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July 14, 1983

*PR*

NATIONAL SECURITY PLANNING GROUP MEETING

DATE: Friday, July 15, 1983  
 LOCATION: The Situation Room  
 TIME: 11:00 a.m.-12:00 Noon  
 FROM: WILLIAM P. CLARK *WPC*

I. PURPOSE

To review our strategy for obtaining the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon in preparation for the visits of President Gemayel and Prime Minister Begin. To review our options in the event the Government of Israel declares its intention to proceed with partial withdrawal.

II. BACKGROUND

As the visits to Washington by President Gemayel and Prime Minister Begin approach, the Lebanese and the Israelis are diametrically divided on the issue of a possible Israeli redeployment. Moreover, the prominence of this issue has been heightened by Syria's continuing obduracy on any negotiations for Syrian withdrawal. There is great political pressure in Israel on the Begin government as a consequence of the steady casualty toll in Lebanon and the apparently dim prospects for any relief soon of Israel's troubling involvement there.

On the other hand, Lebanon vehemently opposes any Israeli redeployment that is not linked to a full withdrawal and which entails the exchange of the instruments of ratification for the Lebanon-Israel agreement. President Gemayel's fear is that a redeployment would lead to consolidation of both the Syrian and Israeli occupation forces, resulting in de facto partition and removing the incentive for any further Israeli and Syrian withdrawal. As an objective matter, there is indeed grave risk of de facto partition as both Israel and Syria appear equally prepared to remain in Lebanon indefinitely. Lebanon's weak government might not be able to withstand this challenge in its present form. There are some indications that the Lebanese would not be as vehemently opposed to an Israeli partial withdrawal which was conducted outside the Lebanon-Israel agreement.

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BY LOJ NARS DATE 4/27/06

There are different redeployment options, ranging from minor adjustments of the IDF presence in the greater Beirut area to a phased pullback to the Awwali River, just north of Sidon. (The Israeli military has apparently decided on a "tactical" redeployment to the Awwali River which would be phased over six weeks). There is a similar range of political risk for the GOL, with Israeli redeployment out of the sensitive Shuf area presenting the greatest difficulty. The U.S. reaction to Israeli redeployment will, therefore, need to be conditioned on the extent of the IDF pullback. It should be underscored that any redeployment should be conducted in an incremental and gradual fashion, both to maximize opportunities for the GOL to establish the necessary political accommodations and to minimize the difficulties for the LAF as it moves into sensitive areas.

The issues which we will have to consider first have to do with our response to:

-- An Israeli request for US pressure on the GOL to implement the Agreement preparatory to a partial withdrawal by IDF.

-- Requests by the GOL that the US and other MNF contributors deploy with the Lebanese Armed forces into the areas vacated by the Israelis.

In the course of the meeting you will be briefed on the several options we have for dealing with the issues. George will also want to raise some broader questions about how to persuade the Syrians and the Israelis to consider full withdrawal options. Both George and Phil Habib will stress the importance of sticking to our overall objectives, namely total withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon and progress on the September 1 peace initiative. Phil, in particular, feels very strongly that we have a moral commitment to the Gemayel government and should not associate ourselves directly in any partial withdrawal proposal not linked to full withdrawal. This does not mean we would not help the Lebanese after the fact, but that we should not appear to condone such Israeli action.

I recommend that you convey your understanding of Lebanese concerns about any Israeli partial withdrawal which is not linked to a plan for complete withdrawal. You might propose that our first goal must be to delay an Israeli partial withdrawal. In the event that it nevertheless takes place, you should express our readiness, in principle, to help the GOL reestablish its authority in the areas which may be vacated by the Israeli forces. On the latter point, I further suggest that you indicate our willingness to be responsive to specific Lebanese proposals for the MNF in close coordination with our co-contributors. Talking points for your summary of the meeting are at Tab A.

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III. PARTICIPANTS

The Vice President  
Secretary of State Shultz  
Secretary of Defense Weinberger  
William P. Clark, National Security Advisor  
The Director of Central Intelligence  
UN Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick  
Chairman, JCS, John Vessey

IV. PRESS PLAN

None.

V. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

See Agenda at Tab B.

Attachments:

Tab A - Talking Points with 3x5 cards  
Tab B - Agenda for NSPG meeting

cc Vice President  
Ed Meese  
Jim Baker  
Mike Deaver

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NATIONAL SECURITY PLANNING GROUP MEETING  
FRIDAY, JULY 15, 1983  
11:00 a.m. - 12:00 NOON  
SITUATION ROOM

AGENDA

- 1. Introduction. William P. Clark  
(5 minutes)
- 2. Intelligence briefing: William J. Casey  
(10 minutes)
  - Situation in Israel:  
Pressure for withdrawal.
  - Domestic political situation  
in Lebanon: Prospects for  
confessional strife.
  - The PLO split and its effect  
on fighters in Lebanon
  - Syrian reactions to partial Israeli withdrawal.
- 3. Options in the face of partial  
withdrawal: George P. Shultz  
(15 minutes)
  - Status of the Lebanon-Israel  
Agreement.
  - Prospects for political  
agreement between the GOL  
and the confessional groups.
  - U.S. options in response to an  
Israeli decision on partial  
withdrawal.
- 4. The role of the MNF in the event of  
partial withdrawal: Caspar Weinberger  
(15 minutes)
  - IDF tentative plans (as  
briefed to DoD).
  - Lebanese proposals for MNF  
deployments.
  - French, Italian, and U.K. responses  
to GOL requests.
  - U.S. options for employment of the  
US MNF.
- 5. Issues for Decision. William P. Clark  
(10 minutes)
- 6. Summary. DECLASSIFIED

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