

~~Prime Minister~~

Sir J. Leahy will be at the
briefing meeting tomorrow and could
discuss further than A.S.C. 23.

From: Sir J Leahy

Date: 23 November 1983

cc: Private Secretary
PS/PUS

Mr Coles ✓

N.B. P.R.

[Signature] 24.
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LEBANON

1. I understand that the Prime Minister was asking earlier today about discussions we have been having with our European partners concerning a possible public statement on the Lebanon emanating from the European Council meeting.

2. Heads of Government will inevitably have to say something on the Middle East. With that and the desirability of focussing attention on the earliest possible withdrawal of the MNF in mind, we have floated some ideas of our own about what such a statement might say. We have also consulted the Americans. They have expressed concern that a European statement would not be helpful at this point because they think it would risk easing the pressure which they believe the Syrians to be under to make concessions over the Lebanese negotiations. At the same time they have suggested some drafting changes to improve the wording from their point of view if a statement is to be made. We have now incorporated most of these, but in one important respect, namely a specific reference to the 17 May Israel-Lebanon agreement, we have not done so because we are certain that we could not get agreement on it among the Ten. Moreover the American attitude on this, which is very much influenced by the current state of their relations with Israel, is at variance with President Gemayel's decision in the Geneva talks to let the agreement be set on one side.

3. The latest position after the meeting of European Ministers yesterday (attended by Mr Rifkind) is set out in UKREP Brussels telegram number 4067.

4. If the Prime Minister wants more information perhaps this could be done orally (if you see a chance)?

John Leahy