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NATIONAL SECURITY PLANNING GROUP MEETING

DATE: Wednesday, July 20, 1983
LOCATION: White House Situation Room
TIME: 2:00-3:00 p.m.
FROM: William P. Clark *WPC*

I. PURPOSE

To review our options for dealing with the major issues that will arise in the course of the Gemayel visit. To decide on a course of action which will help the Government of Lebanon cope with the most pressing problems. To approve, in broad outline, near-term strategies for dealing with Syria and Israel on withdrawal from Lebanon.

II. BACKGROUND

From preliminary discussions with Lebanese Foreign Minister Elie Salem, it is clear that President Gemayel will draw upon your earlier commitment of support and ask for our ideas and assistance in coping with several urgent problems. He will be very anxious to get a commitment of our continuing support for a full withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon. In particular, Gemayel will want our help in resisting Israeli pressures for "tactical redeployments" unless they are clearly linked to a schedule for full withdrawal. However, should the Israelis nevertheless decide to redeploy, say to the Awwali, the Lebanese will want our help in coordinating the movement of the Lebanese Army and the MNF to backfill for the withdrawing Israelis. Finally, Gemayel may not ask directly for our help in resolving some of the most pressing confessional conflicts, but we may want to consider what we could do to help Gemayel reach agreement with the Druze and the Christians in particular. There is little doubt that it will be very difficult for Gemayel or Wazzan to reach agreement with the factions without some help from trusted third parties. We should consider this now, because a sudden Israeli redeployment could trigger a bloody fight in the Shuf and elsewhere, leaving us to pick up the pieces of a shattered consensus.

Beyond these time-urgent issues for decision, Gemayel will be very interested in discussing how we deal with Syrian intransigence. The Foreign Minister has been pressing us

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hard for ideas and it is clear that the Lebanese are increasingly anxious for new initiatives and reassurances that we will have an active policy for inducing or pressuring Syrian withdrawal.

The NSPG meeting is structured in a way which permits me to introduce the issues for your consideration and decision:

- Our position on Israeli partial withdrawal or redeployment.
- Our readiness to use the MNF in support of the LAF if the Israelis redeploy.
- Our willingness to facilitate agreements between the Gemayel Government and the dissident Lebanese factions.
- Our strategy for dealing with Syria.

I have asked Bill Casey to summarize the latest intelligence on Israeli intentions regarding partial withdrawal as well as the Lebanese internal picture. State and Defense will then present the options for dealing with each of the specific issues under consideration. Following our discussion of options, we have budgeted time for you to summarize the meeting and to issue the necessary guidance. We can, in any event, prepare a decision directive following the meeting to ensure that we are all singing from the same sheet of music during the Gemayel visit.

Talking points for you to summarize the meeting are at Tab A.

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