in Lebanon's history even if their media outlets debilitated your enormous rally in order to belittle your actions and to magnify theirs. However, the picture remains crystal clear to the whole world. I will tell the Lebanese and the peoples of this region, who are the ones pushing things to the verge of civil war. In the civil war everyone losses, I won't say that you will lose and we will win. No. We will all lose. All Lebanese will lose in civil war or in sectarian sedition. In Iraq everybody is losing, in Palestine everybody is losing. What some of the Arab kings are promoting, unfortunately, like the civil war in Lebanon, Iraq and Syria are severe losses to all of us and the net profit will go to Israel, to America, to the neo- and to the advocates of the theory of Creative Chaos. In Lebanon, we will not be dragged into any conflict, even after you have killed Ahmad Mahmoud, even if you killed thousands like Ahmad Mahmoud. We will not raise our weapons in the face of anyone.

Those, those, have forgotten, and many of them held posts in the government which prohibited the demonstrations in September 1993. Arms were fired at us: 10 martyrs died and 50 were wounded, yet, we didn't raise arms against anyone. I tell you, that we are in no need of arms to defeat you because our weapons are only directed to the Zionists. With our voices, we defeat you. With the blood of Ahmad Mahmoud, we

defeat you, with our insistence on unity, fraternity and amiability we defeat you. Let the whole world hear, and let the Arab nations know, whom they are trying with lies to turn them against us. They are killing us and yet we say to them, we want to be with you and we want you to be with us, to be together. To you murderers, I say that with blood we will win over your swords.

Dear Lebanese, I heard, and with sorrow I'm saying this, that some political and religious leaders are provoking against the Resistance during their internal meetings by saying that: Hizbollah has 30 thousand rocket which are directed to your homes. This has never been our conduct. And from here, I tell those leaders and those listening to them: whoever we had destroyed his house in Lebanon let him come forward and lay his claim, whoever we shed his blood let him step forward and present his case. In contrast, it is you who burned houses, how many houses have you destroyed, and how many lives have you shed. Honestly, we don't want to threaten anyone and we won't. The blood of every Lebanese and I want to reemphasize this. In some areas they are spreading rumours, especially in the city of Beirut, that a specific group in the opposition party, from a specific sect, wants to attack your streets to provoke sectarian strife. Let all the citizens of Beirut listen to me and all the Lebanese to listen to this: the blood of every Lebanese is like ours, the honour of every Lebanese is like ours, the money of every Lebanese is like ours, the house of every Lebanese is like ours. This is the red line that we protect with our blood even, if you kill, and this is the red line that we protect with our eyelashes even if you conspired against us and if you want to drag us into war, we will not fall into this trap. We will not fall into civil war or sectarian strife, or any other form of internal conflict.

Today, we have a real, national guarantee and an internal immunity which is manifested by the Army Institution whose leaders, soldiers and officers have proved that it is the Army to all Lebanese. This guarantee we all have to protect and we should not allow any disintegration or discord to take place. Political parties should refrain from using some of its leaders or officers for their own interests because if the Army collapsed this will deprive Lebanon from its immunity. To the Internal Security forces, I tell them, that you have also to show that you are a true and national institution and that you don't work to favour the interests of one group at the expense of another, so you can form with the Army a true and national guarantee. Dear brothers and sisters, can you tell me how did the other party treat you when you were in the streets on Friday, and in your sit-in on Friday night and on Saturday night and in your rally on Sunday? The party which claims and speaks about democracy and about public liberties and freedom of speech? Your movement is a civilized one, as acknowledged by the whole world. You always astonish the world whether during war, peace or while protesting. What did they do? How did they react? They debilitated your unprecedented rally. They resorted to riot, they sent their gangs, and I am deeply saddened, because some of them sit with us around the dialogue table to discuss the issue of Hizbollah's disarmament despite the fact that it has never been used at the domestic level while they store and distribute weapons in many areas. They sent their gangs to attack you during your return journey and kill the martyr Ahmad Mahmoud and injure others. They were not able to withstand the democracy

that they claim to protect. How many times did they threaten the opposition leaders, especially the threats that were directed to the national figures of the Sunni sect? Didn't they send their cars, their gangs to besiege the houses of those figures? Is this democracy? Is this freedom? You have earlier on demonstrated for so many days and I want to ask you, to ask the Lebanese and the whole world, was anyone of you attacked, or prevented from going to or coming from the demonstrations during the security forces' tutelage? Was a demonstrator ever killed on his way to or from demonstrations?

But, what is more dangerous today is the sectarian incitement. They have stopped their Muslim-Sunni incitement. Today, there is no talk of the sort, Muslims versus Christians in Lebanon, all the talk is related to the Sunni and Shiite struggle. They claim that the biggest rally ever on Friday was a Shiite demonstration and they ignored the large and hefty participation of all sects in order to present the issue as a Shiite protest against a Sunni-led government. However, the truth is that neither the demonstration was formed of Shiites nor he government is a Sunni-led one. Then they tried to isolate Amal Movement's participation in this demonstration to claim that this demonstration is led solely by Hizbollah and his members. Then they focused their media and political campaign on Hizbollah and their media rhetoric asserts that the demonstrations are supported by Hizbollah and its allies. They want to ignore the other national powers of the opposition. Anyway, in the past few days these allegations were falsified because the demonstrations and the night rallies were true and genuine expressions of all the parities forming the national Opposition Front. This sectarian slogan has fallen and will fall even if they continued in their scheme. All their allegations are directed to the Sunni audience in Lebanon, and in turn the Sunni audience throughout the whole Arab and Muslim worlds, thinking mistakenly, that by this they can disrepute Hizbollah or the other forces in the national Opposition Front. They claim that the opposition wants to change the Taif Accord, yet, this is a slur and a lie, and at other times, they claim that these demonstrations are used to cover up those who killed the martyr, prime minister Rafic Hariri. One of their most recent lies, with which they clearly contradict themselves, is their claim that the Saraya is besieged while at the same time they broadcast, through their TV channels, scenes of delegates parading to the Saraya. How can the Saraya be besieged and the delegates are coming in and getting out the Saraya?
Anyway, sectarian sedition is a grave sin and a crime at both the religious and political levels, and if it found ears, it will burn everyone. Sectarian sedition is like playing with fire. Today, I call for an Arabic investigation committee supported by the Arab League and by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to identify the party which is advancing sectarian or religious rhetoric. I believe that whoever uses such a rhetoric is a traitor. Let this committee investigates who is the party which is distributing pamphlets provoking against this sect or the other, and who is the party which is responsible for transforming the political struggle into a sectarian strife. They know, and this is a testimony to us, that we in Hizbollah, and the other opposition forces as well, are very sensitive regarding sectarian sedition and very sensitive to the Sunni-Shiite strife. They also claim that our status in the Arabic world has dwindled and they advise us daily that we shouldn't jeopardize our reputation in the Arab world. The Arab world knows that we have a sacred and honourable cause

which we serve diligently. We are not after political posts nor fame, and our demand to establish a unity government, doesn't mean that we are asking for Hizbollah's share in the coming government. I clearly declare in front of you that: we will give the cabinet seats that are assigned to Hizbollah to our allies in the national Opposition Front. We are not seeking political posts or power. We have a cause for which we sacrifice our blood and our sons. I tell them, so they know whom they are facing. We are a nation who is not intimidated by insults, obscene language or allegations. Let them hear me well, we remain faithful to our cause and to our nation, to our people and for whom we sacrifice our blood, our souls and our children; it doesn't matter to us whether we are crowned or lay in tombs.

Secondly, I want to address every Lebanese and all the Arab and Islamic nations who closely follow the details of the events in Lebanon and I want to direct a question to them. Does any Lebanese, or any Arab accept that we remain silent or support a government which is daily supported by Bush and Olmert? Do you accept that we remain silent or support a government which is unable to take national decisions, but it complies with the will and the decisions of the American ambassador, Feltman, and Condoleezza Rice? We want a national Lebanese government which is free from any foreign tutelage, be it a foe or a close friend. To defend the authoritarianism and the monopolization of the ruling party, they hide behind sectarian titles like the Sunni-Shiite struggle. They are falsely trying to promote, to the Sunnis of Lebanon and to the world, that the opposition is targeting the Sunni-led government in Lebanon. This is not true. This illegitimate government is not the government of the Sunnis in Lebanon and it won't be a national government unless it becomes a national unity government. This is the government of the American ambassador. I tell you, and let the whole world hears, and I'm being honest as I have always had: if this government were the government which represents the Sunni Lebanese, I would have been the first one to applaud its rule. Let them stop playing with sectarian titles. If you want to address the issue, we have bright and shinning records in contrast to you. If you want to take the Iraqi case, you know that: we were from the onset against the American invasion to Iraq and we announced our stance openly. We were insulted for taking such a stance, but we didn't bother because our position was the right one.
However, it was you, advocates of the continuation of the American occupation to Iraq which you praised because you perceive it as right and you were against ending this occupation, who asked the Bush's administration to occupy Syria and to occupy more Arab and Islamic land. We are with the Resistance in Palestine, in Iraq, in everywhere there is a noble patriot who holds his weapon to free his land from occupation, domination and tutelage.

Don't mix up things nor make them indiscernible. Don't take the stance of one Shiite group as a pretext, similarly, no Shiite is allowed to take the stance of one or more Sunni group as a pretext. It is not permissible for a Shiite to hold the venerable and the dear Sunni brethren or the Sunnis of the world, the responsibility, of signing a peace treaty with Israel in Camp David by a Sunni Arab leader. It is not permissible to blame the Sunnis because one or more Sunni leader shakes hands with the Zionist enemy and calls for the normalization of the relations with Israel while Israel is working on terminating the Intifada in Palestine? Not at all. Shiites are not one single

group, camp or political entity, Sunnis as well are not a single group, camp or entity. In every country, there are Shiites from this group or that and Sunnis from this group or that. There are Muslims from one group or the other as well as Christians from one group or the other. Let us judge one another based on the national or the patriotic stance of each one of us and how we serve the national interests of our countries. Leave this matter aside. Yet, it is saddening and disappointing that in the last few days they circulated a memo which calls for the reopening of the July-August war file in order to hold Hizbollah the responsibility of war, destruction and the economic repercussions etc.

I was always in favour of postponing any discussion in this file for the sake of Lebanon's interests. However, if you are insisting on opening up the issue, so listen well. But before I start explaining and clarifying, I want to say to all the Opposition Front, especially, to the Resistance audience that: what I'm going to say should not have any effects and does not yield any reactions and the world will be astonished how humble, moral and forgiving we are. What I'm going to disclose will not affect the goal, and we will continue to ask them to cooperate with us to form a national unity government. Now listen to the war story. I call for the formation of a Lebanese investigation committee formed of impartial judges or to the formation of an Arab investigation committee also formed of impartial and honest judges to open an investigation regarding the causes of the last war. They accuse us, but today I will accuse them. Who officially asked America, Dick Cheney and George Bush to wage war on Lebanon – by virtue of the following evidence: the dialogue related to the disarmament of the Resistance's weaponry has reached a dead lock and there is no internal way to disarm the Resistance's weaponry because it enjoys wide public support as results of public opinion polls confirm, and because the army is a national and patriotic army and refuses to engage in a conflict with the Resistance so – are those who told the US that there is no internal way to put an end to the Resistance issue, hence, the only way is for the US administration to ask Olmert's government to wage a massive and destructive war not only on Hizbollah but also on all those who support and embrace the Resistance in order to eradicate this movement and to eliminate its presence.

The US administration acquiesced and wanted to invest this issue in the congressional elections, meaning, that if the war turned out as expected, then Bush and the neo-conservatives would brag about terminating one of the most important terrorist organizations in the world. As part of the plan, they had prepared a prison in the occupied north of Palestine, called Roshbina, which is a military air force base with a capacity of 10,000 prisoners. Are all those prisoners exclusively from Hizbollah? No. The would-be prisoners will be any one who opposes the dominating ruling party in Lebanon. The American administration accepted and it gave its orders to Israel. Who asked? I don't accuse all of 14th March party, I don't accuse everyone in the ruling party, and I don't accuse all their leaders. I didn't mention names in front of anybody, not in front of an American or non-American journalist. However, those who sat down with the Americans and requested Israel to wage war on us, they know themselves very well, and I know them and I hope that the day in which I would be obliged to mention their names will not come.

Who holds the responsibility of waging war on Lebanon is not the Resistance which was given the right to liberate the land and the prisoners as the terms of the ministerial statement stipulate. When this right is given to the Resistance, the Resistance is a movement and not a state department, this right means that liberation is achieved through an armed conflict and not through negotiations and diplomatic means. We were given this right in the ministerial statement and we acted accordingly. Who holds the responsibility of waging war and destruction is the one who asked the US and Israel to take this operation as a pretext to wage war on Lebanon and I'm open to an independent judiciary or an independent investigation committee. Also, during the war, I told you that John Bolton, whose departure from the corridors of diplomacy is not to be regretted, wants to stir up conflict between the Lebanese when he expressed his surprise with Lebanese officials who approved the US-French resolution draft only to break their promises later on. But he was saying the truth. They initially accepted the US-French resolution draft but when they were faced with public discontent and dissension they retracted their commitments. I told you, during the war, that Olmert wants to incite conflict among us, but back then I didn't say that he was lying, I used a vague expression that has multiple meanings. When he said that some parties in the Lebanese government contacted us and asked us to continue our fight against Hizbollah. Olmert spoke the truth and we know who they are, and I hope the day when I will be forced to disclose these names in front of the world won't come.

I ask the prime minister of the illegitimate government, and the witnesses are still alive, I ask him: during the war - when the Zionists destroyed all the bridges, highways and crossroads to sever the supply lines of the Resistance in the south region. They certainly didn't destroy the bridges, highways and crossroads as an end in itself, but to cut off the supply lines of the Resistance, but they failed and the military supply continued till the last day – haven't you ordered the Lebanese army to confiscate the Resistance weaponry which was being transported to the south? Would any Lebanese accept, be it a Muslim or a Christian, be it a Sunni, a Shiite or a Druze, such a thing to take place? Would any Arab, be it a Muslim or a Christian, be it a Sunni or a Shiite accept that the Lebanese prime minister to work on cutting off the supply lines of the Resistance while it was engaged in the battle of defending Lebanon and the nation? Should I remain silent just because he is a Sunni? Were he a Shiite, I would have mentioned him from the first day. Tomorrow, the prime minister of the illegitimate government will speak out and say: that Sayed Hassan is falsely accusing me. I call for an investigation and the witnesses are still alive, those whom I sent in the middle of the night as mediators to ask him to freeze this decision. What is more important and dangerous - in Lebanon we pay taxis and the government in turn pays the salaries of the military and security personnel, approves state budget and purchases equipment - that the money that the Lebanese people pay for the sake of enhancing the security forces has, supposedly, to be directed towards protecting and defending the Lebanese, their security and properties. During the war, it was expected from the security forces which affiliate with the ruling party work to track spies and their networks and the Israeli networks that was providing the coordinates to the Israelis to bomb specific targets. Unfortunately, I tell you, and I'm ready for an independent impartial investigation committee, one of the branches of the security

forces that affiliates with the ruling party was working during the war on providing the Israelis with the specific locations of Hizbollah's officials, and this branch worked on tracking my place during the war.

I will say no more about the war, and if I want to continue, whether my brothers in and comrades in the opposition agree or not, had we not been driven by our concern to this country, had we not been conscious of the complexities of the sectarian struggle, I would have stood up on the 14th of August not to speak about a national unity government but to speak about traitors who have to be taken to trail. Despite what I have said, and here the world will be surprised, we are the off springs of these values and this culture, the culture that calls for unity, forgiveness and love, I forgive them and if they want to take me to trail, I'm ready. Few months ago, a group was arrested, sadly, this group affiliates with a fundamentalist Sunni group and its members were planning to assassinate me, and a number of clergy and non-clergy falsified the issue and I forgave them and I dropped the charges. However, they are still in prison and the court has not proved them guilty nor innocent, but I call upon the judicial system in Lebanon to set the members of this group free and to send them back to their homes in Beirut and in Tarik Aljadideh. My Allah forgive them all.
I Again address them, I address the ruling party clinging to power: you won't be able to intimidate us through riot, you won't be able to prevent people from picketing in Riyadh Solh square and Martyrs' squares, you won't be able to drag us to sectarian strife, you won't hear the screams of surrender nor can you count on our weakness or infirmity because our demands are just. We are still saying: let us cooperate together to form the coming national unity government and I also say: time is not in your side, your master in the White House is shaking and collapsing. Let us come together as Lebanese, don't be stubborn, there is still room for negotiations. We didn't say that the resignation of the government is the only demand, we said let us change this current government to a national unity government, the same government which is headed by Fouad Saniora, and you will have the majority in it and we only want the third of the quorum which represents the guarantee for the sake of Lebanon. But if you remained stubborn and insisted on refusing, we have started to think about other options. After a while we won't accept that the new unity government to be headed by a personality from your party. After some time, we won't accept and our goal will be the toppling of the government and the formation of a caretaker government whose main objective will be to run early parliamentary elections and you know to whom the majority will be and who will win. In 2005 elections you won the elections through an unjust and an unfair election law backed by deceitful allegiances. In the upcoming elections, there will be no place for deception because a fox is not taken twice in the same snare. After the early elections, the opposition will gain the majority, will form its government and will be headed by a national and honourable Sunni personality and the whole world will testify to its integrity. Those nationalist Sunni figures in Lebanon are so many and are all able to lead the country. However, we will not exclude you from power, we will at least give you the third of the quorum and to let you participate in the government because we believe that Lebanon is the country that can't be ruled except with the participation and the cooperation of all its parties.

Dear brothers and sisters, I ask you tonight, I address this call to you, especially the Muslims to participate in tomorrow's prayer – Friday prayer – which will be held in your squares, the square of honour, the square of true political resistance and not the faked or alleged ones. This call is an expression of our peaceful and civilized movement. I urge you to participate in Friday's prayer which will be an expression of our unity, and cohesiveness in the face of all forms of sedition and segregation. This prayer will be led by the respectful religious leader Fathi Yakan. I ask you and I ask everyone who is listening to me now, to the full participation in the Friday's prayer. This prayer is not only meant to be a religious exercise, but also as an expression in face of all those who wants to fish in the muddy waters for the sake of instigating sedition, discord and conflict. You might find a fruitful land for sedition and civil strife in every spot in the world, but not in Lebanon. In Lebanon, there will be no armed conflict between Shiites and Sunnis. The second thing that I want to stress, I also ask you and ask those who are listening to me to participate in the biggest rally ever on Sunday at 3 o'clock to reassert our stance and to ascertain the public participation and the public support for the national Opposition Front and we will say to them every night, we will say to them on Sunday, the ruling party will hear us from their castles, they will hear from the squares, the homes of the poor, from huts and from tents, from the destroyed homes and from those who were displaced – we will make them hear the voice of the Opposition Front that we will not surrender, we will remain in the squares until we form a national unity government that represents a guarantee for Lebanon, for all the Lebanese, which will rescue Lebanon, which will defend Lebanon and which is capable of attending to and solving Lebanon's economic, social and political problems.

We will make them hear that we insist on our goal and we will continue no matter what the sacrifices are. Dear brothers and sisters, from all sects, from all parties, from all movements, by Allah's will you will be victorious. And as I used to promise you victory before, I again promise you victory. They continue the battle of July-August war and we continue our battle of defending Lebanon's identity, unity, safety. Long live all of you, blessings be upon the martyr Ahmad Mahmoud, blessings be upon your martyrs. Long live Lebanon. Peace, Allah's compassion and blessings be upon you.

3rd Speech

May 2009 speech: The invasion of Beirut

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. Thanks, and Praise be to Allah, Cherisher and Sustainer of the Worlds. Peace and prayers be on the last prophet, Prophet Muhammad, his infallible progeny, his chosen companions and on all the prophets and messengers.

Brothers and sisters, Peace and Allah's mercy and blessings be upon you all. On this blessed event and at this specific time, there are many topics and issues that need to be addressed, but on this occasion and owing to the nature of the ceremony, I would like to speak in a certain direction.

There are issues of high importance which I will address on Monday night by Allah's will, on Al-Manar TV, regarding the Nakbah (catastrophe) commemoration that befell this nation, when Palestine fell victim to occupation and rape. Tonight, I will not speak about the Nakbah and the Israeli drills nor about the Israeli spy networks in Lebanon and about our obligations towards these issues. Everything that is related to the Israel affairs I will leave it for Monday's speech as I promised. The nature of the subject of the Nakbah, the drills and spy networks are topics that are better suited for a television message rather than in a public ceremony speech. Today I want to talk to you not in a television-message style, because many watch television addresses and say that the Sayyed appears very calm, but when I give a public speech they say that the Sayyed is furious. In fact, I am neither furious in a public speech, nor I am calm in a television address. Each medium has its purpose. A television address differs a lot from speeches given at public gatherings.

Today, I want to speak about you, the Radwan graduate group, about the brothers and sisters and parents, about Lebanon and Lebanese affairs, as we are in an important phase in the elections; I will also conclude the speech by tackling the issue of May 17th and May 7th. First, I would like to congratulate all the graduates, the brothers and sisters, whom we are celebrating their graduation today. Congratulations to them for their success and their academic accomplishments which were the outcome of determination, willpower, faith, perseverance, persistence, effort, Jihad, and attending schools. According to our Islamic doctrine, education is jihad in the path of the Almighty, and some prophetic sayings explain that the angels lower their wings to the education seeker. In the name of the brothers and sisters in Hizbollah's march, I declare our pride of you and your accomplishments and I would like to extend my thanks and high appreciation to the parents - the dear fathers and mothers - as it is customary in every graduation ceremony, for their persistence and support that they have shown to their sons and daughters to continue the path of academic achievement, at the university level and in the different fields of specialization, and for holding the burden that accompanies such decision and we know that the vast majority of Lebanese people and Lebanese families live in poverty, and some even below the poverty line. However, we see that fathers and mothers make the efforts and bear great

burdens and responsibilities to provide for their children the opportunity for education and specialization and the chance to make a real future. I bow in front of the fathers and mothers, the Mujahedeen, because the one who works hard to support his dependents, is like the Mujahid in the path of Allah. This hard work is not only to fill the stomachs of his dependents and to protect them from hunger, but also to educate and raise the status and the livelihood of his off springs, and to safeguard their afterlife. Those are the Mujahedeen on the path of Allah. I must extend my thanks to a segment of our society whom we usually pay little attention to: the spouses. The number of sisters graduating is more than the brothers. This is a healthy phenomenon since many of them continue their education after marriage. Many husbands allow their wives to continue their studies, and of course, a wife who continues her higher education, imposes a burden on the husband and the household. But thanks to Allah, we see that this phenomenon is spreading and growing in our society and it is a healthy phenomenon. Wives, too, help their husbands to continue their studies despite the demands placed by maintaining a marital life. This joint cooperation and endurance lead to such good results. Thus, today, I want to devote special thanks to the spouses who facilitated for their husbands and wives, the opportunity to continue their education and academic achievements, the despite all resulting burdens.

Dear brothers and sisters, your group holds the 'al-Radwan' title, the name of the cherished martyr commander Hajj Imad Mughnieh-Hajj Radwan May Allah bless his soul. Here I want to point out something that many people don’t know, that al-Hajj, May Allah have mercy on his soul, throughout carrying his Jihadist and leadership responsibilities, he used to encourage the Mujahedeen, the brothers working under his command not to abandon academic pursuit. This was his concern and I know he always sought for it and tried to secure the financial and organizational facilities to give a large number of our brothers and sisters the opportunity for the university studies. This was not just his personal desire, but it was based on a strategic vision, this vision which the Resistance and its movement embodies. Because our resistance, my dear brothers and sisters, and since its foundation to this date, our Resistance has been based on knowledge, faith, resolve, determination, intent and sacrifice, but it has also been defined by education, knowledge, specialization and bright minds. This has been acknowledged by our enemies on the battlefield and in more than one area of confrontation, in security and psychological warfare, in military combat, in the development of the capabilities, in tactics, leading to the formation of a special military combat school, neither Westerner nor Easterner but the school of Islamic Resistance in Lebanon, made by Mujahedeen from Lebanon. Therefore, for your group to carry this title is a source of pride and honour, just as the martyr, from his heavenly place, commander Radwan would be proud and honoured to hold his name and to follow his path and to renew the covenant with his blessed blood and with all the martyrs who have gone before.

Dear brothers and sisters, this large number of male and female graduates from the heart of this faithful procession of Jihad presents to Lebanon and to all the world one of the true faces of this procession and one of the shining faces that reflects the Resistance march in Lebanon, and its faith, humanitarianism and patriotism, its sincerity and dedication, its diligence and perseverance, its knowledge and labour, and

its great hope in the future. Today you present to the world a picture of the faithful believer who is not hindered by poverty and deprivation to seek education, success and progress, a picture of a believer not hindered by shortage of money, by having few supporters, or frail equipage to continue Jihad and Resistance to pursue his quest for dignity and freedom, the image of the faithful believer whose ultimate quest is achieving justice, and to see the smile he dreamt off on every lip, and the joy he dreamt off to fill the hearts, the quest of all the prophets throughout history. Today you also present a strong scene and send a clear message to all those who doubted the power of the opposition party to manage Lebanon's affairs in all fields and disciplines, they bet on the opposition's failure to run the affairs of the country, and they say that if the opposition wins the majority, we do not want to participate in the would-be government, not out of asceticism or modesty, but out of betting on failure. I say to all those gamblers, we want you to participate in governing the country with us, as we are proponents of partnership, but if you choose not to, and we win the majority, we will not beg you to, if you are betting on the failure of the opposition, the only answer is this, and this is one out of many ceremonies and one stage out of many stages, with 2883 graduates in all fields of specialization, I tell you that, the hearts, minds, souls, willpower and determination which defeated the strongest army and the strongest country in the region backed by the strongest tyrant in this world, are more than capable managing a country a hundred times larger than Lebanon. Some people accuse us that we want to establish an empire, will it be, then, difficult for us to rule 10452 square kilometres?

And as we were able with our Lebanese minds and hearts, with our Lebanese willpower and sacrifices to liberate our land and prisoners and protect our country, we are able, yet the most able by Allah's will, to build our country and nation and promote development.

Today, I tell you that we are interested in a new phase and we must bear full responsibility and not from a detached or edgewise position, hold the responsibility to build our country, land and to build a strong and a fair state, because strength without justice is destruction and dictatorship and lead to injustice; and justice without strength has no protection or means for implementation. We look forward to a Lebanon, to be home to all its sons and families, all have equal rights and obligations, a homeland to one unified nation and one unified state; one nation which is the Lebanese people, and we don't have a problem talking about our pluralistic multicultural society. In the past, some of the elites, intellectuals and thinkers used to indulge in long debates about whether what we have is pluralism or diversity? There is no difference in the terminology used, basically because pluralism or religious and intellectual diversity is a gift and a blessing, which we can turn into the most important component of strength in our country as well as the world, starting from our homeland.

We are one nation, in one land, we speak one language, and we have similar interests in security, stability, freedom, sovereignty, independence, social welfare, science, education, economy, finance and all of life related affairs pertaining to individuals, families, political parties, groups, religious confessions and regions. Our interests are

deeply the same but we might differ in expressing and diagnosing those interests, but we essentially are one people, who should have long ended the prejudice regarding the quality or the quantity. Today, education in Lebanon cut across all confessions, so does poverty, honour, dignity, betrayal and, unfortunately, collaboration with the enemy. We have to end the qualitative and quantitative debate. We must look at our people as one nation and if there are certain fissures or severe disunity, we all must cooperate and collaborate together to address these divisions or fractures.

We look forward to a unified Lebanese state and to one unified land, and as I spoke of people's unity and unity of land I speak about a unified state. Therefore, we as Hizbollah have always rejected the idea of Lebanon's division and we will stand against any plan to divide Lebanon that may cross anyone's mind today or in the future. To my surprise now, after the failure of all past division plans and regional and international gambling, there are few people who are still thinking of dividing Lebanon. But I honestly tell you, that division plans still tantalize the minds of some political players in Lebanon. I know that these are not mere dreams but actual hopes which some speak about in private meetings and are planning to achieve them under the title of federalism. Such plots will find no place in Lebanon. We want Lebanon to be a unified country, a unified people, land, State and system; Lebanon cannot withstand any form of federalism, which we only see it as a step towards division. It is interesting to see those who currently accuse us of working to achieve a tripartite-rule, are themselves working for federalism.

We also look forward to a Lebanon as a Lebanese state par excellence, free of racism, for some classify themselves as being more Lebanese than others, free of any feeling of racial superiority or prejudice which has no basis in reason, law, or in the values of the surrounding environment we live in, particularly towards our neighbouring Arab world, and in our relations with each other.

We look forward to a Lebanon with an Arab identity, but without fanaticism, because racism and fanaticism are obscurantism and have no relation whatsoever with reason, religion, knowledge and humanity.

Concerning the state and the system, I do not think the Lebanese differ over many of these titles, but they may differ in their interpretation, or ways and means to achieve them. According to the political system we have put forward in our election programme, and as stated in the Taif Accord, we call for the formation of the supreme national authority for the abolition of political sectarianism. We were precise in our election programme; we did not say that we want to abolish political sectarianism, there is one item that is mentioned in the Taif Accord which no one has yet approached, which is the formation of the supreme national authority for the abolition of political sectarianism. What we are asking for is the formation of this supreme body, to convene and study this issue, no matter how long this might take even if it took years, to see whether we wish to continue with the existing sectarian formula. If the study's result were to continue with the existing formula, then let's continue with it. But then there are some developments, improvements and amendments which can be discussed to arrive at an agreement. On the other hand, if

the Lebanese, through the supreme national body for the abolition of political sectarianism, reached the conclusion that we must abolish sectarianism from our system of governance, then we need to put in place a plan to abolish sectarianism and find an alternative system which we should all concede. On this particular point, we do not call for urgency or for imposing the choices of some of the Lebanese over other Lebanese, because any substantial amendment in the system has to be based on a national dialogue that is real, deep and serious, coupled with genuine national consensus, because hast changes or imposing the will of some over others, when it comes to changes in system structure, might have far more serious repercussions and consequences than it would be to continue with the existing current formula, despite its defects which we all agree on. This is one point.

Another point is that we look forward to a unified country, and I do not want to defend Hizbollah here, but I can assure you that since our inception we supported the formation of one state; that is why over all the past years we have never practiced any authority of the so-called, within parentheses "authority Zone", even after the liberation of the border zone. Nine years ago, I stood in the town of Bint Jubail, and I said that we are not a substitute for the State or the authorities and we do not have a judiciary system, nor do we want to put people on trial, even the collaborators who killed us, who shed our blood, wounded and jailed us, who whipped our skin and destroyed our homes; we left them to the Lebanese state to put them to trial. We do not present ourselves as a state or an authority. While, during the past three decades, those who now brag about wanting a single unified State, have actually practiced local statehood, canton and local governance we have never done this in the past, and now we are not doing this anywhere despite all media distortion which is intended to target certain areas, especially the southern Dahiyeh suburbs.

