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**MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT**

From: George P. Shultz  
 Caspar W. Weinberger

Subject: Next Steps in Lebanon

(S) As we move on negotiations regarding Lebanon, we need to make some key decisions. We seek a rapid withdrawal by all foreign forces and Government of Lebanon sovereignty throughout Lebanon. However, we believe the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) cannot currently assume the security role required by such a withdrawal and will not be able to do so for at least six months and more likely a year. On the other hand, we have wanted to avoid the prolongation of the MNF, and extended US involvement. There are three courses of action.

(S) 1. Withdraw the Multinational Force (MNF) before Christmas and accept a year or more delay before full Syrian/Israeli/PLO withdrawal. Seek immediate political agreements for the withdrawals. Try for an immediate disengagement in central Lebanon (commonly known as Step 1 Phase II) without MNF participation. Stretch out further foreign force withdrawals in a step-by-step fashion over the next year or more.

(S) We do not recommend this option, because without MNF, the agreements have a higher chance of breaking down leading to renewed large-scale violence.

(S) 2. The second option is to negotiate under the assumption that the MNF, not the LAF, will be the critical glue for the next year or so. We must then act to expand and extend the MNF very quickly, if our goal is the withdrawal of the Israelis, Syrians and PLO by year's end. This probably means 15,000 more MNF troops -- or as many as 30,000. Part of this requirement may be met by UNIPIL. A major MNF commitment would be necessary because of the lack of LAF capacity to assume control in Lebanon outside the central part. It is very unlikely that the US could avoid the leadership role and a major participation in such an MNF. Our participation would be necessary to gain that of others, and is the symbol of our political commitment to Lebanon's security. This could mean the long-term involvement of substantial US forces. In this option, because the MNF would also have to assist and operate closely with the LAF, there would be a high risk of hostilities.

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(S) We do not recommend this options because it would require a substantial increase in the size of the MNF (including possibly the US contribution) as well as a greater risk to the forces committed.

(S) 3. The third option is to place primary emphasis upon strengthening the Lebanese Armed Forces and Internal Security Force, while temporarily expanding the MNF role. If the Syrians, Israelis and PLO agree to a first step disengagement of forces in central Lebanon, the MNF role should be expanded somewhat to provide political and psychological backing for Gemayel and the LAF. Both MNF and LAF units would occupy the vacated areas. At the same time, over the next several months, we would concentrate on strengthening the LAF, including one brigade which might go south to provide a zone of security for the Israelis. MNF forces could be drawn down as LAF improves. But it will be at least six months and probably a year or more before the LAF can reasonably assert control and the full withdrawal of Israeli, Syrian and PLO troops can occur. The greatest risk at this point might be that the PLO will not cooperate, tying the MNF down in Lebanon for a long period.

(S) We recommend this option, since it diminishes US risks and places responsibility for the security of Lebanon where it belongs: with the Lebanese armed forces. To succeed, we must be firm with Israel and Syria, we must insist that the Saudis and others be equally firm with the PLO, and we must make a maximum effort to strengthen LAF.

(S) The JCS have analyzed requirements implied by Option 3 for a disengagement involving MNF interposition deployments. More MNF forces would be needed to man key terrain. (One brigade under Israeli plan; two brigades if Southern Bekaa included.) These forces would have to be supported by logistics personnel, plus the current MNF in Beirut, plus intelligence and surveillance operations and some form of International Observer Force (IOF). In other words, MNF requirements under Option 3 would be larger than could be met by the MNF now in Beirut.

(S) Whichever option is chosen, it should be noted that US is already carrying a heavy MNF burden, with our Marine Ready Group and our 6th Fleet Carrier Battle Group tied down, plus logistics activities, intelligence and surveillance activities, and efforts to revitalize LAF and ISF. There are a number of factors which bear consideration:

- Other nations must be brought in, e.g., UK, Norway, Spain, Morocco, Korea, Indonesia, Greece, etc. These nations

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should recognize the large, indirect contribution the US is already making.

- US forces need not be increased as the source of infantry battalions for Option 3, if others participate.

- A major US crash effort to strengthen LAF and ISP. This will mean large US Military Assistance Group in Beirut, at least 100 US military trainers, substantial diversion from US Army stocks and a sizable FY 1983 FMS Supplemental (perhaps in the neighborhood of \$ million) as well as firm pressure on France and Saudi Arabia to contribute.

Specific Recommendations

(S) 1. That you direct extraordinary measures, including with the Congress and other nations, to strengthen Lebanese forces.

(S) 2. That you direct a maximum diplomatic effort to move the PLO out of the north.

(S) 3. That you direct US support for negotiations aimed at immediate disengagement.

- Lebanese-Israeli negotiations with US participation

- Lebanese-Syrian negotiations

- US insistence upon diplomatic and financial leverage to move out the PLO

(S) 4. Authorize our negotiators to say the US is positive about US participation in an interim MNF deployed along the Beirut-Damascus highway between the Syrian and Israeli forces which had pulled back from their current locations. At the same time, direct efforts to bring in other nations.

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