



MINISTER OF STATE FOR
THE ARMED FORCES

D/MIN(AF)/JS/5/3/56

16 February 1984

Prime Minister

LEBANON

- with
ABC?*
1. I have seen the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary's minute to you of 16 February dealing with the question of attendance of a BRITFORLEB Liaison Officer at MNF Coordination Committee meetings.
 2. I note the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary's judgement that attendance by the ADA already based in Beirut would not be sufficient evidence of our continued association with the MNF, and that BRITFORLEB representation is needed to maintain our credibility in this respect. This is clearly a matter of diplomatic judgement; on this basis I am content that we should do what he suggests for the time being. I also agree that the BRITFORLEB officer (and his two supporting staff) should be based at the Embassy; this would also avoid the additional risks in ferrying him between RELIANT and Beirut for each meeting (as demonstrated by the gunfire directed at the US Commander en route to last Tuesday's meeting).
 3. If you agree the Foreign Secretary's proposal, I must only ask that we leave the precise timing of the return to Beirut of the British officer and his party to the discretion of the Commanding Officer of BRITFORLEB in the light of the security situation on the ground.
 4. I understand that Michael Heseltine would also support the course of action proposed by the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary.
 5. I am sending a copy of this minute to the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary.

Jps

Ministry of Defence

LEBANSOW: hut Sir PAB



MINISTER OF STATE FOR
THE ARMED FORCES

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CONFIDENTIAL



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

17 February, 1984.

Lebanon

The Prime Minister has seen the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary's minute of 16 February about the question of attendance by a BRITFORLEB officer at the MNF Coordination Committee.

Mrs. Thatcher agrees that a BRITFORLEB representative should attend MNF meetings until further notice.

I am sure that Mrs. Thatcher would accept the point in paragraph 3 of Mr. Stanley's minute of 16 February - namely that we leave the precise timing of the return to Beirut of the British Officer and his party to the discretion of the Commanding Officer of BRITFORLEB in the light of the security situation on the ground.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Richard Mottram (Ministry of Defence).

A. J. COLES

P.F. Ricketts, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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