



10 DOWNING STREET

US Declassified

cc MASTER OPS

THE PRIME MINISTER

4 November 1983

**PRIME MINISTER'S  
PERSONAL MESSAGE  
SERIAL No. T175/83**

Dear Ron,

Thank you for your message of 24 October. I entirely agree that we cannot let the outrageous attacks on the Multi-National Force deflect us from our task. We must continue our efforts to enable the legitimate Government of Lebanon to pursue a peaceful solution in the reconciliation talks.

You will have had an account of the meeting which George Shultz and Geoffrey Howe attended in Paris on 27 October. I was somewhat relieved to note that George Shultz made it clear that there would be no hasty reaction on your part by way of retaliation for the attacks on your Marines. I know you will think twice and three times before doing anything which could damage the process of reconciliation and put in further danger the contingents in the MNF.

As agreed at the Paris meeting, we are putting what pressure we can on all the participants in the Geneva talks. If a more broadly based Lebanese Government can be constructed, that will be a major step forward.

As Geoffrey Howe also mentioned, we have been giving some thought to the longer term. I think we should try to agree urgently on a common approach among the Four on the future of the MNF.

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We share a number of common objectives, for example, withdrawal of all foreign forces and the creation of conditions in which the MNF can itself withdraw. At the Paris meeting it was agreed that the four Foreign Ministers should look at this again in the margins of the NATO Ministerial meeting in December. But I believe that it would be worth getting US and British officials together before then to work on a common approach. There are no easy answers, but the ceasefire and the Geneva Conference represent hard won achievements, and we must work out together how to build on them.

News of further senseless bloodshed in Lebanon today only underlines the urgency of achieving a solution.

*Y  
Lynn  
Ragans*  

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The President of the United States of America

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10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

4 November 1983

Lebanon

You enclosed with your letter of 3 November a draft message for the Prime Minister to send to President Reagan in reply to his message of 24 October.

A message on the lines of your draft was approved by the Prime Minister and despatched on the hot line this afternoon. I now enclose a signed version and would be grateful if you would arrange for its delivery.

**A. J. COLES**

Peter Ricketts, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

3 November 1983

Dear John,

Type message pl.

*[Signature]* 3.  
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Lebanon: Message from President Reagan

We discussed the draft message contained in my letter of 31 October. Sir Geoffrey Howe has given further consideration to the terms in which the Prime Minister might reply to the President, and I now enclose a new draft.

We have also just seen Washington telegram number 3283 (copy enclosed) in which Sir O Wright recommends a message from the Prime Minister on the occasion of the ceremony at Fort Le ~~Jeune~~ in honour of the US marines killed in Beirut. I have not yet shown this telegram to the Foreign Secretary but in view of the time factor the Prime Minister might wish to add a point, along the lines suggested by Sir O Wright, to the enclosed draft. If so, you might feel that the two sentences in the Washington telegram would be better reversed.

*Yours ever,*

(P F Ricketts)  
Private Secretary

*Peter Ricketts*

A J Coles Esq  
10 Downing Street

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DSR 11 (Revised)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:

Reference

THE PRIME MINISTER

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Your Reference

Top Secret

PRESIDENT REAGAN

Secret

Copies to:

Confidential

Restricted

Unclassified

PRIVACY MARKING

SUBJECT: LEBANON: MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT REAGAN

.....In Confidence

Thank you for your message of 24 October. ~~As you know~~  
I entirely agree that we cannot let the outrageous attacks on the Multi-National Force deflect us from our task. We must continue our efforts to enable the legitimate Government of Lebanon to pursue a peaceful solution in the reconciliation talks.

CAVEAT.....

You will have <sup>led</sup> ~~seen~~ an account of the meeting which George Shultz and Geoffrey Howe attended in Paris on 27 October. I was somewhat relieved to note that George Shultz made it clear that there would be no hasty reaction on your part by way of retaliation for the attacks on your Marines. I know you will think twice and three times before doing anything which could damage the process of reconciliation <sup>and put in further danger</sup> ~~In addition, I am sure you will accept that further military action by any of the MNF contributors would endanger all the contingents in~~  
~~the MNF.~~

Enclosures—flag(s).....

As agreed at the Paris meeting, we are putting what

Pressure we can on all the participants in the Geneva talks. If a more broadly based Lebanese Government can be constructed, that will be a major step forward.

As Geoffrey Howe also mentioned, we have been giving some thought to the longer term. I think we should try to agree urgently on a common approach among the Four on the future of the MNF. We share a number of common objectives, for example, withdrawal of all foreign forces and the creation of conditions in which the MNF can itself withdraw. At the Paris meeting it was agreed that the four Foreign Ministers should look at this again in the margins of the NATO Ministerial meeting in December. But I believe that it would be worth getting US and British officials together before then to work on a common approach. There are no easy answers, but the ceasefire and the Geneva Conference represent hard won achievements, and we must work out together how to build on them.