



USMC Photo by SSgt Randy Gaddo

*In a more peaceful moment, Marines with 2d Platoon, Company C, BLT 1/8, relax with a game of basketball at their well-sandbagged position on the perimeter of the Beirut International Airport.*

artillerymen next prepared to fire a high explosive illuminating mission coordinated with naval gunfire from the frigate *Bowen* (FF 1029). The Druze position ceased firing, however, and the mission was cancelled.

French aircraft from the *Foch* flew two photo-reconnaissance missions on 7 September over the area containing the artillery emplacements suspected of having fired on the French compound. These flights were followed by an F-14 mission flown from the *Eisenhower*, marking the first use of a Tactical Aerial Reconnaissance Pod System (TARPS) mission by U.S. forces in Lebanon.<sup>31</sup> These TARPS missions quickly became a source of good information, used to good effect both by the MAU and the carrier battle group. Although there were Russian SA-7 surface-to-air (SAM) missiles in the hills ringing Beirut, the American command believed that their employment was tightly controlled and that they did not pose a significant threat to the F-14 flights.

Generals Miller (CG, FMFLant) and Gray (CG, 2d Marine Division) visited the MAU for three days beginning 7 September. At about 1130 on 8 September, three rocket rounds landed approximately 200 meters from where the Marine commanders were standing. In reply, a coordinated 155mm howitzer volley and 5-inch salvo from the *Bowen* landed on the target, marking the first time that naval gunfire was actually employed in support of the Marines ashore.<sup>32</sup> And it changed the MAU mission a bit more from one of peace-keeping presence to one of active participation.

On the morning of 9 September, 20 mortar rounds exploded near the airport terminal area, marking the first attack from a lone mortar position located southwest of the airport. For the next month, this position was to plague the Marines, who named the gunner "Ali," and "Achmed, the Mad Mortarman." More explicit expletives sometimes flew in the direction of the Druze gunner, who would fire 10 to 20 rounds and then disappear for the rest of the day. He avoided all counterbattery detection by varying his attacks in time and intensity. "Initially, the MAU referred the attacker to the LAF and watched in vain over several days as the LAF artillery landed everywhere but in the vicinity of the mortar position."<sup>33</sup> Most of these Druze mortar rounds were directed at the LAF Air Force's Hawker-Hunter jet fighters west of the main MAU area.

The 24th MAU command chronology for September noted that the movement of Government of Lebanon troops into the mountains put Marines into a position of providing more direct support to the Lebanese. As the LAF became engaged in the mountains along a line from Alayh in the north, and Bshamun, the firing into the Marine lines diminished and gradually ceased. For the next 15 days, the fighting in the hills above Beirut and the airport seesawed, occasionally bringing rounds into the airport area, but not in the volume of the previous two weeks.

In the first week of September, Colonel Geraghty noted, "All ops in this report were protective in nature, either passive, building or reinforcing positions, or active; locating hostile weapons firing on the BIA. Marines returned the fire where appropriate."<sup>34</sup> He also commented:

The increasing involvement in direct and more frequent combat actions has tasked the MAU assets to their fullest. All hands are at quick step and the forced march pace is beginning to tell . . . 24 MAU has added a new page to the discussion on maneuver warfare, i.e., stakes are being raised weekly and our contribution to peace in Lebanon since 22 July stands at 4 killed and 28 wounded. Phibron-8 also

added 1 wounded. We still stand our ground, however, and accomplish the mission we were sent here to do. Morale is high and while many of the Marines do not fully understand the complexities of the effort, all realize its importance to the nation. The call from the President and the visits of LtGen Miller and MGen Gray, were well appreciated and provided a needed boost at a rough time. 24th MAU will hang tough.<sup>35</sup>

General Mead spoke of Geraghty's problems in a presentation at the Marine Corps Historical Center in Washington, D.C., on 14 September 1983:

... with the situation that you find yourself in now, what options do you have? Withdraw? Attack? Hunker down?

... Do you attack? It's not a military problem. Who do you attack? Do you take on the Druze, the Shia, the Muslims? Who do you attack?

Do you hunker down? Isn't that a wonderful expression? Hunker down. Well, you remain on the defensive right now, being responsive to the political arena in hopes that some type of political solution can be arranged through Special Envoy Bud McFarlane. . . .<sup>36</sup>

General Mead also referred to a telephone call from the President to Colonel Geraghty, in which the Commander-in-Chief reminded the MAU commander that he had the full support of the nation and further reminded him that he had the Sixth Fleet in direct support, and to use it when it became necessary.<sup>37</sup>

Despite the shift of the fighting into the hills, the Marines were not entirely forgotten by the Druze or



Photo courtesy of Claude Salhani  
*When LtGen John H. Miller, Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Atlantic, visited 24th MAU headquarters on 9 September 1983, Marine positions were hit by three enemy rocket attacks, which were answered by naval gunfire from American ships.*

*On the alert, Marine machine gunners survey the scene in front of their positions.*

Photo courtesy of Francoise de Mulder



any of the other factions. At 0100, 11 September, Amal forces attacked a joint Marine-Lebanese checkpoint in an attempt to capture ammunition. The attack was beaten off; the Amal were unsuccessful. There were no American or Lebanese Armed Forces casualties.

The next four days, the Marines received a varied amount of small arms, rockets, artillery, mortar, and rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) fire, suffering five wounded. All line companies and manned checkpoints were fired upon and were forced to remain in a Condition 1 state of alert.

In anticipation of his Marines reinforcing the 24th MAU, Colonel James H. R. Curd, commander of the 31st Marine Amphibious Unit, and key staff officers came ashore on 14 September for a briefing of the situation by the staffs of Colonel Geraghty and Commodore France. The 31st MAU had transited the Suez Canal after a training operation in Kenya and had arrived off Beirut on the 12th. Colonel Curd's command consisted of BLT 3/3, HMM-165, and MSSG 31, and was embarked aboard Amphibious Squadron 1 shipping—the *Tarawa* (LHA 1), the *Duluth* (LPD 6), and the *Frederick County* (LST 1184). Acting as the afloat reinforcement for the 24th MAU, Colonel Curd and the Phibron 1 team joined in the planning for contingency operations, a noncombatant evacuation operation, and prepared themselves to conduct any other mission assigned to them.<sup>38</sup>

The 24th MAU and Phibron 8 were given additional muscle later in the month, when the battleship *New Jersey* (BB 62) arrived on 25 September to add to the naval gunfire support already available to Marines ashore.

Commenting on the arrival of the 31st MAU and the nearness of the carrier *Eisenhower* and its accompanying battle group, Colonel Geraghty said:

The presence of ARG Alpha offshore and the overflights from the *Ike* are reassuring and well received by the Marines on the line. I am convinced that the presence of the fixed wing [aircraft] from all the members of the MNF has given those elements firing on BIA cause for concern and they have curtailed their bombardments accordingly. Morale remains high, but the bunkers are getting deeper.<sup>39</sup>

Earlier, on 14 September, the MAU was directed to dig again into its LFORM to provide the LAF once more with an emergency resupply of ammunition. During September, HMM-162 helicopters transported 2,424,081 pounds of cargo (including 1,345,050 pounds of ammunition), most of it for the Lebanese Armed Forces.<sup>40</sup>

During the night of 16 September, the Lebanese Ministry of Defense and the American ambassador's

residence were shelled heavily. The frigate *Bowen* and the destroyer *John Rodgers* (DD 983) fired six naval gunfire missions, expending 72 rounds on six targets and silencing the attackers.

Colonel Geraghty and his staff soon perceived that the LAF would have to retain positions on the Suq al Gharb ridgeline for its offensive to be successful. Walid Jamblatt must have shared this view, for his Druze PSP elements began to focus their main efforts on retaking the ridge.

Operating in support of the PSP militia, Palestinian units in the mountains attacked the Lebanese government forces at Suq al Gharb early on 19 September. The fighting soon got so heavy that gunfire of all calibers could be heard by Marines at the airport throughout the morning. As the Lebanese Army's artillery stocks became dangerously low, the Ministry of Defense, through Army Brigadier General Carl W. Stiner, Ambassador McFarlane's JCS liaison officer in Beirut, requested U.S. naval gunfire support of the LAF. The Ministry of Defense reported that the Palestinians had mounted a two-battalion tank/infantry attack preceded by a heavy artillery preparation, and the LAF was in danger of breaking under the pressure of the attack.

In response to the Lebanese request, the guided missile nuclear cruiser *Virginia* (CGN 38), the *John Rodgers*, the *Bowen*, and the destroyer *Radford* (DD 968) fired 360 5-inch shells in support of the LAF over a five-hour period. The Lebanese government later reported that the Palestinians broke and ran under this devastating barrage which turned the tide of battle.

Earlier training and material support of the LAF notwithstanding, this specific instance of combat support evidently ended the perception of the Marines as neutral in the eyes of anti-government factions. As the 24th MAU executive officer, Lieutenant Colonel Slacum, later commented:

When we provided fire on their [LAF] behalf, it did stop the attack, they were able to hold, and it did provide them a day or so of relief while they regained their composure and reinforced up there . . .

It would appear that our very presence, even before our active support of the LAF, was having a great impact on the issue within Lebanon. It also became intuitively obvious that while we were very cautious in our exchange of artillery and naval gunfire with those batteries that were shooting at us, we did so in a manner as to, I think, show the other side that we were using great restraint. . . . And while we weren't necessarily looked upon as either neutral or friends, it was apparent we weren't looked upon as enemies, either, that the Amal and the Druze appeared to go out of their way to ensure that they did not list us as enemies . . . by and large, they did not group us, target us as an enemy. Those factions that did finally target us appeared to be from out-



Photo courtesy of Françoise de Mulder

*Filling sandbags was a never-ending chore during the 18 months Marines were in Beirut. In that period, Marine Amphibious Unit troops filled more than one million bags.*

side Lebanon, instigated by other nations for whatever purpose, ultimately to discredit us.<sup>41</sup>

Colonel Geraghty recognized that providing U.S. naval gunfire support to the LAF had changed the nature of his mission. The Marines were now considered legitimate targets by anti-government forces. Commenting on this matter in an interview conducted during his return home from Beirut in November 1983, he remarked:

The firing we did in support of the LAF up at Suq al Gharb, that clearly changed our roles . . . . It's a milestone, no question about it in my opinion. It moved us from a previous, very careful, razor edge line of neutrality that we were walking, and treating all the Lebanese communities alike . . . . When we provided support . . . [to] the Lebanese up in Suq al Gharb, that, to me, moved it to a different category. . . .

The Lebanese had run quite low on ammunition and it would have been unconscionable for us not to have provided support at a very crucial time for them. . . .<sup>42</sup>

For the next several days, the Ambassador's residence and the Ministry of Defense came under heavy shelling, causing fires in the residence. All embassy per-

sonnel except the Marine guard and radio watch were moved into the Presidential Palace, and the *Bowen* and *Virginia* engaged the hostile firing battery with 30 5-inch rounds each.

A change began to appear in the MAU's official report:

Naval gunfire became the weapon of choice, if it could engage the enemy firing units, as it gave some separation from USMNF and did not require them to use their organic howitzers in defense of the LAF or MOD [Ministry of Defense].<sup>43</sup>

This marked the first time the anti-government elements were referred to as "enemy" in any Marine report.

Another "first" occurred on 20 September, when two Navy carrier-based reconnaissance aircraft were attacked by a SA-7 surface-to-air missile. Fired from an unknown location, the missile never acquired the lead aircraft, missing it by two miles.

The next night, 21 September, the *Radford*, *John Rodgers* and *Virginia* fired 90 more 5-inch rounds on two targets.

On 23 September, fighting around the airport intensified once again. Two Marine checkpoints came under heavy attack, which included fire from a 20mm antiaircraft cannon. Simultaneously, both the French and Italian compounds were taken under fire. By 1325, the fighting between the LAF and Amal militia in Hay es Salaam had become particularly heavy. Two hours later, the spillover fire began to endanger the Marines and the MAU's 81mm mortars fired 12 high-explosive rounds at a suspected Amal position, silencing it. During the following hour, the Marine mortars fired an additional 28 rounds after their positions at the Lebanese University and other checkpoints once again received intense small arms and RPG fire. That evening, Marine 155mm howitzers and naval gunfire engaged an artillery position that was firing on the airport. Later, the MAU command post came under fire, generating yet another response from Marine mortars and naval gunfire.

These outbreaks of heavy fighting highlighted the vulnerability of the isolated Marine checkpoints, the inability of the 24th MAU to reinforce and resupply them when necessary, and difficulties in evacuating the wounded without placing other Marines in jeopardy. These checkpoints initially had been established as a buffer between the Israeli forces and Hay es Salaam. Since the Israelis were no longer in the area, the checkpoints no longer served a useful purpose and the risks they faced were now unacceptable. On the afternoon of 24 September, after notifying the Lebanese government, 24th MAU redeployed 15 Marines from one checkpoint and 25 from the other to Company B positions at the Lebanese University.

At this point, the shuttle diplomats managed to arrange a ceasefire to take effect on 26 September. Just before the ceasefire, there was considerable fighting around the airport, as various factions attempted to gain favorable positions, and fighting in the airport area eventually tapered off by the end of the month. Other factors contributing to a reduction in the number of attacks on the Marines were the arrival of the reinforcing 31st MAU and the battleship *New Jersey*, as well as the demonstrated readiness of the Americans to employ naval gunfire in support of the LAF and in their own defense. The right of self-defense was also being exercised by allied forces. On 23 September, the French conducted an airstrike against the weapons that had been firing on their positions.

The 24th MAU's command chronology for September notes that the month ended in a positive vein, despite two adverse events. One was the crash of a Marine Cobra helicopter into the sea.<sup>44</sup> Both pilots were

rescued, and had but minor injuries. The second event was the seizure by the Amal militia of two soldiers from the Army Field Artillery School's Target Acquisition Battery, when the Americans made a wrong turn away from the main north-south thoroughfare in the center of Beirut. The two were brought to Nabih Berri, the leader of the Amal, ". . . who apologized for the incident."<sup>45</sup> Saying that the Amal held no animosity toward the Americans, Berri released the two to a French liaison officer. Their jeep was returned, but the pistol of one of them was not.

Of this event, Colonel Geraghty observed, "The incident was particularly serious as it pointed out the relative inability of the USMNF to react to incidents of this nature and demonstrated the variety of threats to the MNF and their possible consequences."<sup>46</sup>

Near the end of the month, on 24 and 25 September, Colonel Geraghty hosted a large congressional delegation led by Congressman Samuel S. Stratton of New York.\* Included in this group were Representatives William L. Dickinson, William Nichols, Larry J. Hopkins, Bob Stump, Beverly B. Bryon, Richard B. Ray, John McK. Spratt, Jr., Solomon P. Ortiz, and

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\*Upon his return to Washington, Congressman Stratton wrote the Commandant:

Dear General Kelley;

I wanted to take the opportunity to write you concerning the truly outstanding service of one of your officers, Colonel Timothy Geraghty, Commander, 24th Marine Amphibious Unit.

As you know, I had the honor recently to lead a delegation of 10 members of the Committee on Armed Services to Lebanon to review the difficult military and political problem firsthand. During our visit, we were able to spend several hours with Colonel Geraghty and his men at Beirut International Airport.

I know I speak for all the members of the delegation in expressing nothing but the highest praise for Colonel Geraghty and, of course, the personnel of the 24th Marine Amphibious Unit. The circumstances presented by U.S. participation in the Multinational Force (MNF) involve extremely difficult exercise of judgment by Colonel Geraghty as the on-site commander balancing the safety of his men with a political requirement to minimize the level of U.S. involvement in the area. It was apparent during our visit that the U.S. participation in the MNF was contributing to stability in Lebanon. This success can be attributed in no small part to the performance of Colonel Geraghty.

The Marine Corps and the United States of America can be justly proud of the service being performed by Colonel Geraghty.

Sincerely,

/s/ Sam

Samuel S. Stratton  
Head of Delegation

Congressman Samuel S. Stratton ltr to CMC, dtd 6Oct83. Handwritten at the bottom of the letter was the note, "We also are deeply grateful for the outstanding assistance General Mead gave our delegation."



USMC Photo by SSgt Robert E. Kline

*Adm James D. Watkins, Chief of Naval Operations, talks to 24th MAU Marines at the MSSG building at Beirut International Airport on 5 October 1983, during his visit.*

Duncan L. Hunter. Accompanying the delegation was General Mead, who was now Director of Manpower Plans and Policy at Headquarters Marine Corps.

Beginning 26 September, the 24th MAU began a series of rest and recreation tours for the line Marines on board Task Force 61 shipping. This gave them an opportunity for hot showers, hot food in a "safe" atmosphere, and just a chance to get away from Beirut for a short period.

After being closed to all air traffic for six days, Beirut International Airport reopened on 30 September, the day that Ambassador McFarlane, a retired Marine lieutenant colonel, toured the MAU's positions. His helicopter, on an aerial reconnaissance, was hit by a stray round. Despite this incident, Colonel Geraghty commented that the ceasefire had been a welcome relief and that all MAU personnel were getting some rest as a result. He also noted that tensions remained high in Beirut, and that it was still risky to travel through most of the city.<sup>47</sup>

At the beginning of October, the LAF began to receive additional American shipments of armored personnel carriers, tanks, and howitzers. The training of Lebanese recruits (and units) resumed. Walid Jumblatt declared the establishment of a separate governmental administration for the Chouf and called for

Druze to defect from the LAF. By mid-October, he joined with other faction leaders in agreeing to conduct reconciliation talks in Geneva.

Going into October, the ceasefire that had been negotiated in late September seemed to hold, but in a very fragile way. Sporadic fighting continued in the suburbs. The 24th MAU began the month in Alert Condition 3, but spillover fire dictated a higher state of alert. Lieutenant Colonel Gerlach rotated his companies into new positions, which they would hold until relieved by the 22d MAU in November.

On 5 October, the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral James D. Watkins, and the Sixth Fleet Commander, Admiral Martin, visited the MAU. After receiving a briefing, the CNO in turn briefed Marines, sailors, and soldiers at the BLT headquarters building.

In time, the MAU squadron's helicopters became targets of small-arms fire. Several planes were hit, but landed safely with minor damage and no crew injuries. To forestall the possibility of more serious incidents, Colonel Geraghty changed the helicopters' flight patterns and varied their routes to and from the airport.

Meanwhile, the ceasefire continued to unravel, PLO members attempted to infiltrate back into Sabra and Shatila refugee camps, and violence erupted as barri-



acades were set up at Hay es Salaam, Burj al Barajinah, and Ash Shuwayfat. Fighting between the PLO and the LAF caused more stray rounds to land in Company A's area at the Lebanese University. Snipers began firing at Marines from buildings close to the MAU's lines, and armed militiamen were spotted entering building ruins.

On 8 October, heavy fighting erupted between the Lebanese government forces and the militia at Burj al Barajinah, Ash Shuwayfat, and Khaldah. Poorly directed fire impacted into Marine positions most of the day, and one Marine was wounded slightly. Around 0900, Marines at the university were taken under sniper fire. One Marine was hit in the shoulder, but was not wounded seriously enough to warrant evacuation. An hour later, a CH-46 drew hostile fire with two rounds striking the aircraft causing damage to its skin. These last two incidents removed any remaining doubt that the USMNF aircraft and men were once again targets of snipers.<sup>48</sup>

Factional clashes and sniper activity continued for the next few days, with Marine line companies being fired at and returning fire where targets were identifiable. Of this period, Colonel Geraghty said:

The ceasefire, while holding for the most part throughout the area, has degenerated to isolated attacks upon the MNF and low level, but violent, confrontation between the various factions; the direct threat against the Marines has increased significantly as several of the more radical groups view the MNF as an alternate and readily visible source against which to demonstrate their [hostilities]. We have returned to our most alert condition and will remain at such for some time. Resupply of my outlying units continues on the ground. I feel it is not worth it to hazard the aircraft. I have moved my air operations to a more protected area and have increased the visible presence of the tank unit to be prepared for fire if necessary. I anticipate the attacks to continue, and have commenced actions to force the LAF to take action in the Hay es Salaam area. I have identified what I believe to be a major source of the attacks upon my positions, and should they continue, and the LAF does nothing, I will reduce the threat as effectively as possible.<sup>49</sup>

The squadron's operations center ashore, at the northern end of the airfield, was evacuated:

... because we were just taking too much sniper fire. It was no longer safe to walk out in the flight line. The snipers were there at the end of the runway, had [us] zeroed in and you just couldn't walk out there without drawing fire. So, we had to close that area completely.<sup>50</sup>

At one point, the squadron's S-2 chief, a trained sniper, was called upon to return fire during one period of heavy sniping and he reported a kill. With the exception of a small crew that remained ashore to operate Landing Site Brown on the southwestern portion

of the airport, all HMM-162 Marines went back to the *Iwo Jima*.

On 12 October, General Kelley, Commandant of the Marine Corps, paid his second visit to Beirut. The next day, he awarded 12 Purple Hearts to Marines wounded in Beirut, held a press conference, and returned to Washington.

Despite the worsening situation, the 24th MAU was able to send Marines on liberty runs to Turkey and Alexandria, Egypt. Isolated hit and run attacks against Marines continued. On the evening of 13 October, a grenade was thrown from a car speeding on the Corniche at a sentry standing guard at the Durrafourd Building. He was wounded badly enough to require evacuation to the *Iwo Jima* after initial treatment at American Hospital. At 2103, Marine helicopters at Landing Site Red at the northern end of the airport, near the Marine artillery positions, came under heavy small-arms and RPG attack. A short time later, fire from Hay es Salaam hit the northern Marine perimeter.