We are with a unified capable State, with a strong government with a strong and decent parliament, which properly represents the will of the Lebanese people, we are also with an independent and strong judiciary system, and a strong army and strong security services. In this we do not differ with others. Yes. There is a contentious point with some Lebanese related to the issue of the Resistance and its weapons and the defence strategy and there is a great deal of controversy and debate around this point and we will discuss this matter, but given the developments that are happening all around us, we still do not see any incompatibility for Lebanon to have both a strong Resistance and a strong State, and the strong State is the one which is capable of taking Lebanon to a stage where it can be said to the Resistance that now there is a State capable of protecting its people, land, security and stability, and you in the resistance, can now go back to your school benches, factories, fields and to your normal lives. This is the natural route.

In this context too, we look forward to a State that exercises real administrative reforms, a good effective and productive governance, free from corruption and bribery. We, therefore, call for the implementation of decentralization as stated in the Taif Accord. We call for a modern election law that allows the best representation of the society's segments and we wholeheartedly support the proportionality law. We call for a State that is capable of addressing social crises and life problems. A State

that gives these issues real and serious priority, and not like what we saw during the past years. We call for a State that is genuine about balanced development, and one of its conditions is the restoration of the Ministry of Planning, that analyses Lebanon's capabilities, resources and needs to put them in an overall comprehensive view, and execute plans that take into account this quantitative and qualitative balance. Therefore, I say to the graduating brothers and sisters: you stand before a challenge of the labour market, to take advantage of the academic degrees that you have just received. We have two paths: the personal partial path, related to how each one of us finds a job for his son or daughter, through an association, institution, leader or party. The other path is to have a government in the near future that places the pains, hunger, poverty and unemployment at the forefront of its concerns, and not spend another four or five years in political struggle over political issues, which they already know from the beginning, that even if they used all their political, military, security and media tools they will fail in achieving any of them.

We look forward to assist in the formation of a government that is earnest, sincere and honest, a government elected from the people, from them, from their hunger and deprivation in order to bring forward serious and sincere solutions to the social, financial, economic, developmental, and employment issues. We also look forward to a strong and independent judiciary system, free from the influence of politicians and from all official and non-official political positions. What we have in Lebanon is not a judicial authority, even if the Supreme Judicial Council says we do. We have fair and honest judges, and the corrupt as well, we have free and independent judges as well as the subordinate who held themselves in pledge to others. Tell me what is the image of the judiciary system which lightly punishes Zionist spies and collaborators who worked and collaborated with Israel for decades and committed treason against their homeland? What is and who is this judicial system that sentence collaborators for six months, or a year, then they are released later on to return to work as spies. And who is this same judicial system that places four senior security officers in prison for three years and eight months without investigation or any evidence. Is this an independent or fair judiciary system? This is shameful that those who collaborated with Israel for many years go into prison for two or three months and then are released. From the beginning, we pledged to hand in collaborators to the Lebanese judiciary, and we did not do what other Resistance movements had done. All Resistance movements in history held trials and punished collaborators and traitors, nationals of their own homeland except the Resistance in Lebanon.

Few years ago, I said to the French Ambassador after Jospin’s visit to occupied Palestine and the subsequent reactions in Bir Zeit University, due to his description of Hizbollah as a terrorist party. Few months after that incident, we liberated our land and it happened that I was reading about the French Resistance, and I said to the French Ambassador at that time: Give my greetings to your Prime Minister and say to him that the Resistance in Lebanon is much more civilized, humane and moral than the French resistance because yours back then held field trials, executed thousands of French nationals without trial, those who were charged with collaborating with the Nazi army, while we in Lebanon, we did not even kill a chicken from Antoine Lahad's Army. We had faith in the state and its judiciary

system. Now some from 14th of March may come out and say that this judiciary system was during the period in which we were under Syrian administration and tutelage. However, the judiciary system at the present time is under your guardianship, yet, act in the same manner. We pledged not to harm those collaborators and to accept the rulings of the Lebanese judicial system, and many of these collaborators returned to their homes and villages; and I say to you now that we keep our pledge and none of them will be harassed unless proven guilty through approved processes. We look forward to a truly strong independent judicial authority to be fair in implementing the law.

We are advocates of partnership in governance and the cooperation of various components or representatives of the various components of the Lebanese society in managing the country's affairs. Therefore, we are advocates of a national unity government, and this experience has not proved its failure, they wanted to present it as a failed experience. The equation that they are working on these days is either you submit to their will or they consider it a failed government. This national unity government, if the parties act with conviction and sincerity, it will not be a failure, but it is the best for Lebanon. Because any government that ignores key components from the Lebanese people under the pretext that they got a majority of half + 1 or 2 MPs, this does not work in Lebanon, whether this was the claim of the opposition or the loyalists. If we all say that Lebanon has a certain idiosyncrasy we must work according to the requirements of this idiosyncrasy, and if there is no idiosyncrasy, then let us open a debate from now, and if we decide to adopt full democracy, then the best formula for a full democracy that could deliver a democratic rule in Lebanon, is to have a parliament that is the result of democratic elections, that are based on an election law of proportionality and that Lebanon to be one electoral constituency.

We accept full democracy, but if we do not go for full democracy because it may affect certain sects, or some Lebanese demographic features, we then must take into account these specifications through partnership and the non-cancellation of anyone at all. As for the story of the obstructing-third or veto power in the Cabinet, which they say it disrupts the country when in fact it does not. And here I must call on our brothers in the Future Movement especially, to review out of their sense of duty, the martyred Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri's experience, and ask all those who were close to him about the difficulties he met through the process of forming the governments which he used to head, and the reason which made him refuse to preside the last government prior to his assassination. They will find that the reason – and this topic was discussed by PM Hariri and I during the lengthy meetings which were held months before his martyrdom - he used to say to me: I will not form or head a government in which I do not have in it or name one third of its ministers myself otherwise let them form the government they want without me. That is why in all the governments he presided, he always sought to secure third of the ministers from the various sects, and when he was unable to do that in the last government before his martyrdom, thus he apologized. Therefore, PM Omar Karami was then appointed for the task of forming government.

The real reason why PM Hariri did not form the last Government was because he was unable to nominate the third of ministers. They can ask Martyr Hariri's friends and associates that this is a normal thing in the country for anyone who wants to be a real partner.

I am not saying that Hizbollah wants the third of the government, but I say that the opposition demanded the third, the opposition which is formed from a variety of spectra and political parties, and represented half of the Lebanese people in the past years, and this is natural. But to return to the tone of tripartite rule, I will tell you what that story is about. This concept was fabricated by them, they laid the egg, which hatched into a chick which they fed and raised, until it became a rooster now standing on podiums crowing: tripartite Governance. No one in the opposition spoke about the tripartite issue, no one thought of it and no one understands what they mean by it. Is it confessional tripartite-rule, tri-sectarian government or tripartite political alliances? I, as a Lebanese citizen, when you ask me about what I understand from the tripartite they are speaking off, I tell you that I do not understand their precise meaning. There are many hypotheses on this issue; they proposed the issue of tripartite-rule only to put the opposition in a defensive position. I wish that the opposition including the brothers in Hizbollah would ignore this fabrication. All they want is to make us defend ourselves. Why should we in every speech have to negate or confirm that 296 the tripartite concept they have fabricated it, they want us to defend ourselves. We didn’t propose this issue, end of discussion, and their claim does not have any factual basis at all. Yes, there is another goal in raising the tripartite issue, which is to target the Christians in the opposition. When we say that certain political forces in the opposition, for example the Shiites, if they want a tripartite rule- if they mean confessional tripartite- and since Lebanon is equally shared between Muslims and Christians, a confessional tripartite would give a third to each for Shiites, Sunnis and Christians respectively, rather than the current half share the Christians currently enjoy in the current governing structure. Hence, they suppose that if this is offered, the Shiites would accept a third share in a tri-sectarian rule, carved out from the current equal share.

This supposedly serves the Shiites of the opposition, and if the Sunnis too would accept such an offer, hence this tripartite would also serve the Sunnis in the opposition. However, they are not focusing on these two parts of the opposition, their main issue is to target the Christians of the opposition. It is an attempt to say that Lebanese Christians and General Aoun, Ministers Franjieh and Skaaf, and other personalities from the opposition but especially General Aoun and the Free Patriotic Movement made a deal with Hizbollah and the opposition, whereby he is happy with a tripartite rule. In other words, he wants to lower the Christians' share in governance from half to a third-share. This of course is not the first media, political and electoral injustice directed at our Christians allies in the opposition and will certainly not be the last. Since this is a lie and has no basis, neither General Aoun nor the Christians in the opposition think this way, nor has anyone else in the opposition mentioned or discussed such a topic, General Aoun did not even accept tripartite share in Jezzine’s elections, how could he be accused of accepting it at the level of the entire country?

Therefore, we should not be in the defence position, but we must be clear about it. Yes, we are advocates of partnership, and the implementation of the Taif Accord, and to work quietly developing our political system on the basis of forming the supreme national political system council to diffuse tension and to discuss the abolition of political sectarianism.

We also look forward to a State, capable of protecting itself, protecting its decisions, citizens, land and security, without the need for UNIFIL forces, with all due respect to them in South Lebanon, and without the need for external security apparatuses, and as Lebanese we have the military and security competencies that enable Lebanon to build such a capable force. Here, also out of respect to the memory of and the commemoration in the following few days of 17th May treaty. It is a pity and very unfortunate that those who stood against May 17th treaty are, we, the Lebanese, easily forget. We tend to forget that those who stood against the Agreement signed by the Lebanese system at that time, from a weakened, defeated and servile position, and through which it subjugates Lebanon to Israel's security, military and political terms? Who signed that treaty on May 17th? Who wanted to attach Lebanon to Israel through the May 17th treaty? Who are the leaders and political parties involved in crowning Lebanon forever as a country that belongs to the Zionist project? And who opposed the 17th of May treaty? Who were the clergy, the men and women, especially in Bir al-Abed from the Imam Reza Mosque? Whose blood was shed to announce Lebanese people's rejection of the 17th of May treaty, other than martyr Mohamed Najdeh? Who gave his blood for Lebanon to be independent from Israel? Who are those who signed with their own ink the Agreement of humiliation with Israel?

Today those who wanted to subjugate Lebanon forever to Israel are now themselves symbols of independence, sovereignty and freedom, whereas those who sacrificed their blessed blood for the liberation of Lebanon are now the titles of subordination, treason and foreign dependence. Isn't this historical injustice? Is it possible to forget that? Now they come up to say the Sayyed has resorted to accusatory language and the language of treason. These are not accusations, these are facts from history, I am not issuing judgments here, and this history has to remain present, to benefit from it in the future, not for vengeance, but to prevent ourselves from being misled or lost again, to prevent selling our country in the new international slave market. We want a strong and capable state that regains its land by its will, and not by pleading, or to have a piece of our land returned as a favour from Netanyahu during an election season.

Like this time of the year, our people, the men and women in south Lebanon, were storming barricades, wire fences, and military sites in the previously occupied southern villages, making the historic liberation. This is the Lebanon we look forward to, based on this I reach the point which I want to highlight. Yes, we want Lebanon that is cooperative, fraternal and collaborative, a Lebanon far-away from conflicts and controversies. Few days ago, was the May 7th commemoration, in the opposition we have in one way or another adopted a policy not to raise this topic because of the sensitivities that it might evoke. Unfortunately, the other side has been

raising the issue before and after May 7th, and they still do. They have been raising this issue in all media outlets, in all platforms and speeches which caused a sandstorm, they mistakenly took our silence and lack of comment on that incident as an indication of our sense of shame, weakness or embarrassment. In fact, although we have in Hizbollah chosen to stay out of this debate, but I find it my duty to comment on this issue in honour of the blessed blood of the martyrs who fell on May 7th, so no one gets confused in Lebanon or outside Lebanon, and to bring some light back to the truth.

I want to remind those, and I don't want to speak in a provoking language to stir tension, I want to remind those talking about 7th May to remember what they did on the 5th of May. If we review the Winograd report which states that among Hizbollah's elements and points of strength that Israel must dismantle is Hizbollah's telecommunications network. Does anyone in Lebanon today have any doubt that Israel eavesdrops on our mobile phone networks? Is there any doubt that Israel eavesdrops on our civil landline telephone networks? Is there any doubt that Israelis eavesdrop all available means of communication? There is certainly no doubt about that, the latest American and international telecommunication tapping technologies are found in Israel. Not one of the most important weapons of the resistance, but the most important weapon of the resistance, and I will repeat to and this is what I meant by reminding, the most important weapon of the Resistance in the July-war was the telecommunications network, because it is immune to eavesdropping and to Israel breaches to an extremely large degree. On the night of May 5th, the Lebanese government convened and from outside the meeting's agenda, took the decision to dismantle the telecommunications network, accusing Hizbollah of operating it outside the law, misusing public funds and violating the sovereignty of the State. So, they took a decision to refer all those connected with this network, to the court. Put these two scenes in front of you I will not make judgments. The former illegitimate Lebanese government must notice that the 5th of May is a mark of disgrace stamped on its forehead throughout history, because it wanted to do what Israel failed to accomplish over thirty-three days of war. This is one point.

The second question, in the last few days, media campaigns with video tapes aired on television the news that thousands of fighters who had been brought into Beirut from outside the city, in the lead up to the 5th of May, I want to ask Beirut citizens who are being told to make their vote a response to the 7th of May. Anyway, a large segment of Beirut citizens already decided who they will vote for according to their political choices and inclinations and regardless of whether there was May 7th or not, as there are different trends based on which people will vote. But I want to address our people in Beirut and urge them to ask: who were those who turned Beirut into a city for militias under the heading of security companies, and who filled the city with centres for dispatching arms under the cover of this title? You can also ask, who were those who brought thousands of fighters from outside Beirut and dispersed them throughout Beirut neighbourhoods, centres and apartments, in synch with a political media campaign launched against Hizbollah and the telecommunications network, before making that Cabinet decision on May 5th. Are these legitimate questions or

not? Does anyone still doubt that thousands of fighters were brought to Beirut prior to the government's decision? What was being planned?

What was planned on the 5th of May is that the government takes the decision? And wait to see what Hizbollah's response would be? If Hizbollah did not do anything, and resort to statements, sit-ins and demonstrations they will have succeeded, and this would be a preparatory step as whoever confiscates the telecommunications network, will later on confiscate other weapons, under similar headings – this in case Hizbollah allowed them to remove the network in the first place. But if Hizbollah did not move in this direction, this means a confrontation will take place between Hizbollah and the army, and this is what they want.

Those who claim that they care about the army and the strong state they want, I will tell you what their project was in the last years, they have been working on instigating conflict and a battle between the army and the resistance. They failed because in Lebanon, we have a patriotic army with patriotic leaders, officers and soldiers. This project was studied by foreign bodies, who carefully analysed the Lebanese Army and assessed whether its leaders, officers and soldiers, were willing and prepared to enter into a battle against the resistance. The outcome they reached was that this army was not mentally, psychologically, culturally, nationally, prepared to fight the resistance. That is why they deprived it from all military assistance, because they consider it an army which cannot be trusted.

Not to be trusted on what? The country? The elections? Or the political regime? No, none, this army is not trusted to fight resistance. The army should consider this as an honour, the army deeply represents an element of safety, security and it is the national guarantee to Lebanon.

If Hizbollah didn't not hush up and instead calls for civil disobedience and to a confrontation in Beirut, thousands of fighters will be ready to mobilize. Here I want to say something we did not say back then; there was a plan ready to put in place, and these fighters had instructions about what to do, which areas they have to take over, the areas they have to cut-off to separate from other areas, the project was to take Beirut to a sectarian strife that was meant to continue for weeks. These events were meant to be taken as a pretext to demand the intervention of foreign forces under the title Sectarian war in Lebanon, to raise the call to the world saying, 'Please help us stop the war', this is what was planned.

Just to know that the decisions taken on the 5th of May were not made for implementation. If these decisions were not for implementation, then why did you stay up till morning before you issued them? Why did you call from inside the convened Ministerial Cabinet, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, U.S., France and others? These things are no longer secret? You can ask the ministers who were there with you in that Government, just hear what they say here and there, I am not revealing secrets, the issue is not about decisions not for implementation, and the previous illegitimate government took the decision to take Lebanon to a sectarian war between Shiites and Sunnis.

I say to all Lebanese, especially to the Shiites and Sunnis in Lebanon and particularly to our dear people in Beirut, what happened on the 7th of May, put a quick end to a sectarian war they had planned for, and for which they had made preparations. It brought a quick end to a plan to burn Beirut by sedition and civil war, it put a quick end to a major conspiracy that was prepared for this resistance. The 7th of May, spared Beirut bloodshed, preserved the official institutions of Beirut, the homes and families of Beirut, which they wanted to destroy and burn on the 5th of May. This is the 7th of May, and this is the greatness of our martyrs' blood. As far as we are concerned, throughout last year I was mindful and took great care not to raise this point, but with what I have heard in the past two weeks, I declare the 7th of May to be one of the glorious days of the Resistance in Lebanon. And as a consequence, the 7th of May placed Lebanon on the path to resolution, and brought Lebanon out of the stymie they had placed it in, the 7th of May compelled them to return to dialogue table which they had previously rejected, the 7th of May led to the election of a president and the formation of a national unity government, the relative stability which Lebanese have enjoyed during the last year is one of the blessings of 7th May, thanks to the martyrs' blood who fell in the 7th of May.

In the past two weeks, I heard slogans saying that 'we do not forget the 7th of May, and that 'they will not forget'. They made speeches, chanted slogans, this is great news, we do not want you to forget the 7th of May, oh dear brother, that is what we want, what we want is not to forget the 7th of May, so that no one will repeat the follies of the 5th of May. As for the people whom you brought from different distant areas, I want to do them justice. It was said that thousands of fighters were bought few days before that time from the two regions of Akkar and Bekaa. I want to do these young men justice, for we know that the people of Akkar and the Bekaa are strong and brave men, on whom one can depend, and no one doubts that they are definitely no cowards at all, nor do they escape from the battlefield, but you did not bring them to fight Israel, try them in fighting Israel. You brought them to fight their own people and the resistance, which the people of Akkar and in the Bekaa consider it the source of their honour, pride and glory. You brought them to fight the Resistance which every Arab, whatever their religion or sect, - considers it his glory and pride in this time and age. Therefore, they did not have the incentive and motivation to fight their folks and brothers in the resistance. And those who brought them ought to have known this. No one shall say that the people of Akkar or the Bekaa are cowards. Never. It is just that they were brought to the wrong battle, a battle which they did not believe in at all, not for a single moment.

Brothers and sisters, yes, we do not want to build on the 7th of May nor on the 17th of May, we read the past to deduce lessons from it for the future, despite everything, we call for cooperation and partnership, to overcome the past to concert efforts, to build our country together and bring it out of its various crises. As I said to them when we came out victorious in July war-a victory which until now they didn't acknowledge-it does not matter anyway-I told them we have to put our arms together and work shoulder to shoulder to build Lebanon, regardless of the outcome of the next parliamentary elections, we need all this cooperation and coordination to build

Lebanon together, to protect it together and to raise together its name high throughout the entire world.

Brothers and sisters, once again we congratulate our brothers and sisters the graduates for their accomplishment and success. Peace, Allah's mercy, and blessings be upon you all.

4th Speech

January 2011 Speech: Resignation from government

In the Name of Allah, The Compassionate, The Most Merciful. Praise be to Allah, The Lord of the world. Peace be on the Seal of prophets, our Master and Prophet, Abi Al Qassem Mohammad and on his chaste and pure Progeny, chosen companions and all prophets and messengers. Peace be upon you all and Allah's mercy and blessings.

Due to the developments that took place in the past few days and due to the importance of the stage, I find myself responsible for presenting the facts and analysing and commenting on them as well as sketching an image as close as possible to the course of events that took place in our country, because it is the right of the Lebanese people, the right of all the Lebanese, the right of all those who love Lebanon and care about Lebanon, the right of the people in Lebanon, of the state, of the Resistance and for the future, to be acquainted with and be informed as much as possible about the course of events because the facts and the way things actually progressed can clearly reveal the intentions and the aims and what is being prepared for this country and for all of us.

First**,** I will start with the facts and I will not go far back to the previous months. I will start briefly with the facts regarding the so called the Arab Initiative or the Saudi-Syrian effort following the talk related to the imminent announcement of the indictment by the Tribunal General Prosecutor in which he intends to accuse Hizbollah's members or cadres, the kind initiative took place on behalf of the Saudi and Syrian sides – on behalf of King Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz and President Bashar Assad and we were informed of the presence of an effort of this kind, and we supported it. We told all our friends who called to offer help: We suggest that you support the Saudi-Syrian effort. In fact, we bet on this effort as did all those who work for the welfare of Lebanon so that Lebanon may overcome this ordeal or the ordeal and sedition planned for Lebanon.

The talks started despite that some in Lebanon denied the existence of these talks, ideas, papers or terms and despite denying reaching an agreement because they are talking about their wishes and not about facts and real events.

On this issue, I want to be very clear so that all Lebanese would have a clear picture so that later no one claims illusionary heroism or present unreal things to people. From the very beginning, the Saudi side was clear and they said that the STL can't be abolished because the STL was established following a resolution issued by the International Security Council, and this issue is in within the hands of America, Britain, France and so on and we said that we understand this and I hinted to this on the speech I gave on the night of Ashura. They were clear. In fact, this was not discussed. So, from the very first days and from the first meeting, it was clear that the Saudi side said that they can't cancel the indictment and we also understood this because the indictment is not in the Saudi hands but rather in the hands of the Americans and the Israelis. Consequently, it is not expected that the Saudi side will be able to convince the Americans and Israel to cancel the indictment.

From the very beginning two things were suggested: First: postponing the issuance of the indictment for several weeks or months until an agreement on another thing is reached. Second let's sit to discuss how we can protect Lebanon from the repercussions of the indictment. All this that took place on the first days, and in fact all these negotiations remained secret. We said that we understand this and that we don't have any problem and off course we refuse the indictment, and we believe that it is politicized and we believe that we are targeted by America and Israel via the indictment, but Lebanon is our country and we are keen to protect this country and during the talks we reached the following: How to protect Lebanon: I also hinted to that in the night of Ashura.

We can protect Lebanon via three terms: the Lebanese government meets and says: Due to the developments, risks, possibilities and so on and apart from its evaluation of the STL and the indictment, it carries on three things:
First, withdraws the Lebanese judges.
Second, stops the Lebanese financing of the STL.
Third, abrogates the agreement memorandum between the Lebanese government and the STL.

Had the current Lebanese government or any other government take these three terms into consideration, this does not mean abolishing the STL by any means. The STL exists apart from our viewpoint on it. If the Lebanese judges were pulled out, the STL has its own law or the Security Council would amend its law so as to replace them by judges from other nationalities. If the Lebanese financing stopped, this would spare the Lebanese people some money and there are many financing resources in the world, so they have no problem in financing or in completing the number of judges. As for the agreement memorandum, abrogating it means that apart from the repercussions of the STL and the indictment, if the General Prosecutor wants to help the Lebanese, there is international Interpol and other means to arrest them and it would not then be the job of the Lebanese government to arrest those accused by Bellemare which might lead to conflicts at the national level.

If we are committed to these three terms, this means protecting Lebanon and saving Lebanon from the repercussions of the indictment while it won't mean by any means abolishing the STL or the indictment – and to all those who engage in sophistry and aim at deluding people – despite our conviction which I would like to repeat again and again that it is an American-Israeli tribunal and this is an American and Israeli resolution. However, we want to reach a mid-way. We were told by the Saudi side that they agree and that PM Saad Hariri approved the terms that we proposed. They said that to be able to reach an agreement (I do not like to name it settlement) or an accord, there are other things which are requested from you as an opposition or as Hizbollah or as Hizbollah and Amal Movement and that you have to accept these terms and consequently, we will have a comprehensive agreement or accord ready for implementation with our trust in Allah.

These terms were put forward with the condition that these remain secret to guarantee the success of the negotiations. Actually, they remained secret. Some of these terms were clear and we accepted them, but others needed further discussion with our allies because we had some comments them. However, the atmosphere which was reflected was positive. The atmosphere which was conveyed by President Bashar Assad to the Saudi side was positive and things were getting along.

Well, the illness of the king, his leaving for the USA and the presence of his son – Prince Abdul Aziz with him as he was the one following these negotiations – slowed down considerably the negotiation process and it was carried through the phone and at discontinuous intervals.

Two weeks ago, or a little more, it was confirmed that the king had a surgery and his health is improving and he is determined to continue his effort to reach an agreement and to finalize this issue and within short time the king's son was expected to arrive in Damascus and Beirut to agree on all the terms and on the mechanism of implementation and it was also said that PM Saad Hariri will be asked to travel to the USA to finalize this issue and prepare for it.

Before leaving Beirut to the USA, PM Saad Hariri made a statement in which he said that the agreement was finalized months ago. Indeed, this needs scrutiny but it is good that he acknowledged that there is an agreement and said that it was finalized a month ago but there are steps that are required from the other side which the latter have not yet fulfilled. Some of us considered this statement as positive because for the first time someone from the other party who used to deny the existence of ideas, drafts, negotiations and a settlement as they call it – acknowledges the existence of an agreement but it states who has to start first and makes the other party responsible for not fulfilling their part. Some read something positive in that statement and saw it as a prelude to the Saudi-Syrian promised steps.

PM Saad Hariri went to America and held meetings with the US administration and without prior notice, the Saudi side called the Syrian side to say that they were sorry and due to the pressures and circumstances, they were unable to continue their efforts and May Allah bless you and see what you can do. We were informed that the effort suddenly stopped without any indications or preludes and this has to do with the analysis and evaluation later: who are the ones who thwarted this course and who led things in this direction?

After we were informed of this and we were also informed that the indictment will be issued soon and that it might be issued within days. We consulted our allies in the opposition and with the parties that have ministers in the government because of the short lapse of time, we unanimously agreed that it is our duty – and I will explain why later – to resign from the government and consequently topple the government for reasons I will mention later. In a constitutional, legal and very natural move, the resignations were submitted and we now in front of a new status whether at a governmental level or at the national level and tomorrow – Monday – parliamentary consultations will take place to designate a new prime minister.

These are the facts.
Now let's try to understand what happened. What took place and why did things reach this direction? First: It's obvious that the Americans and the Israelis were against this Arab effort from the very beginning and they let this effort to move on for some time betting that the S-S efforts (Syrian-Saudi sides) will not lead to an agreement because of the difficulty and the complications of the issue and consequently they do not need to intervene or thwart. However, recently when they realized that the process was yielding very positive results and there are positive atmospheres to reach an agreement, they interfered in a decisive way and they informed that this issue should not move on and had to stop and thus the effort stopped.

Whoever has another interpretation, let him present it to us. This is the only interpretation based on the facts and based on available data, the US and Israeli statements that preceded the efforts and followed stopping the efforts, the US and Israeli gambling and especially the Israeli gambling on the repercussions of the indictment that accuses members of Hizbollah. This is obvious from the announced statements which they make day and night. Is it possible that the Americans and the Israelis allow the Arab efforts to succeed and to hinder all these expectations and gambling?

Second: There is no doubt that this has not only to do with America and there is no doubt, there are political parties in Lebanon who in principle used to deny the existence of ideas, a settlement and an initiative and those worked extensively day and night and provoked American, western and Arab sides to thwart the Saudi-Syrian effort and in some meetings, they used obscene and indecent phrases lashed out at King Abdullah because they found that he was truthful and serious in finalizing the accord and reaching an agreement.

Third: As for PM Saad Hariri and his team’s view regarding this issue, he said that the agreement was finalized, and that there are people who were required to do things which they did not carry out and definitely this is not true. But I will go along with him that an agreement has been made and we waited for several months. Well wouldn’t I wait, if I was interested in the welfare of the country and in transcending this ordeal? Wouldn’t I wait for a week or two until we put the final touches and agree on a mechanism to implement it? What is required from you? What is required from us and with the Trust in Allah we’ll overcome this difficult stage. What happened?

As soon as he went to America, this effort was beheaded and it was aborted and we came back to square one. This poses a very big question which I would like the Lebanese to ask. All Lebanese are worried today about the situation in Lebanon. There was a possibility that we might not reach this point, so why have we reached it?

Fourth: In my understanding it is either that PM Hariri and his team from the very beginning refused this course and did not want this agreement and initially carried on due to KSA pressure and consequently it is not only that they do not want, but they also provoked the Americans and others to exercise pressure on the Saudi side to stop this effort or they were going along with the King and the Saudi side but there is a US force majeure– and between parenthesis (I here ask where is the freedom, sovereignty, independence, the independent decision and national interests)- The Americans say no; so it's no. So, it is either one of these two cases because it is supposed and based on his statements and based on the given data, things were moving on and heading towards finalization.

This comment or interpretation stresses at this moment or at this night, that this team cannot be entrusted with Lebanese decision-making nor with safeguarding Lebanon's interests or Lebanon's stability and they do not have the ability to help Lebanon or lead the country out of any impasse or difficulty that Lebanon might face if months-old efforts were put to an end during a one hour-stay in the USA.

Fifth: As a continuation to this point, PM Hariri said after his return that the demands which he requested – which he called gains – are national gains. Anyway, I have the terms which were required from us because we were informed of them and we were discussing them to find answers. I said that we have given answers and that we were dealing with some of them positively while we were still in negotiations. This exists. Also, to be precise, tonight and for certain reasons, I will not reveal these terms and requirements. However, if others revealed them one day, the Lebanese will be able to judge and will discover that among these terms there are one or two terms that were in line with Lebanon’s interest but all other terms served the interests of Hariri’s political and security team.

This is what we were negotiating on and yet we were dealing positively with them and we were ready to concede political and non-political gains to the team of PM Hariri to protect Lebanon and, consequently, yes, we took this position taking into account Lebanon’s safety and interest but even this was aborted despite discussions pertaining to some terms and details. Yes, I will allow myself to speak about one of these terms as a proof which I will mention in the commentary section and this will be as evidence to this subject.

When we participated in the government, we told them: O brothers! There is an issue called the issue of the false witnesses which is sensitive and dangerous and has great repercussions: There are top security officials were imprisoned for many years based on these testimonies; the Lebanese-Syrian ties were ruined and even destroyed, and the worst sectarian atmosphere prevailed in Lebanon based on these testimonies. There used to be sectarian conflicts in Lebanon but not up to the level of the sectarian conflicts that took place in the past five years which were the worst due to the repercussions of these testimonies and parliamentary elections were held and governments were formed based on the political results of these testimonies, so you are invited to hold the false witnesses accountable as well those who fabricated them because these led to moral, humanitarian, national, economic and security

catastrophes and because they also mislead the investigation and we took this issue to the government and we did not take it to any other place and we did not defame people, we only said take this issue to the judicial council! Well, is it shameful if we called for voting and we are those who always called for consensus democracy?

These issues need consensus and we are the losing party in the vote and we asked them to vote. This is not shame on us, on the contrary, this is a positive act from our behalf as we resorted to institutions in an issue that necessitates consensus, we are willing to accept the result of the voting even if it was against our interests and against the interests of such a great cause, but they did not accept to vote and we said that we are willing to accept the results. This is the issue which stalled the government; it was not us who thwarted the cabinet. Well, what is the term? One of required terms was to close the file of the false witnesses and this is part of the settlement, meaning in exchange for protecting Lebanon and while the STL and the indictment are still chasing us, it was requested through the agreement to close the 'false witnesses' file. Well, why are you interested in the 'false witnesses' case? This must not be part of any agreement or settlement. You should be the most eager to hold the false witnesses and those who fabricated them accountable! Still this term was mentioned in the settlement. Is this in the interest of the nation or does it serve the interests of a specific political and security party?

