

~~SECRET~~

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301



POLICY

JUN 11 1982

DEP SEC HAS SEEN

10 JUN 1982

MEMORANDUM TO THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: Strategy for Lebanon: The State Paper plus Alternatives

1. The State Paper (Tab A):

First, ISA finds confusion in the assumptions on which the paper is based.

- The paper assumes that the UN resolution (for which we voted) calling "for forthwith and unconditional withdrawal" not be carried out.

- Underlining the approach in the paper, there seems to be an assumption that there has to be a substantial change in the status quo in favor of Israel, as a result of Israel's invasion of Lebanon. Of course, in the past few months we have made strenuous efforts to deter Israel from such an invasion. The paper seems to move too easily to a new position: that the accomplished fact must lead to a change in US policy.

Second, we are disturbed by the optimistic tone throughout of a paper which sets forth such difficult tasks. We need to examine the validity of such predictions as the "'emergency' in Lebanon gives them (Jordan, Morocco, Sudan, Oman and possibly Algeria) an excuse to work together in support of our plans at a cost far less than once contemplated." We see little indication that these states are looking for an "excuse" to support US (or Israeli) plans.

Third. Most importantly, ISA and OJCS are firmly opposed to the introduction of US forces into Lebanon in a peacekeeping role at this time.

- We believe that to introduce US troops between combatants without preexisting political agreements or guarantees (which, for example, pertain to the MFO) would put US lives at risk in possible continuous low-level warfare from every extremist faction in the area.

- A US peacekeeping presence in Lebanon would have a detrimental effect on US relations with Arab countries in the Persian Gulf region. Iran has now aligned itself with Syria and has offered to contribute arms. It would be difficult for the US to play a UNIPIL role and, at the same time, enhance our station in the eyes of Saudi Arabia.

~~Declassify on 10 June 1988~~

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL
Authority: EO 13526
Chief, Records & Declass Div, WHS
Date: MAR 08 2019

~~SECRET~~

12

~~SECRET~~

2

- Any such deployment could only be undertaken after a full domestic debate. We do not believe the Congress would accept such a deployment, and that the national debate which would be necessary would be most difficult in an election year.

- As a matter of policy neither of the two superpowers should take on a peacekeeping role in this particular conflict. While an enhanced UNIFIL consisting of countries more powerful than the current UNIFIL members could be useful, we should avoid US or Soviet contingents in Lebanon where the risk of direct geographic and military contact could exist.

2. ~~(S)~~ ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES:

Our goal seems to be to end the threat to Israel, restore a Lebanese government which can govern, and move the Syrians and the Israelis out of Lebanon. The problem is how to gain leverage for these purposes, simultaneously, over the PLO, the Lebanese factions, the Israelis and the Syrians. We have roughly three courses open to us:

- 1.- Stand back. Let the Israelis continue to attack the Palestinians and Syrians and, eventually, prop up a highly dependent, beleaguered Christian government in Lebanon. This Israeli course would depend on continuous use of force. It will be anathema to all Arabs, and probably to most of our European allies. It may trigger a greater Soviet role in Syria.
- 2.- Combine the above with certain actions to save face, limit damage, keep our antagonists off balance -- like calls for a cease fire in place, eventual withdrawal, establishment of an expanded peace keeping force, and a new status quo ante in southern Lebanon. This can be a short-term approach; it is acceptable to Israel and it might buy time. It will probably incur at an early date all the liabilities of the first course.
- 3.- Insist, at the price of sanctions and condemnation, that the Israelis withdraw, and use these actions to wrest commitments from the Arabs. For this to work, however, we cannot simply bail out the Arabs, but must insist on commitments by the endangered PLO to recognize Israel, and negotiate with it within the Camp David framework. For this approach to work -and it would represent a momentous breakthrough -- we would have to take a prominent role in helping to reconstruct a strong Lebanese government. But this could be the basis for a balanced and far-sighted US policy of peace in the region.

Only by the last sort of policy - with us applying pressure and conveying benefits to the parties to the conflict - can we persuade Congress to follow us in controversial issues like arms sales to Jordan.