At 1030 the next morning, accurate sniper fire was directed at two Marine jeeps traveling the airport perimeter road in the eastern sector. The driver of the first jeep was hit in both legs. The driver of the second jeep was shot through the chest and the vehicle overturned. Marines at the landing site and on the perimeter returned the fire with unknown results. Both Marines were evacuated to the *Iwo Jima*, where the second jeep driver died of his wounds. Both LS Red and the perimeter road were subsequently closed as sniper fire became a daily hazard.

Militia activities in Hay es Salaam continued to escalate as militiamen, clearly visible to the Marines, prepared sandbagged positions in the ruined buildings opposite the Marine lines, stocking them with weapons and ammunition. The night of 14 October was particularly threatening as militia snipers fired into the positions of Companies A and C. This sniper fire continued into the morning of the 15th, and the Marines deployed a sniper team of their own to deal with this new threat. "The team surveyed the area with sniper scopes for several hours, pinpointing the snipers actually firing at Marine positions. The team then opened fire with 18 rounds of match 7.62 ammunition at 14 targets. Their success was evident by the sudden silence from each hostile position."<sup>51</sup> Other firing into Marine positions, however, continued to be hostile and unpredictable.

At 1615 on 16 October, a tense calm was shattered

when Company A, at the university, began receiving rifle and machine gun fire from a bunker near its position. Marine snipers returned the fire for the next four hours. At 1915, the volume of fire increased. Three Marines were wounded when five RPGs detonated near the library building. Company A returned fire with rifles and machine guns. The heavy fire kept a medevac helicopter from landing to take out the wounded. At this point, the British contingent, across the Sidon Road, offered their Ferret scout car to escort a Marine motor convoy to the Ministry of Defense, where the two most seriously wounded Marines could be flown out to the *Iwo Jima*. While flying over Hay es Salaam, the choppers were fired upon, but not hit. The hostile fire against Company A increased, and the Marines fired two Dragon antiarmor guided missiles to silence a particularly troublesome machine gun. Another Marine died when Company A's forward air controller was shot in the forehead by a sniper. The volume of fire was such that the dead Marine and two other wounded men could not be evacuated until late in the afternoon of the following day, after a convoy returned to MAU headquarters by a roundabout route.

On the night of 16-17 October, the firing spread to the north and south of the university buildings, placing Company A under siege. By midnight, the fire had begun to taper off, even though it continued sporadically from Hay es Salaam. Scattered fighting continued in Beirut and its suburbs until the 19th. At

this time, Lebanese government forces were heavily engaged at Suq al Gharb and in the vicinity of Burj al Barajinah, as well as in Khaldah.

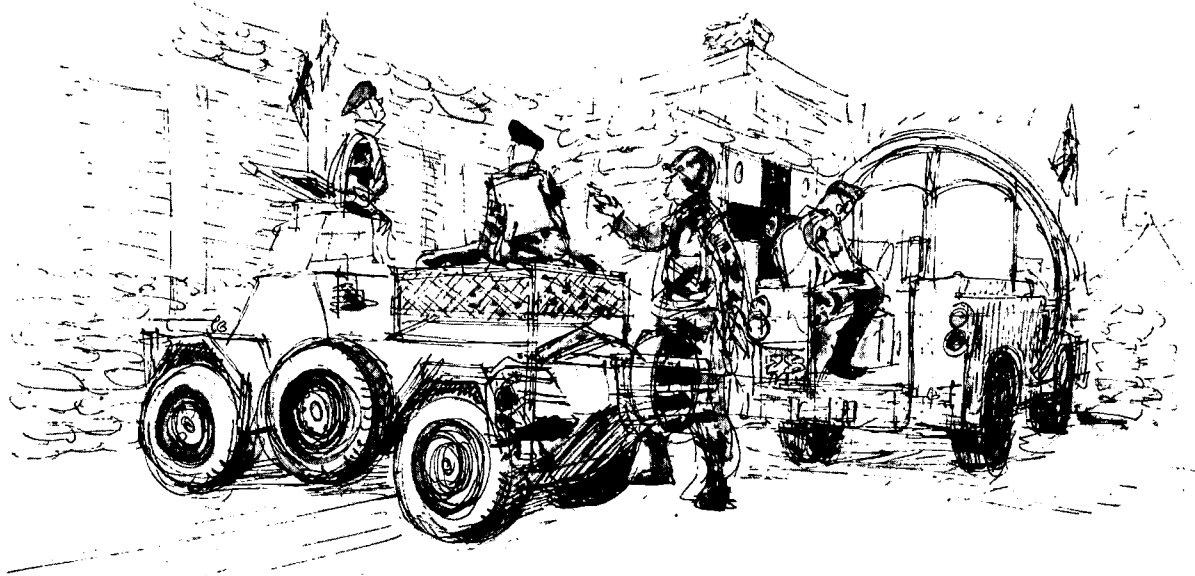
At 1622 on 19 October a supply convoy returning from the Durrafourd Building and the British Embassy was hit by a remote-controlled car bomb. Four Marines were wounded by the explosion. As the Marines rushed a covering squad to the scene of the bombing, Italian soldiers on the scene treated the wounded, and evacuated the most seriously injured to the Italian field hospital. Later, intelligence sources revealed that the Americans had been targets of a pro-Iranian Islamic fundamentalist sect. Four days later, a French jeep was bombed when it passed a command-detonated explosive device hidden in a garbage can. One French soldier was wounded.

Beirut was quiet on 20 and 21 October, with only one Marine checkpoint reporting incoming fire. Lebanese units at Suq al Gharb and Khaldah exchanged artillery fire with the Amal militia, but only Company B on the eastern perimeter received any hostile fire. On 22 October, it was quiet enough for the sailors and Marines to enjoy a USO show at the BLT building.

For obvious reasons, cross-training with the LAF and other MNF units had to be severely curtailed during October. At the same time, the 24th MAU began looking forward to its mid-November relief by the 22d MAU. Backloading of non-essential equipment began on 15 October as the MAU began washing down its

*A British Ferret armored vehicle and a Land Rover at the 22d MAU hospital in late 1983.*

Sketch by Maj John T. Dyer, Jr., USMCR (Ret)







USMC Photo

*A touring USO band plays in front of the BLT headquarters building the day before it was destroyed.*

lower priority rolling and tracked vehicles to shorten the time required for such efforts at Rota. Some equipment was even re-embarked on the *El Paso* before it left for a port visit to Antalya on 11 October.

During this period, a continuous flow of messages from Task Forces 61 and 62 carried word of the increasing threat up through the chain of command. Nevertheless, the watch officer in the National Military Command Center in Washington were unprepared for and shocked by Commodore France's flash message at midnight on 22-23 October (0700 in Lebanon):

Explosion at BLT 1/8 Hq . . . a large explosion at BLT 1/8 Hq Bldg collapsed the roof and leveled the building. Large numbers of dead and injured. Are using MSSG 24 and Italian MNF medical and will medevac out of LS Brown . . . French report a Bldg in their sector also bombed . . . unknown injured; BLT Hq destroyed. Amplifying info to follow.<sup>52</sup>

As later messages flowed in detailing further damage and loss of life, the shock deepened. Colonel Geraghty had arisen at about 0530, going down one floor to his command operations center on the first floor of the MAU headquarters building. Noting that the night had been relatively quiet, the MAU commander soon returned to his second floor office/sleeping quarters.

The explosion of the truck bomb literally blew out all of the windows in the MAU headquarters. To forestall any injuries should such an attack ever occur, Colonel Geraghty and his executive officer earlier had taped all of the windows in their room. The explosion also cracked the MAU headquarters structure, scattering debris all over. Geraghty ran outside, where the atmosphere was foggy with debris floating down. He ran around to the back of the MAU building, seeing only, ". . . a heavy fog and debris . . . still floating down."<sup>53</sup>

The MAU commander next ran over to the aviation safety building behind the MAU headquarters, where all the windows had been blown out. "And it was just then . . . the fog was clearing, and I turned around and the BLT building, the headquarters, was gone. I can't explain to you my feelings then. It was just unbelievable."<sup>54</sup>

Colonel Geraghty and the on-scene Marines immediately began to rescue the injured from the ruins, and to implement their mass casualty evacuation plan, ". . . because of the increased hostilities that had occurred as well as the changing situation, we had updated and practiced our NEOps with mass casualty evacs in the event of something like this. And that

*As viewed from Marine positions in the southeast sector of the 24th MAU perimeter, smoke rises from the devastated BLT headquarters building in this photograph taken within seconds after the blast occurred.*

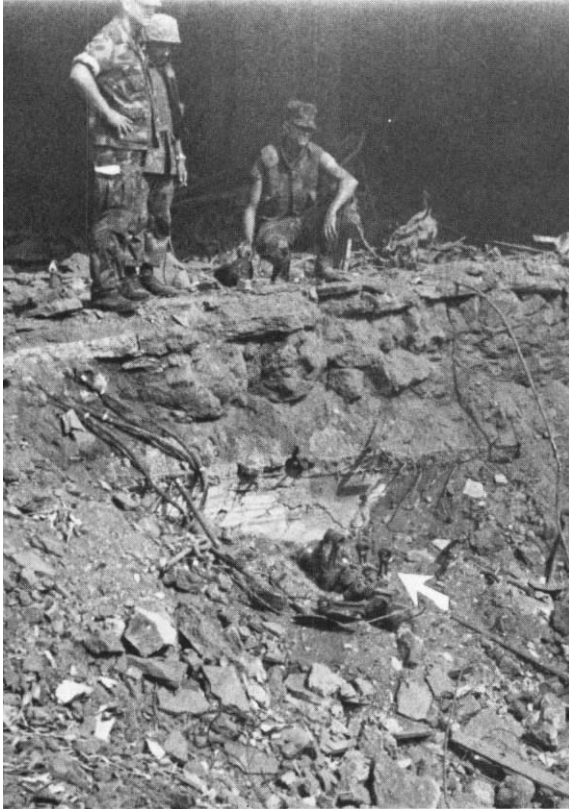




USMC Photos by SSgt Robert E. Kline

*Some views of the destruction following the bombing of the BLT headquarters building.*





USMC Photo by SSgt Robert E. Kline  
*A view of the crater made in the first floor of the BLT headquarters building by the explosion of the truck bomb which devastated the structure on 23 October 1983. The arrow points to a crankcase, all that remained of the truck after it was detonated.*

proved to be quite helpful.”<sup>55</sup> Unfortunately, the battalion surgeon who would have played a very large role in treating the wounded, was killed in the explosion.

Lieutenant Colonel Slacum had been in his bunk at the time of the explosion. His mosquito netting was down and caught the pieces of glass blown inwards. The executive officer was dressing hurriedly when Colonel Geraghty returned and said, “Good God, the BLT is gone! You won’t believe it, the building is gone.”<sup>56</sup>

Geraghty then went to his communication section to report via secure-voice radio to the Sixth Fleet commander. He next sent an OpRep-3 Pinnacle Front Burner<sup>57</sup> flash message to the National Military Command Center in Washington, requesting that the BLT headquarters be replaced by the 2d Marine Division’s air alert force and that he be sent an additional rifle company to enable the MAU to become operational again as soon as possible. Additional Marines would be needed to provide increased security for the grim clean-up facing the MAU.<sup>58</sup>

Meanwhile, Lieutenant Colonel Slacum had traced Colonel Geraghty’s steps to the devastated area:

... down to the steps of the BLT, and all the while I’m walking through debris that’s about midcalf deep, and I just didn’t even notice it. It’s just one of those surrealistic scenes where things are ... so grotesque and so odd that your mind doesn’t comprehend, you’re still in somewhat of a little bit of shock and I just didn’t notice the stuff until I got to the steps of the building and I looked and the thing that struck me is that it was deathly silent. This was perhaps three, four minutes after the explosion, after we had run up and down the ladder a couple of times. ... And there was a gray dust over everything you could see, as far as you could see. The concrete ... from this collapsed building, that had once been three-four stories high was now down to one story ... you could make out which was the first story and then just another 10-15 feet of rubble piled on top of that. ... I first looked around and that’s when you started to see the first bodies, and went to check those that I could see in front of me and then realized the magnitude of the problem. I heard no one, I saw no one.<sup>59</sup>

Slacum then rushed to the communications office to enter the radio net connecting all of the Multi-National Forces to advise them of what had happened and to ask the Italians to send all the medical assistance they could spare. There was an immediate communications problem. The MAU headquarters did not directly monitor the tactical radio net of the line companies, which terminated at the BLT headquarters. So the MAU had to establish direct radio contact with the line companies, informing them of what had happened, and linking them directly into the MAU’s combat operations center.

The MAU’s operations officer, Major George S. Converse, was then in Norway making preparations for a later training exercise. His duties were assumed by the fire support officer, Captain Timothy J. Tanner, and the Assistant S-3, First Lieutenant Stephen N. Mikolaski. Among other things, they had to ensure that the fire support coordination net previously run by the BLT communication section was reestablished by the MAU. They also put the naval gunfire support ships on alert and reestablished radio communications with the FASTAB (Field Artillery School Target Acquisition Battery).

By now, rescue efforts were fully underway. Lieutenant Colonel Slacum asked the *New Jersey* to send her Marine detachment ashore to provide security; “... we had everybody we could get who was familiar with weapons and had been trained as a guard.”<sup>60</sup>

Lieutenant Mikolaski, who bunked in one of the four garages in the MAU building—three doors away from the command operations center—first thought that a satchel charge had been thrown into the com-

mand post. He ran out “. . . and saw that the glass had been blown out of the door. In fact, the doors in the CP had been blown off their hinges, and everyone in the CP was either on the floor or getting up.”<sup>61</sup>

Mikolaski found Captain Tanner in the MAU communications center first trying to raise the BLT headquarters on the radio. He then attempted to obtain reports directly from the line companies. Word was received over the MNF radio net from the French that one of their buildings had been bombed. Lieutenant Mikolaski thought for a moment that all the MNF contingents were being hit with missiles.

After ensuring that the OpRep-3 message had gone out, Mikolaski, together with MAU air officer Major Randolph P. Cotten and MAU Sergeant Major Richard E. Dudley, jumped in Cotten's jeep to see if the MSSG had been able to set up a triage station at LZ Brown. Commodore France had sent a medical team to the airport and working parties from the *Harlan County* and the *Portland* had gone to Green Beach. France had also activated medical teams on the *New Jersey* and the *Virginia* to be helilifted to the airport. He recalled the *Austin* from its port visit to Alexandria and alerted the Royal Air Force hospital at Akrotiri,

Cyprus to the need for possible medical assistance. Finally, he requested medevac aircraft from Stuttgart, Germany<sup>62</sup>

Cotten, Mikolaski, and Dudley then drove to the BLT headquarters building. They saw many Marines digging by hand through the ruins in a desperate attempt to rescue the living, trapped Americans. The wounded were evacuated from the MSSG headquarters, near the MAU command post, while some were taken to local hospitals in Beirut for treatment. The trio then went back to LZ Brown, where Mikolaski noted that a medical officer had arrived and the triage process was working; and these wounded were evacuated seaward.

At this moment, when working parties were frantically digging in the debris and rubble of the destroyed building with bare hands, perhaps one of the busiest Americans at the scene was Lieutenant Commander George W. Pucciarelli, the MAU's Catholic chaplain. Pucciarelli wore the wings of a parachutist earned while serving with a Marine force reconnaissance unit. Like the others in the MAU headquarters, he had been awakened by the blast. In the cot next to him was the Sixth Fleet Jewish chaplain, Lieutenant Commander

*By hand, and with pick and jackhammers, rescue workers begin recovery operations at the scene of the bombing almost immediately after the explosion on 23 October 1983.*



Arnold E. Resnicoff, who had arrived on Friday, 21 October, to conduct memorial services at the MSSG headquarters for the slain jeep driver. Both chaplains had run down to the BLT headquarters site. "I kept looking for the building. As I came around the edge of the shrubbery, I found out that the building wasn't there anymore," remembered Pucciarelli. "It was leveled . . . I could see the grey ash and dust just all over the place, on jeeps, on grass, on trees, on all the rubble that was down there. And then suddenly, I began to see things move within the rubble, and then I realized that these things . . . moving were our fallen comrades, were those who were wounded."<sup>83</sup>

The two chaplains began digging through the rubble with the others, seeking the injured and the dead. Chaplain Pucciarelli continued:

I had my vial of oil and my stole on and I started giving last rites to the dead and seriously wounded. I remember I kept yelling for corpsmen and for assistance . . . as people were starting to come down the stairs toward the building, 'Over here, there's a man hurt over here, get a stretcher, bring him out of here,' and just going from one part to another was what I did for the whole time there. I would say that I probably saw in the first day 150, easily, wounded or dead. . . .

I would stay day and night as they were pulling out the bodies, just the flash of faces that would go through your mind of . . . these guys who would talk to you, no matter what faith they were—Catholic, Protestant, Jewish. This was my second float with them and knowing some of their families and some of their kids and now realizing they were gone was just again a horrendous thought, that so many had been wiped out in one fatal blast.<sup>84</sup>

Within a short time, Italian and Lebanese forces joined the rescue efforts. Despite their own problems,

*24th MAU Chaplain George W. Pucciarelli shows the strain of his ministrations to the living and the dead.*

Photograph by Mike Lyongo, Black Star



USMC Photo by SSgt Robert E. Kline

*Sixth Fleet Jewish Chaplain LCdr Arnold E. Resnicoff wears a camouflage yarmulke given him by Catholic Chaplain Pucciarelli when one he had was lost.*

the French sent a contingent to the blast site, as did the British and the Lebanese Red Cross. "I kept seeing the same faces over and over again. It was remarkable how much work they did."<sup>85</sup> The MAU owned no heavy equipment capable of lifting the large blocks of steel-reinforced concrete to get to those who were still alive, as well as to those who were dead. Within a short time, the Lebanese construction firm of Oger Liban, which had provided such extensive assistance following the bombing of the American Embassy, arrived with large cranes and other needed heavy equipment. Lebanese civilians came to help, but some individuals were apparently there just for other purposes, e.g., looting. Chaplain Pucciarelli apprehended a number of such looters and had them thrown out of the area. Meanwhile, snipers fired intermittently at the rescue scene.

The count of casualties continued to mount. Back in the United States, Americans found that their favorite Sunday television programs were being continually interrupted by special news reports telling about the bombing. Throughout the day, satellite pictures of the bombing appeared on American television screens. Viewers could see the extent of the damage: bodies being carried out; the shocked faces of Marines as they went about their grisly business. The story dwarfed all others. Almost immediately, the country and the world were plunged into mourning.





Photo courtesy of Claude Salhani

*A Marine wipes a tear from his eye as he avoids sniper fire being placed on the rescue teams searching for survivors in the bombed BLT headquarters building.*

Parents, wives, friends of the 24th MAU Marines began their vigil — anxiously awaiting the casualty lists. Many old Marines, and young Marines, too, wept bitter tears of rage, frustration, and sorrow at the tremendous and senseless loss of life. Marine families in Camp Lejeune and its Jacksonville environs, and Americans throughout the country, began wondering if “presence” in Lebanon was worth the loss of a single Marine.

As rescuers continued pulling bodies from the building, they faced a major problem in identifying the dead and injured. Many of the men had removed their identification tags before going to sleep the night before. These dogtags, normally worn around the neck on chains, made sleeping uncomfortable. Many of the troops slept in their gym shorts or other athletic gear, which were not marked with their names as uniform items were required to be. Compounding the problem was the fact that all of the BLT’s service record books and medical records were in the battalion administration offices in the basement of the destroyed building. Most were not recovered for several days. Some were never recovered.

The MAU began by identifying the living. Lists were made of those who had been in the building and survived. Some sort of identification was made of everyone, living or dead, who was evacuated from LZ Brown, “. . . maybe just a name, maybe a Social Secu-

*Marines operate rental Lebanese heavy equipment at the bombed-out building.*

USMC Photo by SSgt Robert E. Kline





USMC Photo by SSgt Robert E. Kline

*Lebanese rescue workers recover a body from the ruins of the destroyed BLT headquarters.*

city number, something, but we knew how many actual people were on the bird and who they were.”<sup>66</sup>

The first aircraft to evacuate the severely injured arrived at Beirut International Airport at about 1030 on the 23d. It was an Air Force C-9 “Florence Nightingale” from Germany and specially equipped for medevacs. The C-9 was not capable of carrying a large number of litter patients, but it had a surgical team on board. It carried out a number of the walking wounded and five litter patients.<sup>67</sup>

Shortly after the arrival of the C-9, a Royal Air Force C-130 arrived. It took off at 1421, headed for Akrotiri, Cyprus, with 20 more of the severely wounded Americans on board. Meanwhile, Air Force C-9s and C-141s were landing, loading, and taking off immediately for Naples, Cyprus, or Germany. The Beirut airport had been closed for several days before the explosion, but it was opened for these flights despite the risk of incoming fire.

The Phibron continued to send working parties to the bombed site from its five ships. Colonel Geraghty reported that the Oger Liban construction firm’s workers and the Italian contingent were still using their heavy equipment to clear the site. He also reported that all access roads to the MAU compound and outlying companies had been barricaded with sand-filled barrels and rolling stock.

On 24 October, President Francois Mitterand of

France visited Beirut to inspect the bomb damage at the French billet. He also visited the BLT building site and paid tribute to the dead Marines. Meanwhile, rescue efforts continued day and night with little sleep for the survivors.

Back in Washington, senior officials had been in motion ever since receipt of the initial flash message that announced the bombing. Shortly after being notified by the Marine Corps Command Center, the Commandant received a telephone call from the President, who was in Augusta, Georgia, telling him that he was cutting short his weekend vacation and would be returning to Washington as early that morning as possible.<sup>68</sup> Mr. Reagan asked General Kelley if he could join him for a meeting of the National Security Council at 0930. During this meeting, the situation in Beirut was briefed and a number of options were discussed.

