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April 15, 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Lewis-Pendleton Telecon April 15: Habib's Meetings with Begin and Israeli Ministers

Sam Lewis reports by secure phone that Phil Habib met at length April 15, first with Foreign Minister Shamir, Deputy Foreign Minister Ben-Meir, David Kimche and others from the Foreign and Defense ministries. He then had an hour long meeting with Prime Minister Begin, who was accompanied by Arens, Shamir and several others. Haddad's role remains the central problem.

Lewis says that in both meetings Habib was eloquent, particularly regarding the Haddad issue. He talked at great length about the readiness in Lebanon to have a new era in relations with Israel, as well as why Lebanon does not believe it can go further on the remaining sticking points. Habib provided a fairly full reading on Gemayel's mood but softened the picture somewhat.

The Israelis were very disappointed with Habib's report. In the Begin meeting, all three ministers insisted that the only acceptable thing for Israel would be to have Haddad remain as Commander. Begin told Phil that the package would have to be considered by the Cabinet, which is next scheduled to meet on Tuesday. (There will be no Cabinet meeting on Sunday since it is Memorial Day. Monday is Israeli Independence Day.) There was a unanimous view that the Lebanese positions Habib reviewed were unsatisfactory, and Lewis has no illusions that the Israelis will change their approach prior to the Cabinet meeting.

Arens had gone to Lebanon on April 14 and had had lunch with Haddad. Arens had returned to Israel with the impression that Haddad was doing a good job of running a quiet little area in southern Lebanon and should be permitted to carry on. This is an argument that Arens has been hearing from his military advisors. His visit with Haddad only reenforced this view.

Habib's discussion also touched on UNIFIL, an issue which Lewis believes will prove to be manageable. Habib put forward Lebanese views regarding a modified UNIFIL presence centered in Sidon with patrols going on occasion to Tyre.

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Habib will be meeting informally with David Kimche on Saturday evening after his return from Cairo. Ambassador Draper arrives in Jerusalem from Washington on Saturday afternoon. There will be a working meeting Sunday morning at which all items in dispute will be reviewed. Habib plans to go to Beirut Sunday after this meeting and return to Israel prior to the next trilateral negotiating session in Netanya on Tuesday, April 19.

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