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL
Authority: EO 13526
Chief, Records & Declass Div, WHS
Date: MAR 08 2019

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

3

Above all, DoD does not believe the USG should rush into any new commitments involving US forces or guarantees for arrangements in Lebanon that have not yet been defined. Moreover, the US must keep in mind the disproportionality between the current Israeli offensive and the recent provocation or injuries against Israel.

Signed

FRED C. IKLE

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL
Authority: EO 13526
Chief, Records & Declass Div, WHS
Date: MAR 08 2019

Office of the Secretary of Defense 5 U.S.C. §552
Chief, RDD, ESD, WHS +
Date: 08 Mar 2019 Authority: EO 13526
Declassify: Deny in Full: _____
Declassify in Part: _____
Reason: _____
MDR: 18-M-1289

~~SECRET~~

A

Page determined to be Unclassified
Reviewed Chief, RDD, WHS
IAW EO 13526, Section 3.5
Date: MAR 08 2019



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

~~TOP SECRET~~
~~8210102~~

June 9, 1982

~~SECRET~~

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. WILLIAM P. CLARK
THE WHITE HOUSE

Subject: Draft CPPG Paper

Attached is a draft paper on elements of a U.S. strategy towards Lebanon for discussion at today's CPPG meeting.

L. Paul Bremer, III
Executive Secretary

Attachment:

Lebanon: Elements of a
U.S. Strategy

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL
Authority: EO 13526
Chief, Records & Declass Div, WHS
Date: MAR 08 2019

~~SECRET~~
~~825-3-615702~~

11.7.2 1111
6/5/82

~~SECRET/SENSITIVE~~

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL
Authority FO 13526
Chief, Records & Declass Div, WHHS
Date: MAR 08 2019

LEBANON: Elements of a U.S. Strategy

The collapse of the ceasefire and Israel's invasion of Lebanon have created an entirely new situation. We have an opportunity to 1) secure Israel's northern border; 2) seek an end to the civil war in Lebanon; and 3) (perhaps) stimulate the larger peace process. Much as was the case in the wake of the October 1973 war, Middle East crisis can provide opportunity for American diplomacy.

It is clear that Israel will not withdraw without the establishment of a broad and effective buffer zone. There is no going back to the status quo ante. Not only is the former state of affairs unacceptable to the Israelis, but it is not clear that it would even be desirable. To return to a situation of inherent instability, one which held the potential for periodic eruption, would hardly serve our interests either in Lebanon or the region more generally. It is equally evident that our objective of a peaceful and pluralistic Lebanon cannot be secured so long as the rest of the country is beset by various armed militia and a Syrian occupation force.

U.S. policy?
40 km or more?

American policy must therefore move on two projects at once: a) the rapid withdrawal of Israeli forces under conditions that reduce the potential for conflict; b) the initiation of a process that will reconstitute a strengthened Lebanese central government, based on a new social pact, a reduced Syrian presence and a Lebanese-Palestinian modus vivendi.

Gyuten?

~~SECRET/SENSITIVE~~

-2-

These projects are linked in the sense that they influence each other. On the one hand, the lack of movement on a solution for the South will guarantee a state of recurring if not permanent crisis and the threat of an Israeli-Syrian war. On the other hand, the lack of a strong Lebanese central government will guarantee instability in the North that will undermine any arrangement in the South.

This linkage, however, should not be treated as a lock step. The immediate and most pressing problem -- our immediate goal -- is to bring about Israeli withdrawal under the conditions noted above. The second part of our effort, dealing with the North and all of Lebanon, can facilitate that goal and will in turn be facilitated by success in the South. But the creation of a buffer zone cannot await the necessarily more complex workings of the reordering of Lebanon's political structure.

Moreover, both elements of our policy will have a definite impact on the larger peace process in the Middle East. The character of U.S. diplomatic efforts in Lebanon will affect Israeli, Egyptian and other moderate Arab willingness to follow our lead under Camp David. Equally certain is that any political outcome in Lebanon will hold major implications for the future role of the Palestinians and the PLO. If the Palestinian issue is recognized as central to the Arab-Israeli impasse in the Middle East, so too will it prove to be in Lebanon.

