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RDS-3, 7/6/02

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-- But the recent IDF moves around West Beirut have clearly been counterproductive. Rather than keeping the PLO focused on the need to negotiate their departure under reasonable terms, you have created a situation in which the Lebanese people have suffered and the Lebanese government leaders have been humiliated and rendered incapable of conducting negotiations.

-- We are, I believe, entirely realistic about situations such as this: a certain degree of continuing pressure is necessary to keep negotiations moving. Diplomacy must be backed by strength and an awareness that strength may be employed.

-- Recent Israeli actions regarding essential public services for West Beirut, the crossing points between West and East, and the ceasefire in place, have had an extremely deleterious effect on our hopes for progress toward objectives which we once thought were shared by Israel and the U.S.

-- Speaking frankly, the actions of the IDF around Beirut over the past 72 or so hours have made it impossible for Ambassador Habib to proceed with his negotiations. As you are aware, situations such as this are never simply stalemated; if there is no progress, deterioration sets in.

-- We are profoundly concerned about the recent trend of events. It is for this reason, on the instruction of the President, that I have asked you to come in.

-- As I am sure you are aware, this may be the most serious moment in these many difficult days of seeking a solution to the West Beirut problem.

JULY 6, 1982

AMBASSADOR ARENS

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THE ACTING SECRETARY ( ) COADR  
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-- We expect Israel and its forces to cooperate with Ambassador Habib's effort to achieve a negotiated outcome to the West Beirut problem.

-- I have been instructed to tell you that the U.S. will not have any part in such a solution. Neither our diplomacy nor our military forces will participate in, or be seen as accomplices to any such outcome.

-- The question has been raised whether Israeli forces may not be seeking to undermine any hope of a negotiated solution while unilaterally pressuring the PLO to evacuate Beirut without a negotiated agreement.

-- Indeed, we are now faced with the troubling question of whether Israel continues to support this tremendous effort we are engaged in--to achieve a negotiated solution that brings about the departure of the PLO leaders and fighters from Beirut and helps the Lebanese regain control over their own capital.

-- It troubles me greatly to say it, but the recent conduct of Israeli forces around Beirut has not seemed fully to accord with the statements and assurances we have received from Jerusalem.

-- There is no need for me to tell you how deeply involved the U.S. is in this matter--diplomatically, morally, and now perhaps militarily. The President has asked me to tell you that he will not let America's good name be trilled with in any of these respects.

-- Now however we face a situation in which the Lebanese government has been seriously hurt and our credibility as an honest negotiator is being compromised.

-- Our goal throughout has been to strengthen the government of Lebanon in order to restore an independent nation free of foreign forces and able to conceive of peace with Israel. We understood that you shared this goal.

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--I ask you to convey this to the Prime Minister and want to stress once again that I am speaking on the instructions of President Reagan.

-- If we do not see such cooperation in the next hours we will have no choice but to consider other ways to preserve America's credibility and salvage the situation in West Beirut. I cannot specify what these will be, but I can tell you that we will have to consider steps such as withdrawing Ambassador Habib from Beirut and issuing an explanatory statement to the public, or, if the Lebanese government negotiators continue to be impeded by IDF checkpoints and other harassing measures, to instruct Ambassador Habib to undertake direct negotiations with those in West Beirut.

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