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FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH SECRETARYUK MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO LEBANON

We agreed to examine the possibility of offering limited military training assistance to the Lebanese Government. A small team from the MOD and the Home Office consequently visited Beirut and has now reported on its findings.

2. The Lebanese Armed Forces proper evinced little enthusiasm for UK training assistance, probably as a result of overwhelming US influence. The team therefore concluded that in the circumstances the most useful training contribution we would make would be project-related assistance to the Ministry of the Interior's Internal Security Force (ISF). The ISF includes the Central Government's police forces and will, it is hoped, eventually replace the Army in maintaining law and order within Lebanon. The US are keen for the UK to take a lead in this area, since US domestic legislation prohibits them from providing aid to paramilitary police bodies, although there have been recent indications of US interest in the ISF as a sales market.

3. An illustrative list of projects for assisting the ISF is attached at Annex A. Many of them are police projects, on which the Home Secretary will no doubt wish to comment. Having seen the Team's report I am, however, very doubtful as to whether a training contribution on these lines would be advisable. The



exact role envisaged for the ISF remains unclear, and there is a danger that it will not prove an effective alternative to the Lebanese Army. For this and other reasons the ISF may come to employ methods which we could not condone and with which we would not want our trainers to be associated. In the circumstances I am not attracted to our Armed Forces undertaking any military training in the Lebanon. However, the problems implicit in our participation in an expanded Multinational Force as an alternative contribution to Lebanese security remain unsolved. As I pointed out in my minute of 26th November, all the available options have operational penalties for our already overstretched Services.

4. I am copying this to the Prime Minister and to the Home Secretary.

SW

Ministry of Defence  
6th December 1982

ILLUSTRATIVE LIST OF PROJECTS FOR UK  
ASSISTANCE TO LEBANON

MILITARY PROJECTS

PROJECT 1 - STUDY OF ISF ROLES, ORGANISATION, EQUIPMENT AND TRAINING  
REQUIREMENT

1. The Team consider that this study should take place as soon as possible. It should be headed by the future UK Team Commander supported by appropriate police and military experts. The study would aim to analyse how the ISF is to play its part in conjunction with the LAF over the next few years. It would take about 4 weeks to complete.

2. Once the ISF role is fixed, the study would define and make recommendations as to its organisation, equipment and training requirements. This initial study would provide an earnest of UK involvement and would seek to ensure that planning was along practical lines, in coordination with similar activity by the US with the Lebanese Army.

3. The study would keep the UK abreast of any sales prospects and equally provide us with a means of monitoring French and Italian activities. If this project were successful it could result in the definition of several other training projects which, if expedient, we could pursue. The team believes that the project could lead to substantial sales of UK products to support the ISF (similar to the effects of Bartlett's report on US sales prospects).

PROJECT 2 - FULL TRAINING REQUIREMENTS OF THE ISF

4. This study flows logically from Project 1 since it would represent a continuation of the same "package" of advice. The study would address the present (interim) training facilities and Lebanese plans for their development against the major personnel increases under consideration. It would also need to assess the basic training of new recruits, continuation training and, above all, instructor training to ensure an organic capability within a given period. This latter would dictate the amount of training required in UK and how much should be done in the Lebanon.

PROJECT 3 - ADVICE ON COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS

5. The Lebanese are likely to require two separate countrywide communications systems - one for the ISF alone, and the second as a joint Army/ISF/Civil Administration network. The study would therefore need to examine the complete spectrum of Government Communications in close liaison with US activities. It would entail a major report and require a large team of military and commercial experts.

6. The study might therefore be better managed as a sub-contract to one of the UK's major electronic firms, not least because of the substantial sales prospects. Whilst such purchase of UK equipment would continue to require major commercial involvement in both installation and training, there would still be a military training requirement though this cannot yet be quantified.

PROJECT 4 - EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE DISPOSAL (EOD) TRAINING

7. The training could follow a progressive pattern as follows:
- a. Team Leader would conduct detailed in-country study to assess both equipment and training required.
  - b. Provision of UK equipment, followed by a small military team to train one or more Lebanese EOD teams in country over a period of two months (similar to planned UK activity in Bahrein).
  - c. Further training of more teams and of Lebanese instructors both of which could be done either in-country or in UK.
  - d. Small UK team remains in Lebanon for continuation training.

The UK is very experienced in putting together packages of EOD training of this sort.

POLICE PROJECTS

PROJECT 5 - FORENSIC SCIENCE LABORATORY AND KINDRED MATTERS

8. The ISF currently have a laboratory which they term their Technical Support Branch dealing with fingerprints, ballistics, handwriting, forgery and criminal records. They are in the process of building a new laboratory which is intended for the forensic aspects of criminal investigation. This building is at an advanced stage of construction and due to open in mid 1983. The ISF have provided the proposed layout of equipment and scale of implementation, but are in desperate need of advice from an experienced forensic scientist on the compatibility of equipment and the recruitment of suitable scientific personnel. In view of this there is an urgent need for a forensic science expert to visit the Lebanon for about 10 days, not only to advise on the scale of equipment (which has yet to be ordered) but also on the scale and qualifications of scientific personnel subsequently required to man the laboratory.