The rapid success of the Israeli military operation offers us a potentially unique but certainly fleeting opportunity to

~~SECRET/SENSITIVE~~

-3-

the peace process. The longer the Israelis stay, the greater will be the harm to our interests. The main elements in an American intervention to take advantage of the situation are the following: a) highly publicized American proposals to establish both the buffer zone and a political process, thereby heading off mischief making in the U.N. and compelling Israel and other parties to the Lebanese problem to heed our agenda; b) a set of understandings among the U.S., Israel, France, key Lebanese factions, Saudi Arabia and Syria that enable us to form both a stronger peace-keeping force and to set both the Israeli withdrawal and a political process in motion; c) timed to these activities, which require an additional set of understandings with Egypt and Israel, a resumption of our previously planned push on the peace process. + PLO?

Peacekeeping Operations: There are three basic options for a peacekeeping force: a) an indigenous blend of internal Lebanese forces supported by Israel; b) a renewed UNIFIL with an expanded geographical mandate, and c) an international peacekeeping force that is outside the purview of the United Nations. The pros and cons of each are discussed below.

The Israelis have raised the possibility of an indigenous Lebanese force, apparently looking to a local coalition of Haddad's militia, the Shia community and the soldiers of the central government. Such a combination would depend upon Israeli support and the promise (or threat) of Israel intervention. It would provide a substitute for Israeli occupation,

~~SECRET/SENSITIVE~~

-4-

Lebanon, and provide a veneer, however transparent, of political legitimacy.

The problem, of course, is that the veneer of legitimacy is likely to be too thin, and the coalition -- if it could be created at all -- would be seen as mere appendage of Israeli rule. The Lebanese Government is unlikely to accept Haddad under any circumstances. International pressure to do something "more acceptable" would mount. It could also contribute to tendencies favoring the effective partition of the country. Lastly, it is not at all clear that these forces possess the capacity to uphold the peace within the enlarged area they would inherit. As a result, such an arrangement could be a recipe for repeated Israeli intervention in Lebanon.

The alternative possessing the greatest political legitimacy would be an international force sanctioned by and operating under the UN umbrella. Such an approach would provide continuity and the best chance of attracting participants. It is not without its drawbacks. Given the expanded area in question, a UN force would require not only a renewed mandate but an expanded one. (Note: The existing UNIFIL mandate expires June 19, 1982.) Not only could we expect to encounter Soviet opposition from the outset, but annual or semi-annual renewals would provide Moscow with continued leverage. Moreover, Israel, with its traditional distrust of UN-sponsored arrangements, might not accept a UNIFIL presence, especially one that would eliminate the Haddad enclave. Notwithstanding

~~SECRET/SENSITIVE~~

-5-

these problems, a UNIFIL presence under an enlarged mandate promises the best chance of arranging an international force with the political legitimacy and size that would be needed to meet the challenge. Bringing about such a force should be our first objective.

Given the probable obstacles to a UNIFIL force, we should have as a fall back an international peacekeeping force outside the United Nations. The obvious model that comes to mind is the Sinai Multinational Force. As is the case in the Sinai, such a force would be free of Security Council oversight, Soviet vetos, and would be less objectionable to the Israelis. It would, however, be more difficult to attract adequate participation without a UN imprimatur, would lack in the eyes of some sufficient legitimacy, and would not follow on smoothly from the UN force already in place.

There are considerations common to either of the international approaches. Both would require a sizeable force -- at least twice the size of their current 7,000 man UNIFIL -- and both would benefit from broad participation, i.e., a mixture of European (especially French) and non-European/Third World representation. Political realities are such that we should resist the inclusion of either local, i.e., Arab or Eastern bloc/pro-Soviet states. Regardless of the composition, however, we should not forget for a moment a basic principle of any peacekeeping operation: That even under a broadened geographical mandate the functional mandate is unlikely to change appreciably.