It was decided that the NSC members should study these options and return later in the day for more comprehensive discussions. At this later meeting, the President appointed General Kelley as his personal representative, and directed that he go as rapidly as possible to Beirut to determine what additional security requirements might exist to protect his Marines further. As General Kelley left the White House Situation Room, the President put his arm around the



general's shoulder and said "warmly and sincerely, 'Vaya Con Dios'—Go with God!"<sup>69</sup>

At approximately 0900 on 24 October, the Commandant's party left Andrews Air Force Base outside of Washington on board Air Force Two. The party consisted of General Kelley; Congressman John P. Murtha; Presidential Assistant Edward V. Hickey; Brigadier General Mead; Marine Colonel Matthew P. Caulfield from the White House Military Office; Lieutenant Colonel Bruce R. Greisen, head of the Counterintelligence Branch, Intelligence Division, HQMC; and Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps Robert E. Cleary.

The plane arrived at Frankfurt during the early evening. As General Kelley left the plane, an Air Force colonel advised him that a flight from Beirut bearing remains of 140 Marines who had been killed in the bombing had just arrived. General Kelley went immediately to the site, and watched as young airmen from the Air Force tenderly and respectfully removed each casket from the C-141 aircraft. While Lieutenant Colonel Frank Libutti, the Commandant's senior aide, did not accompany the Commandant at this point, he recalled that "just from talking to him later, after the fact, that it was a terribly emotional situation."<sup>70</sup>

Early on 25 October, while Marines were landing on Grenada, the party left Stuttgart by helicopter for

the U.S. Air Force Regional Medical Center in Wiesbaden. The most poignant moment of this part of the trip came when General Kelley met Lance Corporal Jeffrey L. Nashton in the intensive care ward. Nashton was in a ". . . critical condition with more tubes going in and out of his body than I have ever seen."<sup>71</sup> The Commandant continued, "When he heard me say who I was, he grabbed my camouflage coat, went up to the collar and counted the stars. He squeezed my hand, and then attempted to outline words on his bedsheet. When what he was trying to write was not understood, he was given a piece of paper and pencil, and then wrote 'Semper Fi.'" General Kelley read this, his ". . . face became animated in a great combination of joy and tremendous pride all wrapped around this very heavy emotional environment. . . . This guy in a single act, in a moment, captured . . . the courage of that man and love for the Corps and his country. And more than anything, the faithfulness, the loyalty . . . the opposite of despair, you know, 'Semper Fi.'" <sup>72</sup>

General Kelley arrived in Beirut early Tuesday afternoon, 25 October, and was met by the new U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon and an old friend, Reginald Bartholomew, and General Richard L. Lawson, Deputy Commander in Chief of the European Command. He immediately went to the BLT headquarters to see the

*Gen Paul X. Kelley, Vice President George Bush, and 24th MAU commander, Col Timothy J. Geraghty discuss the situation during recovery operations after the bombing.*



extent of the damage and witness ongoing rescue operations. While there, the 24th MAU received warning of another terrorist attack, which did not materialize.

That evening, General Kelley conducted a closed meeting in *Iwo Jima's* flag mess with General Lawson; Sixth Fleet Commander Vice Admiral Martin; Mr. Hickey; Marine Brigadier General Ernest T. Cook, Jr., Deputy J-3 of EUCOM; General Mead; Commodore France; and Colonel Geraghty. Colonel Geraghty briefed the group on the current situation, and what actions he had taken to improve the defenses.

Vice President Bush arrived on board the *Iwo Jima* early the next morning, 26 October, and was briefed on the situation by Colonel Geraghty and Commodore France. Subsequently, he toured the ship's sick bay, where he presented Purple Heart medals to injured Marines and sailors.

The Vice President then visited the site of the bombing, followed by a call on President Gemayel, accompanied by Ambassador Bartholomew, General Kelley, and General Lawson. When the Vice President left Lebanon, the Commandant then called upon General Tannous, whom he had met before. Of this meeting, the Commandant's aide recalls, ". . . the meeting was characterized by the very positive interaction of the obvious dynamics between General Kelley and General Tannous . . . sort of old warriors, then trusted veterans . . . there is a charisma there that was very obvious to even the most casual observer."<sup>73</sup>

For the remainder of the day, General Kelley met with other MNF commanders, and visited the site of the terrorist attack against the French contingent. At approximately 1700 that evening, the Commandant called a meeting at the headquarters of the 24th MAU to discuss the contents of the report he would make to the President. This meeting included all of the principals, including Ambassador Bartholomew and General Lawson. Once the general outline and contents were agreed to, the Commandant and his party (less Congressman Murtha who had left earlier) flew out of Beirut International Airport bound back to Washington, with an overnight stop at Naples. The next morning, General Kelley visited Marines and sailors in the Naval Hospital in Naples, where he presented Purple Hearts to the injured.

During the return trip, the Commandant prepared a hand-written, 23-page outline on a yellow, legal-size tablet, which would be the basis for his official report to the President.

Immediately upon his return to Washington, the Commandant was advised that beginning Monday, 31 October, he would participate as the principal witness

in a number of congressional hearings on the Beirut bombing. In preparation, during the weekend of 29-30 October, General Kelley participated in round-the-clock meetings and discussions with Lieutenant General Miller, the FMFLant commander; 2d Marine Division commander, Major General Gray; and his principal staff members to assist him in the preparation of his appearance on the Hill. His primary guidance to his advisors was that regardless of the consequences, "the Marine Corps must tell it like it is."<sup>74</sup>

On Capitol Hill, General Kelley opened his 20-page statement by saying that the attacks on 23 October in Beirut were not against just the Marines and the French, but against the free world.<sup>75</sup>

He then gave his reasons for requesting the Secretary of Defense to establish an independent inquiry into the events leading up to the bombing. The Commandant set the Beirut scene the Marines faced and described their mission (which he said was not "a classic military mission") giving the background for that mission. He avoided discussion of the political or diplomatic reasons for the Marine presence in Lebanon. "It is not the place of a Marine to discuss those imperatives for military employment."<sup>76</sup>

General Kelley spoke about the mission of "presence" and what it meant to the Marine commanders of the MAU. He outlined what each deployed MAU had faced in Beirut, and how the situation was subject to constant change with no corresponding change of mission. The Commandant then discussed the phase that began on 26 September 1983, when a ceasefire had been declared, and when warning of a terrorist threat had been raised again by the intelligence community.

He pointed out that since 1 June 1983 over 100 car bomb possibilities had been developed. All the makes, colors, and license plate numbers of these cars were provided the Marines by intelligence sources and protective measures were taken. General Kelley described what took place on Sunday morning, 23 October, and why he believed that "only extraordinary security could have met the massive and unanticipated threat."<sup>77</sup> Continuing, he said that he believed that Beirut Marines had been pinpointed for destruction by non-Lebanese elements. He then listed the initiatives that were underway or contemplated for increased security of the MAU. He also said that the 24th MAU was in the process of decreasing the vulnerability generally associated with large troop concentrations. Specifically, the steps being taken were to:

Position Lebanese Armed Forces armored personnel carriers at the BIA terminal and at the traffic circle in front of the airport.

Restrict vehicle access to command posts to emergency and military vehicles only.

Restrict civilian pedestrian access to the command posts to one location.

Have MAU units in an indefinite "Condition 1" (highest level) alert status.

Block and reinforce all entrances to the command posts.

Reinforce all perimeter fence lines adjacent to rifle company positions.

Position an additional .50 caliber machine gun to cover avenues of approach into the MAU command post.

Establish additional guard posts throughout the MAU area, and to request an additional rifle company from Camp Lejeune to provide security during the period of the recovery operations.

Establish mobile reconnaissance patrols with antitank weapons within the BIA perimeter.

General Kelley further noted that Headquarters, 2d Battalion, 6th Marines command elements had arrived at Beirut on 25 October to replace the BLT 1/8 command elements and that definitive action was underway to strengthen the 24th MAU positions and to reduce vulnerability to terrorist attacks by isolating and barricading command and control and support areas.<sup>78</sup>

In summary, General Kelley said:

Our security measures were not adequate to stop a large heavily laden truck, loaded with 5,000 pounds of high explosive, travelling at a high speed and driven by a suicide driver, which executed the attack in seconds from start to finish. This 'flying truck bomb' was an unprecedented escalation of the previous terrorist threat, both in size of the weapon and method of delivery. I must continue to emphasize, however, that under our current disposition, restrictions, and mission, we will always have vulnerabilities, and that the other side will make every effort to exploit them.<sup>79</sup>

He then added two final comments. The first had to do with a news story which said that Colonel Geraghty had received a warning of the bombing threat two days before the incident. In response to that report, General Kelley quoted Colonel Geraghty, who said:

Comment made to media was a general statement on car bomb warning. At the weekly intelligence meeting between MNF Intel Officers and the Office of Beirut Security, a listing of suspect car bombs, complete with car descriptions and license plate numbers, is disseminated to the MNF by security officials. These car descriptions are copied and disseminated to our posts. Since our arrival, at least 100 potential car bombs have been identified to the MNF. After the attack on our convoy on 19 October 1983, the car bomb threat was quite obviously real to the USMNF; however, specific information on how car bomb attacks were to be conducted (i.e., kamikaze) or a description of the large truck that conducted the attack on the BLT were never received by the 24th MAU.<sup>80</sup>

The Commandant addressed the charge that, when he was asked in Beirut the previous week whether he



USMC Photo by LCpl Brenda Kusay  
*MajGen Alfred M. Gray, 2d Marine Division commander, addresses the more than 5,000 people attending the memorial services at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, on 4 November. Present were President and Mrs. Reagan, Gen Kelley, and other dignitaries.*

thought that security was adequate, he had answered "yes" despite the undeniable fact of the bombing. He explained:

Five thousand pounds of high explosives destroyed a four story steel reinforced concrete building. It was a heap of rubble. For over fifty hours, day and night, young Marines clawed at steel and concrete—more to save the injured who were trapped at the time than to recover the dead. The emotional scars were already deep—"Why me?" they asked. "Why am I alive and my buddies dead?"

Their Commandant was asked, 'was security adequate?' I replied yes—it was adequate to meet what any reasonable and prudent commander should have expected prior to dawn on Sunday, October 23, 1983. And I want you to know in that atmosphere my remarks were directed to weary and frustrated Marines.

Let me phrase what I was saying in a different way: If you were to ask whether the security around the headquarters building was adequate to protect the occupants against a 5-ton Mercedes truck carrying 5,000 pounds of explosives at high speed—my answer would be NO!

And, if you would ask me whether the commander should have known, given the explosion in the Embassy in April, my answer would again be NO! Both instances involved a terrorist bombing from a motor vehicle, but there the



USMC Photo by LCpl Brenda Kusay  
*Rainsoaked Marines attending the memorial services at Camp Lejeune pay a final tribute to Marines, soldiers, and sailors who died in Beirut and Grenada.*

similarity ends. The delivery system was totally different as was every other aspect of the two incidents.

For these reasons, Mr. Chairman, I urgently requested the inquiry previously mentioned to determine the facts in an atmosphere that is conducive to such an inquiry. Knowing the Secretary of Defense as I do, and the respect I have for Admiral Long, there is no question in my mind that it will be a complete and thorough examination of this awful tragedy. I suggest we all await the board's findings.<sup>81</sup>

Another matter of national concern to which General Kelley addressed his remarks was the manner in which the Marine Corps reported its casualties. He pointed out that in the impact of the destruction of the BLT building and the subsequent tragic loss of life, the casualty reporting procedures for BLT 1/8 was delayed. It was necessary to proceed slowly in reporting for the sake of accurate identification and proper notification to the next of kin of the dead Marines, as well as the wounded. Because of the size of the task facing the Marine Corps:

... and the painfully slow progress in this regard, the decision was made to release the names of those Marines who survived this disaster. We did not do this before for ob-

vious reasons. The process was slow, mainly because of the need for complete accuracy. We didn't want to hurt anyone needlessly. Marines and members of your staffs worked tirelessly to ensure that timely and accurate information was released. The enormity of the situation is still upon us, and no one could feel more remorse than I do over the prolonged suffering caused to many families by unavoidable delays in notifying them of their loved one's status.

The Marine Corps is proud of many things, but nothing more than the way we take care of our own. I want each of you to know that everything humanly possible is being done to facilitate the process.<sup>82</sup>

The Commandant ended his testimony by saying, "The perpetrators and supporters of this challenge to the rights of free men everywhere must be identified and punished. I will have little sleep until this happens."<sup>83</sup> Shortly after the Commandant's Capitol Hill appearance, a commission headed by Admiral Robert L. J. Long, USN (Ret.) was appointed by the Secretary of Defense and began its investigation.

On 4 November, the Commandant accompanied President and Mrs. Reagan and other high government officials to a nationally televised memorial service held outdoors in a heavy downpour of rain at Camp Lejeune. Five days later, General Kelley sent the following message to the 24th MAU, still in Beirut:

Subj: Outpouring of Concern for Lebanon Marines

1. Since the tragic events of 23 October there has been an outpouring of concern from people and organizations throughout the world for you. From small towns in middle America to the far corners of the world, I have received hundreds of letters and telegrams from sympathetic and appreciative individuals and organizations expressing their heartfelt concern for Marines and sailors of 24th MAU and your families and their deep appreciation for your sacrifices and your continued dedication to duty.

2. The tremendous volume of letters and telegrams received precludes presenting extracts from even a fraction of them; however, I have chosen a few salient ones that I felt were worthy of passing on.

A. From the Commandant General Royal Marines, "All Royal Marines grieve with you over your losses in Beirut and your families are very much in our minds."

B. From Northside High School, Memphis, TN, "Northside Cougars care for our Marines in Beirut. . . . We send our love and prayers."

C. From a former Marine in Alabama, "Want you to know that we support you and all your endeavors. We want you to know that if we are not with you in body, we are with you in spirit."

D. From the Swiss Military Attache, "I'm shocked by this terrible act of violence and would like to express to you my condolences."

E. From LtGen Park Hee Jae, Commandant of the Korean Marine Corps, "ROK Marines offer their condolences to those U.S. Marines who sacrificed their lives for peace and freedom."

F. From the Mayor of St. Petersburg Beach, FL, "The city government and its employees wish to extend their deepest sympathies for the loss of American lives in Beirut."

G. From the Comanding Officer, 1stBn, Royal Welch Fusiliers, "Our deepest commiserations on your recent losses. . . ."

H. From a young woman in Milwaukee, WI, "May God watch over all of you."

3. Similar messages were received from the German Navy, the Brazilian Marine Corps, NATO, Retired Dutch Marines,

and a host of other sources throughout the United States and around the world. It is most heartening to know that so many people outside our Corps care so much for our Marines and sailors and understand and appreciate the difficult and demanding mission that has been given to 24th MAU.

4. As always you and your brave men are in my thoughts and prayers. God bless you and Semper Fidelis!<sup>84</sup>

# CHAPTER 7

## The Investigation

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As a result of the Commandant's request for an investigation of the bombing incident by an independent commission, on 7 November 1983, Secretary of Defense Weinberger convened The DOD Commission on Beirut International Airport (BIA) Terrorist Act of 23 October 1983. This move was taken in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Commission Act (Public Law 92-463). The commission's proceedings were to be governed by Executive Order 12024 and by General Services Administration and Department of Defense regulations.

The charter of the commission stipulated that its advisory function was to be completed within 90 days. Appointed members were Admiral Long; The Honorable Robert J. Murray; Lieutenant General Lawrence F. Snowden, USMC (Ret.); Lieutenant General Eugene F. Tighe, Jr., USAF (Ret.); and Lieutenant General Joseph T. Palastra, Jr., USA.

Also assigned to the commission were both military and civilian assistants to provide advice in various technical areas which would be investigated. Intelligence, planning, operations, special warfare, terrorism, command relations, medical, and international law experts were assigned as full-time staff assistance. Since the substantive information to be collected necessarily included highly classified national security material and because these matters could not reasonably be segregated into separate classified and unclassified categories, all witnesses were interviewed in closed sessions.

The Long Commission visited all major units in the chain of command—from the 24th MAU ashore in Beirut; to Task Force 61 offshore of Lebanon; to Sixth Fleet on board *Puget Sound* at Gaeta, Italy; to CinCUSNavEur in London; to CinCEur in Stuttgart. Commission members also visited Tel Aviv, Rota, Akrotiri, and Wiesbaden. While in Beirut, the commission met with members of the 24th MAU before it left Lebanon, toured Marine positions along the airport perimeter, and inspected the ruins of the BLT building. In Lebanon as well, commission and staff members met with Ambassador Bartholomew and his embassy staff, General Tannous—Commander of the LAF—and the commanders of the French, Italian, and British MNF contingents.

Some of its preliminary findings were time-sensitive.

Upon the commission's return from Beirut, it provided the Secretary of Defense with a memorandum outlining the 24th MAU's existing security arrangements. The commission also sent a second memorandum to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs regarding the Federal Bureau of Investigation's comprehensive report on the nature of the explosive devices used in the embassy and BLT building bombings, with a recommendation that the report be forwarded to the service chiefs as well.

In the belief that a thorough understanding of the circumstances surrounding the bombing of the BLT headquarters required a comprehensive knowledge of a number of separate, but closely related substantive areas, the Commission divided its report into ten parts:

Part 1: Addresses the development of the mission assigned to the U.S. Multi-National Force, assesses the clarity of the mission, and analyzes the continued validity of the assumptions upon which the mission was based.

Part 2: Addresses the adequacy of the rules of engagement that governed the execution of the mission.

Part 3: Outlines the chain of command that was tasked with the accomplishment of the military mission and assesses its responsiveness to the security requirements of the MAU in the changing threat environment.

Part 4: Examines the threat to the MAU, both before and after the attack, and assesses the adequacy of the intelligence provided to Colonel Geraghty.

Part 5: Analyzes the security measures that were in force prior to the attack.

Part 6: Provides a comprehensive recapitulation of the tragic events of 23 October 1983.

Part 7: Describes the security measures instituted subsequent to the bombing and assesses the adequacy.

Part 8: Reconstructs and evaluates on-scene casualty handling procedures, aeromedical evacuation, and definitive medical care provided to the victims of the attack. Also addresses the circumstances surrounding an Israeli offer of medical assistance and examines the basis for its non-acceptance.

Part 9: Addresses the 23 October 1983 bombing in the context of international terrorism and assesses the readiness of U.S. military forces to cope with the terrorist threat.

Part 10: Lists the commission's major conclusions and recommendations.

The commission's philosophy in preparing the report was outlined:

... the Commission analyzed those factors bearing upon the security of the USMNF in Lebanon in general, and in the security of the BLT Headquarters building in particular. The Commission began with the premise that U.S. par-



Department of Defense photo by Frank Hall

*Members of the Long Commission pose with Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger before beginning their hearings into the bombing: (left to right), LtGen Joseph T. Palastra, Jr., USA; Adm Robert L. J. Long, USN (Ret); LtGen Lawrence G. Snowden, USMC (Ret); Mr. Weinberger; LtGen Eugene F. Tighe, Jr., USAF (Ret); and Mr. Robert J. Murray.*

ticipation in the Multinational Force was designed to support the efforts of the United States and its allies to facilitate the withdrawal of foreign military forces from Lebanon and to assist the Lebanese Government in establishing sovereignty and authority over the Beirut area. The Commission did not question the political decision to insert the Marines into Lebanon and did not address the political necessity of their continued participation in the Multi-National Force following the 23 October 1983 terrorist attack. Although those political judgements are beyond the purview of the Commission's Charter, and not addressed in the report, the fact did not impede the work of the Commission in examining the impact of those policy decisions on the security of the USMNF.

The Commission reviewed the responsiveness of the military chain of command as it pertained to the security requirements of the USMNF. The Commission did not conduct an administrative inspection of any headquarters element during the review process.

The Commission's focus was on the bombing of 23 October 1983 and the security of the USMNF both prior to and subsequent to that catastrophic event. The security of offshore supporting forces was not reviewed in depth by the Commission. The security of other American personnel in Lebanon was not considered, being outside the Commission's Charter.<sup>2</sup>

The report that the commission delivered to the Secretary of Defense was one of the most comprehensive studies prepared on the history and development

of the U.S. presence in Lebanon and the rationale for the Marines' mission.

This history will not review in full the lengthy study the Long Commission published on 20 December 1983. Part 10 of the report, "Conclusions and Recommendations," can be found in Appendix E. The main areas investigated by the commission covered the Beirut bombing in general, as well as certain factors affecting the MAUs over which they had no direct control.

The commission concluded that the so-called "presence" mission was not interpreted the same way by all levels of command. These differences, including the responsibilities of the Marines for the security of Beirut International Airport, should have been recognized and corrected within the chain of command. On the expanding role of the MAUs, the commission concluded that high-level decisions regarding Lebanon were characterized by an emphasis on military options and expansion of the roles, despite the fact that the security of the Marines continued to deteriorate as progress toward a diplomatic solution slowed. Decisions affecting the role of the MAUs were taken without clear understanding that the conditions under which the Marines first deployed to Lebanon



had changed; that the nature of the American military involvement in Lebanon had changed, and that the expansion of our military involvement in Lebanon greatly increased the risks of the Marines. The commission then recommended a re-examination of alternative means of achieving American objectives in Lebanon, "to include a comprehensive assessment of the military chain of command and a more vigorous and demanding approach to pursuing diplomatic alternatives."<sup>3</sup>

With respect to the rules of engagement, the commission found that a specific set of rules for countering the types of terrorist attacks committed against the embassy and the BLT building had not been provided to nor implemented by the MAU commanders. In addition, the commission said that the Marine mission statement, and the implementation of the May 1983 dual "Blue Card-White Card" rules of engagement, contributed to a mindset which detracted from the Marines' readiness to respond to the type of terrorist attack which occurred on 23 October.