Today we began to understand why the vote on the false witnesses' issue in the cabinet was prohibited and that this issue be referred to the judicial council. Now we began to understand why it is permitted to cripple the country and the government all through these weeks to protect the false witnesses. With my respect to any evaluation which might be said on what Al Jadeed Channel broadcasted yesterday and today I did not manage to watch the second episode.

Well, as a first reaction, a note was circulated within the Future Movement - cadres and coordination directories - to the effect that this dialogue is fabricated. Some officials also said that the video is fabricated and was cut and attached…

Well this is funny. Why? Because there was a meeting and a discussion is taking place. Technically this is possible. I do not know. Anyway, there are experts who might say whether this is fabricated or not. But what is funny is that these cadres, coordination directories and people are ready to accept an indictment which might destroy the country and the region and which is based on communication data which any communication or mobile company might fabricate. This is the easiest thing that can be fabricated, but the tape which was broadcasted by AlJadeed Channel, on the spot they said it is fabricated. However, a while ago the head of the government's media office –the provisional government –issued a statement which says that this incident took place, but it took place as such and with the aim of such and such, meaning they are discussing the denotative meanings and background of the speech but it did not deny the meeting and what took place in the meeting.

And before I came to address you – maybe it is inappropriate to me to go into such details – but I was told that the Future Channel will broadcast the full document of

this meeting. Here, I have a question: If this is one of the documents of the STL and the international investigation is secret, how come you have this document? Now how did Al-Jadeed Channel and others come to possess this document, this is its own business. But you want to broadcast the full document, from where did you get this record knowing that they are secret documents! This is what the statement issued by PM office mentions when criticizing what was broadcasted while stating that these documents are secret, so how did it leak? Allow me to talk in our colloquial language: "good morning!" For five years we have been saying that what is taking place in the international committee appears in newspapers, magazines, televisions, councils and the political and security leaders in Lebanon and with all the embassies in Lebanon have knowledge about it. This is what I liked to highlight.

This is what took place before finishing off the Arab Initiative. I understand that it was put to an end when the Americans intervened and we were informed of that. Well how can we explain our action? Why did we resign and even toppled the government and it was not the resignation of 10 ministers only? By the way, I find it my duty to praise the honourable and nationalist stance taken by Minister Adnan Sayyed Hassan who acted in accordance to his conscience and dignity. It is normal that the others will blame him for his action because they have their own views and considerations.

And we are political parties who participated in the government, and we have ministers in the government and as being part of the government and after an experience that lasted for a year and several months, if we were to make an evaluation after all these developments, are we able to carry on in this government? Prior to these developments, there was suffering resulting from the fact that this government is unproductive. Is the PM following up the cases, plans, project? Is there seriousness? From the very first day of the formation of the national unity government, there were people who were against its formation, bet on its failure and worked to fail it. This is clear from the productivity and the achievements of the government, and I believe that the ministers on the past couple of nights tackled and addressed this issue, yet we were not in a haste to topple the government. We bet that with time, with following up and seriousness let’s give the government chance on these issues which come under the heading of government performance and achievement and let’s activate the government, through addressing people’s issues, fighting financial corruption, etc. but that existed from the very first day.

In this framework comes the most important point. Yes, we came to a place now in which we acknowledge that we are in this government incapable of facing financial and administrative corruption and in executing financial, administrative and economic reforms. Why should we lie on people? Yes, we were still betting on time.

For several months, the ministers and the parliamentary financial and budgetary committee were asking about the 11 billion dollars which were spent under previous governments. Just tell us how and where they were spent and following whose decision? Eleven billion dollars? Where are they? Whose money is this? Is it the money of their fathers and mothers or the money of the Lebanese people?

We are significant political party. Perhaps not only 10 ministers; perhaps 11 or 12 ministers were making this request and we were unable to reach any solution with them and if you requested a bill statement for the 11 billion dollars, they will instantly say that you are evoking sectarian sedition and targeting the Taa'f Accord. What is this? This is just the first one, and this is part of the governmental status quo.

Second: The government was incapable of referring the false witnesses' case – which is a great, dangerous and sensitive case - to the Judicial Council. We failed even through voting to do that.

Third: This government is incapable of facing the repercussions of the indictment on the contrary, this government wants to continue financing a court that is conspiring against Lebanon and the Resistance and its Lebanese judges are accomplices in this conspiracy and this government will later put itself in a difficult position especially when the General Prosecutor or the STL requests it to arrest, unjustly, falsely and aggressively, Lebanese citizens.

This government is not qualified and thwarting the Saudi-Syrian effort has confirmed that this government is not qualified to confront the repercussions of the indictment and when the indictment will be issued which accuses members from Hizbollah, then things are over and the country will be exposed for we will not be able to know what the Israelis or the Americans will do, nor those who want to ravage the country from the inside and who always bet on sectarian strife and conflict. This government left the country to be exposed especially as we were informed that Mr. Bellemare told the President of the Republic and the Prime Minister that the indictment will be issued tomorrow or on Monday or he will hand it in to Fransen to be announced on Tuesday. Anyway, there is no time anymore and this government and the prime minister specifically acted in a way which prevented the government from protecting Lebanon against the repercussions of the indictment. When we became in front of an incapable government of this kind we became false witnesses. This is the feeling of all the ministers and you may ask them one by one. When we reach this conclusion and what is even worse is that people have demands and they might use the street and calls of this kind started to raise and we are asked to prevent people from taking any move on the street and we are required to defend the government and its policies and its conduct which does not convince anyone. In front of this status quo, the resignation and the toppling of an incapable government are a must. Toppling an incapable government might open the door – this is not absolutely confirmed because that has to do with the parliamentary consultations to name a new prime minister tomorrow – might open the door to form a capable, responsible, loyal government ready to hold the burden and ready to follow up, address issues and hold responsibilities. Toppling the government might open the door but keeping the government would keep the door closed and thus it was our national and moral duty to topple the government. In our view, and contrary to some of the comments which we heard, keeping the current governmental status quo was impossible as it would be unfair for the sake of the state and also unfair to state institutions and the people and this was the utmost national safety procedure and not vice versa.

Seventh: based on our diagnosis of this incapable and flaccid government status quo – I do not want to say more than incapable and I do not want to judge intentions – based on this diagnosis we decided to resign. We took a constitutional, legal, democratic and very normal step and this is our natural right. We did not topple a government in the street and we did not block roads and we did not burn wheels and we did not demonstrate and we did not resort - as some promoted– to arms. This did not take place at all. Rather in a constitutional, legal, democratic and civilized way, we presented our reasons and submitted our resignations.

What happened afterwards? As if (don't blame me for using this comparison) the opposition demolished the Kaaba; the USA, France, the West and some Arab states started saying that this move threatens the whole region and puts it on the verge of tension. Yes, to this extent! Why was the whole world moved? What happened? Just for the possibility – as it is not final or definite – that if the people in light of the latest developments in Lebanon, head to parliamentary consultations, there is a possibility that the opposition nominate a figure rom the respected Sunni Sect who might be designated to form the government and consequently the PM won't be Saad Hariri. Just for this possibility all capitals around the world made contacts, exercised pressure and issued statements. What is the interpretation of all of that?
Anyway, I like to say that we in the Lebanese opposition hold our national responsibilities, and we will act in line with these national responsibilities and we won't be frightened by speeches, statements or threats made by anyone around the world as we were not frightened by their wars, aircrafts and navy fleets; so how about being frightened by their hollow statements and threats? We are practicing our convictions based on our evaluations of the interests of our country and the means which we resorted to are absolutely our right, instead we should be thanked for that. We should hear that you are a group of people who acted in a constitutional, legal way and within the framework of the state institutions.

They appeared from most of the world capitals to criticize and accuse us. What is this? What does that mean? I want to tell the Lebanese: do you know what does that mean? This means that it is not allowed in Lebanon for anyone to object or exercise his right or raise his voice or make reforms, changes or find solutions.

It is required that all of us must surrender. Should you open your mouth, the USA, the West, Israel and the Arab world will on the spot raise the issue that you are seeking sectarian sedition.

This is shameful and this also indicates and confirms that the other party which is moving along this track and within this perspective is where, in which position? Within which project and within which viewpoint? For whose interests, it is working?

Eighth: According to my information related to whom the opposition will nominate, in the last hours it has become clear to me that the opposition will not nominate PM Saad Hariri to form a new government. In fact, in the previous government, we did

not nominate anyone, but we accepted to take part in a national unity government. However, following this experience – i.e. the one year and several months experience and our evaluation of it and the efforts and our interpretation of all what happened especially recently, we are clear that we will not make this nomination and we will rather take another direction. Tonight, I will not announce who is the opposition candidate. This will be expressed by the opposition parliamentary blocs during tomorrow's consultations, but I want to ask the following question: why is the whole world intervening in this internal national constitutional event? Mrs. Hilary Clinton made several calls here and there. Let the Lebanese know that tomorrow there are parliamentary consultations and that some parliamentary blocs have complicated conditions and this is quite understandable. But there is a Lebanese national opposition which is engaged in the battle of parliamentary consultations equipped with national tools, and there is another party who is engaged in the consultations battle backed by international and regional intervention and support and this is well known. Today governments, foreign ministries and presidents are intervening so that PM Saad Hariri be elected to head the government. Is this how the state of freedom, sovereignty and independence comes into being?

Let the people work at ease and let the overwhelming majority nominates whomever it wants and who gains the majority of votes wins? This is a democratic, constitutional track, yet there are sides that are capable of diagnosing their interests or they might neither vote for the candidate of the opposition nor for the candidate of the other party; but they are subject to pressure from countries here and there and threatens their interests. Is this how we move in the right democratic, legal, constitutional track? Is the Cabinet that is formed as a result of such a track constitutional, clear, clean and pure? We overcame the past parliamentary elections without making any trouble in the country despite all the flaws and when parliamentary elections held in a state as the size of Lebanon and during which the other party spent more than a billion and 200 million dollars and when the price of a vote in some directories was in the morning 1000 dollars, at noon 2000 dollars and before sunset 5000 dollars, will the elections and the resulting parliament express people’s will? Yet we overcame this issue.

I also want to ask: Will the results of the parliamentary consultations which take place under international and regional intervention and endless pressure express the true will of deputies and their diagnosis of national interests and consequently represent people’s will.

So, why is this intervention taking place? Imagine that the US Ambassador went today to Zahle to meet deputy Nicola Fattoush! Why? Did she go to address Zahle’s – development, economy, and job opportunities? Or did she go to deputy Nicola Fattoush because they are working on deputies individually? This is what we see in the media. Allah only knows what is beyond the media and what is taking place behind the scenes.

There is something even worse from all this international and regional intervention, pressures and contacts to name PM Saad Hariri as head of the government, knowing

that there is no reason for being that much worried and so far, it is not yet confirmed whether the opposition candidate or their candidate will win and it might seem from the first impression that their situation is better than the opposition and despite this we see all this intervention. What if it was confirmed that the parliamentary consultations tomorrow or the day after will lead to the nomination of another Sunni figure? There are great, competent Sunni leaders with honourable history to hold this post. So, what if the decision-making capitals and the world were sure that the opposition candidate will win? What will happen? What will be then the magnitude of the intervention that we expect?

I will say again that what is even worse from all of this– which in my view is another scandal for Mr. Bellemare – what I knew that after the Arab effort was thwarted in America, instead of delaying the indictment, Mr. Bellemare was asked rush the issuance of the indictment. This is part of the battle. However, the scandal is that Mr. Bellemare reported yesterday that on Monday he will hand in the indictment to Fransen. What is this timing? The indictment and the STL – even the timing of the issuance of the indictment is part of the political battle fought in Lebanon and is targeting us, our group, the Resistance and country. Couldn't he have waited until Wednesday or until the parliamentary consultations take place and a new PM is designated? Couldn't he have waited until Thursday? I am not saying that the indictment will be issued but I know for sure that the Lebanese state was officially informed about that. That was also announced in the media. I am not talking about private information. So, couldn't he have postponed the issuance until Wednesday, Thursday, Friday or Saturday? Haven't you earlier on postponed it for two months or a month and a half? You could've waited for a couple of days or for three days. No! What is required is to announce the indictment during the parliamentary consultations in order to be part of the political investment to serve the interests of a specific candidate. This is the status quo. I like to be clear and straightforward. Tomorrow, and the day which follows and the few days to come, there will be two tracks moving at the same time.

There is the track of the parliamentary consultations which will lead to electing a new prime minister, and there is the track of Mr. Bellemare who said that he will hand in the indictment to Fransen and its anticipated announcement.

I will talk first about the first track and then I will talk about the second track. Indeed, in our view the timing was exploited to serve the interests of the parliamentary consultations, but we will disentangle these two tracks. That means there is exploitation; but to us they are two tracks: the independent track of the parliamentary consultations, and the track of Mr. Bellemare and the indictment which is also independent.

Whatever the results of the parliamentary consultations were, the issue of the indictment and how we are going to deal with it is something else. As for the first track: We believe that this is a democratic, constitutional, legal and normal track and in fact, it is we who called for that when we resigned and we could have remained in the government and fought from within the government despite the fact that the

government is incapable and is doing nothing to the false witnesses' case. No, we resigned and this made that the current government to be a provisional government and consequently a date is set for consultations.

This is the normal track which will yield results and apart from results, we are participating in this track and will go to the Presidential Palace to give our nominations as will the other parliamentary blocs. Of course, in this track, political leaders and parties who have deputies and parliamentary blocs tomorrow or the following day are in front of a great national responsibility and a great historic responsibility and apart from fanaticism, and pre-set positions, let them say where they want to take the country. What will the government be like? This is because through the person of the prime minister we deduce the type and the personality of the upcoming government. What type of government are they giving the Lebanese people? What is the conduct and the performance that they want to undertake in front of the Lebanese people? There is an internal situation and a regional situation and at a critical stage. Leave them to their conscience, to their sense of responsibility and evaluation and it is basically they who are expected to vote and give their view on this issue eventually the consultations will move along and the result of the votes will determine the prime minister that will elected based on which people will decide how to act.

We have experienced this government and the previous one and according to us – and I am talking about Hizbollah in particular – indeed it was a new experience to us as we didn't participate in any government through the past years and we might have an evaluation for this participation, yet apart from this evaluation, I like to be clear: any government that will be formed will be a government that is expected to hold responsibility. I believe that the other parties in the opposition might share with us this view and even more decisive. According to us, it is impossible for us from now on to remain silent about any government which protects false witnesses and now that the Arab initiative has come to an end, there is a file called false witnesses which has not been dealt with yet, and the new government will decide what to do with it: will it refer it to the Judicial Council or will deny it? How will it act? This is the business of the new government. We can't remain silent regarding any government that protects the false witnesses especially if it was formed from those who have fabricated the false witnesses. We will not remain silent about any government that protects financial corruption and even manages financial corruption and no one threaten us whether from outside or internally. Let no one holds banners or brigades to face us. We are unable to remain silent on any government that fails in holding its responsibilities by addressing people's matters who are living the worst living conditions at all levels. Also - and I am not making compliments – we are not demanding the government to protect the Resistance and I always used to say this. During July War, we did not ask anyone to protect the Resistance and all those who protected it were honourable, and this position was expression of their conscience, responsibility, dignity, humanity and nationality. We always used to urge the government not to conspire against the resistance, not to make provocations against the Resistance and not to go to this capital or that to incite governments and

countries against the Resistance in Lebanon. And from now on, and I will be clear, we will not remain silent on any government that conspires against the Resistance because it is our duty to preserve all the elements of strength in Lebanon before the existing and imminent Israeli threats, greed and risks. We all know that in the region no one protects anyone, Lebanon is protected by its people, army and Resistance and we are not awaiting any navy fleets from anywhere in the world to come to protect Lebanon. If anyone conspires against the elements of strength that we have in Lebanon, be it governmental or non-governmental, we will not remain silent.

We hope that the Lebanese will be able to form a capable, active and national government to whom its priorities are the very priorities of the people so as to achieve their interests. I have to say that what is happening in Tunisia these days must be a lesson. In this occasion, I have to bless the Tunisian people for their revolution and historic apprising. Where is the moral? It is not only in "If the people once longed-for life…" the lesson lies in the president of this regime and his team who remained all these long years with France, America and the West – and even opened ties with Israel and the stance of this regime from all the basic issues in the region was well known – yet they were not welcomed by all those whom they served well all these years. They did not grant him a visa and they did not allow his plane to land in their airports. They even told all his relatives: 'Go away you are not welcomed here'. The moral is that we as Lebanese people or any people, government or authority must know that this country will carry on if the people sat down together and held talks and when it was said that the S-S talks reached a dead end, political leaders in Lebanon came out to say – and that was even discussed in Rabiyeh when the ministers announced their resignation - that they wanted a Lebanese-Lebanese solution; but if we as Lebanese are incompetent to make a solution and unable to reach at a resolution, then we have a problem.

Now if America and the West interfered in the Lebanese affairs that will lead to internationalization of the crisis in Lebanon, and will complicate the problem in Lebanon which will lead to the entanglement of great and serious interests in Lebanon at a time when the magnitude of our problem is well known and we as Lebanese are able to sit down and address it, yet the other party insists that they do not want to address the problem and even when the Syrian-Saudi effort was taking place and there was a possibility that it reaches somewhere, the way out was thwarted with Lebanese participation. We never close doors and we say that the future of Lebanon depends on dialogue, meeting, cooperation and being positive, but if anyone wants to threaten a section of the Lebanese people through America and the West and the world, they are mistaken and must take lessons from all the experiences that have taken place so far in the region.

Some people say: Wait until you see the indictment and the evidences that it presents. But we have already read the evidences in Dir Spiegel, Le Monde, the Kuwaiti Asseyassiyeh Newspaper and CBC. They are all well known to everyone and on what does the indictment depend on? On what basis it was fabricated, how was this issue prepared from its very beginning to its very end. There is no evidence that attests to the secrecy of investigation or the secrecy of documents… Everything

exists everywhere. That's why we refused the indictment and we said that this tribunal is in such and such a situation and the investigation is so and so and we did not insult anyone, instead we said that these are the facts and these are the data and based on them we said it is an American-Israeli tribunal.

This track is independent from the track of the government and indeed we will see what will happen tomorrow and the day after concerning the indictment and on light of that we will see how we will act and we will defend our dignity, existence and reputation. How we will act? This has to do with the leaders in Hizbollah and the results of the consultations with our allies. Surely, we hold the responsibility to dealing with this issue and I will say again we have untangled the two tracks. Indeed, we are acting according to all what we have been talking about in the past months. We will not let anyone to damage our reputation and dignity, and we will not allow anyone to conspire against us and we will not allow anyone around the globe to unjustly and erroneously accuse us of shedding the blood of martyr PM Rafiq Hariri – even if it was a sheer indictment or an accusation because some people ask us to be patient for the tribunal will prove if someone is innocent or not. He who put the indictment will put the decision of the tribunal and this tribunal is absolutely within the hands of America and Tel Aviv and anyone who moves along with this tribunal is serving this project whether he knew or not.

I will leave this section for tomorrow or the day after and in light of what will be issued, we will read and see and by Allah’s will we might say how we will act and the timing, the content and the mechanism have to do with our diagnosis to the interests.

This is the status quo and as a result of greed, this country has been for years thrust in this crisis and ordeal and my reading and the evidences which I presented previously in the press conference revealed that the Israelis killed PM Hariri and carried out the assassinations in Lebanon to cause a total change in the Lebanese situation.

In the past years and especially in the past couple of years, they expressed their frustration because the project which meant that the so and so party which was expected to control Lebanon didn't succeed and was incapable and unable, but they did not give up and they are continuing their targeting to complete the isolation and the blockade and they carry on in their aspirations to have control over Lebanon to change it to a totally different position with a totally different internal and regional status. However, I like to tell them that during all the past years and in the most difficult and intense conditions when George Bush was in Washington and when the American army were marching towards the Arab and Islamic capitals and when they were talking about a New Middle East, we stood here and we were here and we remained here.

During the past years, nothing remained that we did not confront: political war, media war, misleading, distortion, lies, security war, assassinations and military war in 2006 and you can see where we are now and I reiterate and stress that those who are still with this project make great miscalculations. In my previous speech about the

five stages, I enumerated and explained where their miscalculations are and here you are also miscalculating. It is possible that the consultations may bring back PM Saad Hariri, after all, we do not know the inclinations of the deputies, but this is the beginning of a new stage and not the end of a stage and you are miscalculating and if you believe that you might make use of the indictment to target the Resistance, you are extensively miscalculating and I do not need to go into details any further because in the light of what Mr. Bellemare will do in the next couple of days, I will make another speech.

I hope that Allah Al Mighty will assist the Lebanese people and bestow wisdom, responsibility and care on all the Lebanese leaderships so that they would be able to overcome these ordeals as this is the nature of life

Appendix C:

The Arabic Version of the Speeches

الخطاب الاول

حرب تموز

بعد مضي أسبوعين من المواجهة والعدوان الصهيوني الهمجي والصمود الذي يقترب من المعجزة، صمود هذا الشعب الأبي وهذه المقاومة الشجاعة. أود أن أتوجه إليكم، لأن هناك ما يحتاج إلى تعليق واتخاذ مواقف محددة، لنعرف كيف نواصل أيامنا المقبلة .

في الجانب السياسي يجب أن نعرف ونستوعب حقيقة الحرب وخلفيات العدوان. بعد أسبوعين أصبحت الأمور أوضح بكثير، وتوفر الكثير من المعطيات والمواقف والتصاريح العلنية سواء من مسؤولي الإدارة الأميركية أو العدو الصهيوني، أو من يدور في فلكهم، وأيضاً الكثير من التحليلات والوقائع التي تؤدي الى استنتاج واحد وواضح. لو عرفنا أية حرب نخوض الآن، نستطيع أن نعرف كيف نواصل المسيرة .

بعد حديث وزيرة الخارجية الأميركية عن شرق أوسط جديد، يعني شرق أوسط أميركي إسرائيلي جديد، هل يتصور أحد أن هذا المشروع الضخم الكبير وُلد في يوم أو يومين من أسر المقاومة للجنديين الإسرائيليين؟

كل المعطيات تؤكد أنه كان يتم التحضير لإطلاق هذا المشروع منذ سنة في الحد الأدنى. في تقدير الأميركيين أن هناك عقبات أمام شرق أوسط جديد. فهو يعني المنطقة التي تسيطر عليها الإدارة الأميركية وتتفرد في إدارة شؤونها ومواردها وخيراتها، وتكون شريكتها الأولى إسرائيل. في الشرق الأوسط الجديد لا مجال لأي حركة مقاومة، المطلوب العمل على إزالة العقبات وهي حركات المقاومة في لبنان وفلسطين وتالياً سوريا وإيران .

بدأ الأمر في فلسطين. كان المطلوب تصفية حركات المقاومة في فلسطين. جاءت الانتخابات، وانتصرت حركة المقاومة، ما أوقعهم في حرج شديد. ضربوا الشعب الفلسطيني، جوّعوه، أقفلوا عليه، منعوا المساعدات عنه، وكانوا يدفعون الأمور في فلسطين إلى الاقتتال الداخلي. وكان الخطر الذي يواجه الشعب الفلسطيني هو الاقتتال الداخلي.

جاءت عملية أسر الجندي الإسرائيلي في غزة. أهمية هذه العملية أنها دفعت خطر الاقتتال الداخلي عن الفلسطينيين، وأعادته الى المعركة الأساسية والحقيقية .

في لبنان، خلال عام كامل كانت هناك جهود أميركية مباشرة وغير مباشرة. كان الأميركيون يتابعون تطورات الأوضاع الداخلية في لبنان بشكل واضح وتفصيلي وحثيث، وكانوا يراهنون، وفشلت رهاناتهم على مستوى الداخل، ولم يجدوا من يعمل على القضاء على تيار المقاومة ووجودها في لبنان. فوجئوا بحجم الالتفاف الشعبي حول المقاومة. ذهبوا الى خيار آخر، خلال سنة درسوا واقع الجيش اللبناني، ونعرف أن هناك الكثير من الوفود العسكرية التي جاءت ووجهت الكثير من الأسئلة. وفوجئوا أن هذا الجيش اللبناني لا يمكن أن يقدم على معركة من هذا النوع لأنه جيش وطني. قياداته وضباطه ورتباؤه وجنوده. عقيدة الجيش تأبى أن تنخرط في مؤامرة من هذا النوع، وقيادة الجيش قامت بدور حكيم ودقيق في المرحلة الصعبة التي مرّ بها لبنان في أوضاعه الداخلية .

راهنوا على إدخال حزب الله في الحكومة وإشغاله في المناصب والمشاريع، ويمكن أن يدفعه ذلك الى التراجع عن المسؤوليات الجهادية، وهذا ما لم يحصل .

إذاً كل المعطيات الداخلية كانت أن لا سبيل للرهان على هذا الأمر. انتظروا نتائج الحوار الوطني. كانوا يواكبون بالتفصيل، ووصلوا الى نتيجة أنه لا يمكن الوصول الى هذا الهدف. وقد انتهى الأميركيون الى نتائج أنه ليس هناك من طريق داخلي يمكن الرهان عليه للإجهاز على المقاومة وتيارها ووجودها .

على المستوى الإقليمي، راهنوا كثيراً على أصدقائنا في سوريا وإيران، ووجدوا رغم كل الأباطيل والأراجيف، أن لا إيران ولا سوريا حاضرتان للإجهاز على المقاومة في لبنان أو في فلسطين. وصلوا الى الاستحقاق الذي لا بد منه في نظرهم. هناك جهة واحدة للتعويل عليها لضرب المقاومة في لبنان وفي فلسطين، ولاحقاً يعملون على عزل سوريا وإيران وتهديدهما .

الحرب الإسرائيلية

بناء على هذه القراءة كان خيار الاميركيين الحرب الاسرائيلية على لبنان. وما توافر لدينا من معلومات أن كل المناورات التي كانت تجريها قوات العدو في الاشهر القليلة الماضية، وخصوصا في شمال فلسطين المحتلة وجنوب فلسطين المحتلة، يبدو أنها كانت تحضيرات للعدوان على لبنان، والذي كان معداً أو يجري العمل على أساسه إما

أواخر أيلول أو اوائل تشرين الاول. كانوا بحاجة ايضا الى بعض المعطيات أو المعلومات الاستخبارية لاستكمال خطتهم الحربية .
الخطة كانت تقضي انه دفعة واحدة يقوم العدو بسبب أو بدون سبب، خصوصا أنه يحظى بتأييد دولي وغطاء من أكثر من مكان في العالم، بحملة برية قوية تسيطر على منطقة جنوب الليطاني بالكامل لمنع إطلاق صواريخ الكاتيوشا. وفي نفس الوقت يقوم سلاح الجو الاسرئيلي بضرب جميع بيوت قيادات ومسؤولي ومراكز ومؤسسات حزب الله والبنية التحتية بما يؤدي الى شلل تام في حركة المقاومة وفي حركة البلد وتحريض الشارع اللبناني على المقاومة، وإفقاد المقاومة القدرة على استعادة المبادرة، وإلحاق ضربة قاسية فيها لا يمكن أن تقوم بعدها على الاطلاق. هذا السيناريو كان سينفذ لو لم نقم بعملية الاسر، وأنا شفاف وواضح. ودائما كنا نتساءل انه عندما أقدمنا على هذه العملية كنا نتوقع هذا الرد أو لم نكن نتوقع هذا الحجم من الرد. عندما قامت عملية الاسر فإن المقاومة من حيث لا تعلم أحبطت الخطة الاخطر والسيناريو الاسوأ للحرب على لبنان وعلى المقاومة في لبنان وعلى الشعب في لبنان .
هذه الحقيقة التي توصلنا اليها. من خلال عملية الاسر وجد العدو الصهيوني نفسه انه في حالة إذلال لا يمكن أن يتحمل هذه الضربة فاستعجل الحرب التي كان يعد لها. أهمية هذا الاستعجال تكمن في الدرجة الاولى في ان العدو فقد عنصر المفاجأة. كان يفترض اننا سنكون غافلين نائمين. في لحظة واحدة، جنوب الليطاني في الحد الادنى يتم احتلاله. تقصف بيوتنا ومراكزنا ومؤسساتنا. نفقد الادارة والسيطرة والتواصل وإمكانية الحركة وبالتالي يجهز إجهازا كاملا على المقاومة بأقل خسائر ممكنة. أحبط السيناريو الاول وسقط عنصر المفاجأة، وهو أخطر عنصر كان يعتمد عليه في هذا السيناريو. أضف الى ان العدو اضطر للقيام بهذه العملية قبل وقتها وقبل استكمال المعلومات والمعطيات والتحضيرات اللازمة والمكملة لهذه العملية والتي كان يمكن ان تساعد على نجاحها أكثر من أي زمن مضى .
أيها الشعب اللبناني العزيز ويا شعوب العالم التي يخفق قلبها لنا، نحن الآن بدأنا ندرك بشكل قاطع وواضح خلفيات وأهداف هذه الحرب، وبالتالي كل هذا السجال. العدو كان سيقدم على هذه الحرب وما قامت به المقاومة فيه لطف إلهي. اليوم المشروع الذي انطلقت على أساسه الحرب وخططت على أساسه الحرب هو إعادة لبنان الى دائرة السيطرة والهيمنة الاميركية الاسرائيلية. يعني أسوأ من اجتياح 82 واتفاق 17 ايار. المطلوب ان يخرج لبنان كلياً من تاريخه والتزامه وثقافته وهويته الحقيقية، أن يصبح أميركياً وصهيونياً من خلال واجهات أميركية تطيع وتلتزم ولا حول لها ولا قوة. قدرنا مع كل الوطنيين الشرفاء أن نواجه هذا المشروع المشؤوم وأن نسقط أهداف هذه الحرب، وأن نخوض معركة تحرير ما تبقى من أرضنا وأسرانا وأن نخوض معركة السيادة الحقيقية والاستقلال الحقيقي وهذا ما أكدنا عليه خلال الايام القليلة الماضية .
اليوم بدأت التحركات السياسية والدبلوماسية وقد أعطت العدو الفرص المطلوبة وستعطيه فرصة إضافية. جاءت قبل رايس وفود، وكل من جاؤوا حتى الآن جاؤوا بالاملاءات الاميركية الصهيونية، ولم يقدموا تسويات وحلولا للازمة القائمة والصراع القائم .
لن أدخل الآن في مناقشة الطروحات والشروط لان هذا الامر نفضل ان نتركه للآليات المعتمدة وللجلسات الخاصة، خصوصا ان هذا الملف في جزئياته وفي كلياته يتابع من خلال الايدي الامينة الموثوقة التي نراهن عليها. ولكن أريد أن أقول تعليقا سريعا فقط ليكون واضحا لكم وللعالم كله. أود أن أجزم بأننا لا يمكن أن نقبل بأي شرط مذل لبلدنا أو لشعبنا أو لمقاومتنا أو بأي صيغة يمكن أن تكون على حساب المصالح والسيادة الوطنية والاستقلال الوطني، وخصوصا بعد كل هذه التضحيات مهما طالت المواجهة ومهما عظمت التضحيات. نحن شعارنا الحقيقي والاساسي اولا الكرامة. البيوت هدمت ويعاد بناؤها ان شاء الله. البنية التحتية ضربت ويعاد بناؤها. ولكن الكرامة لا يمكن أن نسمح بأن يهدرها أحد. لا يمكن أن نقبل بأي شروط مذلة. نحن منفتحون على المعالجة السياسية وعلى النقاش السياسي ونتعاطى بمسؤولية وبمرونة، ولكن هناك خطاً أحمر. بعد ان جاءت السيدة رايس الى لبنان وغادرت الى فلسطين المحتلة أعطت للعدو فرصة إضافية. بالتأكيد نحن أمام أسبوع وأمام 10 أيام كما يقول الاسرائيليون أنفسهم، أمام أيام حاسمة ومصيرية بحاجة الى المزيد من الصمود والتماسك الداخلي والصبر هم يراهنون، والمعركة كلها من يصرخ اولا .
نحن سنستمر في مواجهتنا، وأود أن أعلن وهنا أنا أنتقل الى الشق الميداني انه بعد كل هذا الوقت وكل هذا التمادي من قبل العدو الاسرائيلي، نحن كنا قد دخلنا في مرحلة حيفا، أنا أعلن أننا سندخل في مرحلة ما بعد حيفا، وبالتالي هناك مرحلة جديدة من المواجهة والصراع يفرضها العدو علينا كخيار لا بد منه في المرحلة الجديدة. نعم لن يبقى حدود قصفنا حدود حيفا مهما كانت ردات فعل قوات العدو. سوف ننتقل الى مرحلة ما بعد حيفا، واذا تطورت الامور سوف نختار الزمان الذي ننتقل فيه الى ما بعد بعد حيفا .
هذا اولا. ثانيا في المواجهة الميدانية الارضية حتى الآن قام مجاهدو المقاومة بإنجازات كبيرة جدا وكبدوا العدو خسائر كبيرة في ضباطه وجنوده وطائراته ودباباته. اليوم نحن نواجه في بنت جبيل وسنقاتل في بنت جبيل كما قاتلنا في مارون الراس، وكما سنقاتل في كل قرية وبلدة وموقع ونقطة. طبعا كما قلت قبل أيام نحن لسنا جيشا كلاسيكيا، لا

نشكل خطا دفاعيا كلاسيكيا. نحن نقاتل بطريقة حرب العصابات. الكل يعرف أسلوب القتال. المهم في المعركة البرية ما نلحق بالعدو الاسرائيلي من خسائر. وأقول لكم أياً يكن التوغل البري الذي يمكن أن ينجزه العدو الاسرائيلي وهو يملك قوات كبيرة على هذا الصعيد، إلا ان هدف هذا التوغل لن يتحقق وهو منع قصف المستعمرات في شمال فلسطين المحتلة. هذا القصف سيستمر أياً يكن التوغل البري والاحتلال الجديد. ان احتلال أي شبر من أرضنا اللبنانية سيكون وازعاً ودافعاً إضافياً لاستمرار المقاومة ولتصاعد المقاومة. ان مجيء جيش الصهاينة الى أرضنا سيمكننا أكثر من أن ننال منه، من جنوده وضباطه ودباباته، سوف يعطينا فرصة أوسع وأكبر في الاشتباك المباشر ولاستنزاف قوات هذا العدو بدلا من أن يبقى مختبئا خلف حصونه عند الحدود الدولية ومكتفيا بسلاح جوّه القوي في دك القرى والبلدات وقتل الاطفال والنساء المدنيين. في المواجهة ستكون يدنا هي العليا، المعيار في المواجهة البرية هو ما نلحقه من استنزاف له وليس ما سيبقى في أيدينا من أرض أو ما يخرج من أيدينا من ارض لأننا لا نقاتل بطريقة نظامية. أي أرض يحتلها العدو سنستعيدها بالتأكيد بعد ان نلحق بهذا العدو كل الخسائر. اذاً في الحرب البرية نحن جاهزون ومستعدون ومستمرون ورهاننا وتوكلنا على الله سبحانه وتعالى وعلى تلك السواعد القوية والقلوب المليئة بالايمان والعقول المليئة بالمعرفة والنفوس التي تعشق لقاء الله سبحانه وتعالى، فيهون كل الدنيا وهوان الدنيا وأهوال الدنيا في عينها فتقف ثابتة القدم في المواجهة .