~~SECRET/SENSITIVE~~

-6-

The most we can expect from an internationally drawn PKO is that it will bolster and monitor the peace; it cannot maintain it in the face of direct challenges to order. Moreover, we must anticipate that contributors will require some reference or commitment to a larger political process that embraced the Palestinian issue.

A separate consideration concerns that of direct United States participation in any peacekeeping effort. More than sponsorship alone, U.S. participation would pose a tangible and dramatic demonstration of U.S. concern and commitment to stability in Lebanon. It would reassure the Israelis and contribute considerably to the deterrent value of any force. It would also provide a precedent for the region in that it is not inconceivable that a "solution" to the Middle East problem at large will someday require a U.S. presence on the ground.

There are obvious risks inherent in direct U.S. involvement in a peacekeeping force. It would provoke a great amount of domestic controversy, and would be certain to stimulate strong opposition from the Soviet camp and Arab radicals. It would kill any chance of arranging a force under UN auspices. Most important, it could prove to be a strategic error to introduce U.S. forces into the Lebanon equation prior to the establishment of a solid political framework. As is the case in the Sinai, direct U.S. participation must follow, or at least be associated with, political accommodation.

~~SECRET/SENSITIVE~~

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL
Authority: EO 13526
Chief, Records & Declass Div, WHS
Date: MAR 08 2019

-7-

The Lebanese Political Dimension: As noted earlier, it is essential that the strategic buffer/Israeli withdrawal process be accompanied by efforts to reconstitute Lebanese stability in the rest of the country. This can only be realized if the Lebanese factions, as well as the PLO, reach a political accommodation and fall in line behind a central governmental structure. While it is true that the task of finding a solution to the Lebanese civil war has defied achievement for years, Israel's invasion has changed the picture significantly and has provided new incentives to the various factions to reach agreement:

- The Lebanese were already war weary -- the Israeli invasion may have been the last straw;
- The Lebanese, the PLO, the Syrians and the international community now have a united objective -- getting the Israelis out;
- Israel appears to be supportive of some kind of Lebanese accommodation;
- even before the invasion there were signs of new flexibility among the leaders of the Phalange in terms of an accommodation with the PLO and acceptance of a narrower Syrian position in the Bikaa; and
- There has been evidence in the preparations for Lebanese Presidential selection of preference for a stronger President and central government.

1/

~~SECRET/SENSITIVE~~

-8-

These factors suggest that now is the time to try for a significant political accommodation in Lebanon. Even if the attempt fails, we will at least have facilitated the minimum objective of establishing a buffer zone in the South.

Our specific objectives would probably have to include:

- Election of a strong Lebanese President in September;
- Withdrawal of the Syrians to the Northern Bikaa;
- Insertion of Lebanese army and security forces, possibly augmented by other Arab forces in positions abandoned by the Syrians;
- Disbanding, or more realistically, phased integration of the militias, including Haddad's forces, into the central Lebanese army;
- An accord establishing the temporary status of the Palestinians pending resolution of the Palestinian problem; and
- (possibly) An economic windfall for the Central Lebanese Government.

The most recent effort to achieve a resolution of problems related to the factional fighting in Lebanon (The Bayt A-Din process) failed largely because the incentives for agreement for Syria and the PLO were inadequate and the focus of the effort was too narrow, i.e., dealing principally with a military modus vivendi in Beirut. To succeed, each of the principal parties, and particularly the outsiders, the Syrians and PLO, will have to make major concessions and will only do

~~SECRET/SENSITIVE~~

-9-

Syria: Syria has strong incentives to help resolve Lebanon's problems in order to ensure Israeli withdrawal, but it also sees continued Syrian control over the Bikaa Valley and influence on the Lebanese government as vital Syrian interests. Begin's signal to Damascus, indicating recognition of the legitimacy of Syria's security interests in the Bikaa Valley, may be of help. While we do not want to agree to the de facto partition of Lebanon, in large part ^{it} already exists. As for Syrian influence in Lebanon, the normal course of internal maneuvering to select a new President should take care of this as Syrian will be involved. If our approach does not take account of vital Syrian interests, we probably will not succeed.