9. When suitable staff have been selected in the Lebanon, we consider that they could be seconded to the Forensic Science Service in UK where they could study all aspects of police work in the forensic field. There will be a need for British Police expertise in the ISF laboratory, as it nears completion, to train police staff in scenes of crime work. This will be in addition to any scenes of crime courses which Lebanese officers may undertake in this country and we would see 2 officers of the British Police Service, in the rank of Chief Inspector or Inspector, being seconded to the Lebanon perhaps up to 6 months at a time to act as advisors, for liaison between the Lebanese Police and laboratory staff and to reinforce the training of ISF scenes of crime officers.

10. With the opening of the forensic laboratory there would be a need for a much higher standard of training and expertise on the part of local police personnel in this specialist field. The ISF have already requested courses for members of their force in photography, and scenes of crime work with the intention of using such officers in future training. We endorse this approach but consider that it could be reinforced by the secondment of UK police officers to assist with in-force training. This could be done by personnel additional to the Forensic Chief Inspector/Inspector, or by these officers undertaking the dual role. If additional personnel are seconded this could also be for 6 months in the first instance.

PROJECT 6 - TRAINING OF INSTRUCTORS

11. The ISF Training School need instructor training and the British Police Central Planning and Instructor Training Unit at Pannal Ash, Yorkshire is uniquely qualified to carry out such courses for the Police Service. It should be possible to provide a course of instruction and additionally to give some training in planning and course design to Lebanese officers. It would be extremely difficult to achieve worthwhile results in this field by seconding UK officers to the Lebanon because the necessary facilities do not exist in that country.

PROJECT 7 - TRAINING AIDS

12. The ISF Training School is acknowledged to be totally inadequate and is currently housed in temporary accommodation. There is a serious need for modern training aids such as video cassette recorders, overhead projectors and associated equipment. Although we could not recommend the secondment of UK police officers to undertake instructor training in the Lebanon, we feel that there may be a role for seconded personnel once the ISF have a nucleus of personnel who have attended courses at the Central Planning and Instructor Training Unit. UK assistance in such follow up training could be of value and one or two personnel for this purpose could be considered in due course. Such a secondment need not be extensive and perhaps 6 months in the first instance would suffice.

13. An approach was made to see whether existing UK police training video films could be made available : we consider that this would provide no great difficulty, providing the very modest finance needed to purchase the tapes could be made available. Thought could be given to considering whether some training equipment should not be provided gratis, since once a limited amount of modern teaching aids were in use, further orders could well follow.

PROJECT 8 - PROVISION OF COURSES REQUESTED BY ISF

14. The team were aware of the recent request by the ISF (through the British Council) for places on the Criminal Investigation (Operational) Course run by the West Yorkshire Metropolitan Police and courses in photography, both black and white and colour, together with courses for Scenes of Crime (Forensic Science). This request is under consideration and we would recommend favourable response as soon as possible. In addition, we were asked about General Management and Public Relations courses. These would have to be provided in the UK. Frequent mention was made of the 2 places agreed on the Overseas Command Course at Bramshill in 1982 for Lebanese officers who were unable to attend because of the internal security situation. The Lebanese are eager to ensure that these places are made available to them during 1983 and confirmation as soon as possible is highly desirable.

PROJECT 9 - COMPUTER PROJECTS

15. The ISF are currently using an Army computer for various administrative functions, (i.e. pay and statistical matters) but want to computerise their fingerprint collection, criminal statistics and what would appear to be a project similar to the Police National Computer for criminal records and wanted persons. The requirement would be for one or preferably 2 UK personnel to advise on the proposed applications and on how such projects should be managed in the planning stage. A senior specialist from the Home Office Scientific Research and Development Branch and a police officer from the Police Research Scientific Unit could best achieve this by an initial visit of three to four weeks to ascertain exactly what the ISF intend and to advise on how they should undertake the various tasks.

16. It is obvious that the ISF are looking for something beyond just advice on how to undertake computer projects and we feel that there is a distinct opening in this field for sales of British equipment.

17. This will be a long term project which will involve UK personnel in frequent visits in addition to Lebanese officers coming to the UK to study our systems in operation.

CONFIDENTIAL



HOME OFFICE  
QUEEN ANNE'S GATE LONDON SW1H 9AT

10 December 1982

N. B. P. 52.

A. P. C. 10/12.

Dear John

*attached*

UK ASSISTANCE TO THE LEBANON

The Home Secretary has seen a copy of the Secretary of State for Defence's minute to the Foreign Secretary of 6 December.

He very much shares Mr Nott's doubts about the involvement of British personnel with a force whose role is far from clear. It might be possible for us in the short term to provide some limited assistance to the ISF by lending them a forensic scientist, or offering a few Lebanese officers places on detective courses in this country; but we are not sure that they could make effective use of the sophisticated expertise we have to offer. The Home Secretary doubts whether assistance of this sort would make much political impact, and he fears that it might lead to our being sucked into an increasing commitment which would place a strain on our limited resources. In present circumstances the Home Secretary would be strongly against committing any sizeable number of British police personnel in the Lebanon.

I am copying this letter to John Coles (No. 10) (I understand the Prime Minister will be seeing the Lebanese Foreign Minister this morning) and to Jane Ridley (Defence).

*Yours sincerely*  
*Colin Walters*

C J WALTERS

J E Holmes, Esq.

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Lebanon : Internal Signature .

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10 DEC 1982

