

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JUNE 18, 1976

Office of the White House Press Secretary

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THE WHITE HOUSE

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

Due to the continuing uncertainty of the situation in Beirut, I have directed the United States Embassy there to assist in the departure by overland convoy to Damascus of U. S. citizens who wish to depart Lebanon at this time.

The convoy is expected to leave Beirut Saturday, and American citizens are being alerted both by the Embassy and by broadcast on the Voice of America to be prepared for departure at that time, if they so wish.

The remains of Ambassador Francis Meloy and Mr. Robert Waring have been brought to Damascus overland. They will be picked up by a U. S. plane and returned to the United States, arriving on Saturday.

Only those Embassy officials not essential to our continuing operations will be leaving Lebanon. The American Embassy in Beirut is to remain open to continue our efforts to help bring an end to the strife which has brought this tragedy to Lebanon.

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