أريد أن ألفت في قضية المواجهات الميدانية الى طبيعة الحرب النفسية التي يخوضها العدو والتي يجب أن نلتفت اليها كمقاومين وكشعب. أنا أؤكد لكم اننا معكم شفافون وصادقون. نحن لا نخفي شهداءنا. لو قتل أي من قادتنا وكوادرنا سنعلن ذلك وسنفتخر بذلك. لو سقطت لنا أعداد كبيرة من الشهداء سنعتز بذلك ونفتخر بذلك. لو وقع هناك جرحى أو أسرى في يد العدو لن ننكر ذلك. لو وقع هناك جرحى أو أسرى لن ننكر ذلك. وهذه هي سيرتنا حتى عندما كان القتال في مارون الراس قلنا هناك قتال، وعندما خرجنا قلنا مارون الراس انتهت. عليكم ان تستمعوا الينا وليس الى الحرب النفسية التي يخوضها العدو الاسرائيلي. العدو منذ يومين يقول انه سيطر على مدينة بنت جبيل، ويساعده ويروج له للاسف العديد من وسائل الاعلام اللبنانية والعربية، وهم لم يسيطروا على مدينة بنت جبيل، ولا زالت كل مدينة بنت جبيل في يد المجاهدين حتى تسجيل هذه الرسالة وهم يقاتلون ويواجهون ويصمدون .

العدو يتحدث عن مئات الشهداء من حزب الله اين هم هؤلاء المئات؟ يتحدث عن 20 اسيرا، اين هم هؤلاء ال20 اسيرا؟ قبل ايام تحد ث عن أسيرين في مارون الراس، ثم أطلق سراحهما لانهما مدنيان لا علاقة لهما بالمقاومة .

اذاً العدو سيتحدث عن احتلال مدن واحتلال قرى وقتل أعداد كبيرة للمس بمعنويات المجاهدين والناس. أنا أقول لكم هذه الاكاذيب لا تصدقوها. استمعوا الينا. نحن عندما يسقط منا الشهداء سنعلن شهداءنا. عندما نخرج من بلدة بعد ان نقاتل فيها قتال الابطال سوف نعلن اننا خرجنا. نحن لا نكذب على شعبنا، ولكنه هو الذي يكذب على شعبه. هو الذي يمارس الرقابة الاعلامية. هو الذي لا يقول الحقائق لشعبه ولا للعالم. هذا دليل على ضعفه. أما شفافيتنا ووضوحنا فدليل على قوتنا وعلى إرادتنا .

في كل الاحوال عندما اخترنا هذا الطريق كنا نعرف اننا نمضي في طريق ذات الشوك والشهادة التي تصنع النصر. نحن مصرون على الوقوف وعلى الصمود وعلى ان نحفظ كرامتنا وسيادتنا وحريتنا وحرية وطننا. المطلوب ان نصبر وان نصمد وان نواصل وبالتالي الامور لن تبقى كما هي. نحن ان شاء الله موعودون بالنصر وسوف ننتصر في هذه المعركة كما انتصرنا في غيرها. صمودنا سوف يجعل الواقع من حولنا يتغير، الواقع الاقليمي والواقع الدولي. لن يكون هناك وقت طويل متاح للعدو أياً تكن التغطية التي تقدمها الادارة الاميركية لهذا العدو. في نهاية المطاف هذه الدماء الزكية التي تنزف من النساء والاطفال والمدنيين المظلومين ومن الشهداء والمجاهدين المقاومين المظلومين سواء في المقاومة أو في الجيش الوطني اللبناني أو في أي موقع من مواقع التضحية، اليوم هذه الدماء لا بد أن تنتصر على السيف، وهذه هي سنة الله والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته .

الخطاب الثاني

وجهه الى الحشود وسط العاصمة بيروت في 7/12/2006

ايها الاخوة و الاخوات، ايها المعتصمون من اجل لبنان، من اجل سيادة لبنان واستقلال لبنان وكرامة لبنان و حرية لبنان، السلام عليكم جميعا ورحمة الله وبركاتة. كنت اتمنى ان اكون بينكم في ساحة من ساحات الشرف وساحة من ساحات الصمود والمقاومة في هذا الطقس البارد باجوائه الطبيعية ولكنه الحار بالمودة و التعاون ودفئ الاخوة الوطنية من اجل لبنان ومن اجل الامة.

قبل ان ابدأ كلمتي هذه اليكم، اتمنى ان شاء الله ان اكون في يوم من الايام بينكم في تلك الساحة، لكن قبل ان ابدأ واحتياطا لختام الكلمة، للاسف لدينا بعض العادات اللبناتية السيئة وهي اطلاق الرصاص ابتهاجا بمناسبة او اخرى. انا اتمنى على من يستمعون الي عند انتهاء الكلمة الا يطلقوا اي رصاص. هذه عادة سيئة يجب ان نقلع عنها كلبنانين. نحن يجب ان نتجنب اطلاق الرصاص في اي اتجاه حتى في اتجاه السماء. المكان الوحيد للرصاص هو صدر اعداء لبنان، العدو الاسرائيلي. لذلك واحتياطا اتمنى واكد واعتبر ان هذه الليلة عند انتهاء الكلمة من يطلق الرصاص هو مدسوس، يريد الاساءة الي والينا والى كل المعارضة الوطنية اللبنانية.

اولا، اتوجه الى اهل الشهيد احمد محمود بالتعزية والمواساة لاقول لهم ان ابنكم استشهد في ساحة الدفاع عن لبنان و كرامة لبنان وعزة لبنان وتحرير لبنان. الشهيد احمد محمود هو شهيد المقاومة بامتياز وهو ليس شهيدا في شوارع لبنان الداخلية بل هو شهيد في الدفاع عن استقلال لبنان وسيادة لبنان وفي التحرك من اجل انقاذ لبنان وساعود الى الشهيد في طمن الكلمة.

يجب ايضا، ان اتوجه بالشكر اليكم، انتم. يا اشرف الناس اطهر الناس واحب الناس واعز الناس. الى كل اللذين جاؤوا من كل المناطق اللبنانية يوم الجمعة الى ساحتي رياض الصلح و الشهداء من اجل انقاذ لبنان. كل اللذين ما زالوا يحتشدون في كل ليلة من اجل انقاذ لبنان، اتوجه اليكم بالشكر واقول لكم ان ما تقومون به هو امر عظيم وشريف لانه يخدم هدفا وطنيا نبيلا وشريفا، هو انقاذ لبنان من خلال انهاء حالة الاستئثار والتسلط والتفرد ولاقامة حكزمة وحدة وطنية للمشاركة والوفاق والتوافق والتعاون و التضامن.

ايها الاخوة والاخوات، لقد حاولوا في الايام الماضية من خلال الشغب والاعتداء على المعتصمين ذهابا و ايابا وصولا الى قتل الشهيد احمد محمود ان يدخلوا الخوف الى قلوبكم، ان يمنعوكم من المجئ الى ساحات الاعتصام ولكنهم فشلوا ونسوا انكم شعبا لا مكان للخوف في قلبه. اليوم يراهنون على تعبكم او على مللكم وهم لا يعلمون انكم شعبا لا يمل ولا يكل ولا يتعب. قالوا بالامس انهم يتوقعون ان تنطلق من ساحاتكم صرخة الاستسلام وهم تناسوا بالامس القريب كيف وقفتم انتم 33 يوما ليس فقط في البرد او تحت المطر او في العراء وانما تحت اعنف قصف جوي ومدفعي في العقود الماضية. صمدتم رغم التهجير والقتل والمجازر. احتضنكم اهلكم اللبنانيون في كل المناطق اللبنانية ومن كل الطوائف اللبنانية ولم تستسلموا. نعم، هم دعونا للاستسلام من اول يوم ولكننا رفضنا ان نستسلم. هم راهنوا على هزيمتنا ولكننا لم نهزم وبقينا هنا في ارضنا. في ارض الاباء والاجداد اعزاء، اقوياء لا تنحني لنا قامة ولا تنكسر لنا ارادة لا نعرف التعب ولا الملل ولا الكلل، من اجل لبنان ومن اجل الامة. قولوا لهم اليوم من ساحة الاعتصام، قولوا لهم غدا في صلاة الجمعة وقولوا لهم في كل ليلة قولوا لهم يوم الاحد في الحشد الكبير وقولوا لهم بعد الاحد انكم ايها المراهنون على استسلامنا واهمون، واهمون، واهمون. قولوا لهم نحن اقوى من التعب واقوى من البرد واقوى من الجوع واقوى من الكلل واقوى من الملل واقوى من قصف الصواريخ، فكيف بقصف الكلمات. نحن اقوى من الحرب، فكيف بالتهديد. نحن شعب في معركة الارادة لن ننكسر.

ايها الاخوة والاخوات، ليس من الصدفة ان تكون القوى اللبنانية على اختلاف انتمائاتها الطائفية و المذهبية والسياسية و المناطقية التي احتضنت المقاومة وشعب المقاومة في حرب تموز وأب هي نفسها اليوم التي تشكل المعارضة الوطنية اللبنانية وتدعم المعارضة الوطنية اللبنانية. وكذلك ليس من الصدفة ان الشعوب والحكومات والاشراف في العالم اللذين وقفوا الى جانب المقاومة في الحرب هم اللذين يقفون الى جانب المعارضة اليوم. وفي المقابل، ليس من الصدفة ان كل اولئك اللذين دعموا الحرب الاسرائيلية على لبنان هم اللذين يدعمون بقية الحكومة الساقطة المتواجدة في السرايا الحكومي. انا باسمكم ادعوا الدول العربية الحريصة على لبنان ان لا تتدخل كطرف ولا تدعم فريق على حساب فريق. من يريد سلامة لبنان ووحدة لبنان وخلاص لبنان يحب ان يمد يده الى كل اللبنانين، والا تكتفوا بتقارير سفراءكم في لبنان. تفضلوا الى لبنان وتعرفوا على الحقائق السياسية والشعبية و الميدانية عن قرب وابذلوا جهودكم المشكورة من اجل مساعدة لبنان وانقاذ لبنان. واقول للحكومة لبقية الحكومة، الفاقدة الشرعية، ان استنادكم الى الدعم الامريكي والغربي لا يجديكم نفعا على الاطلاق. اليوم من تستندون اليه وفي مقدمتهم حورج بوش، هو احزج ما يكون الى المساعدة، وهو احزج ما يكون الى من ينقذه. فلناخذ مثلا العراق. في العراق يوجد اكثر من 150 الف جندي امريكي في العراق وينفق مئات مئات المليارات. في العراق كل الادارة الامريكية تتابع الموضوع العراقي. العراق ليس ملفا كلبنان في يد الوزارة، وزارة الخارجية الامريكية، ومع ذلك ما هي النتيجة في العراق. الفشل، تمزق العراق، الحرب الطائفية، الحرب المذهبية، الافاق المسدودة. هذه هي النتيجة ومصير اي بلد يراهن على بوش وعلى جيشه وعلى ادارته. ماذا يمكن ان تقدم لكم امريكا وهي الغارقة في وحول المنطقة، من افغانستان الى العراق الى فلسطين الى لبنان. هذه الحكومة اللبنانية على مدى سنة ونصف السنة تلقت ، وما زالت، من الدعم الامريكي ومن الدعم العربي ما لم تتلاقاه اي حكومة في تاريخ لبنان. الا يثير هذا الشكوك والشبه. لماذا هذا الغرام الامريكي بهذه الحكومة وبرئيس هذه الحكومة. لكن ما يثير الشبه اكثر والشكوك اكثر هذا المديح الاسرتئيلي اليومي لهذا الفريق الحاكم في لبنان. هل هناك ما وراء الاكمة ما لا نعرف وما نجهل. اليس من العار ان تجتمع الحكومة الصهيونية المصغرة، وهي عادة تجتمع عندما يكون هناك امرا يتهدد مصالح اسرائيل او امن اسرائيل. اليس من العار ان تجتمع حكومة اسرائيل المصغرة وموضوع جلستها فقط، كيف يمكن ان نساعد هذه الحكومة المتهالكة في لبنان. وقال بعضهم يمكن ان نساعدهم بان نخرج من القسم الجنوبي من بلدة الغجر. وقال بعض بعضهم فلنخرج من مزارع شبعا و لنقدمها هدية ودعم سياسي ومعنوي للفريق الحاكم في لبنان. ولكن ماذا فعلوا لكم؟ لم يخرحوا لا من الغجر ولا من مزارع شبعا. حتى في هذه زهدوا في ان يقدموا لكم دعما معنوياز الا يدعوا كل هذا الدعم الامريكي و الغربي والاسرائيلي الى التوقف والتامل.

ايها الاخوة الاخوات، نحن في المعارضة الوطنية اللبنانية نصر على مطلبنا وعلى هدفنا وهو تشكيل حكومة وحدة وطنية لبنانية حقيقية لماذا؟ لان تركيبة لبنان الخاصة المتعددة المتنوعة تعني ان حكومة فريق واحد وتسلط فريق واحد كان دائما يضع لبنان امام الحائط المسدود في كل شيئ. لبنان لا يقوم الا بالمشاركة، والا بالتوافق، والا بالتضامن، والا بالتعاون وليس بالاستئثار. نريد حكومة وحدة وطنية لانها السبيل الوحيد لمنع اي وصاية اجنبية. ليسمع العالم كله، نحن نريد حكومة لبنانية، قرارها لبناني، ارادتها لبنانية، ساداتها لبنانيون. هذا ما نتطلع اليه. وهي التي تشكل الضمانة للبنان ولمستقبل لبنان و لامن لبنان، اسقرار لبنان، ازدهار لبنان، سلامة لبنان، وحدة لبنان. هذا هو اللذي نتطلع اليه. نحن نرفض اي وصاية اجنبية سواء كانت لعدو او لصديق او لشقيق. هذه هي الحقيقة.

اليوم يسالوننا، لو كنتم انتم المعارضة الحالية اصبحتم في يوم من الايام اكثرية نيابية ، وشكلتم حكومة، هل ستعطونا الثلث الضامن؟ انا اقول لهم باسم حزب الله، و كفريق في المعارضة، اقول نعم، نحن نؤيد اعطاء اي معارضة في لبنان ثلثا ضامنا لاننا نؤمن بالشراكة، ولاننا نؤمن بالتعاون ولا نؤمن بحكم فريق على حساب فريق اخر. وعندما نعطي لاي معارضة لوكنا اكثرية، نعطيها الثلث الضامن، نعطيها ونحن واثقون، لان ليس هناك ما نخافه على الاطلاق وليس لدينا اي التزامات دولية او التزامات اقليمية نريد ان نقوم بتمريرها من خلال حكومة اكثرية معينة. نحن نريد مصلحة لبنان، و مصلحة لبنان هي تلك التي نتوافق عليها جميعا. ايها الاخوة و الاخوات، عندما سدت ابواب الحوار وعطلت طاولة التشاور ووجهنا بالاستئثار والاصرار على التسلط، كان خيارنا الاخير النزول الى الشارع. ولكننا ونحن في الشارع، في الاعتصام، في التظاهر، لم نوقف ولن نقفل ابواب التفاوض. كلاللذبن يدعوننا الى الحوار نقول لهم، نعم. ابواب الحوار مفتوحة مع قادة المعارضة، مع رموز المعارضة وابواب المبادرات مفتوحة. لكن بالتاكيد لسنا بحاجة الى العودة الى طاولة حوار فضفاضة اتضيع الوقت. لن نخرج من الشارع لنذهب الى طاولة حوار يتم خداعنا فيهل من جديد. نحن سنبقى في الشارع، ومن يريد ان يتفاوض مع المعارضة ويتحاور معها، فابواب قادتها على اختلافهم مفتوحة.

اليوم، هناك مبادرة مجلس المطارنة الموارنة اللذي تحترم، ونحن نعتبر هذه المبادرة تحمل العديد من الايجابيات وتستحق ان تناقش وان يتلاقى على اساس بنودها. فيقبل ما يقبل ويعلق او يؤجل ما يعلق او يؤجل. الباب مفتوح للتفاوض وليس صحيحا ان المعارضة لا تحاور ولا تفاوض ولا تناقش. بل الخيارات كلها مفتوحة. لكن، انا اقول لهم، فاوضونا وحاورونا ونفاوضكم ونحاوركم ولكننا باسم كل المحتشدين الليلة، وبالامس وغدا، لن نخرج من الشارع قبل تحقيق الهدف اللذي ينقذ لبنان.

ايها الاخوةو الاخوات، ايها الاخوة والاخوات. ما دمنا مستمرين في اعتصامنا، اريد ان اكد على الضوابط التي تحدثنا عنها منذ اليوم الاول. لا شتائم. البعض من المتحمسين في ساحات الاعتصام قد يطلق شعارات مهينة لشخصيات في الحكومة، ونحن نرفض اي اهانة شخصية لاي احد. اي اهانة، اي شتيمة، اي كلام غير لائق او غير اخلاقي لا يجوز ان يصدر من اعتصامكم. نحن نؤكد على اعتصامنا وتحركنا السلمي والمدني و الحضاري. طبعا، هم عندما قتلوا الشهيد احمد محمود، هم ارادوا ان يجرونا الى الصراع المسلح والى القتال. ولكن، باسم الشهيد احمد محمود، باسم كل رفاقه، باسم كل رجل وامرءة و طفل صغير وشيخ كبير في المعارضة الوطنية اللبنانية، اقول للفريق الحاكم ولقواه السياسية. وللاسف، لبعض مليشياته، نحن نرفض الحرب الاهلية. نحن نرفض الفتنة بين الطوائف، او الفتنة بين القوى السياسية. نحن نرفض اي نوع من انواع التصادم في الشارع. اردناه تحركا حضاريا سلميا. اثبتنا ذلك يوم الجمعة في الحشد الكبير اللذي ليس له سابقة في تاريخ لبنان، ولو وهنوا به في وسائل اعلامهم التي تكبر ما يفعلون وتصغر ما تفعلون. ولكن الصورة واضحة لكل العالم. انا اقول للبنانيين ولكل شعوب المنطقة من يدفع الامور باتجاه الحرب الاهلية. في الحرب الاهلية الكل خاسر، لن اقول لكم انتم تخسرون ونحن نربح. لاء. كلنا يخسر. كل اللبنانيين يخسرون في الذهاب الى الحرب الاهلية او الى الفتنة المذهبية. في العراق الكل يخسر، في فلسطين الكل يخسر.ما يعدنل به بعض الملوك العرب، للاسف، من حروب اهلية في لبنان والعراق و فلسطين هي خسارة لنا جميعا والربح الصافي سوف يذهب الى اسرائيل والى امريكا، والى المحافظين الجدد والى اصحاب نظريات الفوضى الخلاقة. نحن في لبنان لن ننجر الى اي فتنة، لو قتلتم احمد محمود، لو قتلتم الفا مثل احمد محمود. نحن لن نرفع السلاح في وجه احد.

هؤلاء، هؤلاء نسوا وكثير منهم كانوا في الحكومة التي منعت التظاهر في ايلول 93 و اطلق النار علينا وسقط لنا 10 شهداء و 50 جريحا ولم نرفع السلاح في وجه احد. اقول لكم، نحن لسنا بحاجة للسلاح لنهزمكم، لان سلاحنا فقط بوجه الصهاينة. نحن باصواتنا نهزمكم. بدم احمد محمود نهزمكم، باصرارنا على الوحدة وعلى الاخوة وعلى الالفةتز فليسمع العالم و لتعرف، خصوصا، الشعوب العربية التي يحاولون تاليبها على المعارضة اللبنانية بالأكاذيب. هم يقتلوننا ونحن نقول لهم، نحن نريد ان نكون معكم و ان تكونوا معنا، سويا. ايها القتلة. اقول لكم نحن بالدم سننتصر على سيوفكم.

أيها اللبنانيون سمعت وللاسف ان بعض الزعامات الدينية او السياسية تحرض في مجالسها الداخلية و تقول: ان لدى حزب الله 30 الف صاروخ موجه الى بيوتكم. ليس هذا. لم يكن سلوكنا في يوم من الايام. وانا من هنا اقول لهؤلاء الزعامات ولمن يصغي اليهم: من هدمنا له دار في لبنان فلياتي ويطالبنا. من سفكنا له دما في لبنان فلياتي ويطالبنا.

ولكن انتم اللذين تحرقون، كم دمرتم من بيوت وكم قتلتم من انفس وكم سفكتم من دماء. بكل صراحة نحن لا نريد ان نهدد احدا ونحن لن نهدد احدا. ان دم كل لبناني، وانا اريد ان اكد هذا المعنى اليوم. في بعض المناطق يثيرون الكثير من الشائعات وخصوصا في مدينة بيروت ويقولون لهم ان قوى سياسية معينة في المعارضة ذات لون مذهبي تريد ان تهاجم احياكم من اجل استثارة النعرات المذهبية والطائفية. فليسمعني اهل بيروت وكل اللبنانين: ان دم كل لبناني هو دمنا وان عرض كل لبناني هو عرضنا وان مال كل لبناني هو مالنا وان كل بيت لبناتي هو بيتنا. هذا هو الخط الاحمر اللذي نحميه بدمنا لو سفكتموه وهذا هو الخط الاحمر اللذي نحميه برموش عيوننا ولو تامرتم علينا او اردتم جرنا الى الفتنة. نحن لن ننجر الى الفتنة. نحن لن ننجر الى الحرب الاهلية ولا الى الفتنة ولا الى اي شكل من اشكال التقاتل الداخلي.

الحمد الله، اليوم لدينا حماية وطنية حقيقية، هي مؤسسة الجيش اللبناني اللذي اثبت حتى الان بقياداته و ضباطه و رتباءه و جنوده انه جيش كل لبنان. هذه الضمانة يجب ان نحافظ عليها جميعا و يجب ان لا نسمح باي تشرذم او تشقق في داخل مؤسسة الجيش ويجب ان تترفع القوى عن التفكير باستخدام اي ضابط او جنود الجيش اللبناني لمصلحتها لان انهيار الجيش سوف يفقد لبنان مناعته. لقوى الامن الداخلي اقول: يجب ان تثبتوا ، ايضا، انكم مؤسسة وطنية حقيقية، وانكم لا تعملون لمصلحة فريق لبناني على حساب فريق لبناني لكي تشكلوا ايضا الى جانب الجيش ضمانة وطنية حقيقية. ايها الاخوة و الاخوات، عندما نزلتم الى الشارع في يوم الجمعة و اعتصمتم ليلا مساء الجمعة ومساء السبت واحتشدتم يوم الاحد، كيف تعامل معكم الفريق الحاكم، الفريق اللذي يدعي ويتحدث عن الديموقراطية وعن الحريات العامة وعن حق حرية التعبير. كانت حركتكم حضارية واعترف بها كل العالم وكان انضباتكم مدهشا. وانتم دائما تدهشون العالم في الحرب، في السلم، في التظاهر. ماذا فعلوا؟ كيف تصرفوا؟ وههنوا بحشدكم الغير مسبوق. ولكنهم لجؤوا الى الشغب، ارسلوا شللهم المسلحة، وانا يحزنني، البعض يجلس معنا على طاولة الحوار ليناقش سلاحا مقاوما لم يوجه الى الداخل ويريد ان ينزع هذا السلاح. وهو ياتي بالسلاح و يخزن السلاح ويوزع السلاح في اكثر من منطقة واكثر من مكان. ارسلوا شللهم المسلحة لتعترضكم في طريق العودة وتقتل الشهيد احمد محمود وتجرح اخرين. ضاقت صدورهم بالديموقراطية التي يدعون انهم يحافظون عليها. كم وجهوا من تهديدات الى شخصيات المعارضة وخصوصا تلك الشخصيات الوطنية التي تنتمي الى الطائفة السنية الكريمة. الم يرسلوا السيارات والمسلحين لمحاصرة البيوت والاماكن التي تنتسب الى هؤلاء الزعماء و الشخصيات؟ هل هذه هي الديموقراطية، هل هذه هي الحرية؟ لقد تظاهرتم لايام وليالي طويلة وانا اسالكم واسال اللبنانيين واسال العالم في ظل نظام الاجهزة الامنية، كما تسمونها، هل قطع عليكم احد الطريق، في طريق الذهاب او الاياب؟ هل قتل متظاهر لانه ذاهب الى الاعتصام او عائد من الاعتصام. لكن الاخطر فيما يجري اليوم، الاخطر هو التحريض المذهبي. لقد كفوا عن التحريض الطائفي، اليوم ليس هناك حديث عن مسلمين و مسيحيين في لبنان، كل الحديث عن سنة وشيعة في لبنان. قالوا عن الحشد الكبير يوم الجمعة ان هذه المظاهرة شيعية وتجاهلوا المشاركة الكبيرة و العارمة من كل الطوائف ليصوروا وكان المسالة مظاهرة شيعية في مواجهة حكومة سنية. لا المظاهرة شيعية ولا الحكومة سنية.

هذه هي الحقيقة. ثم جاؤوا ليحيدوا حركة امل وليقولوا ان هذه المظاهرة لحزب الله. ثم جاؤا بعد ذلك ليركزوا حملتهم الشديدة على حزب الله وخطابهم الاعلامي المنسق و المتفق عليه، يقولون اعتصام حزب الله وحلفائه. يريدون ان يتجاهلوا بقية قوى المعارضة الحقيقية. على كل حال، خلال الايام الماضية انكشف زيف هذا الادعاء. وان التظاهر والاحتشاد الليلي هو تعبير حقيقي وصادق من كل اطياف المعارضة الوطنية اللبنانية. هذا الشعار المذهبي سقط وسيسقط، ولكنهم يواصلون العمل على اساسه. في كل الادعاءات السابقة في اعلامهم و خطابهم، يستهدفون و يخاطبون الشارع السني في لبنان، و من خلاله ايضا الشارع السني على امتداد العالم العربي والاسلامي ويتصورون انهم بذلك يسيئون الى مكانة حزب الله والى مكانة القوى المشاركة في المعارضة الوطنية اللبنانية. تارة يقولون المعارضة تريد تغير اتفاق الطائف. وهذا افتراء وكذب، واخرى يقولون التظاهر هدفه التغطية على قتلة الرئيس الشهيد رفيق الحريري، ثم يستحضرون العراق وغير العراق، ولااريد ان ادخل في التباسات هذا الاستحضار. و اخر هذه الاكاذيب، ويناقضون انفسهم عندما يقولون: السرايا الحكومي محاصر وفي نفس الوقت يبثون عبر شاشاتهم مشاهد الوفود التي تتقاطر الى السرايا الحكومي. كيف يكون السرايا محاصرا وتاتي كل هذه الوفود.