The commission was critical of the chain of command, finding it deficient in several ways:

1. An effective command supervision of the MNF security posture was lacking prior to 23 October.
2. The operational chain of command's failure to correct or amend the Marines' defensive posture constituted tacit approval of the security measures and procedures in force at the BLT headquarters building on 23 October.
3. Although the USCinCEur operational chain of command was at fault, a series of circumstances beyond the control of these commands influenced their judgement and their actions relating to the MAU's security.

In view of these findings, the commission recommended that the Secretary of Defense "... take whatever administrative or disciplinary action he deems appropriate, citing the failure of the USCinCEur operational chain of command to monitor and supervise effectively the security measures and procedures employed by the USMNF on 23 October 1983."<sup>4</sup>

Although Colonel Geraghty had received a great volume of intelligence warnings about potential terrorist threats before 23 October, the commission concluded that he was not provided timely intelligence tailored to his specific needs, that would have enabled him to defend against the full spectrum of threats he faced. In addition, the paucity of HUMINT assets—and the fact that the HUMINT he received was neither precise nor tailored to his needs—limited Colonel Geraghty's ability to perceive clearly the severity of the threat he faced. The commission made several recommendations concerning the establishment of an all-source fusion center which would tailor and focus

"... all-source intelligence support to U.S. military commanders involved in military operations in areas of high threat, conflict, or crisis." The commission also recommended that the Secretary of Defense, together with the Secretary of State and the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency jointly examine current HUMINT activities with a view to improving this type of intelligence support to the American contingent in Lebanon and other U.S. military forces that might operate in areas of potential conflict.

Part 5 of the report's conclusions and recommendations deals with Marine security before the attack and command responsibility for the security of the 24th MAU and BLT 1/8 prior to the attack. The Commission concluded that the security at the MAU compound was neither equal to the increasing level of threat nor sufficient to preclude the catastrophic losses suffered on 23 October. The decision to house approximately one quarter of the BLT in a single structure as a response to incoming hostile fire was found to contribute to the great loss of life. Accordingly, the commission held the BLT commander responsible for placing about 350 members of his command in one building. The MAU commander was held equally responsible for condoning the concentration of troops in the BLT building; for concurring in the BLT commander's modification of prescribed alert procedures; and for emphasizing safety over security, in directing that sentries on posts 4, 5, 6, and 7 carry unloaded weapons. The commission softened these findings by recognizing a series of circumstances beyond the control of both Colonel Geraghty and Lieutenant Colonel Gerlach which influenced their judgement and actions relating to the security of the MAU. Nevertheless, the commission recommended that the Secretary of Defense take administrative or disciplinary measures against these two officers.

The commission also discussed post-attack security, noting that actions taken subsequent to 23 October had reduced the vulnerability of the MAU to a similar suicidal attack, but that security measures were still not sufficient to prevent additional casualties from being suffered by the Marines. Although the improved disposition of the Marines may have reflected the best option available, the commission felt that the Department of Defense should prepare and submit to the National Security Council a comprehensive set of alternatives to the status quo in Beirut.

In a discussion of casualty handling, the Commission praised the speed and skill with which the rescue and medical efforts were mounted. It found little to criticize in the aeromedical evacuation of the casual-

ties or their distribution to medical centers, but it pointed out that there were an inadequate number of experienced medical planning officers in the CinCEur chain of command. Another medical aspect had diplomatic implications, for it concerned the rejection of the Israeli offer of medical assistance immediately following the bombing. Commodore France had considered accepting the offer, but determined that the medical capabilities of his command were functioning adequately and that the casualty evacuation plans were being implemented smoothly under actual crisis conditions.

In the report's final section, the commission discussed military response to terrorism. It concluded that the bombing of the BLT building was a terrorist act ". . . sponsored by sovereign States and organized political entities for the purpose of defeating U.S. objectives in Lebanon." It also concluded that international terrorist acts like those which occur in the Middle East constitute a world-wide threat to American and other facilities. Terrorism, the commission concluded, has become an important part of warfare and it is necessary to develop an active national policy to combat it and reduce its effectiveness. The members called upon the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff to develop appropriate military responses to terrorism and to work with the National Security Council to develop appropriate political and diplomatic measures.

In conclusion, the commission stated that the Marine force in Lebanon was not trained, organized, staffed, or supported to deal effectively with the terrorist threat in that country. It called upon the Secretary of Defense to ". . . direct the development of doctrine, planning, organization, force structure, education, and training necessary to defend against and counter terrorism."

On 30 December 1983, in response to the Long Commission report, the Secretary of Defense signed a number of memoranda addressed individually to the Secretaries of the Army and the Navy, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Each addressee was referred to a specific portion of the report which came within his province and was requested to report to Mr. Weinberger by 9 January 1984 what action he was taking to correct deficiencies or to implement the recommendations made by Admiral Long and his colleagues. The Service secretaries were referred to the appropriate parts of the report in which the Commission recommended that administrative or disciplinary action be taken with regards to individuals,

but in his 30 December memorandum, the Secretary of Defense mentioned only ". . . administrative action."

The memorandum to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff dealt with several separate topics, and General Vessey furnished copies to each Service chief for information. The Chairman was asked to outline actions he had taken with respect to the commission's recommendations about military responses to terrorism; casualty reporting; the chain of command and effective command supervision of the USMNF security positions; tailored intelligence; rules of engagement; and post-attack security.

Meanwhile, the House Armed Services Committee (HASC) mounted its own investigation. The subject of the HASC Investigation Subcommittee's effort was "Adequacy of U.S. Marine Corps Security in Beirut." The subcommittee was tasked to examine the U.S. policy objective in Lebanon; how the Marine mission contributed to those objectives; whether the risks to the Marines were adequately assessed; and whether adequate precautions were taken to counter them.<sup>5</sup>

On 12 November, the subcommittee delegation arrived in Beirut to conduct two days of hearings, in which they interviewed Commodore France; Colonel Geraghty; embassy security officer Alan O. Bigler; Commander Richard Balzer and Lieutenant Frazer Henderson, both Navy doctors; Lance Corporal Berthiaume; and Navy Hospital Corpsmen Michael Arau and Donald Davidson.

Earlier that month, the full committee held two days of hearings in Washington, during which time the following testified: General Kelley; General Mead; Captain Lewis Mantel, a Navy doctor; Congressman G. V. "Sonny" Montgomery; Rear Admiral Jonathan T. Howe, Director of the Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs at the State Department; Ambassador Dillon; and Gordon E. Harvey, Deputy Director of the State Department's Office of Security. In early December, the Subcommittee also heard from Ambassadors Dillon and Habib; four witnesses from the National Security Agency; John W. Hicks, Chief of the Scientific Analysis Section, Federal Bureau of Investigation; Legislative Counsel Jack Perkins, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice; General Mead again; Corporal Joseph Martucci; Lance Corporals Burnham Matthews and Robert Calhoun; and First Lieutenant Gregory P. Balzer.<sup>6</sup>

On 14 and 15 December, the Subcommittee heard testimony from Aviation Electronics Technician Talmadge E. Lea; First Lieutenant Glenn L. Wagner; Commodore France; Colonel Geraghty; Petty Officer Kenneth W. Densmore; General John W. Vessey, Jr.;

and General Bernard Rogers, CinCEur. The Subcommittee prepared its report from sworn testimony at these hearings and it was published in two sections—the main report itself with diagrams, maps, photographs, and selected portions of testimony, and a second section that contained a summary of findings and conclusions. Both sections were published and made available on 19 December, a day ahead of the Long Commission report.

The Subcommittee found that inadequate security measures had been taken to protect the MAU from the full spectrum of threats. In addition, Colonel Geraghty was found to have made “. . . serious errors in judgement in failing to provide better protection for his troops within the command authority available to him.”<sup>7</sup> Commodore France was adjudged to be equally culpable. The summary also stated that higher command elements failed to exercise sufficient oversight of the MAU. The House members were particularly concerned that the higher level commanders did not reevaluate the security posture of the MAU when it appeared to become increasingly vulnerable in the weeks before the bombing, and that the high level visitors to Beirut, although they were given familiarization briefings, did not seem to be sensitive to the increased security needs of the MAU. The Subcommittee also called into account the role of the “. . . higher level policymaking authority that adopted and continued a policy that placed military units in a deploy-

ment where protection was inevitably inadequate.”<sup>8</sup> The Subcommittee’s summary continued:

Both the Marine ground commanders who testified, consistent with the view of the Marine Corps leadership, interpreted the political/diplomatic nature of the mission to place high priority on visibility and emphasized to the extent of allowing greater than necessary security risks. The subcommittee was particularly distressed to find that the security of the MAU was less than that provided at the interim U.S. Embassy in Beirut.<sup>9</sup>

The Marines in the MAU were praised for their skill, courage, and fortitude, and were considered to be functioning well in a role that was less military than diplomatic. Continuing, the summary dealt with intelligence matters and found that the MAU did not receive adequate intelligence about terrorism, and that the MAU erred in failing to consider truck bombs as significant threats.

In conclusion, the subcommittee in strong terms urged the Administration to review its policy in Lebanon, “. . . from the standpoint of how the Marine mission fits into the policy to determine if continued deployment of the Marine unit, as part of the Multinational Force (MNF) of French, British, and American units is justified.”<sup>10</sup>

Finally, the congressmen stated: “The solution to Lebanon’s problem will only be found at the bargaining table. We must not in any way encourage the perception that a solution can be found on the battlefield with the participation of U.S. armed forces.”<sup>11</sup>

## CHAPTER 8

# Beirut V Goes Home

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On 26 October, as Vice President Bush visited Beirut, Company B positions took 15 mortar rounds over a two-hour period. They returned the fire with 21 rounds of high-explosive 81mm ammunition. Before the month was over, the MAU would suffer three more wounded, none of whom needed to be evacuated.<sup>1</sup>

As attempts to recover bodies and clean up the site continued, the MAU worked hard to prevent a recurrence of the suicide attack. Earthen- and concrete-filled barricades were placed in all open areas to forestall high speed entry by attackers. Colonel Geraghty established a fortified perimeter within the Beirut airport area. He ringed the MAU command post with an anti-vehicle ditch and an anti-vehicle berm, along with the following:

1. The airport road was reduced to two from four lanes.
2. Access into the perimeter was restricted to Multi-National Force and U.S. Embassy vehicles only.
3. The number of entrances to the MAU command post was reduced to three, all of which were covered by .50 caliber machine guns and blocked either with a five-ton truck or heavy steel gates made of railroad tracks.
4. M-60 machine guns, loaded with 7.62mm armor-piercing ammunition, covered all roads and open areas leading into or in the proximity of the airport area.
5. With the exception of those Lebanese who worked at the airport power plant, all civilian personnel were excluded from the compound and all Lebanese Armed Forces troops were relocated outside the fenceline.
6. The number of interior guard posts was increased and all posts were armed with LAAWs (light antitank assault weapons).
7. All but 10 security guards were removed from Green Beach.
8. The Corniche in front of the Durrafourd Building and the British Embassy was blocked off and the position reinforced by an armored assault vehicle.<sup>2</sup>

The Marines remained alert to the possibility of kamikaze-like tactics by fanatics wearing stolen uniforms and driving captured MNF and LAF vehicles. Fighting continued in the suburbs of Beirut during the last days of October, while "The myriad of intelligence reports involving planned bombings of the MNF and diplomatic locations coupled with rumored U.S. retaliation in the southern suburbs only increased the already high tension in Beirut."<sup>3</sup>

On the 31st, an amtrac was convoyed to the Marine

guard positions at the Embassy to provide increased security there. Meanwhile, the newly arrived Company E, BLT 2/6, was inserted into positions on the northeastern portion of the perimeter, relieving Company C, which now moved into the location formerly held by the 155mm howitzer battery. The artillery was moved to new emplacements in the southwestern part of the airport because it had come under heavy fire in the north and was unable to guarantee immediate fire support when called upon to provide it.

By the end of the month, HMM-162 had accumulated 7,435.4 accident-free hours of deployed flight time, exceeding the record of any squadron previously deployed with the Sixth Fleet. A combination of factors, such as medevac, VIP, cargo, mail, and diplomatic flights resulted in this record, which was coupled with a high percentage of aircraft availability, 90 percent, attesting to the round-the-clock efforts of the maintenance crew.

A sorely tried Colonel Geraghty commented at this time:

While the cutting edge of the MAU took many nicks this week, it proved to be made of well-tempered steel. Those that have tried to dull the blade have found that it can't be done from a distance and they have had to move close aboard. . . . The support from the MARG during the bombing was without equal. They placed their ships in harm's way and were the first to respond. Many Marines owe their lives to the sailors of TF 61.<sup>4</sup>

An FBI study later revealed that the explosion which collapsed the BLT building had been caused by explosive material wrapped around tubes of propane or another type of highly volatile gas. This boosted the explosive force of the bomb to the equivalent of more than 12,000 pounds of TNT. In addition to collapsing the building, this was enough to make a crater measuring 39 feet by 29 1/2 feet and 8 feet deep. In doing this, the explosion destroyed a seven-inch-thick concrete floor, which was reinforced by steel rods, each 1 3/4 inches in diameter. The FBI also concluded that, even if the truck had not reached the lobby, and had exploded instead in the roadway at a distance of 330 feet from the building, nearly the same amount of damage and a significant number of casualties still would have resulted.

A large congressional delegation arrived on 29 Oc-



USMC Photo by SSgt Robert E. Kline

*Flanked by American diplomatic personnel as well as representatives from other Multi-National Force units and the Lebanese Armed Forces, Col Timothy J. Geraghty presides over a memorial service in front of the MAU headquarters building in early November.*

*A camouflage utility cap and artificial flowers poignantly mark what is left of the destroyed Marine headquarters days after the site had been cleared. Not much else remains.*

Photo courtesy of Francoise de Mulder



tober and was briefed and given a tour of the MAU positions. Other high-level visitors at the end of October and the beginning of November were General Richard L. Lawson, Deputy Commander, EUCOM; Admiral Richard N. Small, CinCUSNavEur; and Lieutenant General Howard F. Stone, Chief of Staff of EUCOM. On 4 November, the MAU held an emotion-filled memorial service for the men killed in the bombing. Present at the services were Ambassador Bartholomew and Deputy Chief of Mission Pugh and their wives, together with representatives of the LAF and MNF units.<sup>5</sup>

Both Companies A and E came under fire on the night of 5 November, as the advance party of the 22d MAU arrived for the turnover. Beginning at 1650, 7 November, all units on the perimeter came under intense fire, which continued for six hours and was ended only by a heavy downpour of rain and hail.

Because of the difficulty in supporting Company A at the Lebanese University, and the threat these Marines faced by being isolated from the rest of the MAU, Colonel Geraghty decided to abandon the position and pull the company back into his lines. At 0321 on 8 November, a convoy arrived at the university to withdraw Company A. Mechanical difficulties with one of the vehicles delayed the return trip and the convoy did not return to the airport until three and a half hours later. Company A then embarked on board the *Harlan County*, where it remained until her return to the States. This move essentially left the British contingent isolated across from the university on the Old Sidon Road.

The Marine Corps Birthday was celebrated in Beirut on 10 November with a cake-cutting ceremony held at the MAU headquarters. Of this event, Colonel Geraghty wrote, "Our birthday celebration was low key, but traditional, and from our watch, 24th MAU added another page to the history of Marines in Lebanon."<sup>6</sup> On the 10th, Colonel Geraghty received the following message:

Before long you will turn over your responsibilities to 22d MAU. All Americans are deeply in your debt. Even as we grieve for your sacrifice, we take pride in your excellence as Marines on this, the 208th Birthday of the Corps. Please know we are thinking of you and look forward to welcoming you home—Our Marines. 'Semper Fidelis,' Ronald Reagan.<sup>7</sup>

With a week left until its relief by the 22d MAU on 19 November the 24th MAU's Marines remained on alert, receiving some intermittent fire and returning it when warranted, but ready to leave Lebanon. Morale was very high, but the shock of the bombing and the

resultant loss of life began to tell within a few days after the 23d. For many of the younger Marines, who had never before faced death or the dying so closely, it was a traumatic experience. Chaplain Pucciarelli counseled many Marines who had lost good friends, and even relatives, in the bombing. Some of the older and more mature Marines spoke to the younger ones, trying to get them to talk about their feelings to provide an emotional outlet. With respect to this period and the bombing, the MAU chaplain later reflected:

You know, we can read about Pearl Harbor, you see pictures, but being there [in Beirut] again, the sights and the sounds and the smells and all the senses would be more of a sobering event than reading this in a history book. So a lot of these young lads were overcome by the scene, and of course, it took its toll that particular day. But I think, working at the site for four days or more, helped a lot. I think it was kind of a [catharsis].<sup>8</sup>

Elements of Lieutenant Colonel Ray L. Smith's BLT 2/8, fresh and eager after a successful operation in Grenada, began landing at Beirut International Airport on 17 November. At that time, BLT 1/8 began to backload on Phibron 8 shipping. By 2330 the next day, all members of the 24th AMU were re-embarked and ready to leave for home. Brigadier General Jim R. Joy,\* the 22d MAU commander, relieved Colonel Geraghty as commander of the U.S. contingent of the Multi-National Force, Beirut at 1000 on 19 November. Two hours later, the *Iwo Jima* and the *Portland* followed in the wakes of the *El Paso*, *Harlan County*, and *Austin*, which had left for Rota, Spain the day before. In his last situation report from Lebanon, Colonel Geraghty stated, "24th MAU stands relieved as LF6F 2-83 [Landing Force, Sixth Fleet] and US Contingent to the Multi-National Force, Beirut, Lebanon. Proceeding on duties as assigned. Able to respond to any combat mission. Able to respond as Marines."<sup>9</sup>

Phibron 8 arrived in Rota on 24 and 25 November to a warm reception that was totally unexpected. The naval station commander extended post exchange hours to accommodate MAU/MARG personnel and to ensure that they had an opportunity to relax and shop.

\*In view of the need to provide additional supervisory assistance and coordination of the activities ashore in Beirut, the Commandant authorized the appointment of the Assistant Commander, 2d Marine Division, Brigadier General Joy, as commanding general of the 22d MAU on 3 November. When Phibron 4 shipping carrying the 22d MAU from Grenada to Beirut arrived off Lebanon on 17 November, General Joy went on board *Guam* and formally assumed command of the 22d, relieving Colonel Faulkner, who then became chief of staff. Prior to his promotion, General Joy had served as Fleet Marine Officer, Sixth Fleet and was totally familiar with the Lebanon situation.



USMC Photo by SSgt Robert E. Kline

*24th Marine Amphibious Unit Marines wash down their vehicle at Beirut International Airport before it went on board Phibron 8 shipping, headed for Rota and the States.*

Bus transportation was provided to and from the ships on a regular schedule for liberty parties. The wives' clubs at the base organized "welcome home" parties where ". . . tons of fine food of the most enjoyable sort, free beer/soda, a band and singers, and massive amount of good will and friendliness were dispensed by these charming hostesses in a gracious and warm manner. It was a reception which cannot be topped for the amount of care shown. The overflowing of concern was unexpected and deeply appreciated."<sup>10</sup>

On 29 November, while in the Atlantic heading for Morehead City, the 24th MAU received the following message from the Commandant:

Subj: USMNF

1. Courage, sacrifice and heroism characterized the Lebanon tour of 24 MAU. Under the most trying and difficult conditions each unit's performance shines as a witness to the world that Americans stood firm in the defense of peace and freedom.

2. The exemplary bravery of the MAU's Marines, sailors, and soldiers has been indelibly written on the pages of American history. No one—standing or fallen—served in vain. Every man's devotion to duty will continue to be an inspiration to all who desire to live as free men.

*BGen Jim R. Joy (right) relieves Col James P. Faulkner as 22d Marine Amphibious Unit commander on board the Guam (LPH 9) off Beirut on 17 November 1983.*

Photograph by author





3. On behalf of a grateful nation, I thank God for men like you in the service of this country.

General Kelley sends!<sup>11</sup>

The 24th Marine Amphibious Unit arrived at Morehead City to a warm welcome from the commanding generals of the 2d Marine Division, 2d Marine Aircraft Wing, and 2d Force Service Support Group, plus families, bands, and national media attention.

Two days later at Camp Lejeune, Colonel Geraghty's 24th MAU passed in review before General Kelley, who welcomed the Marines and sailors home with the following remarks:

When I met the first flight of your fallen comrades as they arrived at Dover, Delaware, after the mass murder of 23 October, I asked the question—Lord, where do we get such men? As you stand here today I ask the same question. Where do we get such men of courage—such men of dedication—such men of patriotism—such men of pride? The simple answer is that we get them from every clime and place—from every race—from every creed—and from every

color. But each of you has one thing in common—you are a Marine or that special brand of Navy man who serves alongside Marines.

Two days ago an entire nation opened its heart in grateful recognition of your safe return.

You gallant Marines and sailors of the 24th have earned your rightful place in the glorious history of our Corps. You can stand tall and proud in the knowledge that you have selflessly given of yourselves in the service of your country, your Corps, and of free men everywhere.

In the joy and emotion of your safe return, let none of us forget those brave Marines and sailors who made the supreme sacrifice—or forget the wife who will never again see her husband—the child who will never see its father—or the parents who will never see their son. They, too, have made the supreme sacrifice!

By the authority given to me this day by the Secretary of the Navy, I hereby recognize your significant contributions, under conditions of great adversity, by authorizing each of you to wear the Combat Action Ribbon.

You and your precious families—those loved ones who have participated in a lonely and anxious vigil these past months—have my deepest and sincerest respect and admiration. God bless you!