The PLO: The PLO should be ready to deal. It has been mauled militarily and can anticipate no return to the status quo ante. Nevertheless, it retains significant assets in the rest of Lebanon, in other Arab capitals and in the rest of the world. The PLO can prevent a broad Lebanese accommodation just as it can attack U.S. interests both politically and using terrorism throughout the world. We can anticipate that unless we take account of the vital interests of the Palestinians, (as opposed to the PLO), i.e., resolution of the broader Palestinian problem, we will not gain the critical support we need to achieve our objectives from the Arabs and Europeans.

~~SECRET/SENSITIVE~~

~~SECRET/CONFIDENTIAL~~

-10-

In the context of our international efforts in Lebanon, we will want to focus attention on the Palestinian problem in its Lebanese dimension and prevent others from trying to broaden the discussion to resolution of the Palestinian problem vis-a-vis Israel. To accomplish this, we will have to demonstrate to our European allies and Arab friends that we are fundamentally committed to resolve this larger problem and have the best chance of doing so in the context of the peace process in which we are engaged.

The Peace Process: You are fully aware of the venue problem we face in pushing forward on the peace process. We will also face a problem of moving forward with autonomy negotiations so long as Israel remains in Lebanon. The process is at risk and yet it is absolutely vital that we move forward now. We see two aspects to the problem -- the autonomy talks themselves and European and Arab attitudes toward them. We have rightly concentrated on the talks up until now, but given the almost inevitable delay we face in the talks and the focus the Lebanese crisis is placing on the Palestinian problem, it may be appropriate to reconsider our immediate emphasis while we seek to arrange Israeli withdrawal. We will be sending you a separate paper on our options in this regard, linking our need for Arab support to attain our objectives in Lebanon with our need for Arab and particularly Jordanian support in the peace process.

~~SECRET/CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~SECRET/SENSITIVE~~

-11-

In a larger sense, the crisis may also present the opportunity -- in combination with the Iran-Iraq war -- to effect a rapprochement between Egypt and such states as Saudi Arabia and Jordan. The "emergency" in Lebanon gives them (Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia, Sudan, Oman and possibly Algeria) an excuse to work together in support of our plans at a cost far less than once contemplated. Our objective would be not only to gain a stronger Arab voice pushing for political accommodation in Lebanon, but even more importantly, to give these countries a sense of participation and identification with U.S. efforts. Rapid movement to achieve this kind of support could go a long way toward moderating the immediate current negative impact of Israel's invasion on our strategic objectives in these countries.

A last note concerning the U.S.S.R. A Soviet Union with its prestige committed to success could be a strong factor in reaching an agreement, but in our view, this is not the Soviet Union we would encounter. The Soviets are more likely to seize on this opportunity to engage the Palestinian problem and try to confront the U.S. with a stark choice between Israel and Camp David on the one hand, and losing Arab support on the other. The Soviets should be left out, but this does not mean excluded. Our efforts with the Soviets can be through bilateral means, pursued with sufficient intensity to put them off balance and force them into the position, of supporting, or opposing, an

~~SECRET/SENSITIVE~~

-12-

internationally-backed initiative. We anticipate that on this basis the Soviet ability to make mischief will be checked, although it cannot be eliminated.

Conclusion: The case is overwhelming for a two staged U.S. initiative in Lebanon that aims at the minimum objective of an Israeli withdrawal with a strategic buffer zone and at the maximum objective of restoring a viable central Lebanese government. The key remaining issues are whether this initiative should be launched sooner or later and with more consultation and agreement before any public announcements or less.

There are strong reasons to lay the groundwork carefully before investing enormous prestige in this tangled situation. But the dangers of delay mount with each day. Many consultations have already been undertaken and Phil Habib may still have a chance at reaching an Israeli-Syrian understanding we will need for a ceasefire, based on a restricted definition of both Israeli objectives and Syrian security concerns. Waiting might only serve to bring into being new political and military realities which could frustrate our objectives.

We believe the emerging situation justifies going ahead. Our plans for the South incorporate Israel's basic demands. Our plans for the rest of Lebanon are founded upon some strong local interests. On balance, we ought to seize the moment while we have a chance to shape uncertainties to our advantage.