في كل الاحوال، التحريض المذهبي خطيئة و جريمة تاريخية و دينية وانسانية وسياسية كبرى، واذا اخذت مكانها الطبيعي فانها تحرق الجميع. التحريض المذهبي لعب بالنار. و اليوم انا اطالب بلجنة تحقيق عربية من جامعة الدول العربية او اسلامية من منظمة المؤتمر الاسلامي تاتي الى هنا و تحقق. انا اقول من يحرض مذهبيا او طائفيا هو خائن. وليحققوا من اللذي يقدم اليوم خطابا طائفيا او مذهبيا، من اللذي يوزع البيانات تحلل قتل ابناء هذه الطائفة او

تلك الطائفة. من اللذي يحول الصراع السياسي في لبنان الى صراع مذهبي. ثم يعرفون هم ويعتقدون هذه شهادة لنا، اننا في حزب الله تحديدا وفي بقية المعارضة الوطنية حساسون جدا اتجاه الفتنة الطائفية و حساسون جدا اتجاه الفتنة المذهبية بين السنة و الشيعة. وايضا يحاولون ان ينالوا من حزب الله و يقولون ان مكانتنا في العالم العربي تراجعت.و ينصحوننا، كلهم يوجه النصح لحزب الله ولي شخصيا، و يقولون لا تضيعوا ما جمعتموه، ولا تضيعوا مكانتكم في العالم العربي. العالم العربي يعرف، وحصلنا على هذه المكانة لانه يعرف، اننا اصحاب قضية مقدسة و شريفة ونحن نخدم قضيتنا. نحن لسنا طلاب مناصب ولا طلاب مكانه، ولا طلاب شهرة، حتى في حكومة الوحدة الوطنية المقبلة،نحن لا نطالب بحصة لحزب الله. انني اعلن امامكم بوضوح: ان المقاعد الوزارية التي تعطى لحزب الله في حكومة الوحدة الوطنية سنتخلى عنها ليشارك فيها حلفاؤنا في المعارضة. نحن لسنا طلاب سلطة ولا طلاب منصب، نحناصحاب قضية نفتديها بدمائنا وابنائنا، واقول لهم ليعرفوا من يخاصمون اليوم ومن يواجهون اليوم. نحن قوم لا نخاف من الشتائم و لا من السباب ولا من الاتهامات، فليسمعوني جيدا: نحن نخلص لقضيتنا و شعبنا و امتنا و نقدم من اجلها ابنائنا ودمائنا وارواحنا وماء وجوهنا، لا نفرق عند الواحد منا ان يجلس على العرش او يشيع في نعش.

ثانيا: اخاطب كل لبناني وكل الشعوب العربية و الاسلامية اللذين يتابعون اليوم احداث لبنان بشكل تفصيلي واسالهم لنبحث عن مكانتنا عندهم. هل يرضى اي لبناني او اي عربي ان نسكت او ندعم حكومة يعلن عن دعمها كل يوم جورج بوش وايهود اولمرت؟ هل تقبلون ان ندعم او نسكت عن حكومة ثبت بالدليل القاطع انها لا تملك قرارا وطنيا لبنانيا و انما تخضع لارادة و قرار السفير الامريكي فلتمان و من ورائه كونداليزا رايس؟ نحن نريد حكومة لبنانية وطنية لا تخضع لاي اجنبي كما قلت، سواء كان عدوا او صديقا او شقيقا. هم ليدافعوا عن تسلط و استئثار الفريق الحاكم، يختبئون خلف العنوان المذهبي السني و الشيعي، و يحاولون ان يصوروا للسنة في لبنان وللسنة في العالم، ان المعارضة تستهدف حكومة السنة في لبنان. هذا ليس صحيحا. هذه الحكومةالغير شرعية ليست حكومة السنة في لبنان وليست حكومة وطنية الا اذا تشكلت على اساس حكومة وحدة وطنية، هذه حكومة السفير الامريكي. وانا اقول لكم وليسمع كل العالم واقول صادقا وقد عودتكم على الصدق: لو كانت هذه الحكومة حكومة السنة في لبنان لكنت انا اول المطيعين لهذه الحكومة. فليتوقفوا عن اللعب بالمذهبية، ولو اردتم ان تدخلوا الى الملف الفلسطيني، الى ساحة الصراع، فصفحة قوى المعارضة اللبنانية مشرقة ومضيئة فيما يعني فلسطين. و لكن اين صفحتكم. لو اردتم ان تدخلوا التباسات الموقف في العراق، فانتم تعرفون: نحن اصلا ضد الغزو الامريكي للعراق واعلنا هذا بوضوح، وشتمنا، و لم نهتم للشتائم لان الموقف كان حقا. اما انتم، فادعياء بقاء الاحتلالا الامريكي، وتمدحون هذا الاحتلال وترونه صائبا و تعارضون انهائه و تدعون ادارة بوش الى احتلال سوريا والى احتلال المزيد من الارض العربية و الاسلامية. نحن مع المقاومة في فلسطين، في العراق، في كل مكان يحمل فيه وطني شريف سلاحه من اجل تحرير ارضه من الاحتلال والهيمنة و الوصاية.

لا تخلطوا المسائل ولا تشبهوا الامور على الناس لا تحتجو بموقف فئة شيعية هنا او هناك، كما لا يجوز ان يحتج احد من الشيعة بموقف فئة سنية هنا او هناك. هل يجوز لشيعي ان يقف ويحاسب الاهل الطرام و الاحباء والاخوة، اهل السنة في العالم لان رئيسا عربيا وقع صلحا مع اسرائيل في كامب ديفيد ويحمل اهل السنة مسؤولية صلح كامب ديفيد؟ هل يجوز ان يحمل احد اهل السنة مسؤولية بعض الزعماء اللذين يصافحون الصهاينة ويطبعون مع الصهاينة ويحاصرون الانتفاضة في فلسطين؟ ابدا. الشيعة ليسوا حسابا واحدا، و السنة ليسوا حسابا واحدا وليسوا معسكرا واحدا و ليسوا مشروعا واحدا. في كل بلد هناك شيعة و سنة هنا وهناك، هناك مسلمون هنا و هناك. هناط مسيحيون هنا وهناك. فليحاسب بعضنا الاخر على اساس مواقفه الوطنية و القومية التي تخدم مصالح وطنه ومصالح امته. دعوا هذا الامر جانبا. ولكن من المؤسف و المحزن انه في الايام الاخيرة عمموا على بعضهم البعض واعادوا فتح ملف الحرب الاخيرة في تموز و اب، ليعيدوا تحميل حزب الله مسؤولية الحرب و الدمار و التبعات الاقتصادية والى اخره، و يبدو ان هناك تعميم واضح وتركيز واضح.

انا من اللذين كانوا يحرصون دائما على تاجيل الكلام في هذا الملف لمصلحة اللبنانيين، ولكن ما دمتم تصرون فاسمعوا، قبل ان اشرح و اوضح اقول للمعارضة جميعها و خصوصا للجمهور اللذي يعتبر نفسه معنيا مباشرة بالمقاومة، ما اقوله ليس له عندنا نتائج ولا ردات فعل وسوف يستغرب العالم: كم نحن و انتم اخلاقيون ومتسامحون ومتواضعون وحريصون، ما اقوله لن يغير من الهدف شيئا، وسوف نبقى نقول لهم: تعالوا معا لنشكل حكومة وحدة وطنية، ولكن اسمعوا عن الحرب: انا ادعواالى تشكيل لجنة قضائية لبنانية من قضاة نزيهين او لجنة قضائية عربية من قضاة نزيهين، ولتفتح تحقيقا في مسالة الحرب الاخيرة. هم يتهموننا، ولكن انا اليوم بصراحة ساتهمهم. الذي طلب من امريكا، من جورج بوش وديك تشيني بشكل رسمي ان تشن الحرب على لبنان بدليل ان الحوار حول سلاح

المقاومة باعتقادهم وصل الى طريق مسدود لا امكانية داخلية لبنانية لانتزاع سلاح المقاومة لانها قوية وذات جمهور لبناني عريض من كل الطوائف وهذا ما اكدته استطلاعات الراي العامة، ولان الجيش اللبناني جيش وطني يرفض الصدام مع المقاومة، قالوا لهم لا سبيل لبناني ومحلي لانهاء مسالة المقاومة، الطريق الوحيد هو ان تطلب الادارة الامريكية من حكومة اولمرت ان تشن حربا كبيرة مدمرة قاضية ليس على حزب الله فقط بل على حزب الله وعلى كل الذين يؤيدونه او يحتضنونه حتى لا تبقى لهذه المقاومة باقية ولا تقوم لها حتى في المستقبل قائمة.

الادارة الامريكية قبلت هذا الطلب و ارادت ايضا توظيفه في انتخابات الكونغرس التي جرت بمعنى انه لو نجحت الحرب لجاء بوش والمحافظين الجدد ولقالوا للامريكان ها نحن قضينا على احد اهم التنظيمات الارهابية في العالم، وفي المخطط حضروا لسجن في مستوطنة في شمال فلسطين المحتلة اسمها روشبينا وهي قاعدة عسكرية ايضا و قاعدة جوية تتسع لعشرة الاف سجين. هل هؤلاء السجناء سيكونون فقط من حزب الله، لا، كان السجناء سيكونون من كل من يعارض الفريقالمتسلط الحاكم في لبنان. وقبلت الادارة الامريكية واعطت الامر لاسرائيل. من الذي طلب؟ انا لا اتهم كل فريق 14 أذار، لا اتهم كل الفريق الحاكم، لا اتهم كل الشخصيات، انا لم اكر اسماء امام احد، لا امام صحفي امريكي و لا غير صحفي امريكي، لكن الذين جلسوا مع الامريكين وطلبوا منهم ان تشن اسرائيل علينا الحرب يعرفون انفسهم و انا اعرفهم واتمنى ان لا ياتي يوم من الايام اقول اسمائهم.

الذي يتحمل مسؤولية الحرب في تموز ليست المقاومة التي يعترف لها البيان الوزاري بوضوح بان لها الحق بالعمل من اجل تحرير الارض والاسرى. عندما يعطى هذا الحق للمقاومة، المقاومة، مقاومة وليست وزارة خارجية. المقاومة تحرر الارض والاسرى بالسلاح وليس بالمفاوضات والدبلوماسية. نحن اعطينا الحق في البيان الوزاري و فعلنا بالحق الذي اعطيناه في البيان الوزاري. الذي يتحمل مسؤولية الحرب والدمار هو الذي طلب من امريكا واسرائيل ان تتخذ هذه العملية ذريعة لتشن الحرب على لبنان، وانا اقبل بقضاء محايد ولجنة تحقيق محايدة. ايضا انا في ايام الحرب قلت لكم ان جون بولتون غير المئسوف على رحيله يريد ان يوقع بيننا الفتنة كلبنانيين عندما اعلن عن مفاجاته ان المسؤولين في لبنان قبلوا مسودة المشروع الامريكي الفرنسي ثم تخلفوا عن ذلك، ولكنه كان يقول صدقا. هم قبلوا بمسودة المشروع الامريكي الفرنسي لكن عندما ووجهوا بالرفض الوطني في لبنان عدلوا عن ذلك. قلت لكم ايام الحرب ان اولمرت يريد ان يوقع بيننا ولكن لم اقل لكم لكم انه يكذب، استعملت عبارة حمالة اوجه. عندما كان يقول ان جهات في الحكومة اللبنانية تتصل بنا وتصر علينا ان نواصل القتال، هذا الكلام من اولمرت صحيح ونحن نعرف من هؤلاء، وارجوا ان لا ياتي اليوم الذي اذكر فيه اسماءهم امام العالم.

انا اخاطبكم من هنا وبجواركم رئيس الحكومة الفاقدة للشرعية. انا اساله و الشهود كلهم ما زالوا احياء، اساله يا دولة الرئيس: في وسط الحرب عندما دمر الصهاينة بالغارات الجوية كل الجسور والطرق و المعابر من اجل قطع خطوط امداد المقاومة في الجنوب، وهم ما ضربوا الجسور من اجل الجسور ولا الطرقات من اجل الطرقات وانما كانوا يريدون قطع خطوط الامداد للمقاومة وفشلوا وبقى الامداد مستمرا حتى اخر يوم ولم يتوقف. اساله: الم تامر انت يا دولة الرئيس الجيش اللبناني بمصادرة سلاح المقاومة الذي ينقل الى الجنوب ام لا؟ هل يقبل لبناني سواء كان مسلما ام مسيحيا، هل يقبل لبناني سواء كان سنيا او شيعيا او درزيا ان يحصل هذا في ايام الحرب؟ هل يقبل اي عربي سواء كان مسلما او مسيحيا سنيا او شيعيا ان يعمل رئيس حكومة لبنان على قطع خطوط الامداد للمقاومة التي كانت تخوض معركة الدفاع عن لبنان وعن الامة؟ فقط لانه سني يجب ان اسكت عنه لو كان شيعيا لذكرته منذ اليوم الاول. سوف يخرج غدا رئيس الحكومة الساقطة شعبيا ليقول: السيد حسن يتجنى علي. انا اقبل بلجنة تحقيق والشهود احياء، من ارسلتهم ليتوسطوا لديه في الليل من اجل ان يجمد هذا القرار، ما زالوا على قيد الحياة. ولكن الاهم والاخطر، نحن في لبنان ندفع الضرائب للحكومة وهي بدورها تدفع رواتب الموظفين في المؤسسات العسكرية والامنية و المدنية و تدفع الموازانات وتشتري التجهيزات، من المفترض ان الاموال التي يدفعها الشعب اللبناني و تبني بها اجهزة امنية ان تبني الاجهزة الامنية لحماية اللبنانيين وحماية امنهم وممتلكاتهم والدفاع عنهم، في الحرب كان من المفترض ان تعمل الاجهزة الامنية التابعة للفريق الحاكم على ملاحقة الجواسيس و الشبكات الاسرتئيلية التي كانت تقدم المعلومات للاسرائيليين ليقوموا بالقصف، ولكن للاسف الشديد اقول لكم،وانا حاضر ايضا للجنة تحقيق مستقلة ومحايدة، ان احد الاجهزة الامنية الرسمية التابع للفريق الحاكم كان يعمل في فترة الحرب للبحث عن اماكن قيادات حزب الله لتشخيصها، وقد عملت مجموعة من هذا الجهاز الامني الرسمي للاسف الشديد لتحديد المكان الذي كنت اتواجد فيه انا شخصيا اثناء مرحلة الحرب.

اكتفي بهذا المقدار عن الحرب، ولو اردت ان استمر سواء قبل الاخوة والرفاق في المعارضة او لم يقبلوا، لو لم نكن حريصين على هذا الوطن، لو لم نكن مدركين للحساسيات المذهبية و الطائفية لوقفت في الرابع عشر من اب ليس لاتحدث عن حكومة وحدة وطنية وانما لاتحدث عن خونة يجب ان يحاكموا في لبنان. لكن مع كل الذي قلته لكم، وهنا يتفاجا العالم وتتفاجئون، نحن ابناء هذه القيم مهذه الثقافة ثقافة الحرص على الوحدة، ثقافة التسامح و ثقافة المحبة، انا اسامحهم واذا ارادوا ان يحاسوني انا جاهز للحساب. اليوم وايضا حرصا على الحساسيات المذهبية، قبل اشهر اعتقلت مجموعة للاسف انها كانت تنتمي الى جهة اصولية سنية وكانت تخطط لاغتيالي، وقام الكثيرون من عمائم وغير عمائم وطعنوا في هذه المسالة وانا سامحتهم، وقلت انني اسقط حقي. ما زالوا في السجن امام القضاء الذي لم يحسم مسالتهم حتى الان ولا اعرف لماذا، ولكن انا اطلب من القضاء اللبناني ان يطلق اعضاء هذه المجموعة التي كانت تخطط لاغتيالي وان تعيدهم الى بيوتهم في بيروت وفي الطريق الجديدة وسامحهم الله جميعا. مجددا اخاطبهم، اخاطب الفريق الحاكم المستاثر: لن تستطيعوا ان ترهبونا بالشغب ولن تستطيعوا ان تمنعوا الناس من المجئ الى ساحتي رياض الصلح و الشهداء، لن تستطيعوا جرنا الى الفتنة المذهبية، لن تسمعوا صرخة استسلام ولا ضعف ولا وهن لان مطالبنا محقة. ما زلنا نقول لكم، تعالوا لنقيم حكومة وحدة وطنية، واقول لكم: الوقت لا يلعب لمصلحتكم، ابدا، فهذا سيدكم في البيت الابيض ترتجف اعصابه ويتهاوى في كل مكان. تعالوا لنعود الى بعضنا البعض كلبنانيين، لا مكان للعناد، الفرصة ما زالت متاحة وابواب التفاوض ما زالت قائمة ولا زلنا نقبل في المعارضة، لم نقل ان مطلبنا الوحيد هو اسقاط الحكومة، قلنا تعالوا نحول الحكومة الحالية الى حكومة وحدة وطنية، الحكومة التي يراسها فؤاد السنيورة، ولكم فيها الاغلبية وللمعارضة ثلث ضامن من اجل ان نضمن لبنان. لكن اذا اصريتم على العناد ورفضتم، نحن الان في المعارضة بدانا ندرس خيارا اخرا، بعد مدة لن نقبل حكومة وطنية يراسها اجد منكم. بعد مدة لن نقبل سيتحول هدفنا الى اسقاط هذه الحكومة وتشكيل حكومة انتقالية تجري انتخابات نيابية مبكرة وانتم تعرفون لمن الاكثرية ولمن الغلبة. في انتخابات 2005 اخذتم الاكثرية على عجل بقانون ظالم وبتحالفات المخادعة، في الانتخابات المقبلة لن يكون مكان للخداع لان المؤمن لا يلدغ من جحر مرتين. بعد الانتخابات المبكرة ستكون المعارضة اكثرية وستشكل حكومتها وسيرأس حكومتها شخصية سنية وطنية شريفة نظيفة نزيهة يعرف العالم كله نزاهتها. وهؤلاء السنة الوطنيون في لبنان كثر القادرون على تحمل مواقع قيادية من هذا النوع. ولكن لن نلغيكم ولن نشطبكم، سنعطيكم في الحد الادنى، انا اوافق ان نعطيكم الثلث الضامن ونشارككم لاننا نؤمن ان لبنان بلد الشراكة والمشاركة والتوافق والتعاون.

ايها الاخوة والاخوات، لتعبير عن استمرارنا في هذا التحرك السلمي الحضاري، انا ادعوكم الليلة، يعني في هذا النداء وفي هذا الخطاب. طبعا، ادعوا المسلمين بالتحديد للمشاركة غدا في صلاة الجمعة التي ستقام في ساحاتكم ، ساحات الشرف والمقاومة السياسية الحقيقية وليس المزيفة او المدعاة. ادعوكم الى المشاركة في صلاة الجمعة التي ستعبر عن وحدتنا وتلاحمنا في وجه كل اشكال الفتنة و التفرقة بامامة سماحة العلامة الشيخ الدكتور فتحي يكن. واقول للمصلين من المسلمين الشيعة، باعتبار اننا عادة نصلي الظهر غالبا، ان صلاة الجمعة هذه تجزئكم عن صلاة الظهر ويمكنكم بعدها ان تصلوا صلاة العصر وتكفيكم. هذا تفصيل فقهي على كل حال. ادعوكم وادعوا كل من يستمع الى اوسع مشاركة في صلاة الجمعة هذه لانها عبادة لله الواحد الاحد، لانها تعبير نريد ان نوجهه لكل اولئك الذين يتربصون بنا. من اجل الفتنة والتفرقة والتصارع. قد تجدون ارضا للفتنة و الحرب الاهلية في مكان ما في العالم. لكن في لبنان لن، لن يكون هناك قتال بين الشيعة والسنة. والامر الثاني، ادعوكم وادعوا كل المشاهدين والمستمعين الي، المشاركة في الحشد الجماهيري الكبير يوم الاحد في الساعة 3 عصرا لتجديد التعبير عن الموقف و لتاكيد الحضور الشعبي والاصرار الشعبي للمعارضة الوطنية اللبنانية و نقول لهم في كل ليلة سنقول لهم الاحد عصرا سيسمعوننا في كل قصور الفريق الحاكم من الساحات، من بيوت الفقراء من الاكواخ من الخيم من البيوت المهدمة من احياء المهاجرين بالفقر والهجرين بالحرب. سنسمعهم صوتنا في المعارضة الوطنية اللبنانية لن نستسلم سوف نبقى في الساحات سنبقى في الساحات حتى نقيم حكومة الوحدة الوطنية اللبنانية الضامنة للبنان لكل اللبنانيين، المنقذة للبنان، المدافعة عن لبنان التي تعالج ازماته الاقتصادية و السياسية والاجتماعية. لنسمعهم باننا مصرون على الهدف وسنواصل الطريق مهما كانت التضحيات. ايها الاخوة و الاخوات، من كل الطوائف، من كل المذاهب، من كل الاحزاب، من كل التيارات. انتم منتصرون حكما. وكما قلت لكم في الدعوى، كما كنت اعدكم بالنصر دائما، اعدكم بالنصر مجددا. هم يواصلون حرب تموز واب ونحن نواصل معركتنا في الدفاع عن هوية لبنان ووحدة لبنان وسلامة لبنان. عشتم جميعا، طاب ثرى الشهيد احمد محمود، طاب ثرى شهدائكم. عشتم وعاش لبنان و السلام عليكم.

الخطاب الثالث

في حفل تخريج طلاب الجامعة في 15/5/2009

أعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم والحمد لله رب العالمين والصلاة والسلام على أشرف الخلق وأعز المرسلين سيدنا ونبينا وحبيب قلوبنا أبي القاسم محمد بن عبد الله وعلى آله الطيبين الطاهرين وأصحابه المنتجبين.
السلام عليكم رحمة الله وبركاته. في هذا الحفل المبارك و في هذا الزمان بالتحديد تتعدد العناوين والقضايا، ولكنني في هذا الحفل بمناسبته وطبيعته، اود ان اتحدث في اتجاه معين.

هناك قضايا على درجة عالية من الاهمية سوف اتحدث عنها يوم الاثنين ليلا ان شاء الله ,عبر شاشة المنار, في مناسبة النكبة ,التي حلت بهذه الامة عندما وقعت فلسطين فريسة الاحتلال والاغتصاب. والحديث عن النكبة والمناورات الاسرائيلية وواجباتنا تجاهها، الحديث عن الشبكات الاسرائيلية في لبنان وكل ما يرتبط بهذا الشأن الاسرائيلي لن اتحدث عنه اليوم, وانما اتركه الى يوم الاثنين كما وعدت سابقا. وطبيعة هذا الحديث في موضوع النكبة , في موضوع المناورات, في موضوع الشبكات هو اقرب للحديث في رسالة تلفزيونية منه في احتفال جماهيري، لأنني أريد اليوم ان اتحدث اليكم وان اخطب فيكم ليس على طريقة الرسالة التلفزيونية, فالكثيرون ينظرون إلى الرسالة التلفزيونية ويقولون السيد "كتير رايق", لكن عندما اخطب يقولون "السيد معصب"، لا حين أخطب أكون معصبا ولا في الرسالة التلفزيونية أكون "رايق"، لكل مقام مقال. طبيعة الرسالة التلفزيونية تختلف عن الخطاب في حشد جماهيري.

اليوم أريد ان أتحدث عنكم، عن دفعة الرضوان,عن الاخوة والاخوات والاهل، وعن لبنان عن الشأن اللبناني ونحن في مرحلة مهمة جدا، فيما يرتبط بالانتخابات ,وأنهي الحديث في وقفة لا بد منها عن 17 ايار وعن 7 ايار.
أولا أود أن أتوجه بالتبريك الى جميع الاخوة والأخوات الخريجين الذين نحتفي بهم اليوم. ابارك لهم نجاحهم , ابارك لهم انجازهم العلمي الذي كان حصيلة عزم وإرادة ونية وجدية ودأب وتعب وجهد وجهاد، والجلوس على مقاعد الدراسة,في فهمنا الاسلامي الديني ,هو جهاد في سبيل الله عز وجل,وان الملائكة وكما جاء في بعض الاحاديث الشريفة ,لتضع اجنحتها لطالب العلم. وأعلن باسم اخواني واخواتكم في مسيرة حزب الله,افتخارنا بكم واود ان اتوجه بالشكر والتقدير العاليين,الى الاهل الكرام الآباء والامهات كما في كل حفل تخرج ,الآباء والامهات ,الذين اصروا ودعموا مواصلة ابنائهم وبناتهم,للتحصيل العلمي ,في المراحل الجامعية والتخصصية وتحملوا أعباء هذا القرار, ونحن نعرف ان الاغلبية الساحقة من اللبنانيين ومن العائلات اللبنانية تعيش شظف العيش وعلى خط الفقر وكثير منهم تحت خط الفقر, مع ذلك نجد ان الآباء والامهات يبذلون جهودا ويتحملون الكثير من الاعباء والتبعات ليوفروا لأبنائهم فرصة التعلم والتخصص, وفرصة الصناعة الحقيقية للمستقبل. انا انحني اجلالا أمام الآباء والامهات المجاهدين في سبيل الله ايضا لان الكاد على عياله كالمجاهد في سبيل الله، والكد على العيال ليس من اجل ملء بطونهم إبعادا عن الجوع, وانما الكاد على عياله ليطعمهم وليعلمهم وليرفع شأنهم وليبني لهم دنياهم ويصون لهم آخرتهم مجاهد في سبيل الله. هناك شريحة يجب ان اتوجه لها بالشكر, عادة لا يتم الالتفات اليها هي شريحة الازواج لانه والحمد لله ان هناك ظاهرة واضحة ولذلك هذا يمكن ان يفسر جوانبه ان عدد الاخوات اكبر من عدد الاخوة 'هناك شريحة في ظاهرة جيدة انه حتى بعد الزواج ,الكثير من الازواج يسمحون لزوجاتهم ان يواصلوا الدراسة , وطبعا الزوجة التي تواصل الدراسة الجامعية ,هذا امر يرتب نوع من الاعباء ,على الزوج وعلى البيت لكننا الحمد لله تعالى, نجد ان هذه الظاهرة

تنتشر وتكبر في محيطنا وفي بيئتنا وهي ظاهرة طيبة جدا ,كذلك الزوجات اللاتي يساعدنا ازواجهن على المضي في الدراسة بالرغم من تكوين البيت الزوجي، هذا التعاون والتحمل المشترك يؤدي الى نتائج طيبة من هذا النوع ,ولذلك انا اريد ان اخصص اليوم شكرا خاصا للازواج الذين سهلوا لازواجهم او زوجاتهن, فرصة مواصلة الدراسة والتحصيل العلمي ,بالرغم من كل التبعات المترتبة على ذلك.

ايها الاخوة والاخوات , تحمل دفعتكم اسم الرضوان ,اسم الشهيد القائد الحبيب الحاج عماد مغنية الحاج رضوان رحمة الله عليه. وانا هنا اريد ان أشير الى امر لا يعرفه الكثير من الناس, وهو ان الحاج رحمة الله عليه, طوال توليه المسؤولية الجهادية والقيادية الملقاة عليه كان دائما يشجع الاخوة المجاهدين ,الذين يعملون تحت إمرته, على ان لا يتركوا الدراسة, وكان يحمل هذا الهم وانا اعرف انه سعى وكان يسعى دائما لتأمين الامكانات المالية والتسهيلات التنظمية لتواصل اعداد كبيرة من اخواننا واخواتنا فرص التحصيل الجامعي وهذا ليس مجرد رغبة شخصية وانما كان مبنيا على رؤية استراتيجية, هذه الرؤية التي جسدتها المقاومة , وحركة المقاومة ,لان مقاومتنا ايها الاخوة والاخوات , مند انطلاقتها الى اليوم , صحيح كانت مقاومة العلم والايمان ومقاومة الارادة والعزم ,والتصميم والتضحية , ولكنها ايضا كانت مقاومة العلم والمعرفة والتخصص والعقول الذكية, هذا ما اعترف لنا به أعداؤنا في ساحات المعركة وفي اكثر من ميدان , في المواجهة ,وفي الحرب الامنية والنفسية ,والقتال العسكري, وفي تطوير الامكانات وفي تطوير التكتيكات ,وصولا الى تكوين مدرسة عسكرية قتالية خاصة لا شرقية ولا غربية وانما مدرسة المقاومة الاسلامية في لبنان التي صنعها مجاهدون من لبنان. ولذلك، فان حملكم لهذا العنوان، هو عز لكم ,وفخر لكم , كما ان القائد رضوان في عليائه يعتز بكم ويفتخر بكم عندما تعلنون اسمه وتواصلون دربه وتجددون العهد مع دمه الطاهر وكل الشهداء الذين مضوا.

ايها الاخوة والاخوات هذا العدد الكبير من المتخرجين والمتخرجات,من قلب هذه المسيرة المؤمنة المجاهدة, يقدم اليوم للبنان وللعالم وجها من الوجوه الحقيقية لهذه المسيرة , وجها مشرقا من الوجوه المشرقة التي تعبر عن مسيرة المقاومة في لبنان وعن ايمانها وعن انسانيتها وعن وطنيتها وعن صدقها وإخلاصها، وعن جدها واجتهادها، وعن علمها وعملها، وعن سعيها وأملها الكبير بالمستقبل المؤمن، انتم تقدمون اليوم للعالم صورة المؤمن الذي لا يقعده الفقر والفاقة والحرمان عن طلب العلم وعن النجاح وعن التقدم، وصورة المؤمن الذي لا تقعده القلة، لا قلة العدد ولا قلة الناصر ولا ضعف العدة عن الجهاد والمقاومة طلباً للكرامة والحرية، وصورة المؤمن الذي أقصى ما يتطلع إليه هو تحقيق العدل بين الناس والابتسامة التي يحلم أن ترتفع على شفاه الناس جميعا، والبهجة التي يحلم أن تغمر قلوب الناس جميعا، وهذا كان هدف الأنبياء طوال التاريخ.
أنتم اليوم أيضا تقدمون مشهدا قويا ورسالة واضحة لكل أولئك الذين يشككون بقدرة قوى المعارضة على إدارة لبنان في كل المجالات وفي كل الاختصاصات، ويراهنون على فشل قوى المعارضة في إدارة شؤون البلد، ويقولون إذا فازت المعارضة بالأكثرية لا نريد أن نشاركها، ليس زهداً ولا تعفاف، وإنما مراهنة على الفشل، أقول لكل أولئك المراهنين، نحن نحب أن تشاركونا لأننا دعاة شراكة، ولكن لو أردتم أن لا تشاركونا إن فزنا بالأكثرية فلن نتوسل إليكم، وإذا كنتم تراهنون على فشلنا أو فشل المعارضة، الجواب هو فقط، وهذه حفلة من الحفلات ومرحلة من المراحل، 2883 خريجا وخريجة في كل الاختصاصات، أقول لكم إن العقول والقلوب والنفوس والإرادات والعزائم التي هزمت أقوى جيش وأقوى دولة في هذه المنطقة يدعمها أقوى جبار في هذا العالم هي أقدر على أن تدير بلد مئة مرة أكبر من لبنان. هناك أناس يتهموننا أننا نريد أن نقيم أمبراطورية في المنطقة فهل سيعصى علينا 10452 كلم مربع.
وكما استطعنا بعقول لبنانية وقلوب لبنانية وإرادات لبنانية وتضحيات لبنانية أن نحرر أرضنا وأسرانا وأن نحمي بلدنا، نحن قادرون إن شاء الله بل الأقدر إن شاء الله على أن نبني بلدنا ووطننا وأن نعلي البنيان.

