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SYSTEM II
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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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October 28, 1982

National Security Decision
Directive Number 64

NEXT STEPS IN LEBANON (X)

After careful consideration of the situation in Lebanon, I have decided that the United States must now take bold and timely initiatives to obtain the early withdrawal of all foreign military forces not later than by the end of this year. Such actions are essential if Lebanon is to become once more a sovereign, independent country and if the broader objectives contained in the U.S. peace initiative are to succeed. By exercising our leadership so far, we have already made substantial progress in restoring order to Lebanon. Furthermore, we know from our recent negotiations that there are strong incentives for all the occupying powers to withdraw their forces quickly. We must now move to exploit these conditions. (X)

Our strategy for this next phase in the restoration of Lebanon has two principal objectives. First, we seek, and we will facilitate, the prompt disengagement and quickest orderly withdrawal of Israeli, Syrian and Palestinian armed forces from Lebanon. Secondly, we must strengthen the ability of the Government of Lebanon to control, administer, and defend its sovereign territory. (X)

To achieve these objectives, we must provide leadership and strong support to the Government of Lebanon. We must undertake, on a priority basis, a systematic program to rebuild the Lebanese security forces to maintain security within the country and improve the Lebanese Government's ability to assume its responsibilities as quickly as possible. We must also be prepared to contribute additional U.S. forces to a multinational force (MNF). (X)

I cannot overemphasize the sense of urgency and importance I attach to this mission. I would like you to develop a diplomatic strategy and supporting plans to achieve our twin objectives. I would also like for you to provide me, as the negotiations unfold and we have a better idea of the mission of the force, estimates of the size, composition, recommended

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deployment and employment of the MNF to assist in meeting security requirements until the Lebanese can progressively assume their responsibilities as the MNF gradually withdraws. Recognizing that a significant increase in security assistance for Lebanon will be required, I would also like to have your plans for aiding the Government of Lebanon, including diplomatic, budgetary and legislative proposals. While I think it is essential that we take the lead in the diplomatic effort and make a substantial contribution to the supporting military effort, we should make every effort to secure the timely and credible participation of other countries who share our objectives. ~~(X)~~

I recognize that there are substantial risks in these undertakings which will confront our forces and those of our friends. However, mindful of the recent tragic history of this traditionally friendly country and the opportunity which now exists to further the cause of peace between Israel and all its neighbors, we cannot let this historic moment pass. Clearly, our initiatives and our commitment to Lebanon's independence will further strengthen our credibility and demonstrate our determination to continue the progress we have already made. ~~(X)~~

Ronald Reagan

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