## CHAPTER 9

# Beirut VI—End of the USMNF 20 November 1983-26 February 1984

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On 2 August 1983, prior to its return to Lebanon, the 22d Marine Amphibious Unit, now commanded by Colonel James P. "Pat" Faulkner, once again came under the operational control of Fleet Marine Force, Atlantic. At this time, the MAU consisted of BLT 2/8 (LtCol Ray L. Smith), HMM-261 (LtCol Granville R. Amos), and MSSG 22 (Maj Albert E. Shively). All the MAU's Marines, and their Navy colleagues, conducted the usual pre-deployment training and exercises, and boarded Commodore (Captain, USN) Carl R. Erie's Phibron 4 shipping at Morehead City on 17-18 October 1983 for the trip to Beirut. The squadron's ships consisted of the *Guam* (LPH 9), the flagship; the *Trenton* (LPD 4); the *Fort Snelling* (LSD 30); the *Manitowoc* (LST 1180); and the *Barnstable County* (LST 1197). On 18 October, they stood out of the North Carolina port city for Beirut.

For Beirut VI, the 22d MAU's third deployment to Lebanon, HMM-261 and MSSG 22 were organized like their predecessors, but BLT 2/8 had been reorganized to conform to a new infantry battalion table of organization (1083C). This new T/O reduced the Marine infantry battalion by 10 percent, to a strength of 43 officers and 779 enlisted Marines. Despite this reduction, the new battalions were given greater fire power with an increase of 24 grenade launchers (bringing the total to 134), 8 additional Dragon antitank weapons (for a total of 32), and the introduction of 8 M-2 .50 caliber machine guns. At a future date, each of the new infantry battalions would be issued other new weapons—the SMAW (Shoulder Launched Multipurpose Weapon), and the Mk 19 40mm machine gun.

To transport the additional heavy weapons and to give the reorganized battalions greater mobility, they were issued 26 additional jeeps, essentially doubling their previous allowance. In a battalion landing team configuration, the infantry battalions would also gain 24 more jeeps from their attached units.

The reduced strength of the battalions was reflected primarily in the reorganization of the rifle units. A rifle platoon now consisted of 36 Marines—including the platoon leader, platoon sergeant, and platoon guide and 11-man squads of two 5-man fire teams each—instead of the 13-man squads of three four-man fire teams each.

Some of the MAU's Marines had been on an earlier deployment to Lebanon, for more than 40 percent of the BLT had been in the unit two years or more. All of Lieutenant Colonel Smith's squad leaders and more than one third of his fire team leaders had completed the 2d Marine Division's Squad Leader's Course. All the BLT's rifle platoon commanders had been through the Infantry Officer's Course at the Marine Corps Development and Education Command at Quantico following their graduation from The Basic School.<sup>1</sup>

About midnight of 20-21 October, as Phibron 4 shipping passed north of Bermuda en route to the Mediterranean, CinCLant ordered Commodore Erie to turn south to a holding position about 500 miles northeast of Grenada. Because the Phibron's ships' radios had been monitoring the news stories as well as receiving updated classified intelligence reports about the civil upheaval in Grenada, both Navy and Marine Corps officers presumed that they might be directed to conduct a non-combatant evacuation of American and foreign nationals from the troubled island. The Amphibious Task Force had trained for this type of operation and began planning to carry out such an evacuation shortly.

In his message to Commodore Erie, the Commander in Chief of the Atlantic Fleet also instructed the Phibron commander to remain in his holding position until midnight of 23-24 October. Then, if no further instructions had been received, he was to continue on his way to Beirut. At the same time, the Phibron assumed an EmCom (emission control) condition, in which radio and radar silence was instituted. Messages could be received, but not sent, as all electronic and sonic emissions closed down. As Phibron 4 essentially became a ghost squadron, the inability to talk to higher echelons was to cause some problems as planning for the Grenada operation unfolded.

At this point, Marine and Navy planning was primarily concerned with the evacuation of civilians from a hostile or "non-permissive" environment. At 2200 on 22 October, Commodore Erie was ordered to head his ships towards Grenada. A second message then gave order of battle information about Grenadian forces. No further directives were issued to the Phibron at this point. Admiral Joseph Metcalfe III, Second Fleet



Photograph by the author

*En route to Beirut from Grenada on board Trenton (LPD 4) (left to right) Maj Joseph J. Streitz, ExO, BLT 2/8; LtCol Ray L. Smith, CO, BLT 2/8; and Maj Albert E. Shively, CO, MAU Service Support Group 22.*

commander and joint task force commander for the operation, radioed Commodore Erie that the Army had been ordered to conduct an airborne assault on Grenada.<sup>2</sup> Shortly after this, the Marines were brought into the picture and given their operation orders for the landing on Grenada.

By 1 November the 22d MAU had successfully completed its role in Operation Urgent Fury, the code name for the landing on Grenada. On 2 November, Lieutenant Colonel Ronald R. Rice, 22d MAU executive officer, led an advance party ashore on Grenada, where it boarded a plane for the United States and then on to Beirut. The next day, Colonel Faulkner and his operations officer, Major (later lieutenant colonel) Earnest A. Van Huss, were flown ashore to Grenada, where they briefed Senator John G. Tower of Texas on Operation Urgent Fury. Shortly after this, the two flew to Norfolk to brief Lieutenant General Miller at FMFLant headquarters.

At 1740 on the 2d, Phibron 4 ships steamed past St. George's harbor with battle flags flying. The ships then turned and headed north for Barbados, where HMM-261 helicopters flew supplies from the beach to the carrier *Independence*. When this task was completed and all helicopters had landed back on the *Guam*, the Amphibious Ready Group set a course for Beirut.

On 3 November, the 22d MAU received a message stating that when the MAU arrived off Beirut, its structure would be modified.<sup>3</sup> Essentially, Brigadier General Jim R. Joy, the Assistant Division Commander of the 2d Marine Division would relieve Colonel Faulkner as commander of the MAU, whereupon the former com-

mander would become MAU chief of staff. General Joy was to bring a small staff group to Lebanon to expand the MAU staff. The rationale behind this high-level decision was the need to provide additional supervisory assistance and coordination of activities ashore in Beirut. In considering the terrorist bombing of the BLT building and the subsequent recovery measures, as well as the need to coordinate the overall efforts of the other Multi-National Force units and to supervise the relief of the 24th MAU by the 22d, it was deemed necessary to assign a Marine general officer as MAU commander. Additionally, this would make him co-equal in rank to the French and Italian MNF commanders.

General Joy later gave an additional reason for the change. In response to the heavy fighting in late August and early September, the 31st MAU was sent to Beirut from Kenya to serve ashore as theater reinforcement, if needed. At this time, General Miller had directed General Joy at Camp Lejeune to put together a "mini-MAB" [Marine Amphibious Brigade] headquarters, ready to fly out to Beirut should the U.S. Multi-National Force be increased to MAB size.<sup>4</sup>

General Joy then organized what he called a "suitcase staff," consisting of no more than 10 people, which was packed and ready to fly to Beirut when ordered.\*

General Joy's small staff was briefed in Norfolk at FMFLant headquarters, and in Washington by Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps staff sections, by the State Department, and by the Defense Intelligence Agen-

\*When General Joy took command of the 22d MAU on 17 November 1983 at 1100, the MAU's staff sections—S-1, S-2, S-3, and S-4—became G-sections. The 22d's S-1, First Lieutenant Kenneth R. Bergman, remained as G-1, and his section was augmented by a warrant officer, whose initial assignment was to work with BLT 1/8 to get its personnel records organized before the unit returned to the United States. Lieutenant Colonel Forrest L. Lucy became G-2, with the former S-2, Captain Paul M. Jungel, becoming his assistant. Similarly, the MAU S-3, Lieutenant Colonel Earnest A. Van Huss became assistant G-3 to Lieutenant Colonel Edmund J. Connelly, Jr., and Lieutenant Colonel Charles S. Rinehart became G-4 with Major Albert J. Martin his assistant. Lieutenant Colonel William H. Schopf III relieved First Lieutenant Billy D. Martin as the Fire Support Coordinator, and was in turn relieved by Major John R. Todd for seven days, 13-19 February 1984. The only unit commander replaced was Major Albert E. Shively, head of MSSG 22, who became executive officer to Lieutenant Colonel Douglas M. Davidson. When Colonel Faulkner became General Joy's chief of staff, the MAU's former executive officer, Lieutenant Colonel Ronald R. Rice, became MAU liaison officer to the Lebanese Ministry of Defense. On 20 February 1984, Colonel Faulkner again took command of the MAU, and General Joy became Commanding General, Joint Task Force, Lebanon. The senior staff officers who came to Beirut with General Joy became the JTF staff, whereupon their former assistants once again became the MAU's senior staff. 22d MAU Post Deployment Rpt for Landing Force Sixth Fleet 1-84, dtd 11May84, p. 3, hereafter 22d MAU Post Deployment Rpt.

cy. Back at Camp Lejeune, in addition to carrying out its regular assignments, the staff met often to work on contingency plans and to keep current on what was going on in Beirut. The staff remained on alert until early October. When the 31st MAU left Beirut on 13 October to return to the Western Pacific area, the concept of sending General Joy and his staff to Beirut became moot. After the bombing of the BLT headquarters building, however, General Joy was instructed to leave for Beirut as soon as possible and assume command of the 22d MAU before it landed to relieve the 24th.<sup>5</sup>

One day out of Rota, Spain, 10 November, all embarked Marines and their Navy hosts celebrated the 208th Birthday of the Corps in traditional manner, with the reading of Major General Commandant John A. Lejeune's birthday message. Another tradition observed was the cutting of the birthday cake, with the first piece handed to the oldest Marine present, and the second piece to the youngest. Lieutenant Colonel Ray L. Smith, the BLT commander, on the *Trenton*, was to lead the second advance party into Beirut, flying from the *Guam* to Rota on the 11th. As he had to leave the *Trenton* on the 9th,\* he held his battalion's birthday ceremonies that morning.

Colonel Faulkner flew on board the *Guam* from Rota on 11 November, and resumed command of the MAU. He then briefed his key staff and command personnel about the new Marine command arrangement that would go into force when they arrived at Beirut and the relief of the 24th MAU.

The Amphibious Ready Group arrived at Beirut on 17 November. General Joy and his staff boarded the *Guam*, where he relieved Colonel Faulkner as 22d MAU commander at approximately 1100.

In early November, before he took over command of the MAU, General Joy was in Beirut to survey the situation. CinCEur sent him a message on 9 November, directing a number of actions to enhance the security of the U.S. Multi-National Forces ashore in Lebanon. Among these was a requirement to reduce the size of the BLT and MAU headquarters ashore to an essential few, with the "non-essential" Marines relocated on board Phibron shipping. Following this, the rifle company at the northern end of the airport would be moved to other positions to provide the MAU with integrated and coordinated security. The company's former positions were to be occupied by LAF troops. Company E, 2d Battalion, 6th Marines, which had

\*When the *Guam* headed towards Rota, the rest of Phibron shipping steamed directly into the Mediterranean, where the *Guam* would join up later.

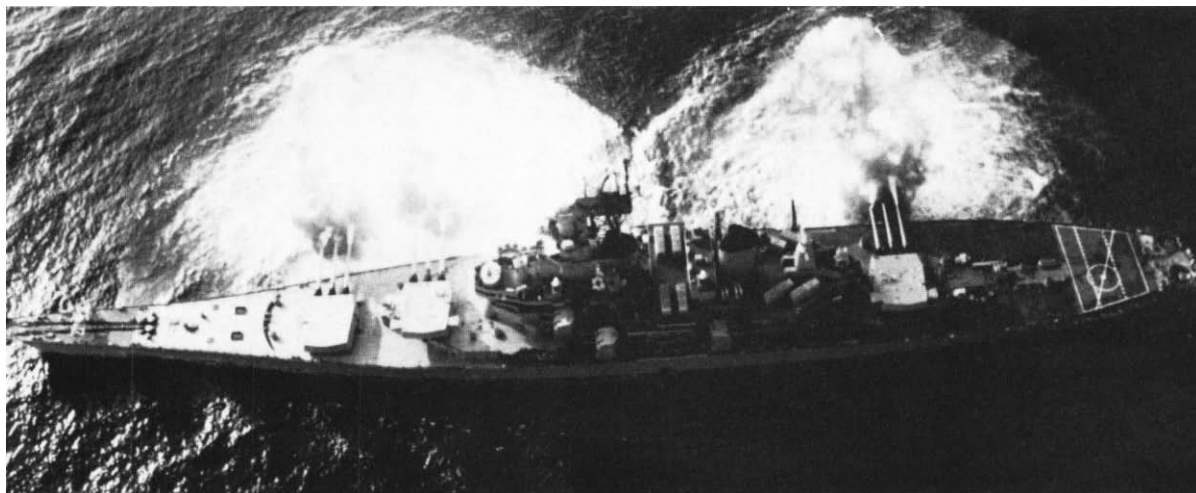


Photograph by the author  
22d MAU commander Col James P. Faulkner (left) and MAU Chaplain Kevin L. Anderson look over a few of the thousands of letters sent to the 22d MAU following its successful operation on Grenada.

reinforced the 24th MAU after the bombing, returned to Camp Lejeune by 19 November. In addition, General Joy was to spread out the concentrated billeting of Marines providing security for the U.S./British Embassy. Further, he was directed to return to shipboard all but the forward (or Alpha) command groups of the BLT and MAU until protected command posts with overhead cover could be constructed for them. Finally, except for a minimum of essential units to provide support ashore, the MSSG was to operate afloat.<sup>6</sup>

Meanwhile, the turnover with 24th MAU went well and was completed 12 hours ahead of schedule on 19 November. General Joy then threw the MAU's entire efforts into improving the safety and security of all troops ashore by constructing additional bunkers, improving existing positions, ensuring dispersion of units, and "fine-tuning the command and control capability of the MAU Hq."<sup>7</sup> The fact that the turnover had gone so smoothly, in perfect weather, and without harassing fire from unfriendly elements, enabled the MAU to push ahead with its barrier and obstacle plan and to begin building a new MAU command post on 19 November.

A Seabee site survey team had been at the airport for two days, 17-19 November, to review the Marine positions and determine how they could be improved and made safer. Meanwhile, the MAU headquarters had been moved to the airport maintenance building just east of its previous site. The new BLT command post was now on a piece of land between the coastal highway and the southern end of the airport's north-south runway. Located on the same stretch of land, but closer to the crossing of the north-south and



U.S. Navy photo

*The battleship New Jersey (BB 62) fires her 16-inch guns off the coast of Beirut in support of Marines ashore when hostile rocket and artillery rounds threatened Americans.*

northeast-southwest runways, were the artillery battery emplacements. Two rifle companies (F and G) were dispersed on the eastern side of the northeast-southwest runway within several hundred yards of LAF and Shiite positions near Khaldah, where the Marines were still subject to frequent sniper fire.

The Seabee report noted that the MAU was attempting to build protective, semi-covered bunkers without enough material, equipment, skilled labor, and experience in constructing such structures. The reporting Seabee officer concluded that these MAU-built bunkers offered little more than minimal protection from shell fragments.<sup>9</sup>

According to General Joy's plan, the MAU command post was to be built near the new BLT command post area. By 19 November, preparation of the site was

underway. The possibility of heavy rains in December and the immediate requirement of the MAU to dig in influenced the Seabee survey team leader to recommend that 40 Seabees from the 1st Naval Mobile Construction Battalion Detachment, Rota, be sent to Beirut to assist the Marines in their barrier and construction efforts. The recommendation was approved, the Seabees arrived in Lebanon on 24 November for a 30-day assignment, and immediately began work on the new MAU positions. Initially, the MAU recognized the need to protect its combat operations center, intelligence section, fire support coordination center, and the like. At the same time, General Joy pointed out an equally important requirement for an obstacle/barrier protection system for rifle company positions. The Seabee team recommended that sea-land

*Beginning in December 1983, sea-land shipping containers are dug in for use as secure command, control, and communications bunkers at Beirut International Airport.*



vans be reinforced and dug in as protected bunkers, a solution which seemed eminently workable. Earlier, the MAU had contracted locally for heavy equipment and construction materials to build/reinforce Marine bunker complexes. At the same time, General Tannous provided the MAU with 40 of the large sea-land shipping containers which the Seabees began reinforcing and burying for MAU, MSSG, battery, and company command and control facilities.

General Joy also requested that upon completion of the construction phase, additional containers be procured and buried for use as protected personnel bunkers. As these construction efforts went on, combat engineers assigned to the BLT assisted the rifle companies in improving and rebuilding their fighting positions. The Seabees were tasked with building "dive-in" bunkers, strong backing for tents, and construction of earth berms between fighting and living positions. The MAU commander wanted to reduce the number of Marines living in buildings in the old MAU/MSSG area, and he predicted in his 19 November report to CinCEur that, when the new MAU command post was completed—within 10-14 days—the number of personnel ashore would be reduced considerably. General Joy concluded his situation report by saying, "We are mindful of requirement for keeping minimum essential people ashore and are review-

*From his vantage point in the turret of an LVTP-7 assault amphibious vehicle in front of the British embassy, a 24th MAU Marine keeps watch for potential attacks against the U.S.-British diplomatic center.*

Photo courtesy of Claude Salhani



ing each functional area in the MAU/MSSG on a line by line basis.”<sup>9</sup>

Less than a week after 23 November, General Joy again reported that he, his staff, and his commanders had dedicated their efforts to continuing the “presence” mission while doing their utmost to prevent a recurrence of the bombing and other terrorist actions. At the same time, he recognized that the terrorists might resort to such other tactics as mining the MAU area, and ambushing, kidnapping, or assassinating Marines. The MAU commander further reported that he had identified the Durrafourd Building, the U.S./UK Embassy, and the MAU/MSSG areas as the most likely terrorist targets, and that he had taken the steps he mentioned earlier to protect the Marines against terrorist attacks. To refuse entry into the MAU positions by sappers, infiltrators, and kidnapers, General Joy replaced the fixed positions along the perimeter with aggressive patrolling at irregular intervals. He backed this so-called “forward security line” with section- and platoon-manned strongpoints with mutually supporting crew-served weapons. He also placed tactical and protective wire around the strongpoints and planned to install floodlights at these positions.

General Joy also reduced access to the roads leading into the Marine perimeter with what amounted to a three-tiered system. The innermost tier was armed with direct fire weapons, such as Dragon, LAAW, and .50 caliber machine guns, manned and fully ready 24 hours a day. Each Marine position was issued special rules of engagement based on specific triggering situations that were most likely to occur. The MAU commander had also recognized the potential threat of suicide air attacks and had considered the use of Redeye and Stinger missiles in an air defense role, but because of the danger they might pose to commercial flights in and out of Beirut International Airport, those weapons were not initially used. And so air defense was assigned to .50 caliber and M-60 machine guns.

Finally, General Joy reported that he was fully employing the counterintelligence augmentation he had been given. This consisted of the 2d Counterintelligence Team, a composite team with personnel drawn from the 2d and 4th Counterintelligence Teams (FMFLant), and the 8th Counterintelligence Team (2d Marine Aircraft Wing), augmenting the counterintelligence detachment that originally deployed with the 22d MAU. The composite team operated with a headquarters element and four subteams, each of which was assigned a specific functional area. One subteam



*A wrecked automobile is placed with other obstacles in the defense perimeter surrounding the 22d MAU.*

was assigned to counterterrorism activities and physical security of the MAU area of operations, while a second was tasked to collect information about threats to the U.S. Multi-National Force. A third subteam was assigned the mission of analysis and reporting, while the fourth was held in reserve with a secondary mission of reinforcing the physical security subteam.<sup>10</sup>

As a matter of Marine Corps doctrine, counterintelligence teams are not normally assigned to or deployed with units below Marine Amphibious Brigade level, and the 22d MAU became the first unit of its kind to be supported by a counterintelligence team that was fully manned and equipped. Lebanon also marked the first time since Vietnam that a counterintelligence team had deployed in support of a landing force commander.<sup>11</sup>

While all this activity was going on ashore, Colonel Faulkner, as chief of staff of the MAU, spent his nights on board the *Guam*, coordinating with the Phibron staff as well as coordinating MAU staff functions afloat. His days ashore were spent at the MAU forward command post at the airport, coordinating MAU staff functions there. This permitted General Joy to devote more time to improving the MAU's defensive positions, "enhancing boring conditions, handling visiting VIPs, and coordinating with other MNF and GOL [Government of Lebanon] agencies."<sup>12</sup>

On 25 November, General Joy reported that two 9-foot berms had been prepared to the north of the MSSG command post and that a tank ditch was being dug in between the berms. At the same time, two 9-foot berms were being built outside the western and southern fence lines encircling the MAU area, after which a tank ditch would be dug inside the fences. Protective wire was strung and the berms were covered by M-60 and .50 caliber machine guns, Dragons, and LAAWs. No Lebanese vehicles were permitted inside

the area and all other autos were stopped and inspected before they were given entry. The old gates and weak portions of the fenceline were blocked with wrecked buses and automobiles.

By the 25th, the BLT command post had moved to its new site. On the same day, the Seabee contingent began preparing the MAU headquarters' new bunkers. Earthen berms were thrown up around the BLT and MAU command post sites, and bulldozers were working at the rifle company and artillery battery positions, building berms and clearing fields of fire.

Concurrently with these engineering activities, the rifle company and platoon positions were being reorganized to become mutually supporting. The existing bunkers were used as "passive type" observation and listening posts, while engineer-designed prefabricated fighting positions were placed in the rear of these posts. Once this "frontline" work was completed, the Seabees were to prepare bunkered living positions and sandbagged strong-back tents in the MAU/MSSG and BLT command post areas and at each company and battery position.

In the midst of all this, the MAU remained on alert in order to be immediately responsive to the multifaceted threat it faced. On the perimeter, the Marines were awakened each day for an early morning stand-to and General Joy set Alert Condition 1 in the predawn hours (0445-0700). Fortunately, there had been little or no sniping or incoming artillery and rocket fire during the 22d MAU's first days back in Lebanon.<sup>13</sup>

General Joy maintained close relationships with the other Multi-National Force Units in Lebanon. He proposed setting up a MNF coordinating officer at the Lebanese Ministry of Defense for the then-existing MNF Liaison Office at the Presidential Palace was not working effectively and was not responsive. There was no early decision for or against the proposal, however.