اليوم، أتوجه إليكم لأقول، نعم، نحن معنيون بمرحلة جديدة ويجب ان نتحمل فيها المسؤولية كاملة وليس من بعيد ولا مجانبة، مسؤولية ان نبني بلدنا أن نبني وطننا وان نبني الدولة القوية العادلة لان القوة بلا عدل خراب وديكتاتورية ومدعاة ظلم، ولأن العدل بلا قوة لا حامي له ولا منفذ له. نحن نتطلع الى لبنان وطناً لجميع أبنائه وعائلاته، متساويين في الحقوق والواجبات، وطن فيه شعب واحد ودولة واحدة، شعب واحد هو الشعب اللبناني ويجب أن نتخلص في العلن وفي السر عن أي حديث عن شعوب لبنانية، نحن شعب لبناني واحد وليس لدينا عقدة من الحديث عن تعددية حضارية أو ثقافية.في الماضي كان بعض النخب والمثقفين والمفكرين يقومون بسجالات طويلة هل أن ما عندنا هو تعدد أو تنوع؟ لا خلاف في الاصطلاح، أساسا التعدد أو التنوع الثقافي والحضاري والديني والفكري هو نعمة ورحمة ويمكن أن نحوله بأيدينا إلى أهم عنصر من عناصر القوة في وطننا وفي العالم أيضا انطلاقا من وطننا.

نحن شعب واحد في ارض واحدة نتكلم لغة واحدة ولدينا مصالح واحدة في الامن والاستقرار والحرية والسيادة والاستقلال والرفاه الاجتماعي والعلم والتربية والاقتصاد والمال وكل شأن حياتي كأفراد وعائلات وأحزاب وفئات وطوائف ومناطق، نحن مصالحنا واحدة في العمق، قد نختلف في التعبير عن هذه المصالح أو في تشخيص هذه المصالح، ونحن شعب واحد يجب أن ننتهي فيه من روح النوعية والكمية، اليوم، العلم عندنا عابر للطوائف، والفقر عندنا عبر للطوائف، والشرف والكرامة عندنا عابرة للطوائف، والعمالة والخيانة للأسف الشديد أيضا عابرة للطوائف. يجب أن ننتهي من مقولة النوعية والكمية وأن ننظر إلى شعبنا على أنه شعب واحد، وإن كان هناك من تمزقات معينة أو افتراقات حادة معينة، يجب أن نعمل جميعاً بالتضافر والتعاون من أجل معالجة هذه الافتراقات أو التمزقات.

نتطلع الى لبنان بلداً واحداً، أرضا واحدة، كما تحدثت عن وحدة الشعب، وحدة الأرض ووحدة الدولة، ولذلك نحن في حزب الله دائما رفضنا تقسيم لبنان وسنقاوم أي فكرة عن تقسيم لبنان قد تخطر في بال أحد اليوم أو في المستقبل. والحمد لله الآن بعد فشل كل مشاريع التقسيم والرهانات الإقليمية والدولية أن هناك من يفكر بالتقسيم، ولكن أقول لكم بصراحة، هناك صنو للتقسيم ما زال يدغدغ عقول بعض الجهات السياسية في لبنان، وأنا أعلم أن هذه ليست مجرد أحلام وإنما آمال يتحدث عنها في بعض المجالس الخاصة والداخلية ويخطط للوصول اليها، وهي موضوع الفدرالية، هذا لن يكون له مجال في لبنان، نحن نريد لبنان بلدا واحدا شعبا واحدا أرضا واحدة ودولة واحدة ونظاما واحدا، ولبنان لا يتحمل أي صيغة من صيغ الفيدرالية التي لا نرى فيهاإلا خطوة على طريق التقسيم. من الجميل أن بعض الذين يتهموننا بالمثالثة هم يعملون من أجل الفدرالية.

أيضاً نتطلع إلى لبنان وطناً لبنانياً بامتياز ولكن بلا عنصرية، بلا أحاسيس تفوق عنصري ليس لها أساس لا من عقل ولا من قانون ولا من قيم تجاه المحيط الذي نعيش فيه، وبالتحديد تجاه المحيط العربي، أو اتجاهه بعضنا البعض، ليأتي بعضنا ويصنف نفسه لبنانياً أكثر من الآخر.

نتطلع إلى لبنان وطناً عربي الانتماء، عربياً، ولكن بدون عصبية، لأن العنصرية والعصبية جاهلية لا تنتمي إلى العقل والدين والمعرفة والانسانية بصلة.

فيما يعني الدولة والنظام، في كثير من هذه العناوين، لا أعتقد أن اللبنانيين لديهم خلاف حولها، ولكنهم قد يختلفون في ترجمتها أو في وسائل وطرق تحقيقها. نحن في النظام السياسي طرحنا في برنامجنا أننا ندعوا ، كما ورد في اتفاق الطائف، إلى تشكيل الهيئة الوطنية العليا لإلغاء الطائفية السياسية. نحن كنا دقيقين في برنامجنا السياسي الانتخابي، لم نقل في البرنامج اننا نريد الغاء الطائفية السياسية، هناك شيء في الطائف لم يتقرب إليه أحد بعد، اسمه تشكيل هيئة وطنية عليا لإلغاء الطائفية السياسية، ما نطالب به هو تشكيل هذه الهيئة العليا التي عليها ان تجلس وتدرس، بغض النظر عن الوقت الذي تحتاجه ولو طال لسنوات، ما اذا كنا نريد ان نستمر بالصيغة الطائفية؟ إذا كانت النتيجة الاستمرار، فلنستمر وحينئذ هناك بعض التطوير والتحسين والمعالجات يمكن مناقشتها والتوافق حولها، أما إذا وصلنا إلى نتائج في الهيئة الوطنية العليا لإلغاء الطائفية السياسية أنّنا يجب أن نلغي الطائفية من نظامنا حينئذ نضع خطة لإلغاء الطائفية وتنظيم البديل الذي ينبغي أن نتوافق عليه، في هذه النقطة بالتحديد نحن لا ندعو إلى أي استعجال، كما أننا لا ندعو إلى فرض خيارات لبعض اللبنانيين على البعض الآخر وإنما أي تعديل جوهري في النظام يجب أن يقوم على اساس حوار وطني ونقاش وطني حقيقي وعميق وتوافق وطني جدي، لأنّ الإستعجال أو التعاطي بغلبة إرادة على إرادات فيما يتعلق بجوهر النظام قد تكون تداعياته ونتائجه أخطر بكثير من بقاء النظام بصيغته الحالية وبرغم كل السلبيات التي نتفق عليها، هذه نقطة.

نقطة أخرى، نحن نتطلع إلى دولة واحدة، وأنا لا أريد أنّ أدافع عن حزب الله، أنا أؤكد لكم أننا منذ تأسيسنا ندعم قيام دولة واحدة، ولذلك وعلى مدى كل السنين الماضية لم نمارس أي سلطة فيما يسمى، بين هلالين، مناطق النفوذ، حتى بعد تحرير الشريط الحدودي، أنا وقفت في مدينة بنت جبيل في مثل الأيام القادمة وقلت نحن لسنا بديلا عن الدولة وعن السلطة، ليس لدينا قضاء ولا نريد أن نحاسب الناس حتى العملاء الذين قتلونا وسفكوا دماءنا وظلمونا وسجنونا وجلدوا ظهورنا وهدموا بيوتنا، (تركناهم لكي) تحاسبهم الدولة اللبنانية. ولكن نحن لم نعرض أنفسنا في يوم من الايام لا دولة ولا سلطة، فيما في تاريخ العقود الثلاثة الماضية غيرنا مِمَّن يزايد علينا بالحديث عن الدولة الواحدة مارس الدولة ومارس الكانتون ومارس السلطة المحلية ونحن لم نفعل ذلك في يوم من الأيام،والآن نحن لا نفعل ذلك في أي منطقة من المناطق بالرغم من كل التشويه الإعلامي الذي يطال بعض المناطق وخصوصا الضاحية الجنوبية.

نحن مع الدولة الواحدة الدولة المقتدرة والدولة التي لديها حكومة قوية ومجلس نيابي قوي ولائق ومناسب ومعبر عن إرادات الشعب اللبناني، وسلطة قضائية مستقلة وقوية وجيش قوي وأجهزة أمنية قوية، وفي هذا لا نختلف مع الآخرين، نعم هناك نقطة هي نقطة الخلاف مع الآخرين هي مسألة المقاومة وسلاح المقاومة والإستراتيجية الدفاعية وهذه نقطة يوجد فيها الكثير من الجدال والنقاش ولكن نحن لا زلنا لا نرى وسنناقش هذا الأمر وما زلنا نناقش هذا الأمر، وبالنظر إلى كل ما يجري حولنا من تطورات نقول ليس هناك أي منافات بين أنّ يكون للبنان مقاومة قوية ودولة قوية، والدولة القوية هي التي يمكن أن توصل لبنان إلى المرحلة التي تقول فيها حتى للمقاومة هناك دولة قادرة على حماية أرضها وشعبها وأمنها واستقرارها وأنتم أيّها المقاومة عودوا إلى مقاعد دراستكم وعودوا إلى مصانعكم وحقولكم وإلى حياتكم الطبيعية، وهذا هو الطريق الطبيعي.

في هذا السياق أيضا، نحن نتطلع إلى دولة تمارس إصلاحا إداريا حقيقا، إدارة جيدة فاعلة منتجة بعيدة عن الفساد والرشوة، ندعو إلى تطبيق نظام اللامركزية الإدارية كما ورد في اتفاق الطائف، ندعو إلى قانون انتخاب عصري يتيح أفضل تمثيل لشرائح الناس ونحن قلبا وقالبا مع قانون يعتمد على التمثيل النسبي، نحن ندعو إلى دولة قادرة على معالجة الأزمات الإجتماعية والمعيشية وتعطي هذه الأزمات أولوية حقيقية وجدية وليس كما كنا نشهد خلال كل السنوات الماضية، ندعو على دولة صادقة في مسألة الإنماء المتوازن، والذي نعتقد أنّ شرطه الطبيعي هو إعادة العمل بوزارة للتخطيط تضع قدرات وإمكانات وحاجيات لبنان في نظرة شاملة واحدة وتخطط بنظرة واحدة وتضع آليات تنفيذ تراعي هذا التوازن الكمي والنوعي، ولذلك اقول للإخوة والأخوان الخريجين أنتم أمام تحدٍ سوق العمل وتحدي فرص العمل والإستفادة من الشهادات والإختصاصات التي حصلتم عليها، أمامنا طريقان : الطريق الشخصي والجزئي هو أن يفكر كل واحد منا كيف يوفر وظيفة لولده أو ابنته من خلال جمعية أو مؤسسة أو زعيم أو حزب أو جهة، والطريقة الأخرى هي أن تكون لدينا حكومة في المستقبل القريب تضع نصب عينيها آلام وجوع وفقر الناس ومشكلة البطالة، "ومش نقضيها اربع خمس سنين" بصراع سياسي على عناوين هم كانوا يعرفون من البداية أنه لو استخدموا كل الوسائل السياسية والأمنية والعسكرية والإعلامية سيفشلون في تحقيق أيٍّ منها.

نتطلع أن نساعد في إيجاد حكومة جادة ومخلصة وصادقة وحكومة من سنخ الناس ومن بينهم ومن جوعهم ومن حرمانهم حتى تضع حلولا جادة وصادقة في المسألة الإنمائية والإجتماعية والمالية والإقتصادية وفي مسألة العمل، أيضا نتطلع إلى سلطة قضائية قوية ومستقلة عن سياسيين وعن كل المواقع السياسية الرسمية وغير الرسمية. ما هو موجود لدينا في لبنان ليس سلطة قضائية حتى لو مجلس القضاء الأعلى يقول هذا، ليس لدينا سلطة قضائية على الإطلاق، لدينا قضاة فيهم النزيه الآدمي وفيهم الفاسد، فيهم الحر المستقل بضميره وقراره وفيهم المرتهن والتابع، وإلاّ عودا على بدء، قولي لي ما هي صورة القضاء الذي يعاقب عملاء الصهاينة الذين عملوا وتعاملوا مع إسرائيل لعشرات السنين وارتكبوا بحق وطنهم الخيانة العظمي ما هو هذا القضاء ومن هو هذا القضاء الذي يشهر هؤلاء شهر أو ستة أشهر أو سنة ثمّ يطلق سراحهم ليعود بعضهم إلى شبكات التجسس، ومن هو هذا القضاء الذي يزج بأربع ضباط كبار ثلاث سنوات وثمانية أشهر في السجن بلا تحقيق وبلا دليل هل هذا قضاء مستقل أو نزيه؟ هذا عيب أن من يتعامل مع إسرائيل سنوات طويلة يدخل السجن شهرين أو اثنين أو ثلاثة ويخرج، ونحن منذ البداية تعهدنا أن نسلّم هؤلاء إلى القضاء اللبناني ولم نفعل كما فعلته أي مقاومة في التاريخ، كل مقاومات التاريخ أقامت محاكما ميدانية وعاقبت العملاء والخونة من أبناء وطنها إلاّ المقاومة في لبنان، وأنا قلت في تلك الأيام للسفير الفرنسي بعد زيارة جوسبان لفلسطين المحتلة وما جرى عليه في جامعة بير زيت، عندما وصف حزب الله بأنه حزب ارهابي وبعد ذلك بأشهر قليلة حصل التحرير وكنت قد قرأت عن المقاومة الفرنسية، قلت للسفير الفرنسي في ذلك الوقت أبلغ رئيس حكومتك سلامي وقل له أنّ مقاومتنا في لبنان أكثر حضارية وإنسانية وأخلاقية من المقاومة الفرنسية، لأنكم أقمتم محاكما ميدانية وبدون محاكمات أحيانا قتلتم عشرة آلاف عميل فرنسي بتهمة التعاون مع الجيش النازي ونحن لم نقتل حتى دجاجة من جيش انطوان لحد.

وثقنا بالدولة والقضاء، وهنا قد يخرج أحد من 14 آذار ليقول هذا القضاء كان بزمن الوصاية والإدارة السورية، القضاء في أي زمن وهذا القضاء في هذا الزمن في وصايتكم يتصرف نفس الأمر، سلمنا العملاء للقضاء وتعهدنا أن نقبل بحكم القضاء اللبناني وأن لا نمس بهؤلاء العملاء، وكثيرا منهم عادوا إلى قراهم وبيوتهم، وأنا أقول لكم الآن نحن عند تعهدنا ولا يجوز أن يمس أحد بأحد من هؤلاء إلاّ إذا ثبت تورطه بالوسائل المعتمدة. نحن نتطلع إلى سلطة قضائية حقيقية مستقلة قوية تحكم بالعدل وتطبق القانون وهذا ما نتطلع إليه.

نحن من دعاة الشراكة في السلطة وتعاون مختلف مكونات أو ممثلي مكونات الشعب اللبناني في إدارة شؤون البلد، ولذلك نحن من دعاة حكومة الوحدة الوطنية وهذه التجربة ليست فاشلة، هم يعملون على تقديمها كتجربة فاشلة، إمّا أن تخضع لإرادتهم أو تكون الحكومة فاشلة وهذه المعادلة التي يعملون عليها هذه الأيام. هذه الحكومة حكومة وحدة وطنية إذا تصرفت الأطراف بقناعة وإخلاص لن تكون حكومة فاشلة بل هي الأفضل للبنان، لأنّ أي حكومة تتجاهل مكونات أساسية من الشعب اللبناني تحت عنوان أننا حصلنا على أغلبية بنصف زائد نائب أو نائبين هذا لا يصلح في لبنان لا من قبل المعارضة ولا من قبل الموالاة، إذا كنّا جميعا نقول أنّ للبنان خصوصية يجب أن نعمل بمستلزمات هذه الخصوصية، وإذا لم يكن فيه خصوصية فلنذهب من الآن لنناقش، تريدون ديموقراطية فلتكن ديموقراطية كاملة وأفضل صيغة للديموقراطية الكاملة التي يمكن أن تؤدي إلى حكم ديموقراطي في لبنان هو أن ينبثق مجلس نيابي عن انتخابات ديموقراطية على أساس قانون انتخابات نسبي يكون فيه لبنان دائرة انتخابية واحدة.

نحن نقبل بالديموقراطية الكاملة، أمّا إذا كنّا لا نذهب إلى الديموقراطية الكاملة لأنها تمس بخصوصيات الطائفية أو المذهبية أو المناطقية اللبنانية إذا يجب أن نراعي في تشكيل سلطتنا هذه الخصوصيات من خلال الشراكة وعدم إلغاء احد على الإطلاق. أمّا قصة الثلث المعطل والتي يقولون عنها أن تعطل البلد وهي ليست معطلة للبلد، أنا أدعو خصوصا الإخوة في تيار المستقبل أن يراجعوا من واجب تجربة الرئيس الشهيدة رفيق الحريري وأن يسألوا كل المقربين منه عن معاناته في تشكيل الحكومات التي كان يتراسها وعن السبب في عدم ترؤسه لآخر حكومة قبل اغتياله، سيجدون أنّ السبب ـ وهذا الموضوع جرى نقاش فيه بيني وبين الرئيس الحريري في اللقاءات المطولة خلال أشهر قبل استشهاده ـ كان يقول لي : "أنا إذا ما بيكون لي ثلث الوزراء في الحكومة لألي وأن مسميهم ومتل ما بدو بيمشي" فلن أشكل حكومة ولن أترأس حكومة وليشكلوا الحكومة "اللي بدون ياها". ولذلك كان دائما في الحكومات التي ترأسها كان يسعى لأن يكون له ثلث الوزراء من مختلف الطوائف وعندما لم يتمكن من ذلك في آخر حكومة اعتذر عن المشاركة في بيانه المعروف وتم تكليف دولة الرئيس عمر كرامي بتشكيل الحكومة حينها.

السبب الحقيقي خلف عدم تشكيل الرئيس الحريري لآخر حكومة هو أنّه لم يتمكن من تسمية ثلث الوزراء ويقدرون على سؤال الأصدقاء والمقربين أن هذا الأمر طبيعي في البلد، أي أحد يريد أن يكون شريكا حقيقا

أنا لا أقول ان حزب الله يريد ثلث الحكومة وإنما أقول المعارضة كانت تطالب بثلث الحكومة , المعارضة المتشكلة من أطياف وتيارات متنوعة والتي كانت تمثل نصف الشعب اللبناني خلال السنوات الماضية , وهذا أمر طبيعي , اما العودة إلى نغمة المثالثة , انا أقول لكم ما هي قصة المثالثة , هذه فكرة هم اخترعوها "هم باضوها وهم عملوا منها صوص وكبروها صارت ديك تتصيح على المنابر" هذه المثالثة , لا احد في المعارضة حكي عن المثالثة ولا احد فكر بالمثالثة ولا احد فهمان ما هي المثالثة التي يتكلمون عنها , المثالثة يعني ماذا؟ مثالثة الطوائف, مثالثة مذاهب , مثالثة تحالفات سياسية , أنا كمواطن لبناني تقول لي هم يتكلمون عن مثالثة ماذا تفهم ؟ أقول لك أنا والله لست افهم ما هو قصدهم بالتحديد, في فرضيات عديدة بهذا الموضوع , هم طرحوا موضوع المثالثة فقد ليحولوا المعارضة إلى موقع الدفاع , وأنا أتمنى على قوى المعارضة وعلى الإخوة أيضا في حزب الله ان نطلع من هذه القصة, هم يريدون وضعنا بموضع دفاع , لماذا نجلس بكل خطاب نقول مثالثة لا , والمثالثة أبدا, يريدون وضعنا بموضع دفاع عن النفس , نحن لم نطرح هذا الموضوع والسلام , هذا ليس له أي أساس من الصحة , نعم انا أقول لكم هناك هدف اخر من طرح المثالثة هو التصويب على مسيحي المعارضة , لان اليوم عندما نقول مثلا انه في قوى سياسية معينة ان شيعة المعارضة على سبيل المثال يريدون مثالثة , هم يقصدون المثالثة الطائفية , وان لبنان اليوم مناصفة بين مسلمين ومسيحيين ومثالثة يعني ثلث للشيعة وثلث للسنة وثلث للمسيحيين والدروز يكونوا ضمن حصة المسلمين في شكل أو بآخر , طيب يمكن إذا أتيت وقلت للشيعة وتقول لهم أريد ان انقل لكم حصة من ضمن المناصفة إلى ثلث البلد , بالشراكة السياسية ما بيزعلوا , طيب شفافين اذن هذا يخدم المعارضة شيعيا, وإذا أتينا للسنة وتقول لهم انا أريد ان انقل لكم جزء من مناصفة إلى مثالثة , عال هذا يخدم المعارضة السنية, وهم ليس كثير واضعين أعينهم على استهداف المعارضة في هاتين الساحتين ولأسباب كثيرة. الموضوع للأساسي هو استهداف مسيحيي المعارضة, ومحاولة القول للمسيحيين في لبنان ان العماد عون والوزير فرنجية والوزير سكاف وشخصيات أخرى في المعارضة ولكن في الأخص العماد عون والتيار الوطني الحر وانه عمل صفقة مع حزب الله والمعارضة وهو راض بالمثالثة أي انه يريد خفض حصتكم يا مسيحيين من النصف إلى الثلث , وهذا طبعا ليس أول ظلم ولن يكون أخر ظلم إعلامي وسياسي وانتخابي وإعلامي موجه إلى حلفائنا من مسيحيي المعارضة . لان هذا كذب وليس له أي أساس من الصحة , لا العماد عون فكر هكذا ولا مسيحيي المعارضة فكروا هكذا ولا احد جاء بسيرة هذا المعارضة ولا تناقشوا بهذا الموضوع , وهو في جزين لم يقبل ثلثين بثلث , أتوا لاتهامه بالمثالثة .

إذن هذا الموضوع لا يجب ان نبقى فيه في موقع الدفاع وإنما يجب ان نكون واضحين فيه , نحن نعم من دعاة الشراكة وحضور الجميع وتطبيق اتفاق الطائف والعمل بهدوء على تطوير نظامنا السياسي على أساس تشكيل الهيئة الوطنية العليا لإغاثة النظام السياسي لبحث إلغاء الطائفية السياسية .

نحن أيضا نتطلع إلى دولة قادرة على ان تحمي نفسها وتحمي قرارها وأرضها وشعبها وأمنها , دون حاجة إلى قوات طوارئ دولية لا تقدم ولا تؤخر مع احترامنا إليهم هم ضيوفنا في جنوب لبنان ودون حاجتها إلى أجهزة أمنية خارجية ولدينا كلبنانيين من الكفاءات العسكرية والأمنية ما يمكن لبنان من ان يكون له قوة جديرة على هذا الأساس , وهنا أيضا احتراما للذاكرة ولذكرى الأيام القليلة المقبلة 17 أيار, من المحزن جدا ومن المؤسف جدا ان يصبح الذين ناهضوا اتفاقية 17 أيار , "نحنا اللبنانيين بنسونا بسرعة مش انو مننسى بسرعة أي بقدر ما في ضخ إعلامي ومشاكل وهموم ومصائب تكركب على رؤوسنا بنسونا والا الناس ما بتنسى" , اتفاقية 17 أيار , الاتفاقية التي وقعها النظام اللبناني في ذلك الحين من موقع الضعف والهزيمة والهوان والتي خضع لها لشروط إسرائيل الأمنية والعسكرية والسياسية , من الذي وقع اتفاقية 17 أيار ؟ من الذي كان يريد ان يلحق لبنان بإسرائيل من خلال اتفاقية 17 أيار ؟ من هي القيادات والقوى السياسية الضليعة في تلك المرحلة من محاولة تتويج لبنان بلدا تابعا وللأبد للمشروع الصهيوني؟ ومن الذي وقف في وجه 17 أيار؟ من علماء ورجال ونساء وخصوصا في بئر العبد في ذلك المسجد المبارك مسجد الإمام الرضا (ع) ؟ من الذي سفك دمه ليعلن الرفض اللبناني الشعبي لاتفاقية 17 أيار غير الشهيد محمد نجدي؟ من الذي قدم دمه ليكون لبنان مستقلا عن إسرائيل ؟ ومن الذي وقع بحبره اتفاقية الذل مع إسرائيل ؟

اليوم الذين أرادوا إلحاق لبنان بإسرائيل والى الأبد هم رموز للاستقلال والسيادة والحرية والذين قدموا دمائهم زكية من اجل تحرير لبنان هم عناوين للتبعية والعمالة والارتهان للخارج , أليس هذا ظلم تاريخي ؟ هل يجوز ان ننسى ذلك ؟ الآن يطلعوا ويقولوا السيد يعود إلى لغة التخوين, هذا تاريخ, أنا لا اصدر أحكام, ويجب ان يبقى التاريخ حاضرا لنستفيد منه للمستقبل ليس لنثار من بعضنا البعض , وإنما حتى لا نضلل من جديد ولا نضيع من جديد ولا يباع بلدنا من جديد في أسواق النخاسة الدولية , نحن نريد دولة قوية عزيزة مقتدرة تستعيد أرضها بإرادتها وليس بالتوسل لا من عليها نتنياهو بإعادة قطعة ارض بموسم انتخابي , هذا أمر جزئي بسيط.

في مثل هذه الأيام كان شعبنا وكان أهلنا في جنوب لبنان الرجال والنساء قبل حملة البنادق يقتحمون الحواجز والأسلاك والمواقع القرى ويصنعوا معجزة التحرير التاريخية هذا هو لبنان الذي نتطلع إليه , وعلى هذا الأساس أيضا أصل إلى النقطة التي أحببت ان أشير إليها , نعم نحن نريد لبنان المتعاون لبنان المتآخي لبنان المتضافر , لبنان البعيد عن النزاعات وعن الصراعات , قبل أيام قليلة كانت ذكرى 7 أيار نحن تبانينا في المعارضة بشكل او بآخر ان هذا الموضوع لا نثيره لان إثارته سيؤدي إلى المزيد من الحساسيات ونحن في موسم انتخابي , والطرف الآخر للأسف الشديد قبل 7ايار وبعد 7 أيار وما زال, وأثار هذا الموضوع في كل وسائل الأعلام في كل المنابر وفي كل الخطب وأثار عاصفة غيار وكأنه اعتبر ان سكوتنا وعدم تعليقنا على تلك الحادثة كأنه إحساس بالخجل او إحساس بالضعف او إحساس بالحرج , أنا في الحقيقة كما تبانينا في حزب الله لا ندخل في سجال ولكن وجدت من واجبي ان اعلق على هذا الأمر وفاء لدماء الشهداء الطاهرة التي سقطت في 7 أيار وحتى لا يحصل التباس لا في لبنان ولا في غير لبنان وحتى يقال بعض الحق في هذه المسالة , بناء عليه أنا أعيد في التذكير ولا أريد ان أتكلم في لغة فيها إثارة او إعادة تشنج , أريد ان اذكر الذين يتكلمون عن 7 أيار ان يتذكروا ماذا عملوا في 5 أيار , بيكفي أن نأتي بتقرير فينوغراد وان نقرا فيه لما اعتبر ان من عناصر قوة حزب الله كذا وكذا وكذا ومن جملة عناصر قوة حزب الله التي يجب العمل على إنهائها وتفكيكها هي شبكة الاتصالات السلكية التي أقامها حزب الله, اليوم هل من احد لديه شك بان الإسرائيلي يتنصت على الخليوي ؟ هل من احد لديه شك بان الإسرائيلي يتنصت على التلفون المدني ؟ هل من احد عنده شك بان الإسرائيلي يتنصت على كل وسائل الاتصال المتاحة ؟ ما في شك وما في نقاش , واحدث تقنيات العالم الأميركية موجودة عند إسرائيل في هذا المجال , نعم أهم سلاح في المقاومة ليس من أهم أسلحة المقاومة , سأعيد وهذا قصدي بالتذكير, أهم سلاح للمقاومة في حرب تموز كانت شبكة الاتصالات السلكية لانها محصنة بدرجة كبيرة جدا جدا جدا عن التنصت وعن دخول الإسرائيلي على هذه الشبكة , هذا خذوه بعين الاعتبار , اجتمعت الحكومة اللبنانية ليلة 5 أيار أظن يوم 5 أيار ومن خارج جدول الأعمال قررت تفكيك شبكة الاتصالات واعتبارها خروجا على القانون ونهبا للمال العام ومسا بسيادة الدولة واتخذت قرارا بإحالة كل من له علاقة بهذه الشبكة بهذا القضاء , ضعوا هذين المشهدين أمامكم وأنا لا أريد ان احكم ولا أريد ان اقضي , الحكومة اللبنانية السابقة غير الشرعية يجب أن تنتبه أن يوم 5 أيار هو يوم عار في جبينها وفي تاريخها لأنها أرادت أن تفعل شيئا عجزت عنه إسرائيل طوال ثلاثة وثلاثين يوما، هذا واحد.

السؤال الثاني في الأيام الماضية ظهرت تسريبات وبثت بعض الأشرطة على التلفزيونات لماذا تم استقدام آلاف المقاتلين من خارج مدينة بيروت قبل الخامس من أيار، أريد أن أسأل أهل بيروت، أهل بيروت الذين يطالبونهم بأن ينتخبوا ويردوا على السابع من أيار، على كل حال هناك جزء كبير من أهل بيروت هذا خيارهم السياسي وانتماؤهم السياسي وسينتخبون إن كان هناك 7 أيار وإن لم يكن هناك 7 أيار، هناك اتجاهات مختلفة والناس ستنتخب بحسب اتجاهاتها، لكن أنا أحب أن أوجه لأهل بيروت: يمكنكم أن تسألوا من الذي حول مدينة بيروت إلى مدينة للميليشيات تحت عنوان الشركات الأمنية، ومدينة مليئة بمراكز التسليح عبر عنوان الشركات الأمنية، ويمكنكم أن تسألوا أيضا من الذي جاء بآلاف المقاتلين من خارج بيروت ووزعهم داخل أحياء بيروت وفي المراكز وفي الشقق أثناء شن حملة سياسية إعلامية على حزب الله وعلى شبكة الاتصالات السلكية قبل اتخاذ القرار في الخامس من أيار؟ هذا سؤال مشروع أم ليس مشروعا؟ هل هناك اليوم أحد مازال لديه شك بأنه استقدام آلاف المقاتلين إلى مدينة بيروت قبل أن تتخذ الحكومة هذا القرار؟ ما الذي كان مخططا له؟

ما كان مخططا له أنه في الخامس من أيار تتخذ الحكومة القرار، ماذا يفعل حينها حزب الله؟ إذا لم يفعل شيئا واكتفى بمظاهرة، باعتصام، ببيان، يكونون قد نجحوا ويكون هذا مقدمة _ فمن يصادر السلكي يصادر الأسلحة الأخرى لاحقا تحت عناوين مشابهة- هذا إذا حزب الله سمح لهم بإزالة السلكي، أما إذا لم يسمح بذلك فهذا يعني الصدام مع الجيش وهذا ما يريدونه.
هؤلاء الذين يدعون الحرص على الجيش والحرص على الدولة القوية - أنا أقول لكم - كان مشروعهم في السنوات الماضية العمل على إيجاد صراع وقتال بين الجيش والمقاومة وفشلوا لأنه لدينا في لبنان جيش وطني ولدينا قيادة وطنية وضباط وجنود وطنيون. وتم دراسة هذا الأمر من قبل جهات أجنبية وضعت الجيش اللبناني تحت المجهر ودرست هل هذا الجيش بقيادته وضباطه وجنوده موافق وجاهز نفسيا أن يدخل في معركة مع المقاومة ووصلت إلى نتيجة مفادها أن هذا الجيش لا يمكن أن يدخل في ذلك وغير مؤهل نفسيا وعقائديا وفكريا ووطنيا أن يقاتل المقاومة ولذلك حرموه من كل المساعدات لأنهم اعتبروه جيشا غير مأمون.
غير مأمون على ماذا؟ على البلد؟ غير مأمون على الانتخابات؟ غير مأمون على السلطة السياسية؟ لا...
هو غير مأمون على قتاله للمقاومة وهذا شرف للجيش، هذا عمق الأمان والأمن والضمانة الوطنية التي يشكلها الجيش اللبناني.

