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ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

I-06821/83
8 MAR 1983

INTERNATIONAL
SECURITY AFFAIRS

Robert D. Joseph, President
National Association of Arab Americans
1825 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Suite 211
Washington, D.C. 20009

Dear Mr. Joseph:

On behalf of Secretary Weinberger, thank you for your letter of February 4 regarding Israeli use of US military equipment in Lebanon. As you know, the Administration is examining the propriety of Israel's use of US equipment during last summer's hostilities. President Reagan, in his pursuit of a negotiated withdrawal of Israeli, Syrian and PLO forces from Lebanon, is determined to ensure the security of Israel in the process. We believe that the recent misunderstandings between Israeli soldiers and Multinational Forces have been cleared up, and we anticipate no further incidents. The President and Secretary Weinberger will continue to pursue the objectives of a strong and fully sovereign government in Lebanon and a broadening of negotiations for peace between Arabs and Israel. In this process, US credibility and goodwill with all parties concerned will be very important.

If you are interested, I would be interested in meeting with you to discuss these issues more fully.

Sincerely,

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
(INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS)

OSD 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(6)

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OFFICE OF
THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ARAB AMERICANS

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February 4, 1983

The Honorable
Caspar W. Weinberger
Secretary of Defense
The Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301

Feb 4 1983

Dear Mr. Secretary:

On behalf of the National Association of Arab Americans and its members, I would like to express our grave concern for the safety of American forces in Lebanon in light of the series of confrontations that have recently taken place between Israeli troops and American soldiers of the Multinational Force. We support the vigorous stand the Reagan Administration is taking to ensure that such incidents are not repeated and we further applaud the determination of the U.S. Marines to carry out their assigned role in Lebanon.

The NAAA has taken the position that Israeli use of American military equipment, at a cost of thousands of innocent lives, to occupy and retain parts of Lebanon has been a violation of the U.S. Arms Export Control Act and other agreements pertaining to the use of American arms. This violation is all the more serious because American economic and military aid is now being used by Israel to threaten the lives of U.S. Marines. We urge the Administration to implement a cut-off of military aid to Israel under the terms of the Arms Export Control Act until Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon can be secured.

The NAAA supports the Administration's efforts to secure the withdrawal of foreign troops from Lebanon. We are concerned that Israel's actions in Lebanon, actions which threaten American lives, are a dangerous effort to forestall progress in the withdrawal negotiations and to obstruct consideration of President Reagan's Middle East initiative.

As representatives of the three million Americans of Arab descent, many of whom have relatives in Lebanon and are personally affected by the tragedy that is taking place, we would like to request a meeting with you to discuss the situation in Lebanon and our support of the Administration's efforts on behalf of peace.

Sincerely,

Robert D. Joseph
President

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