During this period, the MAU's composite helicopter squadron was kept busy with passenger, mail, and freight flights to and from Beirut airport or to Larnaca from the flight deck of the *Guam*. In addition, the helicopters flew VIP shuttle and diplomatic flights, some of which went to Tel Aviv.

When the 22d MAU first arrived in November, the HMM-261 commander, Lieutenant Colonel Granville "Granny" R. Amos, put two of his Cobras on the *Trenton*, fully armed and on a 30-minute alert. Cobra pilots and maintenance crews were rotated from the *Guam* every five days. A third armed Cobra was ready as backup on the *Guam*, while the squadron's fourth gunship was undergoing maintenance work. The



Cobras were never flown over the beach, but when the turnover took place in November, they were airborne, orbiting two miles off the beach. They were airborne again when the Embassy was evacuated in early 1984, and once again when the 22d MAU re-embarked in February. The gunships trained regularly, "running close air support with the fixed wing off the *Indy* and the *JFK* [the carriers *Independence* and *John F. Kennedy*], and they did a lot of naval gunfire exercises in case we did need them to go over the beach."<sup>14</sup>

In order to employ the helicopters usefully ashore, Major William J. Sublette, the MAU Air Liaison Officer, suggested a tasking for the squadron's other aircraft. Lieutenant Colonel Amos would launch a UH-1N, four CH-46s, and sometimes two CH-53Ds in the morning. These helicopters would then be turned over to Major Sublette's control ashore. At noontime, the planes would return to the *Guam* where new pilots and crews would take over. This was necessary because on some days, the pilots could fly for 8-10 hours without respite, "and that worked out really good as far as getting the max utilization of the airplanes and air crews without having a lot of dead time orbiting the airport."<sup>15</sup> If the aircraft were not needed at any time during the day, they would set down in one of the landing zones and shut down their engines. All helicopters returned to the *Guam* at night to avoid being hit by the random fire falling within the MAU perimeter. For medical evacuations, a CH-46 was also put on the *Trenton* on a 30-minute alert at night.

During the first three months into this deployment, HMM-261 fully supported the MAU with 25 percent of its flight time spent in ferrying VIPs and visiting entertainers around, and another 25 percent in supporting the Navy.<sup>16</sup>

One of the major characteristics of this deployment with respect to helicopter operations was the uncertainty from day to day about the security of the individual landing zones. The erratic and sporadic nature of the attacks on the helicopters was dramatized on 28 January 1984, when an unidentified individual fired a SA-7 missile at a CH-46 approaching a landing zone which had been used extensively since the 22d MAU's landing in November. Fortunately, the SA-7 missed the aircraft. Many flights had previously brought in external fuel loads here, hovering over the LZ without any problems. Earlier, on 8 January, another had flown into LZ Oriole, the landing area near the Embassy, which had been used without incident for two months. This time, however, several men fired upon the plane with small arms and RPGs, kill-

ing one Marine in the process.<sup>17</sup> In addition, there were many instances of helicopters flying to the beach and picking up indications that the aircraft were being tracked by a radar system that was associated with the Soviet quad-barrelled ZS-23mm antiaircraft gun. During the first two and a half to three months of the deployment, aircraft were constantly being tracked by radar as they flew into the airport. The HMM-261 helicopters were fired upon by small arms weapons, rocket-propelled grenades, and the single SA-7, but they received no ZS-23 fire.

When the squadron first arrived in Lebanon, it began averaging a total of 40 hours a day flight time. In December, this increased to 50 hours a day, with two or three days hitting 70 to 80 hours flight time. The squadron ended up the year with 1,415.8 hours of flight time in December, 1,348 in January, all the while averaging 90-95 percent aircraft availability. HMM-261's workload didn't lessen in February, for in 29 days, the pilots flew 1,417 hours for a 49-hour daily average.

All MAU components conducted on-the-job training when they could, in between times filling and hauling sandbags. By the first week of December, the Seabees had completed emplacing all sea-land containers in the MAU command post area. At the same time, the combat engineers attached to BLT 2/8 completed new fighting positions throughout the BLT area, and also emplaced barbed wire obstacles in front of each position.<sup>18</sup>

The week of 3-9 December was characterized by a series of violent clashes which resulted in the MAU's first casualties of the deployment. On 4 December, Navy jet bombers flew from the flight decks of the *Independence* and the *John F. Kennedy* to attack selected targets east of Beirut.\* In response to anticipated retaliatory action, the MAU set a maximum alert condition, beginning at 0700.

During the course of the day, Marine positions on the eastern and southern airport perimeter were taken under occasional sniper and mortar fire, which was returned in kind. At 1935 and 2010, Checkpoint 7, a combat outpost located on Pepsi Road, which led towards the airport from Ash Shuwayfat past the Pepsi Cola bottling plant, was hit by small arms fire. Manning this outpost was a rifle squad reinforced by a machine gun team, a sniper team, and a LAAW team from the assault squad of Company G's weapons platoon.

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\*Two of the planes were shot down during this raid, with one Navy pilot killed and the second bailing out over Syrian-held territory. He was later returned to U.S. jurisdiction.



Photo by GySgt Dale S. Welker

*A view of Amal-held buildings from Company G, BLT 2/8, positions. The arrow points to "Cafe Daniel," from which hostile small arms fire was directed against Marines.*

The fighting positions of these Marines were atop two small, 2 1/2 story buildings, with each rooftop measuring 9'x12' at most. These positions were selected because they provided the best observation of all the small buildings in the area. An air assault company of the LAF 33d Battalion was collocated just southeast of the Marines.

At 2204, the eastern perimeter again came under fire, with one 122mm rocket round landing directly on top of Checkpoint 7, killing eight Marines and wounding two others. When the small arms fire directed at Checkpoint 7 increased, six off-duty Marines had rushed to the rooftop to reinforce the four already there. All became casualties. Of this tragic event, Lieutenant Colonel Smith later commented, "Good men rushed out of protective bunkers and into a fighting position. They felt it was the thing to do, and I don't fault them. I wish now they hadn't."<sup>19</sup>

Following this, the MAU returned fire with small arms, 81mm mortars, 155mm artillery, and 5-inch naval guns.<sup>20</sup> This response caused several secondary explosions, but enemy losses were unknown. The Marines could only tell whether they had inflicted casualties with return fire during daylight hours when they could see Lebanese civilian ambulances evacuating wounded. The BLT commander did not believe that the fire that killed his eight Marines was so-called spillover, ". . . I think from the very beginning that they were shooting at us . . . it is my opinion that it was because of the air strike that morning . . . And there is no way of really documenting that the fire was because of the air strike."<sup>21</sup>

Two nights later, on 6 December, a short but violent firefight erupted near Company G positions. The fire came from fortified bunkers believed held by Amal

radicals. After Marine small arms and machine gun fire, as well as M203 grenades, failed to silence the Amal, Marine tank and Dragon rounds finally did, destroying two bunkers in the process.

Relative quiet prevailed for the next few days, but then short, bitter firefights began in the early morning hours of 8-9 December, again in front of Company G positions and emanating from "Cafe Daniel,"<sup>22</sup> a known Amal position that had been fortified, and had firing slits directly facing the Marines.

Around this time, the Amal in Burj al Barajinah seemed to think that they had a special relationship with the Marines. On the evening of 6 December, several Amal appeared at the airport and complained to the LAF liaison officer that the Marines building bunkers on the eastern perimeter were impinging on Amal territory. They said, ". . . that it was too close to them and they wanted it stopped. If we didn't stop it, they were going to shoot at us. Well, we weren't building bunkers any further forward towards them than where they'd [the bunkers] always been."<sup>23</sup> Major Alfred L. Butler III, the MAU liaison officer to the Lebanese Army, quietly took notes while avoiding direct contact with the Amal.

Lieutenant Colonel Smith's response to this warning was that the Marines were only building defensive positions and clearing fields of fire. Further, since he had no offensive intent then, he said that he would continue to improve his defenses. On the morning of 7 December, while the Marine engineers worked with the Seabees in front of Company G positions, the Amal opened up with grenades, small arms, and machine gun fire. The Marines returned fire with tank rounds, Dragons, LAAWs, and M203s. After an hour, the firing ended.

That afternoon, Amal representatives again met with the LAF liaison officer and repeated their statement of the previous evening—that if the Marines kept working in front of Company G, they would be fired upon. True to their word, the Amal fired at the engineers and the Seabees during the morning of 8 December. This time, however, the Marines responded in more than kind, destroying all of the Amal bunkers to their front, including those in the “Cafe Daniel” building.

While this was going on, the Amal called the American Embassy to ask how they could arrange a ceasefire. They complained that the Marines weren’t “responding in kind, that they thought they had an agreement. . . . Well, they didn’t have any agreement, but that had been the rules of engagement, and they were aware of them, I guess.”<sup>24</sup> Prior to this time, and certainly prior to the 23 October bombing, the rules of engagement decreed that Marines would respond proportionally to any life-threatening fire from any quarter. “Well, after 23 October, that made no sense.”<sup>25</sup> And so the fire the Marines returned on 8 December was intense enough to destroy the positions firing upon them and lethal enough to cause Amal casualties.

On the morning of the 9th, the Americans suffered two more casualties. A Seabee was slightly wounded and his bulldozer just about destroyed when it was hit by an RPG. In the same attack, a Marine was shot in the leg and evacuated to the *Guam*.

After these incidents, things slowed down somewhat, but the Marines continued to receive fire from small arms and automatic weapons, and occasionally

mortars. They were “obviously firing directly at us, and when we could determine where the fire was coming from, we responded, vigorously. Vigorous became the byword for our response. ‘You shoot at us, you must be prepared to receive a vigorous response.’”<sup>28</sup>

During this time, the MAU continued to upgrade its positions, using the 33-man combat engineer platoon from Camp Lejeune that augmented the MAU’s organic engineer capability in the BLT and the MSSG\* and the Seabees’ efforts. The Seabees were due to leave 23 December, and General Joy was determined to use them as fully as he could in their remaining time in Beirut. Meanwhile, Marines in Beirut continued to be visited by congressional delegations, as well as by high-ranking officers in the chain of command. In addition, General Joy was kept busy meeting with his MNF counterparts and with General Tannous.

By mid-December, 50 of the planned 80 sea-land containers had been emplaced as bunkers, with the remainder scheduled to be in place by the first of the year. Surprisingly, the weather continued to be fair, giving Marines an extra measure of time to work on improving fields of fire, building berms, and emplacing wire obstacles in front of their positions. Lieutenant Colonel Smith organized the BLT’s defense along the eastern perimeter by pulling back to give Marines on the line as much open terrain—and as many good fields of fire—as possible. He then built platoon-sized strongpoints, “. . . really hardened . . . that, if it came down to defending against a major attack, each of these strongpoints could really fight and defend themselves. And that, of course, left . . . in

\*See Appendix B.

*Only a sandbagged post is visible on the skyline at Beirut International Airport.*

Photo by GySgt Dale S. Welker



Golf [G] Company's case, as much as 300 meters between strongpoints."<sup>27</sup>

All of these strongpoints were covered by fire and observation. Lieutenant Colonel Smith left quite a few of the old, above-ground, "presence" bunkers in place, and at night he would send two- and three-man security patrols out to those old bunkers. The Marines would light up cigarettes, and occupy the bunker for several minutes, and then move out to another bunker down the line to do the same thing, to "let them [the Shiites or Amal] know they're in the bunker, and then let them always wonder where they [the Marines] are."<sup>28</sup>

In organizing the ground, the BLT moved around the terrain in front of the company positions. At the southern end of the perimeter, all of the ground in front of Company G was re-arranged by the Seabees and their bulldozers. According to Lieutenant Colonel Smith, he:

... told Golf Company and Fox Company commanders to use their imagination and look at how they wished that terrain was, then make it that way. . . . There were several places over an Golf Company's frontage where over the years the Syrians had pushed up dirt facing south, Israelis came in and they pushed up the same dirt and reoriented it, but it was facing north. . . . So, those fire piles and artificial terrain . . . they turned it so it faced the way they wanted it to face. We moved a lot of dirt that way.<sup>29</sup>

A great deal of money was poured into these efforts to reorganize the defense. Based on an agreement between Generals Miller and Tannous—each acting for their respective governments—FMFLant would pay for all materials and costs for renting heavy equipment\* employed in emplacement of the bunkers and building new fighting positions. Simultaneously, the Government of Lebanon agreed to underwrite the cost of installing lighting and placing concrete Dragon Teeth obstacles around the MAU perimeter.<sup>30</sup>

In the MAU's weekly situation report, General Joy advised that he planned to request the Marine Corps to put certain pieces of heavy equipment on standby for immediate airlift to Beirut, should the local supply no longer be available. He also noted that he was continuing his attempt to reduce the number of MAU personnel ashore and that in the second week of December, he managed to return more than 100 MSSG Marines to the ships.<sup>31</sup>

Concluding this report, General Joy noted that the

\*Because the heavy equipment needed to build these new defenses was not immediately available through military channels and not part of the equipment organic to the MAU or its component units, arrangements were made through the Government of Lebanon to rent them from local civilian construction firms.



Watercolor by Maj John T. Dyer, Jr., USMCR (Ret)  
*On Watch, Christmas 1983*

threat of a conventional attack on the Marines remained an ever-present possibility.<sup>32</sup> At the same time, the terrorist threat remained probable, in light of several small incidents directed at the French MNF.

The MAU commander noted the heavy attack on Companies E and G, between 1630 and 1920 on 15 December. At that time, the firing then going on between the LAF and PSP in the vicinity of the Marines had spilled over into MAU positions. Approximately 20 mortar rounds detonated near or amidst the Marines and they were repeatedly fired upon by .50 caliber machine guns and ZS-23s. The MAU answered with 81mm mortars, tank guns, 155mm artillery, and naval gunfire. During the heavy firing, a PSP representative contacted the U.S. Embassy's political officer, asking how they could turn off the bombardment. He was told that if the PSP would stop shooting at Marines, they would not be fired upon. Shortly thereafter, Jumblatt's PSP ceased firing, while the Marines continued firing for 15 to 20 minutes more to ensure that all their targets were neutralized. General Joy wryly commented later, "It would appear our aggressive response to attacks by fire, and especially the *New Jersey*, has made an impression on some elements."<sup>33</sup>



Sketch by Cpl Michael Shelton  
The 22d MAU's 1983 Christmas card reminiscent of the Iwo Jima flag raising. The tree is a Cedar of Lebanon and symbolizes the country in which it grows.



BLT 2/8 Chaplain Thomas W. Falkenthal, dressed in a Santa Claus suit, delivers gifts to Marines on the MAU perimeter from the rear of an ambulance. LtCol Edmund J. Connelly, Jr., 22d MAU G-3, is at the right.

Bob Hope, Miss America 1983 Debra Maffett, Ann Jillian, Kathy Lee Crosby, and Brooke Shields visit Beirut servicemen on board amphibious squadron ships at Christmas 1983.



As Christmas approached, the MAU was visited by a number of high-ranking military and civilian personnel. In December, the MAU and the Phibron were inundated with tons of mail addressed "To a Marine, 22d MAU," or "To a Sailor, Phibron 4." Included in the mail bags were countless fruit cakes, Christmas cards, thousands of pounds of cookies and candy, and the like. Lieutenant Colonel Amos, commander of HMM-261, recalled that someone sent three pallets of live Christmas trees to the American forces in Beirut, each tree decorated with ornaments. One could go to any one of the squadron's work shops ". . . any time from probably the 10th of December to the 10th of January and there would be five gallon pails of cookies that people had sent. . . . The mess decks [of the *Guam*] were plastered with 'Dear Sailor' Christmas cards. Just unbelievable. Nobody could remember seeing anything like that. The outpouring of the American people. . . ."34

The phenomenon was not exactly new to Beirut Marines, for the 24th MAU had experienced something like this expression of American generosity when it was in Lebanon the Christmas before. Also, as the 22d MAU left Grenada, it received mail bags filled with cards, letters, and boxes of cookies and candy, thanking the Marines and sailors for what they had done in Operation Urgent Fury.

Carrying on a tradition he had begun in World War II of spending Christmas with U.S. forces overseas, Bob Hope and his troupe of entertainers arrived off Beirut just before Christmas to give shows on board the *Guam* and the *New Jersey*. Four hundred 22d MAU Marines were flown to the *Guam* on 23 December to see the show, while another 400 attended a show on the *New Jersey* the next day. Mr. Hope insisted on visiting the Marines who were not able to see his show, and on Christmas day he was flown ashore to make a quick visit to the MAU headquarters.

Also visiting the Marines during this holiday season, were Captain Eli Takesian, ChC, USN, Chaplain of the Marine Corps, and Captain Angelo J. Libera, ChC, USN, senior chaplain of the 2d Marine Division, who visited all MAU positions, holding Christmas services for the Marines ashore. On Christmas Day, Lieutenant Thomas W. Falkenthal, ChC, USN, the BLT chaplain—who had brought a Santa Claus costume with him to Beirut—donned it and went around to all of the BLT positions by ambulance, handing out Christmas presents to the line Marines.

By Christmas, 95 percent of the tank ditch around the MAU perimeter was completed, with 70 percent of the Dragon Teeth in place. The dirt berm around

built-up area was completed, but only 20 percent of the planned wire obstacles were in place. Of the 156 planned fighting positions, 75 percent had been completed.<sup>35</sup> The new MAU command post was also sufficiently prepared to permit transfer of essential command/control/communications functions from the old, so-called "vital area" to the new position.<sup>36</sup> On 23 December, 29 of the Seabees sent to assist the MAU in building up its defenses were sent back to Rota. The remaining 12 were to stay in Lebanon for an additional 30 days.

During this Christmas period, the attacks by fire on Marine positions continued at a much-reduced level. A resupply convoy returning from the U.S./UK Embassy took fire with neither damage nor casualties. An Air Force bomb-dog handler in the Embassy area was slightly wounded by sniper fire on 22 December near the bombed-out American Embassy, while conducting a search for car bombs along Ambassador Bartholomew's usual automobile route near the temporary embassy site.<sup>37</sup>

By the end of the year, in unseasonably good weather, all major MAU command post functions were located in the new command post site. The MAU headquarters had been relocated on 27 December. New 9'x9'x13' living bunkers were completed for the Marines manning the amtracs on the Corniche near the joint embassy site, and three more were constructed in the rear of the Durrafourd Building for the guard platoon assigned to embassy security.

Ever since his arrival in Lebanon, General Joy had pressed for President Gemayel's approval to set up a Multi-National Force liaison/coordination office at the Ministry of Defense, primarily because the liaison office at the Presidential Palace was not operating effectively. The Lebanese officers at the Presidential Palace:

. . . were a step behind the operational usefulness of the information that was passed to the MNF liaison officers. It was like a press debrief of the previous day's events and we didn't get anything in a timely manner or know exactly what was going on . . . in the detail or accuracy that was needed for tactical planning in defense of our forces and accomplishment of our mission."<sup>38</sup>

The problem was that General Tannous and his staff operated in the Ministry of Defense, where the action, planning, and timely information could be found. Seeing that General Tannous was unable to allow the overt establishment of an MNF functional coordination center at the MOD, General Joy and Lieutenant Colonel Rice, the 22d MAU's special staff officer, sought an opportunity to establish the function without formalizing it.<sup>39</sup> On 29 December, Lieutenant

Colonel Rice was assigned to duties at the Ministry of Defense with the Office of Military Cooperation to serve as a liaison officer between the Lebanese Armed Forces and General Joy, in the latter's function as Commander, Task Force 62, on matters concerning the United States Multi-National Force.<sup>40</sup>

General Joy commented that General Tannous gave this arrangement unofficial blessing. "However he requested that we maintain a low profile because of some reservations on the part of the Palace."<sup>41</sup> Lieutenant Colonel Rice functioned in this billet from 29 December to 24 February, after which he returned to the MAU headquarters and reassumed his assignment as MAU executive officer.

During his time at the Ministry of Defense, Lieutenant Colonel Rice frequently visited the LAF operations center, checking with Lebanese operations officers, intelligence representatives, fire support coordinators, and duty officers. As a result of these contacts, he was able to provide General Joy, and offshore naval units up-to-date target data. This ultimately meant U.S. Multi-National Force and its supporting arms could respond to General Tannous' requests in a more timely and suitable fashion.<sup>42</sup>

Meanwhile, the MAU continued its defensive construction efforts. By the first week of 1984, work at the U.S./UK Embassy and the Durrafourd Building was progressing satisfactorily. The prefabricated bunkers and fighting positions on the Corniche were completed. The sandbagging of a trailer in the rear of the Durrafourd Building and of a prefabricated protective bunker was almost completed with the assistance of a 20-man working party lifted by helicopter from the airport to the embassy area each day.