حسنا، إذا لم يسكت حزب الله وذهب إلى عصيان مدني وإلى مواجهة في بيروت، آلاف المقاتلين جاهزون وأنا أريد أن أقول شيئا لم نقله حينها، كان هناك خطة موضوعة وهؤلاء لديهم التعليمات ماذا سيفعلون والمناطق التي سيحتلونها وأي مناطق سيقطعونها عن بعضها البعض، وكان المشروع هو أخذ بيروت إلى فتنة مذهبية تستمر لأسابيع يتم على أساسها استدعاء قوات من الخارج تحت عنوان أن هناك حرب مذهبية في لبنان، تعالوا يا عالم ساعدونا في وقف الحرب، هذا ما كان مخططا له.
لتعلموا أن ما كان في الخامس من أيار ليس قرار ليس للتنفيذ، هكذا قرار ليس للتنفيذ؟ إذن لماذا سهرتم حتى الصبح؟ ولماذا اتصلتم من داخل جلسة مجلس الوزراء بالسعودية وبمصر وبأميركا وبفرنسا وبآخرين؟ هذا لم يعد سرا. يمكنكم أن تسألوا الوزراء الذين كانوا معكم في الحكومة تلك ماذا يقولون هنا وهناك، أنا لا أقوم بكشف أسرار، الموضوع لم يكن موضوع قرار ليس للتنفيذ، هذه الحكومة السابقة البتراء اللاشرعية اتخذت قرار بوضع لبنان أمام حرب مذهبية في لبنان بين الشيعة والسنة، وما فعلته المعارضة ويريدون تحميلها لحزب الله فقط؟ نحن جاهزون، "جسم لبّيس" ويعجبكم.

أنا أقول للبنانيين جميعا ولكن بالخصوص للشيعة والسنة في لبنان وبالأخص لأهلنا الكرام الأعزاء في مدينة بيروت، ما حصل في السابع من أيار وضع حداً سريعا جداً لحرب مذهبية كانوا يخططون لها وأعدوا لها العدة، وضع حداً سريعاً لإحراق بيروت بفعل الفتنة والحرب الأهلية، وضع حداً سريعاً لمؤامرة كبرى كانت تحضر لهذه المقاومة، السابع من أيار حقن الدماء في بيروت، السابع من أيار حفظ المؤسسات في بيروت، السابع من أيار حفظ البيوت والعائلات في بيروت التي أرادوا لها أن تخترب وأن تحترق في الخامس من أيار. هذا هو السابع من أيار، وهذه هي عظمة دماء شهدائنا.
بالنسبة لنا، أنا كل السنة الماضية كنت أراعي وأداري، ولكن أمام ما سمعته في الأسبوعين الماضيين أنا أعلن السابع من أيار يوماً مجيداً من أيام المقاومة في لبنان، وفي النتيجة السابع من أيار هو الذي وضع لبنان على طريق الحل، السابع من أيار هو الذي أخرج لبنان من المأزق الذي وضعوه فيه، السابع من أيار هو الذي فرض عليهم أن يعودوا

إلى طاولة الحوار التي كانوا يرفضونها، السابع من أيار هو الذي أدى إلى انتخاب رئيس توافقي وإلى تشكيل حكومة وحدة وطنية، ما نعم به اللبنانيون من سنة استقرار نسبي خلال العام الماضي هو من بركات السابع من أيار وبفضل دماء الشهداء الذين سقطوا في السابع من أيار.

سمعت شعارات خلال الأسبوعين الماضيين، أنهم يقولون لا ننسى السابع من أيار، يقولون لن ننسى، خطبوا وقالوا ورددوا الشعارات، عظيم جدا بشرتمونا، نحن نريد ألا تنسوا السابع من أيار، وهذا هو المطلوب يا حبيبي يا أخي يا عيني هذا هو المطلوب.المطلوب ألا ننسى السابع من أيار حتى لا يكررّ أحد حماقة الخامس من أيار. أما الناس الذين أتيتم بهم من المناطق أنا أريد أن أنصفهم، قيل أنه جيء بآلاف المقاتلين في قبل أيام في ذلك الحين من منطقتي عكار والبقاع، أنا أريد أن أنصف هؤلاء الشباب، نحن نعلم أن أهل عكار وأهل البقاع رجال شجعان أقوياء يُتكل عليهم ولا أحد لديه نقاش في هذا الأمر، ليسوا جبناء أبداً ولا يهربون من المعركة ولكن أنتم بأهل عكار وبأهل البقاع لا ليقاتلوا إسرائيل، جربوهم في قتال إسرائيل، أتيتم بهم ليقاتلوا أهلهم، أتيتم بهم ليقاتلوا المقاومة التي يشعرون في عكار وفي البقاع أنها عزهم وشرفهم وفخرهم. أتيتم بهم ليقاتلوا المقاومة التي يعتبرها كل عربي مهما كان دينه أو مذهبه يعتبرها عزاً له في هذا العصر، ولذلك لم يكونوا يملكون الحافز والدافع ليقاتلوا أهلهم وإخوانهم في المقاومة وعليهم أن يدركوا ذلك ولا يقولن أحد أن أهل عكار أو أهل البقاع جبناء، أبداً. ولكن جيء بهم إلى المعركة الخطأ التي لا يؤمنون بها لحظة واحدة على الإطلاق.

أيها الأخوة والأخوات، نعم نحن لا نريد أن نبني على السابع من أيار ولا على السابع عشر من أيار، نحن نقرأ الماضي لنعتبر منه في المستقبل، بالرغم من كل ما حصل نحن ندعو إلى التعاون وندعو إلى الشراكة وندعو إلى تجاوز الماضي وندعو إلى تضافر الجهود والأيدي والأكتاف لبناء وطننا وإخراجه من أزماته المختلفة وكما قلت لهم ونحن خارجون من حرب تموز منتصرين ولم يعترفوا بانتصارنا حتى اليوم، لا يهم، قلت لهم نحن يجب أن نضع يدا بيد وكتفا على كتف لنبني لبنان، والآن أياً تكن نتيجة الانتخابات النيابية المقبلة، نعم نحن بحاجة على كل هذا التعاون وكل هذا التضافر لنبني لبنان معا ولنحمي لبنان معا ولنرفع اسم لبنان عاليا في كل العالم معا.
أيها الأخوة والأخوات، مجددا أبارك لأخواتنا وإخواننا الخريجين إنجازهم ونجاحهم والسلام عليكم جميعا ورحمة الله وبركاته.

الخطاب الرابع

كلمة السيد نصر الله بعد استقالة الوزراء 16/1/2011

أعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم والحمد لله رب العالمين والصلاة والسلام على أشرف الخلق وأعز المرسلين سيدنا ونبينا وحبيب قلوبنا أبي القاسم محمد بن عبد الله وعلى آله الطيبين الطاهرين وأصحابه المنتجبين.
السلام عليكم رحمة الله وبركاته

نظراً للتطورات التي حصلت في الأيام الأخيرة في لبنان ولأهمية المرحلة أجد نفسي مسؤولاً عن عرض الوقائع وتحليل هذه الوقائع والتعليق عليها وأيضاً رسم صورة تقريبية لمسار الأمور في بلدنا لأنه من حق الشعب اللبناني وحق اللبنانيين جميعاً ومن حق كل أولئك الذين يحبون لبنان ويهتمون للبنان، للشعب في لبنان، وللدولة، للمقاومة، للمستقبل، أيضاً أن يطلعوا وأن يحيطوا بالقدر الممكن الذي يمكن قوله حول مسار الأمور لأن الوقائع ومسار الأمور تستطيع أن تكشف لنا بوضوح النوايا والاستهدافات وما يحضر لهذا البلد ولنا جميعاً.
أولاً: أبدأ من الوقائع. لن أعود كثيرا إلى الأشهر السابقة. سوف أبدأ وباختصار في الوقائع منذ بدء ما سمّي بالمبادرة العربية أو بالمسعى السعودي السوري على إثر الحديث عن قرب صدور قرار اتهامي من قبل مدعي عام المحكمة الدولية ينوي فيه توجيه الاتهام إلى أفراد أو كوادر من حزب الله، قامت مبادرة كريمة من قبل الجانب السعودي والجانب السوري، من قبل الملك عبد الله بن عبد العزيز والرئيس بشار الأسد وأبلغنا بأن هناك مسعى من هذا النوع ونحن دعمنا هذا المسعى وكل الأصدقاء الذين اتصلوا للمساعدة. كنا نقول لهم: نحن نقترح أن تدعموا المسعى السعودي السوري. في الحقيقة نحن راهنّا عليه كما راهن كل الذين يريدون الخير للبنان وأن يتجاوز لبنان هذه المحنة أو ما يعدّ له من محن ومن فتن.
بدأت المحادثات بالرغم من أن البعض في لبنان كان ينكر أصلاً وجود محادثات أو وجود أفكار أو وجود أوراق أو وجود بنود فضلاً عن أنه ينكر التوصل إلى اتفاق لأنهم كانوا يتحدثون عن أمانيهم وليس عن الحقائق الخارجية والوقائع الخارجية.
أنا أحب في هذا الموضوع أن أكون واضحاً جداً حتى يكون لدى اللبنانيين جميعاً صورة واضحة، وحتى لاحقا لا يصطنع أحد بطولات وهمية أو يقدم أموراً غير واقعية للناس.
منذ البداية، الجانب السعودي كان واضحاً، قال: "لا يمكن إلغاء المحكمة الدولية، لأن المحكمة الدولية أقيمت بقرار من مجلس الأمن الدولي، وهذا الموضوع عند أمريكا وبريطانيا وفرنسا ووو..". وقلنا نحن نتفهم ذلك وأنا أشرت إلى هذا المعنى في خطاب ليلة عاشوراء. كانوا واضحين. أصلاً هذا الموضوع لم يجرِ حوله محادثات. هذا من الأيام الأولى من اللقاء الأول كان واضحاً.
إن الجانب السعودي قال إنه لا يمكن إلغاء القرار الظني، ونحن أيضا تفهّمنا هذا الموضوع، لأن القرار الظني ليس عند السعودي، بل القرار الظني عند الأمريكي وعند الإسرائيلي، وبالتالي لا يُتوقع من الجانب السعودي أن يستطيع أن يمون على الأمريكي والإسرائيلي لإلغاء القرار الظني.
طُرح منذ البداية أن الممكن أمران: الأمر الأول: تأجيل صدور القرار الظني لعدة أسابيع أو لعدة أشهر ريثما يمكن التفاهم على الأمر الآخر.
الأمر الثاني: تفضلوا نجلس لنناقش كيف يمكننا أن نحمي لبنان من تداعيات القرار الظني، هذا كله جرى في الأيام الأولى، وطبعاً كل هذه المفاوضات كانت سرية.
نحن قلنا إننا نتفهم، ونحن ليس لدينا مشكلة، وطبعاً نحن نرفض القرار الظني ونعتقد أنه مسيّس ونعتقد أننا مستهدفون من قبل أمريكا وإسرائيل عبر القرار الظني، ولكن لبنان بلدنا ونحن حريصون على حماية البلد.
وبالمداولات وصلنا إلى نتيجة تقول ما يلي: كيف نحيّد لبنان؟ وهذا أنا أشرت له أيضاً في ليلة عاشوراء، كيف نحيّد لبنان؟
نحيّد لبنان من خلال ثلاثة بنود. الحكومة اللبنانية تجتمع وتقول: نظراً للتطورات والأخطار والأحتمالات و وو.
وبمعزل عن تقييمها للمحكمة الدولية وللقرار الظني تقوم بثلاثة أمور:
الأمر الأول: سحب القضاة اللبنانيين.
الأمر الثاني: وقف التمويل اللبناني للمحكمة الدولية.
الأمر الثالث هو إلغاء مذكرة التفاهم بين الحكومة اللبنانية والمحكمة الدولية.
هذه البنود الثلاثة إذا أخذت فيهم الحكومة اللبنانية الحالية أو أي حكومة أخرى، فهذا لا يعني إلغاء المحكمة الدولية أبداً. المحكمة الدولية قائمة بمعزل عن رأينا فيها.
لو سحب القضاة اللبنانيون، فالمحكمة لديها قانون، أو أن مجلس الأمن يعدل قانونها، فيتم الإستعاضة عنهم بقضاة من جنسيات أخرى.
لو توقف التمويل اللبناني نوفّر على الشعب اللبناني بعض المال، هناك مصادر تمويل كثيرة في العالم. ليس لديهم مشكلة لا بالتمويل ولا باستكمال القضاة.
وأما بالنسبة لمذكرة التفاهم فإلغاؤها يعني أنه بمعزل عن التداعيات المحكمة والقرار الظني، إذا كان المدعي العام يريد لبنانيين، هناك إنتربول دولي وهناك وسائل أخرى، هم يذهبون ويرَون كيف يمكنهم اعتقالهم، وليست وظيفة الحكومة اللبنانية أن تعتقل من يتهمهم بلمار، مما قد يؤدي إلى مشكلات على المستوى الوطني.

إذا التزمنا بهذه البنود الثلاثة، فهذا يعني تحييد لبنان وحماية لبنان من تداعيات القرار الظني ولا يعني على الإطلاق إلغاء المحكمة الدولية ـ لكل من يغالط ويعمل على تضليل الناس ـ ولا يعني إلغاء القرار الظني، مع اعتقادنا الذي أودّ قوله وأكرره إن هذه المحكمة أمريكية إسرائيلية وهذا قرار أمريكي إسرائيلي.
لكن نحن نود الوصول إلى حل وسط بالموضوع. أبلغنا من الجانب السعودي أنهم موافقون على هذه البنود الثلاثة وأن الرئيس سعد الحريري موافق على هذه البنود الثلاثة.
وقالوا: حتى نستطيع أن ننجز اتفاقاً (أنا لا أحب تسميته تسوية)، أو تفاهم، هناك أمور أخرى مطلوبة منكم كمعارضة، أو كحزب الله، أو كحزب الله وحركة أمل، إن هذه البنود أو هذه الأمور عليكم أن تقبلوا فيها وبالتالي يكون عندنا تفاهم واتفاق كامل ونتكل على الله.
وتم عرض البنود علينا مع اشتراط أن يبقى هذا الأمر سرياً لنجاح المفاوضات. وبالفعل بقي سرياً الأخيرة لأن هناك بعض البنود واضحة ونحن كنا موافقين عليها ولكن هناك بعض البنود تحتاج إلى بعض النقاش وعليها ملاحظات ونقاش مع بعض حلفائنا، لكن الجو الذي انعكس هو جو إيجابي، والجو الذي نقله الرئيس بشار الأسد للجانب السعودي هو جو ايجابي وكانت الأمور تتواصل.
بطبيعة الحال، مرض الملك وسفره إلى الولايات المتحدة ووجود الأمير عبد العزيز نجله معه، وهو من كان يتابع المفاوضات، بطأا كثيراً هذا الأمر وأصبحت المفاوضات على الهاتف وبفترات متقطعة.
قبل أسبوعين تقريباً أو أكثر بقليل، أتى تأكيد أن الملك خضع للعملية ووضعه الصحي جيّد وهو عازم على مواصلة هذا الجهد وعلى الوصول إلى اتفاق وإنهاء هذا الأمر. وفي وقت قريب يمكن أن يأتي نجل الملك إلى دمشق والى بيروت من أجل الاتفاق على كل البنود وحول آليات التنفيذ.وقيل أيضاً إنه سيتم طلب سفر الرئيس سعد الحريري إلى الولايات المتحدة من أجل إنجاز هذا الأمر والتحضير له.
والرئيس سعد الحريري قبل أن يغادر بيروت ويتوجه إلى الولايات المتحدة أطلق تصريحاً يقول فيه إن الاتفاق أنجز منذ أشهر. طبعاً هذا يحتاج إلى تدقيق، ولكنه أمر جيّد إنه يعترف أن هناك اتفاقاً ويعتبر أنه أُنجز منذ أشهر ولكن هناك خطوات مطلوبة من الطرف الآخر لم يقم بها الطرف الآخر.
بعضنا اعتبر أن هذا الكلام إيجابي لأن فيه للمرة الأولى اعتراف من قبل أحد في الفريق الآخر الذي كان ينكر وجود أفكار ووجود مسودات ووجود مفاوضات ووجود تسوية كما كانوا يسمونها فيعترف بوجود اتفاق ولكنه يتحدث عمّن يبدأ أولا ويحمّل المسؤولية للطرف الآخر بأنه لم يبدأ، البعض قرأ جانباً إيجابياً في هذا التصريح وان هذه مقدمة للخطوات الموعود بها سعودياً وسورياً.
سافر الرئيس سعد الحريري إلى أمريكا وأجرى اللقاءات الأمريكية هناك، وبدون أي سابق إنذار يتصل الجانب السعودي بالجانب السوري ويقول له نحن نعتذر، نتيجة الضغوط والأوضاع نحن لسنا قادرين على مواصلة العمل في هذا المسعى، الله يعطيك العافية "وشوف شو بدك تعمل".
تم إبلاغنا بأن هذا المسعى توقف فجأة بلا مقدمات ولا إشارات ولا أي شيء، وهذا له علاقة بالتحليل وبالتقييم لاحقاً، أن من الذي عطّل هذا المسار وأوصل الأمور إلى ما وصلت إليه؟
بعدما تبلغنا ذلك، وأيضا تبلغنا أنه سيتم استعجال صدور القرار الظني والإتهامي وقد يصدر خلال أيام تشاورنا مع حلفائنا في المعارضة، مع القوى التي لها وزراء في الحكومة لأن الوقت كان ضيقاً، وأجمعنا أنه بات من الواجب ـ وسأشرح لاحقا لماذا ـ أن نقدّم استقالتنا من هذه الحكومة وبالتالي إسقاط هذه الحكومة، للأسباب التي سأذكرها بعد قليل. وبشكل دستوري وقانوني وطبيعي جداً قُدّمت الاستقالات وأصبحنا أمام وضع جديد سواء على المستوى الحكومي أو على المستوى الوطني وغداً (الأثنين) توجد استشارات نيابية للتكليف.
هذه الوقائع.
نأتي لنحاول أن نفهم الذي جرى. ماذا حدث ولماذا وصلت الأمور إلى هنا؟
أولاً: من الواضح أن الأمريكيين والإسرائيليين كانوا يرفضون منذ البداية هذا المسعى العربي منذ البداية وهم تركوا هذا المسعى يمشي لفترة من الزمن باعتقاد أنهم كانوا يراهنون أن "السين سين" سورية والسعودية لن يستطيعوا التوصل إلى اتفاق لأن الموضوع صعب ومعقد وبالتالي هم ليسوا بحاجة للتدخل أو أن يعطلوا أو يجهضوا.
لكن في الآونة الأخيرة عندما رأوا أن الأمور متقدمة بشكل كبير وهناك أجواء إيجابية لإنجاز اتفاق حول هذا الأمر تدخلوا بقوة وبشكل حاسم وأبلغوا بأن هذا الأمر لا يمكن أن يستمر وعليه أن يتوقف ولذلك توقف بهذا الشكل المفاجئ.
مَن لديه تفسير آخر يتفضل ويشرح لنا. هذا هو التفسير الوحيد بناءً على كل الوقائع وبناءً على كل المعطيات، التصريحات الأمريكية والتصريحات الإسرائيلية التي سبقت المساعي ولحقت إنهاء المساعي، والرهانات الأمريكية والإسرائيلية وخصوصاً الإسرائيلية على تداعيات القرار الظني الذي يتهم أفراداً من حزب الله. هذا كلام واضح ومعلن ويقولونه في الليل وفي النهار هل يمكن للأمريكيين والإسرائيليين أن يسمحوا للمسعى العربي بالنجاح ليعطل عليهم كل هذه الآمال وكل هذه الرهانات.

ثانياً: لا شك أن الموضوع ليس أمريكياً فقط، ولا شك أن هناك أطرافاً سياسية في لبنان وهي التي كانت تنكر أصلاً وجود أفكار وتسوية ومبادرة عملت في الليل وفي النهار وحرضت أطرافاً أمريكية وغربية وعربية لإفشال المسعى السعودي السوري واستخدمت أيضاً في بعض اللقاءات عبارات نابية وغير لائقة بحق الملك عبد الله لأنهم وجدوا أن الرجل صادق ويسعى، وجاد في إنجاز هذا التفاهم وفي الوصول إلى هذا الاتفاق.
ثالثاً: بالنسبة للرئيس سعد الحريري وفريقه في هذا الموضوع، هو يقول إن الاتفاق أنجز وأن هناك أناساً مطلوب منهم أشياء لم يقوموا بها. طبعاً هذا غير صحيح لكن سأمشي معه هناك اتفاق أنجز وانتظرنا عدة أشهر. ألا أنتظر، إذا كنت حريصاً على مصلحة البلد وتجاوز هذه المحنة، لا أنتظر بعد أسبوعاً أو أسبوعين حتى نكمل الاتفاق أو نتفق على آلية التنفيذ؟ ما هو المطلوب منك؟
ما هو المطلوب منا، نتكل على الله ونتجاوز ببلدنا هذه المرحلة الصعبة، "شو عدا عما بدا"؟
مجرد أن ذهب إلى أمريكا تم قطع رأس هذا المسعى وتم اجهاضه والعودة إلى نقطة الصفر.
هذا في الحقيقة هو موضع تساؤل وسؤال كبير، وأنا أحب أن يسأل اللبنانيون، اللبنانيون كلهم اليوم قلقون على الوضع في لبنان، وكان هناك إمكانية أن لا نصل إلى هذا الموضوع، لكن لماذا وصلنا له؟
رابعاً أيضاً في هذا السياق، أنا فهمي أن الرئيس الحريري وفريقه يا أما هم من البداية غير قابلين ولا يريدون هذا المسار وهذا التفاهم، وساروا في البداية نتيجة ضغط المملكة العربية السعودية وبالتالي، ليس هم لا يريدون فقط، وإنما هم أيضاً ذهبوا وحرّضوا الأميركيين وغير الأميركيين للضغط على الجانب السعودي لإيقاف هذا المسعى، وإما لا، هم كانوا سائرين مع الملك ومع الجانب السعودي ولكن هناك إرادة أميركية قاهرة، وهنا بين هلالين (أين تصبح الحرية والسيادة والاستقلال والقرار المستقل والمصالح الوطنية) الأميركي يقول لا فهذا يعني لا، لا يعدو واحدة من الاحتمالين لأنه من المفترض حسب تصريحاته هو وحسب كل المعطيات أن الأمور كانت سائرة وستصل إلى خواتيمها.
هذا التعليق او هذا الفهم يؤكد بهذه اللحظة أو في هذه العشيّة أن هذا الفريق لا يمكن ائتمانه لا على القرار اللبناني ولا على المصلحة اللبنانية ولا على استقرار لبنان ولا يملك القدرة على تجاوز مساعدة لبنان أو قيادة لبنان لتجاوز أي محنة أو مصاعب يمكن أن يواجهها إن كانت مساعي أشهُر يمكن أن تنتهي خلال ساعات في الولايات المتحدة الأميركية.
خامساً: أيضاً باستكمال هذه النقطة، الرئيس الحريري قال بعد ما عاد إن المطالب التي قدّمها والتي سمّاها مكاسب هي مكاسب للوطن. على كل حال ما كان مطلوباً منا من بنود هو موجود عندي لأنه تم إبلاغنا به وكنا نناقشه لكي نرد عليه بأجوبة، وأنا قلت إننا أعطينا أجوبة عليه، وبعضها كنا نتعاطى معه إيجابيا لما كنا ما زلنا نناقش. هذا موجود.
أيضاً حتى نكون دقيقين الليلة أنا طبعا ولأسباب معينة لن أكشف ما هي هذه البنود وما هي هذه المتطلبات، ولكن إذا كشفها غيري في يوم من الأيام فاللبنانيون يقدرون أن يحاكموا، وسيكتشفون أن هذه البنود فيها بند أو بندان يمكن القول نعم فيها مصلحة وطنية، أما بقية البنود ففيها مصلحة للفريق السياسي والأمني للرئيس الحريري.
هذا الذي كنا نتفاوض عليه، ومع ذلك كنا نتعاطى بإيجابية ، نحنا كنا حاضرين أن نعطي مكاسب سياسية وغير سياسية لفريق الرئيس الحريري من أجل تجنيب لبنان، وبالتالي نعم، هذا الموقف نعم، نراعي فيه السلامة الوطنية والمصلحة الوطنية، ولكن حتى هذا أُجهض بمعزل عن بعض النقاش في بعض البنود والتفاصيل، نعم أريد أن اسمح لنفسي، هناك بند واحد كشاهد أنا سأذكره في سياق نقاط التعليق وهذا يعبر لنا عن شاهد بهذا الموضوع.
لما نحن ذهبنا إلى الحكومة وقلنا لهم يا أخوان هناك ملف اسمه ملف شهود الزور، خطير وحساس وكبير، وهذا الملف له تبعات كبيرة جداً، هناك ضباط وغير ضباط وهناك أناس ألقي بهم في السجون سنوات بناء على هذه الشهادات، العلاقات اللبنانية السورية تم تخريبها لا بل تدميرها، بناء على هذا، أسوأ جو مذهبي حصل في لبنان هو بناء على هذه الشهادات، كان هناك صراعات طائفية ولكن على المستوى المذهبي والسنوات الخمس التي مرت هي أسوأ أجواء مذهبية بناء على نتائج هذه الشهادات، وهناك انتخابات نيابية أجريت وحكومات ركّبت بناءً على النتائج السياسية لهذه الشهادات، تفضلوا وحاسبوا شهود الزور ومن صنع هؤلاء الشهود الزور لأنه أدى إلى كل هذه الكوارث الأخلاقية والإنسانية والوطنية والاقتصادية والأمنية ولأنه أيضاً ضلّل التحقيق. وأخذنا الموضوع هذا إلى الحكومة، لم نأخذه إلى مكان ثانٍ ولا شهّرنا بالناس فقط، قلنا لهم خذوه إلى المجلس العدلي! حسناً، عيب علينا إذا نحن طالبنا بالتصويت ونحن دعاة الديمقراطية التوافقية؟

هذه الأمور تحتاج إلى توافق لكن نحن الطرف الخاسر في التصويت نقول لهم صوتوا، هذا ليس عيباً علينا بالعكس هذه ايجابية منا، نحن نحتكم للمؤسسات وفي أمر نحن من دعاة الديمقراطية التوافقية عليه نقبل بالتصويت على حسابنا ، وعلى حساب قضية بهذا الحجم فلم يقبلوا بالتصويت ونحن كنا قلنا بأننا نقبل النتيجة وهذا الذي عطل مجلس الوزراء ولسنا نحن من عطّل مجلس الوزراء.

طيب ما هو البند؟ واحد من البنود الواردة المطلوبة إغلاق ملف شهود الزور. هذا جزء من التسوية التي كانت مطروحة، يعني مقابل أن نحيّد لبنان والمحكمة باقية فوق رأسنا والقرار الظني باق فوق رأسنا كان مطلوباً بالاتفاق إغلاق ملف شهود الزور، طيب إذن لماذا أنتم مهتمون بملف شهود الزور؟ يجب أن لا يكون هذا جزءاً من أي اتفاق وجزءاً من أي تسوية، أنتم يجب أن تكونوا أشد الناس حرصاً على محاسبة شهود الزور ومن فبركهم ومن صنّعهم! مع ذلك هذا يرد في التسوية، هذا من مصلحة الوطن أو من مصلحة فريق سياسي وأمني معين؟
اليوم نعم بدأنا نفهم لماذا كان ممنوعاً في مجلس الوزراء التصويت على ملف شهود الزور وأن يتحول الملف على المجلس العدلي. الآن بدأنا نفهم لماذا مسموح أن يتعطل البلد ومجلس الوزراء كل هذه الأسابيع لحماية شهود الزور.
مع احترامي لأي تقييم ممكن أن يقال عما عرضته قناة "الجديد" بالأمس، واليوم لم ألحق مشاهدة الجزء الثاني.
طيب، للوهلة الأولى صدر تعميم داخل تيار المستقبل، الكوادر، والمنسقيّات.. أن هذا كلام مفبرك، وحتى صدر كلام عن بعض المسؤولين ان هذا فيلم الفيديو مفبرك وملزّق وموصّل وإلى آخره.
طبعا هذا أمر مضحك، لماذا؟ لأنه جلسة وسجال و"أخذ وعطا" ونقاش.. فنيّاً ممكن، لا أعرف، وعلى كل هناك خبراء يقدرون أن يقولوا إن هذا مفبرك أو حقيقي. ولكن المضحك أن هؤلاء الكوادر والمنسقيات وهؤلاء الناس جاهزون أن يقبلوا قراراً ظنياً يخرب البلد والمنطقة مبني على داتا اتصالات وتقدر أي شركة اتصالات او شركة خليوي ان تركّبه، هذا الذي يمكن أن يفبرك بكل سهولة ولكن الشريط المسجل الذي عرضته قناة "الجديد" ومباشرة يقولون إن هذا الشريط مفبرك، وإن كان على كل حال صدر قبل قليل بيان عن المكتب الاعلامي لرئيس الحكومة، حكومة تصريف الاعمال ويقول فيه إن هذا الحادث صار ولكن "هذا صار هيك والمقصود هيك" يعني أنه يناقش بدلالات الكلام وخلفيات الكلام ولكنه لم ينكر اللقاء وما جرى في اللقاء.
أيضا قبل أن آتي لأتكلم معكم "ويمكن من غير المناسب أن أدخل أنا بهكذا تفاصيل" ولكن قيل لي إن تلفزيون المستقبل سينشر الوثيقة الكاملة لوقائع هذا اللقاء بشريط الاخبار، وانا هنا عندي سؤال: اذا كانت هذه الوثيقة من وثائق المحكمة الدولية والتحقيق الدولي والتحقيق سري كيف يكون لديكم هذه الوثائق؟ والآن قناة الجديد وغيرها كيف حصلت على هذا الموضوع هذا شانها، ولكن جنابكم أنتم تريدون أن تعرضوا الوثيقة الكاملة، من أين حصلتم على هذا التسجيل؟ مع العلم أن الوثائق سرية! وهذا الذي قاله البيان الصادر عن مكتب رئيس الحكومة عندما ينتقد على النشر ويقول هذه وثائق سرية، فكيف تم تسريبها ؟ اسمحوا لي أن اتكلم بالعامية: "صح النوم". نحن منذ خمس سنوات نقول إن كل ما يجري في اللجنة الدولية هو موجود في الصحف وبالمجلات والتلفزيونات وبالمجالس وعند قيادات سياسية وأمنية في لبنان وعند كل سفارات الدنيا، على كل هذا الموضوع أحببت أن أشير إليه.
هذا الذي صار الى ما قبل الإجهاز على المبادرة العربية واتفهم انها انتهت بعدما جاء الامريكان وبلغنا، طيب نحن ما هو تفسير تصرفنا؟ لماذا نذهب الى استقالة لا بل الى اسقاط حكومة ليس فقط استقالة عشرة وزراء؟ وبالمناسبة أنا من واجبي أن أنوّه بالموقف الوطني الشريف والكريم لمعالي الوزير الدكتور عدنان السيد حسين الذي تصرف بما يمليه ضميره وبما تمليه كرامته في هذا الموقع، ومن الطبيعي ان الاخرين سوف يلومونه لان لهم رؤيتهم ولهم حساباتهم.
ونحن قوى سياسية مشاركة في الحكومة لنا وزراء في الحكومة، جزء من الحكومة، وبعد تجربة سنة وعدة أشهر اذا اتينا لنقيّم بعد كل هذه التطورات هل نستطيع ان نستمر فيها؟ قبل هذه التطورات كان هناك معاناة مفادها ان هذه الحكومة غير منتجة، وهل رئيس الحكومة يكون في البلد ويتابع الوزارات وهل يتابع الملفات ويتابع الخطط ويتابع البرامج وهل في جدية؟ ومن اليوم الأول هناك أناس راهنوا أول يوم تشكيل حكومة وحدة وطنية وكانوا ضد تشكيلها وعملوا على افشالها، وكانوا يريدون لها أن تفشل ، هذا بالانتاج وبالانجاز واضح، واعتقد الوزراء الليلة وامس وقبل امس تكلموا وعالجوا هذا الموضوع، ولكن مع ذلك لم نسرع في إسقاط الحكومة، كنا نراهن انه مع الوقت، مع المتابعة والجدية فلنعطِ الأمور فرصة بهذه الموضوعات التي اسمها اداء الحكومة وانجاز الحكومة وتفعيل الحكومة وحل قضايا الناس ومحاربة الفساد المالي ووو...الخ يمكن أن نصل إلى مكان، ولكن هذا حاضر منذ اليوم الأول.
وفي هذا السياق تأتي أهم نقطة. نعم نحن وصلنا إلى محل الآن نعترف فيه أننا عاجزون في هذه الحكومة من أن نواجه الفساد المالي والفساد الإداري وتحقيق إصلاح مالي وإصلاح إداري وإصلاح إقتصادي "ليش نكذب على العالم" نعم كنا ما زلنا نراهن على الوقت.
لمدة عدة أشهر، وزراء الحكومة ولجنة المال والموازنة النيابية يطالبون ويتحدثون عن 11 مليار دولار أنفقوا في ظل الحكومات السابقة، فقط قولوا لنا كيف وبقرار ممن وأين؟ 11 مليار أنفقوا أين هذه الأموال؟ من أموال من؟ من أموال آبائهم وأمهاتهم أو من أموال الشعب اللبناني؟
نحن قوى سياسية طويلة عريضة، ويمكن ليس فقط عشر وزراء، ويمكن أكثر من 11 و 12 وزيرا يطالبون بهذا الأمر، لم نقدر أن نصل معهم إلى نتيجة، وإذا طالبت بكشف حساب 11 مليار دولار مباشرة يشهر عليك موضوع الفتنة المذهبية واستهداف الطائف. ما هذا الحكي! هذا واحد وهذا جزء من الواقع الحكومي.

