

JUNE 22, 1976

Office of the White House Press Secretary

NOTICE TO THE PRESS

The President has designated Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Talcott Seelye to go to Beirut as his Special Representative to take charge of our Embassy there temporarily. Ambassador Seelye, after consultation with Secretary Kissinger, will depart for Beirut at the earliest possible date.

In view of the present situation in Lebanon, the President and Secretary consider it essential to have as their representative a senior man with long experience. Ambassador Seelye recently became Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, after serving as Ambassador to Tunisia. He has served before in Lebanon, and for several years was director of the office in the department for our relations with Lebanon and nearby Arab countries. This background and the distinction with which he has served particularly qualify Ambassador Seelye for the new assignment the President has given him.

In preparation for his new assignment, Ambassador Seelye met with the President yesterday afternoon, and is meeting today with Secretary Kissinger and some of our Middle East ambassadors in Paris.

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