Serving as embassy guard for its entire period in Lebanon was Second Lieutenant Michael L. Ettore's 1st Platoon, Company F. He and his advance party were lifted by helicopter to the Embassy on 13 November, and the rest of his platoon joined him five days later. Although he was isolated from the rest of the MAU at its airport location, and was situated in the heart of Muslim-held territory in west Beirut, Ettore felt safer there than at the airport. Muslim factions were doing most of the shelling of the airport and he felt that the Muslims were not about to shell their own people.<sup>43</sup>

All of the posts of this embassy guard—not to be confused with the Marine Security Guard detachment inside the Embassy—were fortified bunkers in which the guards did tours of six hours on and six hours off. Initially, Lieutenant Ettore's detachment consisted of one officer, and 64 enlisted Marines, supported by three amphibious assault vehicles, two jeep, two Air Force bomb dogs and their handlers, a cook, and two

Navy corpsmen, all of whom were reinforced by a rifle squad from Company F's 3d Platoon, a two-gun machine gun squad, and a squad from the company's weapons platoon.<sup>44</sup>

When things became hectic in west Beirut in early February 1984, the embassy guard was reinforced by another 35 Marines, approximately. While the guard was not fired upon purposely, it did receive some spillover fire and stray shots. From time to time, a phantom mortarman fired from never-discovered positions without causing Marine casualties. The rules of engagement for the guard changed somewhat from what they had been before the BLT bombing. When Lieutenant Ettore relieved the 24th MAU's Marines in November, he was told, "If there's a man on the roof . . . and he's got an RPG and he's obviously . . . going to shoot it at you, then you don't have to wait to be engaged because of the situation we were in. We didn't have the 400 or 500 meters buffer zone like they did at the airport." The Muslims were quite close to the Marines "and we could get shot at from 10 feet away."<sup>45</sup>

Surrounding the embassy area was a fairly large group of Druze PSP militia. They apparently had a good talking and working relationship with the American Embassy's Regional Security Officer, Alan O. Bigler, with whom the MAU Marines worked very closely. Having been in one position for so long, Ettore and his men were able to recognize individual PSP militiamen personally and at times were able to deal with them through Bigler. Once, when Ettore needed some dirt to fill sandbags, he passed the word to Bigler, who, in turn, told Salim, the local PSP leader, "and the Druze actually hauled us in some dirt."<sup>46</sup>

Despite the heavy fighting which erupted in west Beirut in early February, the *status quo* between the Marines and the PSP remained in force, and the Marines were not fired upon by the locals. Several unknown assailants did, however, fire upon Marines unloading a helicopter at Landing Zone Oriole, near the embassy, without causing any casualties. According to Ettore, Salim told him that they were not his men, and that "several times, when some of his people caused incidents, he would just simply offer to kill them to show his sincerity. He said, 'Do you want me to kill them?' And I would say, 'No, no!' But all you had to do was just tell him, 'Look, this guy is bothering us, don't let him back here,' and you'd never see the guy again."<sup>47</sup>

Meanwhile, events beyond Lebanon were beginning to determine the future of the Marines in that country. Some segments in American politics and society



were completely opposed to the deployment of Marines to Lebanon and the nature of their mission. They pronounced dire forebodings of what would result from the continued presence of Marines in this troubled area of the Middle East. The quickest way to get the Marines out was for Congress to invoke the War Powers Resolution.\* After much heated debate, the Congress granted the President authorization to keep the Marines in Lebanon for 18 months.

Following the bombing of the BLT headquarters, publication of the Long Commission and House Armed Services Committee reports, and a period of public mourning, there was increased pressure upon the Administration to pull the Marines out of Lebanon, an action the President adamantly refused to take. None of this clamor in the United States escaped the notice of the Beirut Marines. The media, for example, were constantly asking Marines what they thought about the Beirut situation and how they felt about remaining in Lebanon. Digging in at the airport and witnessing the increased strength and effectiveness of the various militia factions surrounding their positions (as well as the inability of the Lebanese Armed Forces to impose its will on the government's enemies), the Marines began to realize that perhaps their time in Lebanon was growing short.

Rumors—"scuttlebutt" to the Marines—began to circulate within the MAU. As General Joy recalled, "I think Congress came back in session around the 23d of January and we had a constant stream of Senators and Congressmen coming to visit us all during December and January. And it was very obvious that there was going to be a big battle on the floor of Congress over getting the Marines out of Beirut."<sup>48</sup>

In the midst of all this, the MAU continued to improve its positions and to respond to those who fired on them. In the evening hours of 7 January, after a lone rifleman fired on Marine positions at the northeast perimeter of the airport, the Marines there returned aimed rifle fire and one M203 grenade "... which blew the attacker out of sight."<sup>49</sup> At about the same

time, a 107mm rocket impacted near Marine positions in the southeast perimeter, wounding two Marines. Apparently, this was spillover fire coming from LAF-Druze fighting nearby.<sup>50</sup>

A Marine was killed on 8 January while on a work detail at the Bain Militaire on the Corniche near the U.S./UK Embassy. Five days later, while improving positions at the southern end of the airport, Marine combat engineers were fired upon by unidentified individuals from a building nearby, known locally as the "York Building." There were no Marine casualties, but the Marines returned a "decisive volume" of small arms, mortar, tank, Dragon, and LAAW fire which severely damaged the building and quieted the hostile fire.

By 12 January, only 31 Marines remained in the old MAU CP site, and the new MAU headquarters was in full operation. Phase I of a three-phase construction program had just about been completed. By 16 January, in planned Phase I construction, 119 sea-land containers had been prepared and 130 emplaced. Thirty-two prefabricated bunkers had been completed and 45 emplaced. With respect to fighting positions, 156 had been prepared, 128 completed, and 136 emplaced.<sup>51</sup> The cost of material, of equipment rented from local sources, and civilian labor came to \$1.56 million.<sup>52</sup>

Meanwhile, Phase II construction went on. In this phase, the MAU planned to construct protected bunkers for all personnel ashore. Material for this construction continued to arrive in Beirut. It arrived either by ship, usually the USS *Transcolumbia*, or by helicopter from Larnaca. A major effort was also underway to complete the barrier plan, which included the installation of Dragon Teeth and a tank ditch all the way around the perimeter. By the middle of January, the Government of Lebanon's promise to install perimeter lighting was still unfulfilled. Phase II, when completed, would cost \$771,000.

Phase III called for the reinforcement and hardening of all sea-land container bunkers to enable them to withstand direct hits from fuzed delay ordnance. The costs for 540 metric tons of steel I-beams, concrete, cyclone fence, waterproofing, lumber, nails, rented equipment, and civilian labor would total \$3.705 million.

The actual construction for all phases was done by 74 Seabees and 99 Marine combat engineers. All told, they emplaced more than 400 sea-land containers, 192 bunkers, and 156 two-man fighting holes.

In addition to this three-phase construction effort,

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\*Essentially, the War Powers Resolution states, among other things, that if U.S. forces are introduced into hostilities or a place where hostilities are imminent, the President will report to the Congress within 48 hours of taking such action the circumstances necessitating this action, the constitutional and legislative authority on which such action was based, and the anticipated scope and direction of the hostilities. From this time, whenever the President has reported to Congress that he has taken such action or plans to, he has 60 days to recall the forces, unless (1) Congress declares war or authorizes such use of force; (2) Congress extends the 60 days period; or (3) Congress is unable to meet because of an attack on the United States.



*Shown in this photograph is one part of the Dragon's Teeth perimeter surrounding the 22d MAU's positions at Beirut International Airport. Nearly 800 were emplaced.*

*A view of the road leading north to Beirut from the airport in January 1984. Note that a berm has been constructed and Dragon's Teeth are in place outside the MAU compound. To the right is the devastated BLT building and in the background is Beirut itself.*

Photo courtesy of BGen Jim R. Joy, USMC



the MAU implemented a barrier plan. In building the barrier during the period beginning November 1983 to January 1984, the MAU accomplished the following:

- a. Constructed and strategically emplaced 500 concrete Dragon Teeth;
- b. Constructed a 9-foot-high dirt berm around the MAU perimeter;
- c. Set the existing steel fence along the coastal highway in concrete;
- d. Constructed a tank ditch around the MAU perimeter;
- e. Strategically placed a double apron, triple concertina wire barrier around the perimeter of MAU positions;
- f. Strategically placed trip flares and "flash bangs" around the perimeter;
- g. Employed derelict vehicles as obstacles along the perimeter;
- h. Constructed tetrahedrons for placement at the gates leading into the MAU positions to slow down vehicular traffic.<sup>53</sup>

When the MAU received orders to leave Lebanon, consideration was given to destroying the bunkers and all defensive positions. However, it was determined that such an effort would be too costly and time-consuming.

Near the end of January, the MAU was furnished six M19 40mm machine guns, .50 caliber sniper rifles, improved 60mm mortar rounds, and additional night vision goggles.

During the evening of 14 January, the MAU's eastern perimeter positions came under small arms fire, but no casualties resulted. Later that evening, positions on the southern perimeter received four large-caliber rounds, which caused no damage. After the Marines fired three 155mm illumination rounds at suspected firing positions, firing ceased.

The next night, the perimeter came under a large volume of fire of all calibers from the hostile firing positions running along a ridgeline east of the airport. A 122mm rocket hit the Marine fuel farm inside the perimeter destroying large fuel bladders and igniting 2,500 gallons of gasoline. The Marines returned fire vigorously, calling in 5-inch naval gunfire. After the firing ceased, there were no Marine casualties. The number of enemy casualties was unknown.

Toward the end of January, MAU representatives met with embassy personnel and the staff of Phibron 4, to review contingency plans for a non-combatant evacuation operation. Such an operation was not actually contemplated at the time, but the timing for the review would prove to be near perfect.

To break the routine of filling sandbags and improving their positions, the Marines conducted on-the-job training, held classes in first aid, and trained in the

use of TOW/MULE (Modular Universal Laser Equipment) night sights.\*

Concerned by the possibility of kamikaze air attacks on MAU positions and Phibron shipping, FMFLant sent an air defense survey team to Beirut to assess the air defense requirements for the airport, the U.S./UK Embassy, and the Durrafourd Building. The team developed a defensive concept that called for an additional 39 Marines. General Joy noted that this was an unacceptable number in view of his efforts to reduce the number of men ashore, ". . . but appeared warranted to provide a viable air defense/control system."<sup>54</sup> On 10 February, the MAU was augmented by ten Stinger Missile Teams from the 2d Marine Aircraft Wing. Six were deployed at the airport, two at the U.S./UK Embassy, and two held in reserve.<sup>55</sup>

At about 0830 on 28 January, a SA-7 missile was fired from a position northeast of the airport at a CH-46 helicopter landing in the vital area. The missile missed its target and landed in the sea. Two days later, Amal elements in the vicinity of Cafe "Daniel" fired small arms and rocket propelled grenades at Company G positions killing one Marine and wounding another. The Marines responded once again with tank gun fire, 60mm mortars, M203 grenades, fire from 40mm and .50 caliber machine guns, and small arms fire. This resulted in an estimated three Amal killed and 11 wounded.<sup>56</sup>

The firing continued throughout the day of 30 January, escalated in mid-afternoon, and finally ended approximately three hours later. For the first time during this deployment of the 22d MAU, the vital area (former location of the MAU headquarters), was hit by 15-20 mortar rounds. One Marine was wounded. Company E, on the perimeter, was also hit by seven more mortar rounds. At about the same time, a Company G radioman was hit and killed by a sniper.

The source of the fire was located by the Marine Target Acquisitions Battery (TAB) attached to the MAU and the Army TAB, similarly assigned, but the Amal mortars were firing from heavily populated areas. Under the existing rules of engagement, the Marines were prohibited from firing on areas where there would undoubtedly be "significant collateral damage" (e.g., civilian casualties). General Joy was able to fix one position in a graveyard, and passed target information about this and a second position to the LAF with the request that they place fire on them. The LAF complied, but other Amal positions were not so easily

\*The MULE proved invaluable in determining the accurate ranges of targets and key terrain features, and in the designation of targets for aircraft acquisition and engagement.

reached. Some positions were located so far north that the TAB radar fan could not cover them.

The MAU commander noted in his situation report for the period, "The most troublesome matter is that two Marines, well protected, ended up as casualties. This is a very sobering point, that readily demonstrates the fact that we may take casualties regardless of how well we defend ourselves."<sup>57</sup>

At the end of the month, tension was visibly rising between the LAF and the militia of the various factions. Rumors spread throughout Beirut and the suburbs of an impending major government operation against the militia, and all parties prepared for even heavier fighting. It appeared to the BLT commander that the Amal and PSP well knew LAF plans ahead of time, and had begun an offensive of their own against the Army before the LAF could begin theirs.<sup>58</sup> The fighting was particularly heavy on the night of 4 February, with some spillover fire hitting inside the Marine perimeter. Especially heavy fighting broke out between the LAF and Muslim elements in Beirut and the southern suburbs on 5 February. In the late morning, the Marine positions in the northeast portion of the perimeter were hit by both direct and spillover fire, but no casualties were sustained. That night, the LAF pounded the southern suburbs and Khaldah with tank main gun, artillery, mortar, rocket, and small arms fire. A backlash resulted from this heavyhanded effort when LAF Muslim soldiers, whose families lived in these areas, refused to continue fighting. Some left their units, while others just remained in their barracks. Meanwhile, Nabih Berri called the Amal out of the Lebanese Armed Forces, ". . . in fact, he called all Muslims to leave the LAF."<sup>59</sup>

The Marines could see what was happening in the LAF units closest to MAU lines. On the night of 5 February, the Amal and the PSP went on the offensive all over west Beirut and the southern suburbs. LAF units along the airport road leading from Beirut to the terminal essentially laid down their arms and left quietly, with the Amal just as quietly taking over the abandoned posts and terminal area that night. The only building they did not occupy housed the LAF liaison office. An Amal leader, Dr. Salinas, visited the office, ". . . and asked that the Marines be advised that 'the Amal does not want to fight the Marines.'" He reportedly requested that the Marines not fire on the Amal, and said, "Even if the Marines attack us, we will not return the fire."<sup>60</sup>

The LAF units east of Company G had a particularly hard fight that night. It lasted from about dusk to about 2230 before it died down, observed closely

by the Marines. In front of the MAU positions were a Lebanese infantry company (reinforced by a tank platoon) and an air assault company. The LAF units had shared a checkpoint with the Marines on Pepsi Road. A telephone line went back to the Marine company command post. The LAF captain called Company G commander, Captain Robert K. Dobson, Jr., to tell him that the government troops still held all of their positions. At about 2300, loudspeakers in front of the LAF units began to blare messages in Arabic. By dawn the next day, the LAF commander had but few troops left, all of them Christian. His Muslim soldiers all had deserted. The Lebanese officer told Captain Dobson that he had to withdraw through the Marine lines because he only had about one-fourth of his former command remaining. Lieutenant Colonel Smith ordered Company E, less a few Marines holding their former positions, to fill in where the LAF companies had formerly been. At this time the Amal pulled back, indicating once more that they had no desire to fight Marine forces.

About 1530 on 6 February, a heavy volume of large caliber and small arms fire, originating from Druze-controlled areas, fell on MAU positions along the eastern perimeter. The Marines answered with fire from all their organic weapons, plus 5-inch naval gunfire. The MAU also called in the first Marine-controlled tactical air mission since the August 1982 landing in Lebanon. Directed by a BLT 2/8 forward air controller, a Navy A-6 Intruder from the carrier *John F. Kennedy* dropped two laser-guided bombs on an identified target. At 2230, firing on the Marines ceased. One Marine had been killed.<sup>61</sup>

The next day, LAF security around the airport\* deteriorated at a rapid rate, as Lebanese soldiers, with their tanks and other rolling stock, sought a safe haven within U.S. positions at the airport, or continued on to the north to join up with other government forces. An hour after noon on the 7th, large caliber fire landed in the center of the airport, and 50 minutes later, the MAU evacuated approximately 250 personnel, including Seabees, Marine combat engineers, and other Marines to Phibron shipping. All construction work at the airport ended. General Joy planned to bring some of the Seabees back ashore, when possible, to finish emplacing the sea-land vans, but this plan was overtaken by events.

On 7 February, the MAU began non-combatant evacuation operations, bringing out 40 American civilian embassy employees and their dependents by

\*Since September 1982, the Government of Lebanon's Army was responsible for the exterior security of the Multi-National Force units.



*Civilians leave the Durrafourd Building for helicopters carrying them out of Beirut in February 1984.*

helicopter from the evacuation control center at the U.S./UK Embassy to the *Manitowoc*. The next day, 49 more Americans were evacuated to the *Guam* for the airlift to Larnaca later. By 11 February, a total of 787 individuals had been flown from the embassy area or from Juniyah to Phibron 4 shipping, and then on to Larnaca.<sup>62</sup> On 11 February, one evacuee was hit in the neck by a stray bullet, but suffered only minor injuries. She was flown to the *Guam* for treatment.

Playing a major role in these evacuation operations was First Lieutenant Ettore's platoon from Company F. Ever since its arrival in Lebanon in November 1983, it had been providing security for the U.S./UK Embassy and Lieutenant Ettore had worked very closely with State Department representatives on the evacuation plan.

Heavy shelling in east Beirut was coming close to the Lebanese Presidential Palace, Ambassador Bar-



*Marines adjust a protective helmet on a youngster before he is evacuated from Beirut in February 1984.*

tholomew's residence, and the Ministry of Defense on 8 and 9 February. The Government of Lebanon requested American fire support to engage the hostile artillery positions. Target acquisition units located the positions inside Syrian controlled territory. The Lebanese request was passed to higher headquarters for approval and once it was received, the *New Jersey* and the *Moosebrugger* took the positions under fire, silencing them.<sup>63</sup>

Plans for the withdrawal of the MAUs had existed since August 1982. When the 22d MAU landed in November 1983, the concept of redeployment was re-discussed. It became apparent to MAU staff officers as they read the message traffic through early February, that the Marines would be redeployed, but not

*HMM-261 CH-46s lift off from the Corniche near the British Embassy in February 1984, evacuating civilians from strife-torn Beirut, when the situation became critical.*



all at once. From the very beginning of his command in Lebanon, General Joy had been under pressure to reduce the number of Marines ashore. The MAU developed numerous plans to shrink the size of shore-based units while maintaining enough force to carry out its mission. According to MAU Assistant G-3, Lieutenant Colonel Van Huss, ". . . that was a continuous effort and a priority with General Joy and his staff and the commanders."<sup>64</sup>

It was also planned that—sooner or later—the Marines would totally seabase their logistical effort, leaving only a small combat service support detachment ashore. Plans for redeployment had been discussed before the LAF situation had deteriorated, ". . . and with the events of early February, it was prudent that we continue with [them]. Not in haste. It was programmed. . . ."<sup>65</sup>

Early in February, General Joy learned from Lieutenant Colonel Peter E. Woolley, commander of the British MNF contingent, that President Reagan had informed the governments of Great Britain, France, and Italy, that the United States was going to withdraw its forces from Lebanon. General Joy learned of the announced decision while listening to a British Broadcasting Corporation shortwave news broadcast on 7 February. The report stated that the President had ordered the Marines in the Beirut area to begin a phased withdrawal to Navy ships offshore shortly. Official orders had not yet reached General Joy.

This same day, the British contingent departed. Lieutenant Colonel Woolley called General Joy to tell him that he had received his marching orders and was leaving immediately. As General Joy recalled, Woolley said, ". . . 'I'm going to see General Tannous and tell him I'm leaving. We are going to motor march to Juniyah and will be picked up in Juniyah and leave.' And sure enough, they did."<sup>66</sup>

On or about 15 February, General Joy sent a message to the CinCEur planners stating that the MAU could pull out by 28 February if a redeployment was being considered. The MAU plan for a 28 February departure date provided for the possibility of up to two days of foul weather which meant that the Marines could actually leave on the 26th, the weather and other factors permitting.<sup>67</sup> This eventually became the day that the Marines left Lebanese soil. The JCS order to the MAU to execute the redeployment was sent on 18 February.

On 16 February, in response to the MAU message, General Rogers directed General Joy to turn over command of the 22d MAU to Colonel Faulkner on 20 February, and to establish and assume command of

Joint Task Force, Lebanon (JTFL).<sup>68</sup> At the same time, the MAU was ordered to occupy and defend positions in the vicinity of Beirut International Airport—a MAU mission since September 1982—and to conduct a tactical reembarkation. The MAU was also directed to provide external security for the U.S./UK Embassy, and to support JTFL.

General Joy's new command would be comprised of the MAU; the Office of Military Cooperation; the U.S. Army Training unit located at the Ministry of Defense; and an embassy security detachment, made up of MAU Marines, responsible for guarding the U.S./UK Embassy and the American ambassador's residence. General Joy was further directed to maintain his command post at the airport until the MAU departed, and then to move it into a secure location in east Beirut. Since he would be working with the Lebanese Armed Forces, General Joy decided to set up his office at the Ministry of Defense.<sup>69</sup>

Once the MAU had re-embarked on Phibron 4 shipping, the Marines reverted to the operational control of the Sixth Fleet. General Joy had the 22d MAU under his JTFL command 20 through 26 February. Thereafter, he had only Lieutenant Ettore and 100 Marines who guarded the embassy, and 200-300 Army trainers in the Office of Military Cooperation, which consisted of three Special Forces training teams, each consisting of approximately 75 soldiers. General Joy also had an ANGLICO team to help carry out his fire support mission. He placed sections of this team in strategic vantage points in the mountains overlooking the city of Beirut and the Ministry of Defense.

The MAU was experienced in rapid re-embarkation, but the Marines had accumulated a large amount of excess gear over their 18 months' stay in Lebanon. The situation in Beirut prevented loading the *Transcolumbia* from the port, so the MAU's surplus supplies and equipment were loaded aboard the *Manitowoc* and the *Barnstable County*. The two LSTs then steamed to Haifa. After they docked there, the excess was transferred to the *Transcolumbia*. The LSTs then returned to Beirut, ready to begin a phased re-embarkation.

Throughout early February, fire had fallen sporadically on and around MAU positions, and the Marines continued to return fire. On 9 February, the Government of Lebanon requested naval gunfire placed on rocket positions which were firing on Beirut. The Navy complied with the request, hit the targets, and the firing stopped. The next day, Marine positions in the southern sector received heavy mortar fire, which was answered in kind by 60mm and 81mm mortars again silencing the enemy. However, three large caliber

rounds exploded in the southern sector of the airport, severely damaging the counterbattery radar equipment supporting the Marines there, and effectively limiting their ability to determine where hostile fire was coming from.