ثانياً: عجز الحكومة عن تحويل ملف شهود الزور الذي ذكرت، وهو ملف خطير وكبير وحسّاس، على المجلس العدلي. حتى بالتصويت عجزنا.

ثالثاً: وهذه الحكومة أيضاً هي عاجزة عن مواجهة تداعيات القرار الاتهامي، هي أعجز، بالعكس هي حكومة تريد أن تواصل تمويل محكمة تتآمر على لبنان وعلى المقاومة ويكون قضاتها اللبنانيون شركاء في هذا التواطؤ وفي هذا التآمر ولاحقاً ستضع نفسها في موقف صعب عندما يأتي المدعي العام أو المحكمة وتطلب منها أن تعتقل مواطنين ظلماً وزوراً وعدواناً.
هذه الحكومة غير مؤهلة، وإجهاض المسعى العربي أكد بأن هذ1ه الحكومة غير مؤهلة لمواجهة تداعيات القرار الظني الاتهامي، وعندما يصدر القرار الظني الاتهامي ويتهم عناصر من حزب الله فعندها انتهت الأمور وانكشف البلد، فنحن لا نعرف ماذا يمكن أن يفعل الإسرائيلي أو الأميركي أو غيرهم من الذين يريدون أن يخربوا البلد من الداخل أيضاً الذين كانت رهاناتهم دائماً رهانات فتنة وصدام ماذا يفعلون؟! هذه الحكومة تركت البلد ينكشف وخصوصاً إذا كان كما أبلغنا بأن السيد بلمار أبلغ رئيس الجمهورية وأبلغ رئيس الحكومة أنه غداً سيصدر القرار الظني يوم الاثنين أو أنه الاثنين سوف يسلمه إلى فرانسين وسيعلن عن هذا الأمر يوم الثلاثاء. على كل حال لم يعد هناك وقت وهذه الحكومة ورئيس الحكومة تحديداً تصرف بما يمنع هذه الحكومة من حماية لبنان أمام أي تداعيات للقرار الظني. عندما نصبح أمام حكومة عاجزة من هذا النوع نحن نصبح شهود زور وهذا إحساس كل الوزراء ويمكنكم أن تسألوهم واحداً واحداً.

وعندما نصل إلى هذه النتيجة بل أسوأ من هذا، الناس لديهم مطالب وقد يتحركون في الشارع وكانت هناك بدايات دعوات من هذا النوع، نحن مطلوب منا أن نمنع الناس من التحرك في الشارع وأن ندافع عن الحكومة وعن سياستها وعن أدائها الذي لا يقنع أحداً. أمام هذا الواقع كله كان لا بد من الاستقالة ومن إسقاط حكومة عاجزة. إسقاط الحكومة العاجزة قد يفتح ـ وهذا ليس أكيداً مئة بالمئة لأن هذا أصبح له علاقة بالاستشارات غداً ـ قد يفتح الباب أمام لبنان لتشكيل حكومة قادرة، حكومة مسؤولة، حكومة مخلصة، حكومة تحمل العبء، حكومة حاضرة تتابع وتعالج الأمور وتتحمل المسؤوليات. إسقاط الحكومة قد يفتح الباب، أما إبقاؤها فسوف يبقي الباب مسدوداً، ولذلك كان واجبنا الوطني والأخلاقي أن نذهب إلى إسقاط الحكومة.
برأينا، خلافاً لبعض التعليقات التي سمعناها، فإن استمرار الواقع الحكومي الحالي كان مستحيلاً وظلماً للدولة، نفس الدولة ومؤسسات الدولة وللناس وهو مقتضى السلامة الوطنية وليس العكس.
سابعاً: بناءً على تشخيصنا لهذا الواقع الحكومي العاجز المترهّل ـ لا أريد أن أقول أكثر من عاجز ولا أريد أن أذهب إلى النوايا ـ بناءً على هذا التشخيص قررنا الاستقالة. نحن قمنا بخطوة دستورية وقانونية وديموقراطية وطبيعية جداً وهذا حقنا الطبيعي، نحن لم نُسقط حكومة في الشارع ولم نقطع طرقات ولم نحرق دواليب ولم نتظاهر ـ ولا مثلما يقوم البعض بالترويج بإستخدام السلاح ـ هذا لم يحصل أبداً. نحن أتينا، بشكلٍ دستوري وقانوني وديموقراطي وحضاري، أننا نحن وزراء وهذه هي أسبابنا وهذه هي استقالتنا.
ماذا حدث؟ كأن المعارضة في لبنان (لا تؤاخذوني هدّت الكعبة)، لم يبقَ أمريكا ولم يبقَ فرنسا ولم يبقَ الغرب ولم يبقَ بعض الدول العربية، ذاك بدأ يهدد بالتوتر على مستوى المنطقة وذاك.. لهذه الدرجة؟
لماذا قامت الدنيا كلها؟ خيراً إن شاء الله؟،فقط لمجرد احتمال، وليس قطع أو يقين، أن الناس إذا ذهبت في ظل الأوضاع المستجدة في لبنان إلى استشارات نيابية، احتمال أن المعارضة تُرشح إحدى الشخصيات المحترمة من الطائفة السنية الكريمة ويحظى بمسؤولية تكليف الحكومة، وبالتالي لا يأتي الرئيس سعد الحريري، لمجرد هذا الإحتمال لم تبقَ عاصمة في العالم إلا وقامت واتصلت وضغطت وأصدرت بيانات، هذا ما هو تفسيره أو فهمه؟
على كلٍ أنا أحب أن أقول في هذه النقطة، نحن في المعارضة اللبنانية نتحمل مسؤولياتنا الوطنية، وما تقتضيه هذه المسؤوليات الوطنية سنعمله، نحن لا نخاف من خطب أو من بيانات أومن تهديدات أحد في هذا العالم، نحن لم نخف لا من حروبهم ولا طائراتهم ولا أساطيلهم، فكيف تُخيفنا بياناتهم وتهديداتهم الجوفاء؟ نحن نُمارس قناعتنا وتشخيصنا لمصلحة بلدنا، ونحن الوسيلة التي اعتمدناها هي وسيلة من حقنا تماماً، بل يجب أن نُشكر عليها، أن يقال لنا: أنتم جماعة قد تعاطيتم بشكل دستوري وبشكل قانوني وضمن المؤسسات.
خرجوا من أغلب عواصم العالم كي ينتقدونا ويتهمونا، كيف هذا؟، هذا ماذا يعني؟ أنا أقول للبنانيين هل تعرفون ماذا هذا يعني؟، هذا يعني أنه ليس مقبولاً في لبنان أن يعترض أحد وأن يمارس حقاً وأن يرفع صوته، وأن يلجأ أحد إلى أي عملية إصلاح أو تغيير أو معالجة.

المطلوب من الجميع أن يستسلموا، وإذا فتحت فمك، هذه أميركا وهذا الغرب وهذه إسرائيل وهذا العالم العربي وهذه مباشرةً تُلوّح لك بالفتنة المذهبية.
هذا أمر معيب جداً وهذا يدل ويؤكد أن الفريق الآخر الذي يمشي في هذا المسار وضمن هذه الرؤية هو أين؟، هو أين؟ في أي موقع؟ في أي مشروع؟ ضمن أي رؤية؟ ولأي مصلحة هو يشتغل؟

ثامناً: من الواضح أنه حسب معلوماتي في الساعات الأخيرة، والذي أصبح له علاقة بمن نُرشح، لكن واضح لدي أن المعارضة مُجمعة على عدم تسمية الرئيس سعد الحريري لتكليفه في حكومة جديدة، نحن أصلاً في المرة الماضية لم نُسمِّ، لكن قبلنا أن نشترك في حكومة وحدة وطنية. لكن بعد هذه التجربة، أي تجربة سنة وعدد من الأشهر، وتقييمنا والمساعي وفهمنا لكل ما جرى خصوصاً في الآونة الأخيرة، نحن في هذا الموضوع واضحون في أننا لسنا في صدد هذه التسمية، ونأخذ اتجاهاً آخراً، وأنا لست في هذه الليلة بصدد أن أُعلن من هو مرشح المعارضة، هذا الأمر تُعبر عنه الكتل النيابية المعارضة غداً في الاستشارات، لكن الشيء الذي أُريد أن أسأل عنه في هذا الموضوع والذي هو استحقاق وطني ودستوري داخلي، لماذا كل العالم يتدخل فيه؟، هيلاري كلينتون، السيدة كلينتون أجرت اتصالاً إلى هنا واتصالاً إلى هنا. وليعرف اللبنانيين أن غداً يوجد استشارات نيابية ويوجد ظروف معقدة عند بعض الكتل النيابية، هذا مفهوم، ولكن يوجد معارضة وطنية لبنانية تخوض معركة الاستشارات بأدوات وطنية ويوجد فريق آخر يخوض معركة الاستشارات بتدخل ودعم دولي وإقليمي، وهذا معروف، اليوم حكومات تتدخل ووزارات خارجية تتدخل ورؤساء يتدخلون، كله باتجاه أنه لا بد أن يأتي الرئيس سعد الحريري ليعاد تكليفه لرئاسة الحكومة، هكذا توجد دولة الحرية والسيادة والإستقلال؟،
اتركوا الناس يأخذون راحتهم، ولتسمَّ الأغلبية النيابية من تريد، من الذي يأخذ أغلب الأصوات. هذا مسار ديموقراطي ودستوري، لكن عندما توجد جهات هي تستطيع أن تُشخص أين مصلحتها وكيف هي مصلحتها، أو يمكن أن لا تعطي لا مرشح المعارضة ولا مرشح الفريق الآخر ولكنها تتعرض للضغوط من قبل دول هنا ودول هناك وتهدد مصالحها، أهكذا نكون نمشي بمسار ديموقراطي وقانوني ودستوري صحيح؟ وهل رئاسة الحكومة التي تلد بمسار من هذا النوع هي دستورية بشكل واضح ونظيف ونقي؟
في الانتخابات النيابية الماضية قمنا بتقطيعها من دون أن نفتعل أي إشكال في البلد بالرغم من كل الشوائب، فعندما تكون هناك انتخابات نيابية بحجم لبنان يُنفق فيها الطرف الآخر ما يزيد عن مليار ومئتي مليون دولار، وعندما يُصبح حق الصوت في بعض الدوائر صباحاً ألف دولار وظهراً ألفين دولار وقبيل المغرب خمسة آلاف دولار، هل تكون هذه الانتخابات وهذا المجلس النيابي يُعبر عن إرادة الشعب؟ هذا الأمر قمنا بتقطيعه.
كما أريد أن أسأل: هل الاستشارات النيابية التي تحصل في ظل تدخل دولي وإقليمي وضغوط لها أول وليس لها آخر، النتيجة التي لها تكون تُعبر عن إرادة النواب الحقيقية وعن تشخيصهم للمصالح الوطنية وبالتالي عن إرادة الشعب؟ إذاً لماذا يحدث هذا التدخل؟ تصوروا أن سفيرة الولايات المتحدة الأميركية تذهب اليوم إلى زحلة لتلتقي مع النائب نقولا فتوش، لماذا؟ هل ذهبت لترى ماذا تحتاج زحلة؟، إنماء واقتصاد وفرص عمل، أم أنها ذهبت إلى النائب نقولا فتوش لأنه يتم العمل على النواب نائب نائب؟، هل الذي نراه في الإعلام، أما الذي لا نراه في الإعلام من خلف الستار فالله يعلم ما هو؟
الأسوأ من هذا كله، من هذا التدخل الدولي والتدخل الإقليمي والضغط والاتصالات لتسمية الرئيس سعد الحريري رئيساً للحكومة، مع العلم أنه لا داعي لأن يقلقوا بهذا المقدار، فبحسب الحسبة لا أحد يقول إنه متأكد أن مرشح المعارضة سينجح أو أن مرشحهم سوف ينجح، ويمكن أن يكون للوهلة الأولى أن يعتبروا أن حساباتهم هي أريح (أفضل) من حسابات المعارضة، ومع ذلك نجد التدخل، كيف لو كان مؤكداً أن مسار الاستشارات النيابية غداً وبعد غد سيؤدي إلى نجاح شخصية سنية أخرى، وفي الطائفي السنية الكريمة شخصيات كبيرة وقيادات كبيرة كفوءة ولائقة وذات تاريخ لتحمل هذه المسؤولية، فكيف لو كانت عواصم القرار والعالم متأكدة أن مرشح المعارضة سوف يفوز؟، ماذا كان يمكن أن يحدث؟، ما هو حجم التدخل الذي كنا سنتوقعه؟
أرجع وأقول الأسوأ من هذا كله، وهذا برأيي بمثابة فضيحة جديدة للسيد بلمار، أنا الذي أعرفه أنه عندما أجهضت العملية (المسعى العربي) في أميركا، أنه بدلاً من تأجيل أو استمهال القرار الظني طُلب من السيد بلمار استعجال إصدار القرار الظني، هذا جزء من المعركة، لكن الفضيحة أن السيد بلمار يبدو له أن يُبلغ أمس أن الإثنين أنا سأسلم لفرانسين الثلاثاء، ما هو هذا التوقيت؟، القرار الظني والمحكمة الدولية ـ حتى في توقيت إصدار القرار الظني ـ هو جزء من المعركة السياسية التي تُخاض في لبنان وتستهدفنا وتستهدف هذا الفريق وتستهدف المقاومة وتستهدف البلد، أليس كان يستطيع أن ينتظر إلى يوم الأربعاء؟، حتى تنتهي الإستشارات النيابية ويتكلف رئيس حكومة جديد، أليس كان يستطيع أن ينتظر إلى الخميس؟ أنا لا أقول أن القرار الظني سيصدر لكنني أعرف قطعاً أن هذا الأمر أُبلغ للدولة اللبنانية بشكل رسمي، وهذا أُعلن أيضاً في وسائل الإعلام، أنا لا أتكلم عن معلومات خاصة، أيضاً أليس كان يستطيع

أن يؤجل إلى الأربعاء أو الخميس أو الجمعة أو السبت؟، ألستَ أجّلت (بلمار) إصدار القرار شهرين أو شهراً ونصف؟، كنت تستطيع أن تؤجل إلى يومين أو ثلاثة أيام. كلا. المطلوب أن هذا الأمر يُعلن في أيام الاستشارات النيابية كجزء من التوظيف السياسي لمصلحة مرشح معين ومحدد.
هذا هو واقع الحال، أنا أحب أن أكون واضحاً وصريحاً كثيراً، يوجد الآن غداً وبعد غد وفي الأيام القليلة المقبلة مساران يمشيان في وقت واحد:
يوجد مسار الاستشارات النيابية التي ستوصل إلى تكليف رئيس حكومة جديد، ويوجد مسار السيد بلمار الذي قال أنه سيسلم القرار الظني إلى فرانسين، والإعلان عن ذلك.
سأتكلم عن المسار الأول ومن ثم سأتكلم عن المسار الثاني.
طبعاً نحن برأينا أنه تم استخدام التوقيت لمصلحة الاستشارات النيابية، لكن نحن سنتعاطى معه بشكل مفكك، يعني هذا توظيف، لكن بالنسبة لنا يوجد مساران: يوجد مسار استشارات نيابية مستقل ويوجد مسار السيد بلمار والقرار الظني كمستقل.
أياً تكن نتائج الاستشارات النيابية هذا شيء، وموضوع القرار الظني وكيفية التعاطي معه هذا شيء آخر.
في المسار الأول: نحن نعتبر أن هذا المسار ديموقراطي ودستوري وقانوني وطبيعي، وأصلاً نحن طالبنا به، نحن عندما استقلنا كنا نستطيع أن نظل في الحكومة ونُقاتل داخل الحكومة، والحكومة عاجزة ماشي الحال، وشهود الزور، ماشي الحال. كلا نحن استقلنا وطلبنا أن تصبح هذه الحكومة لتصريف الأعمال، وبالتالي يُحدد موعد للاستشارات، هذا هو المسار الطبيعي، وسيؤدي إلى نتيجة، وبمعزل عن النتيجة نحن مُشاركون في هذا المسار وسنصعد إلى القصر الجمهوري لنعطي رأينا مثل كل الكتل النيابية، طبعاً في هذا المسار القيادات السياسية والزعماء السياسيين والأحزاب التي لها نواب والنواب والكتل النيابية غداً وبعد غد عندهم مسؤولية وطنية كبيرة ومسؤولية تاريخية كبيرة، بعيداً عن التعصب والمواقف المسبقة فدعهم يقولون أين يريدون أن يأخذوا هذا البلد، وما هي الحكومة، لأنه من خلال شخص رئيس الحكومة نستطيع أن نفهم شخصية الحكومة المقبلة، ما هي الحكومة التي يريدون أن يُقدموها للشعب اللبناني؟ ما هو الأداء والممارسة التي يؤدوها أمام الشعب اللبناني، هناك وضع داخلي وهناك وضع إقليمي وفي مرحلة حرجة، أتركهم لضميرهم ومسؤوليتهم وإحساسهم وتقييمهم وبالتالي هم الذين سيصوتون ويعطون آرائهم بهذا الموضوع، ساعتئذ الإستشارات سوف تمشي ونتيجة الأصوات سيكلف رئيس حكومة وعلى ضوئها الناس تقرر كيف ستتصرف.

لقد عشنا تجربة هذه الحكومة وتجربة حكومة سابقة، بالنسبة لنا وأتكلم عن حزب الله بالتحديد، بالتأكيد هذه التجربة جديدة ولم نكن مشاركين في حكومات على مدى السنوات الماضية، ويمكن أن يكون لدينا تقييم لهذه المشاركة، وبمعزل عن هذا التقييم، أنا أحب أن يكون واضحا أنّ أي حكومة سوف تتشكل ستكون حكومة تحمل مسؤولية، بالنسبة لنا ـ وأعتقد أن بقية الأفرقاء في المعارضة يمكن أن يكون جوهم هكذا أو بهذا الوضوح والحسم ـ نحن بالنسبة لنا يستحيل علينا بعد الآن أن نسكت عن حكومة تحمي شهود الزور وقد انتهى المسار العربي، هناك ملف اسمه ملف شهود الزور متروك، الحكومة المقبلة هي التي ستقرر به هل تحوله إلى المجلس العدلي أو تتنكر له أصلا، كيف ستتصرف، هذا أصبح شأن المحكمة المقبلة. أي حكومة تحمي شهود الزور وخصوصاً إذا كانت مِمَّن صنّع شهود الزور نحن لا نستطيع أنّ نسكت عنها. أي حكومة تحمي الفساد المالي بل تدير الفساد المالي نحن لن نسكت عنها، ولا أحد يهددنا لا بالخارج ولا بالداخل وما "حدا" يرفع بوجهنا أي ألوية وأي رايات. أي حكومة لا تتحمل مسؤوليتها بشكل جدي ورسمي لمعالجة قضايا الناس الذين يعيشون على كل صعيد أسوأ الظروف الحياتية نحن لن نقدر أن نسكت عنها.

أيضا وبطريق أولى ـ وأنا لا أجامل بهذا الموضوع ـ نحن لا نطلب من الحكومة أن تحمي المقاومة ودائما كنت أقول هذا الموضوع، أيام حرب تموز نحن لم نطلب من أحد حماية المقاومة، وكل الذين حموها كانوا شرفاء وعبّروا عن ضميرهم ومسؤوليتهم وكرامتهم وإنسانيتهم ووطنيتهم وقوميّتهم. نحن دائما نطلب من الحكومة أنّ لا تتآمر على المقاومة، أن لا تحرض على المقاومة، أن لا تذهب إلى هذه العاصمة وتلك العاصمة لتحرض الحكومات والدول على المقاومة في لبنان، أي حكومة تتآمر على المقاومة ـ وأنا منذ الآن سأكون واضحا ـ نحن لن نسكت عنها، لأنّ واجبنا أن نحفظ كل عناصر القوة للبنان أمام التهديد الإسرائيلي والأطماع الإسرائيلية والأخطار الإسرائيلية القائمة والمحدقة، وكلنا نعرف في المنطقة أن لا أحد يحمي أحدا، لبنان يحميه أهله وجيشه وشعبه ومقاومته، نحن لا ننتظر أي أساطيل من أي مكان من العالم لكي تأتي لتحمي لبنان. إذا كان أحد سوف يتآمر على عناصر القوة الموجودة في لبنان حكومة أو غير حكومة نحن لن نسكت عن هذا الموضوع.

نأمل ونرجو أن يتمكن اللبنانيون أن يشكلوا حكومة قادرة وفاعلة ووطنية وأولوياتها هي فعلا أولويات الناس وتحقيق مصالحهم. وأحب أن أقول أنّ ما جرى هذه الأيام في تونس يجب أن يكون عبرة، وطبعا بالمناسبة يجب أن أبارك للشعب التونسي ثورته وانتفاضته وقيامه التاريخي، العبرة أين، ليست فقط في: "إذا الشعب يوما أراد الحياة"، العبرة في رئيس هذا النظام وفريقه الذي بقي طول عمره مع فرنسا وطول عمره مع أمريكا وطول عمره مع الغرب، وحتى مع إسرائيل كان فاتحا خطوطا، ومفهوم موقف هذا النظام من كل القضايا الأساسية في المنطقة ماذا كان، هؤلاء الذين خدمهم طوال هذه السنين لم يستقبلوه ولم يعطوه فيزا ولم يقبلوا أن تنزل طائرته في مطاراتهم، بل قالوا لكل أقاربه أنتم غير مرحب بكم "فلّو وحملو وامشو"... العبرة أنه نحن اللبنانيون والشعب اللبناني وأي شعب وأي حكومة وأي سلطة، هذا البلد يستمر إذا العالم جلست مع بعضها وفهمت على بعضها وأخذت مع بعضها، عندما قيل أنّ الـ سين سين وصل لطريق مسدود خرجت قيادات سياسية لبنانية، وهذا الموضوع طرح حتى من الرابية عندما أعلن الوزراء أعلنوا استقالتهم، وقالوا نحن نبحث عن حل لبناني لبناني، لكن إذا كنّا نحن اللبنانيون غير جديرين أن نصنع حلا وغير قادرين أن نصل إلى حل فلدينا مشكلة.

الآن إذا تدخلت أمريكا والغرب بالموضوع اللبناني فهذا سيؤدي إلى تدويل الأزمة في لبنان وسيؤدي إلى تعقيد المشكلة في لبنان وسيؤدي إلى تشابك مصالح كبيرة وخطيرة في لبنان في الوقت الذي معروف قدر مشكلتنا ونحن كلبنانيين قادرون أن نجلس ونحلها، لكن هناك إصرار من الفريق الآخر أنه لا نريد أن نحل، وحتى عندما جاء المسعى السوري ـ السعودي وكان من الممكن أن نصل إلى حل تمّ إجهاض هذا الحل وبمشاركة لبنانية.

نحن لا نقفل أبوابا أبداً، ونحن نقول أن مستقبل لبنان يتوقف على الحوار وعلى التلاقي وعلى التعاون وعلى الإيجابية ولكن إذا أراد أحد أن يستقوي على جزء من الشعب اللبناني بأمريكا وبالغرب وبالعالم فهو مشتبه مشتبه مشتبه وعليه أن يتعظ من كل التجارب التي تحصل في المنطقة.

هناك أناس سيقولون: انتظروا لتروا القرار الظني وما الأدلة التي لديه، (لكن) الأدلة التي لديه قرأناها في ديرشبيغل وقرأناها في اللوموند وقرأناها في السياسية الكويتية وفي التلفزيون الكندي وموجودة عند كل العالم ومعروف على ماذا اعتمد (القرار الظني) وعلى ماذا فُبْرِك وكيف لُفِقَ هذا الموضوع من أوله إلى آخره، ولا يوجد هناك لا سرية تحقيق ولا وثائق سرية وما في شي، وكله موجود عند كل العالم. لذلك نحن طلعنا ورفضنا هذا القرار وقلنا أنّ هذه المحكمة واقعها واحد إثنان ثلاثة أربعة وهذا التحقيق واقعه واحد إثنان ولم نطلع لنشتم ولكن طلعنا وقلنا أنّ هذه هي الوقائع وهذه هي المعطيات وهذه هي الحقائق بناء عليه وصفناها بمحكمة أمريكية إسرائيلية.

هذا مسار مستقل عن مسار الحكومة، وطبعا نحن سوف نرى ماذا سيجري غدا وبعد غد بموضوع القرار الظني وعلى ضوئه نحن سنتصرف وسندافع عن كرامتنا وعن وجودنا وعن سمعتنا، كيف سنتصرف هذا له علاقة بقيادة حزب الله وبالتشاور والتواصل مع حلفائنا ولكن بالتأكيد نحن مسؤولون أن نتعاطى مع هذا الموضوع وأعود وأقول نحن نفك المسارين عن بعضهما، وبالتأكيد على كل الذي تحدثنا به في الأشهر الماضية نحن قوم لن نسمح أن تمس سمعتنا وكرامتنا أو أن يُتآمر علينا أو أن يأتي أحد في العالم وفي الكون لِيُلَبِّسَنَا ظلما وعدوانا دم الرئيس الشهيد رفيق الحريري ولو ظنّا ولو اتهاما لأنّ هناك أناس يقولون لنا "طولو بالكم بعد المحكمة يمكن تبرّئ ويمكن ما تبرئ"، الذي وضع القرار الظني سيضع قرار المحكمة، وهذه المحكمة عند الإدارة الأمريكية وعند تل أبيب بالمطلق "وكل واحد ماشي معها هو يخدم هذا المشروع" عَلِمَ أم لم يعلم.
لذلك هذا الشق أنا أتركه للغد ولبعد غد على ضوء الذي سيصدر وسنقرأه ونراه وإن شاء الله نحن يمكن أن نقول كيف سنتصرف، والتوقيت والمضمون والكيفية لها علاقة بتشخيصنا للمصالح.
واقع الحال هكذا وهذا البلد نتيجة الأطماع به أدخل منذ سنوات في هذه المحنة وبهذه الفتنة، وطبعا أنا قراءتي والقرائن التي قدمتها في المؤتمر الصحفي سابقا أن الإسرائيليين هم الذين قتلوا الرئيس الحريري وهم الذين ارتكبوا الإغتيالات في لبنان ليعملوا تغييرا كاملا في الوضع اللبناني.
في السنوات الماضية وفي السنة الماضية والتي قبلها عبّروا (الإسرائيليون) عن إحباطهم أنّ المشروع الذي كان يعني أنّ الفريق الفلاني سيسطر على لبنان للأسف لم ينجح ولم يقدر ولم يتمكن، لكن هم لم ييأسوا وهم يكملون بالإستهداف ويكملون بمحاولة المحاصرة والعزل ويكملون بطموح السيطرة على لبنان وتحويل لبنان إلى موقع آخر تماما وإلى واقع داخلي مختلف وإلى موقع إقليمي مختلف، لكن أحب أن أقول لهم أنّه خلال كل السنين الماضية وفي أصعب الظروف وفي أشد اللحظات عندما كان جورج بوش جالسا في واشنطن (...)، وعندما كانت الجيوش الأمريكية زاحفة على العواصم العربية والإسلامية وعندما كان يحكى عن شرق أوسط جديد، نحن وقفنا هنا وكنّا هنا واستمرينا هنا.

خلال السنوات الماضية لم يبقَ شيء إلاّ واجهناه : حرب سياسية وحرب إعلامية وتضليل وتشويه وأكاذيب وحرب أمنية واغتيالات وحرب عسكرية عام 2006 وترونا اليوم نحن أين، وأعود وأؤكد أنّ المتابعين بهذا المشروع حساباتهم غلط كثيرا وأنا في خطاب سابق وفي محطات خمس حسبت لهم حساباتهم الغلط والآن هنا أيضا تحسبون غلط... مِن الممكن أن تعيد الإستشارات الرئيس سعد الحريري، لا نعرف بالنهاية ميول النواب كيف يمكن أن تذهب لكن هذا بداية لمرحلة جديدة وليس نهاية المرحلة وأنتم تحسبون غلط، وإذا كنتم تعتقدون أنه بإمكانكم أن تستعينوا بالقرار الظني لاستهداف المقاومة فأنتم تحسبون غلط كثيرا وأنا لا أحتاج أنّ أفصّل أكثر من ذلك لأنّه على ضوء ما سيقوم به السيد بلمار في هذين اليومين سيكون لي كلام آخر.
أتمنى أنّ يعين الله سبحانه وتعالى الشعب اللبناني ويعطي القيادات اللبنانية كلها الحكمة والمسؤولية والحرص والقدرة على تجاوز هذه المحن، لكن هذه طبيعة الحياة.