

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

October 2, 1982

Dear Mr. President:

I am in receipt of your letter of September 19.

As I have already stated publicly, I share the revulsion of the entire American people for the deplorable events which have recently occurred in Beirut, including the murder of President-elect Bashir Gemayel and the appalling massacre of Palestinian refugees. These outrages are links in a tragic chain of events which has its source in the destruction of Lebanese national integrity in the 1970s.

You will recall that, in a previous communication to you, I noted that, while the U.S. and Israel enjoy close and friendly relations, Israel is a sovereign state. I must, therefore, categorically reject as inappropriate in a communication between us your allegations concerning Israeli conduct in Lebanon and your implied accusation that my government was in a position to prevent the recent massacre in Beirut but failed to do so. If the Soviet Government has representations to make concerning Israeli conduct, it should communicate directly with the Government of Israel.

As I had occasion to inform you previously, the United States has done and continues to do all in its power to put an end to the civil war and foreign military intervention in Lebanon. Together with the Governments of Italy and France, the United States has agreed to reconstitute the Multinational Force in Beirut. The task of this force is to help the Lebanese Government reestablish its authority. The force will be withdrawn when its mission in support of the Government of Lebanon has been completed.

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The cause of peace in Lebanon is not advanced by groundless accusations. The immensely complex and volatile situation in that country requires that the level of rhetoric be scaled down. If the Soviet Union wishes to contribute to the restoration of peace in Lebanon, it can do so best by seeking to reconcile the parties involved rather than making ill-founded and inflammatory public charges.

Sincerely,

Ronald Reagan

His Excellency
Leonid Ilich Brezhnev
President of the Presidium of the
Supreme Soviet of the Union of
Soviet Socialist Republics
Moscow