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Authority: EO 13526  
Chief, Records & Declass Div, WHS  
Date: SEP 05 2018

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THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE,

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301



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MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Defense Security Assistance Team to Lebanon, 1-2 November

~~TOP SECRET~~ Our team consulted with President Gemayel and his officers about your proposal that we expedite equipment and training for Lebanon. Gemayel accepted all proposals, except for the transfer of tanks from Israel. He said Mr. Begin would use this as political leverage against him. Assistant Secretary of Defense West reported to me these observations:

~~TOP SECRET~~ -- The people of Beirut are bouncing back to normal (all high schools open this week), despite the savage destruction of the city.

~~TOP SECRET~~ -- Gemayel was disturbed about recent Israeli refusals to permit Lebanese Army Forces to begin, on a small scale, to assert control in the countryside.

~~TOP SECRET~~ -- Lebanon cannot emerge as a strong, sovereign nation if so humiliated.

~~TOP SECRET~~ -- Gemayel and his senior officers genuinely see the United States and your leadership, to paraphrase Lincoln, as "the last, best hope" of Lebanon.

~~TOP SECRET~~ -- Our Marines in Beirut have high morale and competence and would like to assist in the training (exercises) of the Lebanese Armed Forces.

~~TOP SECRET~~ -- The French have offered Gemayel a \$150 million military loan, which he probably will accept.

~~TOP SECRET~~ -- The Saudis have offered aid only indirectly. We told Gemayel we would seek to be helpful in approaching Fahd and Defense Minister Sultan by preparing necessary equipment and financing lists for Gemayel to present.

~~TOP SECRET~~ -- Gemayel and his officers are convinced that they can evict any staybehind PLO ("a 60% chance we won't even have to fight them") if the Israelis and the Syrians agree to withdraw.

~~TOP SECRET~~ -- Gemayel sees the withdrawal of foreign forces as requiring US leadership "to force Sharon." The Saudis will have to use financial pressure to force the Syrians out.

~~TOP SECRET~~ -- Gemayel's senior officers believe the Israeli and Syrian withdrawal will take many months unless the US applies strong pressure on Israel, and through the Saudis, on Syria. Thus, your decision that we should expedite the withdrawal process

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will help us to come to grips with this obstacle. Your determination to respond quickly to Lebanon's military equipment needs was greatly appreciated by the Lebanese leadership.

*Paul Carter*

cc:

Sec State  
DCI  
Dep Sec State

Office of the Secretary of Defense  
Chief, RDD, ESD, WHS  
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