On 14 February, the Marines were fired upon again, but suffered neither material damage nor human casualties. Meanwhile, General Joy discussed the situation with his French and Italian counterparts, and consulted with Commodore Erie and Admiral Martin, Sixth Fleet commander, about the future of the U.S. elements of the Multi-National Force in Lebanon. He continued to backload all non-essential personnel and equipment on Phibron shipping, and to refine re-embarkation plans.

In a report to General Rogers, the MAU commander stated that fire support coordination procedures had been simplified under new rules of engagement. All U.S. elements could now respond immediately and directly to LAF requests for fire support. General Joy also reported the impending departure on 19 February of General Angioni's Italian units, with the last of them scheduled to leave Beirut on the 21st. The Italians were to leave behind at the port area a 100-man airborne company, while the San Marcos Tactical Group would remain on ships offshore, ready to land in a contingency.<sup>70</sup>

Even before the arrival of orders directing the MAU

to leave Lebanon's shores, the MAU Service Support Group began backloading equipment, supplies, and personnel to comply with General Joy's directive to reduce the size of the MAU ashore. Up to this time, the MSSG was ". . . kept busy 18, perhaps 20, hours a day, in some cases [with] primarily what I just call routine support to the MAU; that is, maintaining the MAU with rations, with water, with fuel, with ammunition, all these other kinds of services . . . ."<sup>71</sup>

When not busy with these jobs, the MSSG Marines were building the berms and digging the tank ditch, or filling sandbags. ". . . there wasn't a lot of free time, and there wasn't any place to go, so we stayed right on the beach and turned to."<sup>72</sup> On 13 February, Lieutenant Colonel Davidson, the MSSG commander, began backloading the MAU's Class I (rations), III (petroleum, oil, and lubricants), IV (construction materials), and IX (parts, repair kits and components) supplies to amphibious shipping. The next day, the remaining Seabees went aboard the *Transcolumbia* together with 22d MAU equipment. By 16 February, the MSSG had completed backloading excess supplies and had begun a phased redeployment of its personnel. Two days later, with nearly all supplies and equipment back on board ships, the MSSG commander established a combat service support detachment at the airport to support 22d MAU elements still ashore. But from this point, combat service for the MAU was

*With spirits high and the U.S. flag waving, BLT 2/8 Marines—among the last to leave Beirut International Airport on 26 February 1984—wade through the surf of Green Beach to board landing craft which will carry them to Phibron shipping offshore and on to Rota.*

Photo courtesy of Claude Salhani







*Marines drive their vehicles into the well deck of the Barnstable County (LST 1197) in February 1984.*

essentially seabased.<sup>73</sup> Lieutenant Colonel Davidson moved his command post on board the *Trenton* on 20 February, a full six days before the rest of the MAU boarded its ships.

The BLT began backloading on 9 February, when support elements and equipment began to leave the airport. The battalion's Headquarters and Service and Weapons Companies went aboard their assigned ships on the 25th, and the rest of the BLT left the airport the next day. At 0400 on 26 February, Company E was flown out from LZ Brown, near the terminal area and the north-south runway of the airport. Helicopters then returned to the airport for Company F. Both companies were back aboard the ship by dawn. Company G was slated to leave from Green Beach in armored amphibian vehicles and Phibron landing craft. The withdrawal of the BLT would have been completed by 0630, had not the Phibron's LCUs been given another task—the transporting of ammunition from Sidon to Juniyah—before loading the Marines at Green Beach. The last elements of the BLT left the beach at about 1237.<sup>74</sup>

*CH-46 Sea Knights flown by HMM-261 pilots ("The Bulls") pass over Green Beach carrying Marines back to Amphibious Squadron 4 shipping offshore as the 22d MAU leaves the soil of Lebanon on 26 February 1984. Beyond the haze in the background is Beirut.*

Photo courtesy of Claude Salhani



Lieutenant Colonel Amos, HMM-261 commander, recalled that the 26th was:

... a beautiful Sunday morning. I remember, I flew back in and landed beside General Joy's Huey and sat up on the hill, you know, where the artillery positions were. And he and I and Ray Smith (BLT commander) sat there watching the beachmasters leave, birds were singing. . . . And you could see young kids moving in, playing in the bunkers down there to the north where we had moved out of. And [then we] flew back to the boat.<sup>60</sup>

Earlier that morning, another key event took place. The CinCEur directive of 19 February had ordered General Joy, to "effect liaison with Lebanese government to ensure that security for the airport was turned over to the Government of Lebanon."<sup>76</sup> At that time, however, neither the Lebanese Government nor its army had a responsible individual or unit at the airport or in its proximity with authority to accept responsibility for airport security.

After the heavy fighting of 7-8 February, when the LAF's 4th Brigade left the southern area of the airport and gave up Khaldah, the Amal took control. One of the Amal representatives, a man named Tylas, who was described as a young Muslim war chief, contacted the Americans and said, "We are responsible for west Beirut, we are responsible for the southern suburbs," and "we will see to it that the airport is safe, we will see to it that the Marines are not attacked, we will ensure that only authorized vehicles will transit the coastal highway." The Amal did what they promised to do.<sup>77</sup>

At 0600 on 26 February, control of Beirut International Airport was turned over to Captain Habib, representing the LAF 33d Battalion, 3d Brigade.<sup>78</sup> Shortly thereafter, Colonel Faulkner, Lieutenant Colonel Van Huss, and Major William J. Sublette, the MAU Air Liaison Officer, went to the LAF liaison office at the airport to recover the American flag, which had been there for some time. They had planned to bring the flag back to the States to present it to the widow of Major Alfred L. Butler III, the MAU liaison officer to the LAF, who died as the result of an accidental discharge on 8 February—the last Marine to die in Lebanon.

As Lieutenant Colonel Van Huss recalled the scene:

... Colonel Faulkner turned to Colonel [Fahim] Qortabawi [the LAF liaison officer], and said 'With your permission, we will now strike our colors.' Bill Sublette and I moved immediately to the flag staff, took the flag down, folded it properly as it should be, and as we were folding it into the triangle, Colonel Qortabawi, perhaps was a little bit taken by the seriousness of what we had been doing. He reached up and took the Lebanese flag down, folded it—I don't know if he folded it properly. . . . He simply folded



*Maj William J. Sublette, 22d MAU Air Officer (left), and Lt Col Earnest A. Van Huss, 22d MAU Operations Officer, carefully fold the American flag which hung in the Lebanese Armed Forces airport liaison office.*

it and handed it to Colonel Faulkner and said, 'Well, you may as well take our flag, too.' And it was over.<sup>79</sup>

As though he really didn't fully understand the significance of the moment, Colonel Qortabawi said to Colonel Faulkner, "You are leaving?" The MAU commander replied, "Yes, we are really leaving. Our eastern positions have already been vacated, we're in pullback positions now, holding in the vicinity of the high ground down near where Hotel Battery was emplaced [on the western edge of the airfield], and we are in the final throes of embarkation. Yes, Colonel Qortabawi, we are really leaving." Again, Lieutenant Colonel Van Huss recalls:

Colonel Qortabawi was a Christian. He said, "I have no way to go home. To go home, I have to go through Muslim checkpoints. You can get me to the Ministry of Defense by helo ride?" [Col Faulkner replied] "Yes, we can do that." So Colonel Qortabawi left with us; we gave him a helo ride to the Ministry of Defense, he linked back up to General Tannous, and it was all very final and over.<sup>80</sup>

The 22d Marine Amphibious Unit left behind more than one million filled sandbags and a lot of deep holes, which the Shiite militia Amal very quickly occupied.\* The Marines departed with all that they had brought with them, leaving behind very little in the way of scrap materials. There was some thought of cratering the emplacements that they had dug and destroying the sea-land vans, but, in the minds of the MAU's staff officers, it had taken a Herculean effort

\*"Exactly six minutes after the last [Marine] amtrac left [the beach], the Amal flag was flying over the watchtower at Black Beach. Likewise, Amal flags were going up all over the airport." Larry Pintak ltr to author, dtd 10Jan87.



Photo courtesy of Claude Salhani

*Security men with weapons at the ready surround Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, in helmet and flak jacket, as he holds an impromptu press conference before meeting with U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon Bartholomew at the latter's residence.*

to get them in the ground, and it would have taken a similar effort to have dug them out. The Dragon Teeth were left where they had been placed, for only a heavy crane could have lifted them.

The MAU remained on board its ships until relieved on 10 April by the 24th MAU, commanded by Colonel Myron C. Harrington, Jr. At that time, the new amphibious task force took position hull down on the horizon, just out of sight of the Beirut shoreline. On 29 February, the Secretary of Defense visited the 22d MAU and Phibron 4 and presented the Navy Unit Commendation to both commands. General Kelley visited his Marines on 11 March.

The MAU still had a role to play in Lebanon—as a reaction force to rescue the American ambassador, if necessary, or in other contingency operations in Lebanon or elsewhere in the Mediterranean. Meanwhile, Phibron 4 ships, with embarked Marines, would leave, one at a time, for port calls at Haifa and liberty for all hands. During one such port call, a young Marine was killed in Haifa in an automobile accident. He was

the last MAU Marine to die while the 22d MAU was deployed.

*Marines lower the national colors for the last time in Lebanon at their Beirut International Airport outpost.*

USMC photo by Sgt Hartman T. Slate



The turnover between the 22d and 24th MAUs was completed by 1000 on 10 April. At 1600, Commodore Erie's Amphibious Squadron 4 left the Lebanese littoral for Rota, where the MAU would wash down all its equipment. This task took three days, 16-19 April, after which Phibron 4 headed for the United States. Arriving at Morehead City on 1 May, the 22d MAU was given the same type of greeting by bands, cheerleaders, and officials which had met all the other returning MAUs. On 3 May the Secretary of the Navy and the Commandant reviewed the MAU. Eight days later, on 11 May, the 22d Marine Amphibious Unit was deactivated as Landing Force Sixth Fleet 1-84.<sup>81</sup>

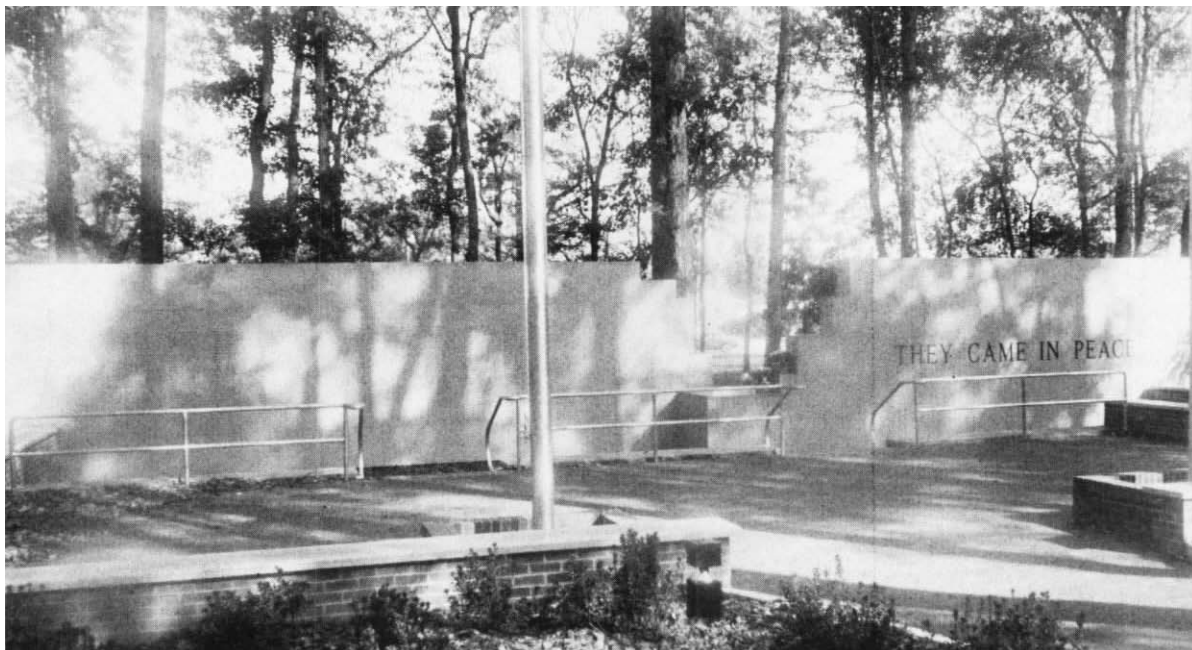
The departure of the 22d MAU did not end the Marine presence in Lebanon. Still ashore were General Joy and his joint task force, the 24th MAU Marines who provided external security for the U.S./UK Embassy, and the Marine Security Guards providing internal security for the U.S./UK Embassy. Initially, General Joy was scheduled to deactivate the task force when the 24th MAU relieved the 22d. However, General Lawson, Deputy CinCEur, directed Joy to remain after the new MAU arrived to assist in getting it settled and to ensure that the 24th MAU and Phibron 6 instituted good working relations with Ambassador Bartholomew and the Office of Military Cooperation, as well as with the Lebanese.

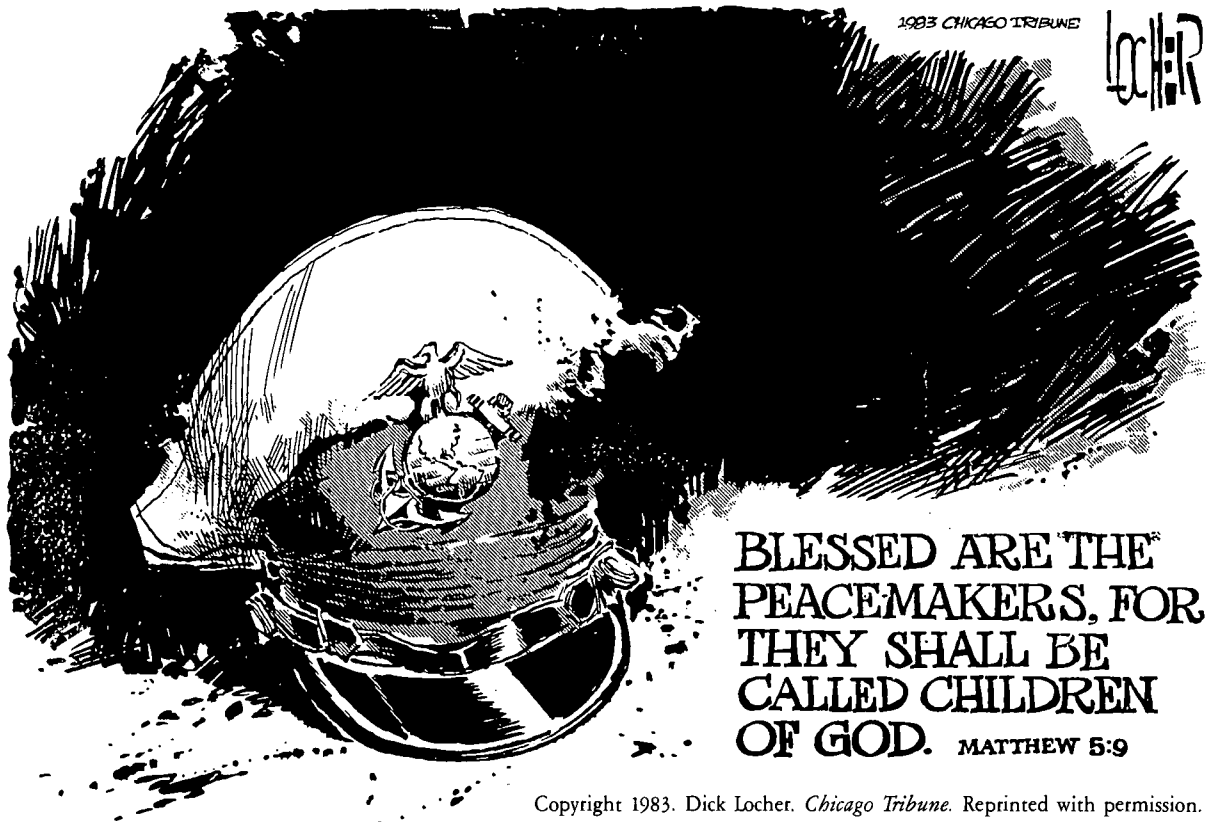
The first orders General Joy received set a date of not later than 15 April for the deactivation of the joint task force. Meanwhile, a senior U.S. Embassy official was kidnapped in Beirut by an unidentified faction and General Joy was called upon to assist in the efforts to recover him. As a result, the deactivation was delayed. On 19 April, he was finally ordered to deactivate the force two days later and to inform Ambassador Bartholomew and General Tannous of his orders. The Ambassador was none too happy with this news nor with the timing for the deactivation. Peace talks were then being held in Damascus, and the American diplomat believed that President Gemayel was going to return to his capital and announce an accommodation with the Syrians. Ambassador Bartholomew felt, accordingly, that the deactivation was premature. He suggested that General Joy request a delay for several days. CinCEur concurred, and the Joint Task Force, Lebanon was officially deactivated on 26 April. General Joy flew to Stuttgart for a debriefing and then returned to Camp Lejeune, where he resumed his duties as Assistant Division Commander, 2d Marine Division.<sup>82</sup>

The final curtain came down on Marine Corps presence in Lebanon on 31 July 1984, when 24th MAU Marines guarding the U.S./UK Embassy returned to Phibron 6 shipping by helicopter and amtracs. The

*The Beirut Memorial, at the entrance of Camp Johnson, Jacksonville, North Carolina, was dedicated on 23 October 1986. The concept for the memorial came from Jacksonville citizens and was paid for by donations coming from all over the country and world.*

USMC photo by Cpl Jamee Sosa





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last of the Marines departed at 1824 local time. This departure coincided with the transfer of American diplomats from the British Embassy to new offices in east Beirut, where space had been found to house the U.S. Embassy.

With the withdrawal of the last MAU Marines, Marine presence in Lebanon ended as quietly as it had begun spectacularly. The only Marines now remaining in Beirut are those assigned to the security guard inside the American Embassy.

For a time after the Marines left, there was an uneasy truce in Beirut. The Green Line was bulldozed out of existence and there were few reports of firing between factions. It almost seemed as though the peace that was elusive when the Marines were in country was almost within grasp. But it was never to be, for the fighting soon became as intense as ever.

In the 18 months that the MAUs were in Lebanon, 238 Marines died and 151 were wounded. Another 40 Marines suffered non-battle injuries, and seven were wounded as the result of the accidental discharge of weapons.\*

\*These statistics were obtained during a telecon between Hd, Casualty Section, HQMC and the author on 3 Aug 84. See Appendix F for a listing of Marine casualties in Beirut.

To memorialize the Marines who served and died in Beirut, "Lebanon" was added to the battle honors of the Marine Corps already enscribed on the base of the Marine Corps Memorial in Arlington, Virginia. It was, perhaps, appropriate that this new battle honor was unveiled on 8 November 1985, when the traditional ceremonies celebrating the 210th birthday of the Marine Corps were observed.

A further memorial to the Beirut Marines was dedicated on 23 October 1986 at the entrance to Camp Johnson—the old Montford Point Camp—in Jacksonville, North Carolina. The concept of this memorial came from Jacksonville citizens, whose enthusiasm and dedication served to inspire donations from individuals and organizations from all over the country. Present at the dedication were the families and friends of those who died in Beirut and Generals Kelley and Gray, as well as now-retired General Miller, Colonel Geraghty, and Lieutenant Colonel Gerlach. The simple memorial consists primarily of two large walls. On the left side is inscribed the names of the soldiers, sailors, and Marines killed in Beirut and Grenada, while on the right wall are the words, "They Came in Peace."

Of these Americans, a proud but saddened and grateful Marine Corps and nation can only say, "Thank you" and "Semper Fidelis!"

# Notes

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## Chapter 1 Footnotes

1. The material for most of this section was derived from *Report of the DOD Commission on Beirut International Airport Terrorist Act, October 23, 1983*, dtd 20Dec83, pp. 94-98, hereafter *Long Commission Rpt.*
2. SSgt Randy Gaddo, "Beirut Bombing," *Leatherneck*, Feb84, p. 16.

## Chapter 2 Footnotes

1. For a more comprehensive account of the 1958 deployments, see Jack Shulimson, *Marines in Lebanon, 1958* (Washington: History and Museums Division, HQMC (rev. 1983), and BGen Edwin H. Simmons, USMC (Ret), *The United States Marines: The First Two Hundred Years, 1775-1975* (New York: The Viking Press, 1974), pp. 255-57.
2. The Phibron would become the Mediterranean Amphibious Ready Group (MARG) once it passed from the operational control of the Second Fleet to the Sixth Fleet.
3. 32d MAU Situation Report No. 7, for the period 22-28May82, dtd 29May82 (Archives, MCHC, Washington, D.C.), hereafter 32d MAU SitRep, with number and date. See Appendix B for the task organization for each MAU deployed to Lebanon. Unless otherwise noted, all official documentation is located in the Archives, Marine Corps Historical Center, Washington Navy Yard, Washington, D.C., and the interviews in the Oral History Collection in the same place. Similarly, the Command Chronologies (ComdC) of the MAUs are held in the Archives.
4. Captain White wore two hats—one as the commodore of Phibron 4, the second as Commander, Task Force 61 (CTF 61). Similarly, Colonel Mead was two-hatted—Commanding Officer, 32d MAU, and CTF 62. The chain of command ascended from CTF 62 up through CTF 61; to Commander, Sixth Fleet; to Commander, U.S. Naval Forces, Europe (CinCUSNavEur); to Commander in Chief, U.S. Forces, Europe (CinCEur); to the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington.
5. Col James M. Mead, "The Lebanon Experience," *Ma-*

*rine Corps Gazette*, Feb83, p. 30, hereafter Mead, Lebanon.

6. 32d MAU SitRep, No. 9, dtd 12Jun82.
7. 32d MAU ComdC, Jun82.
8. 32d MAU SitRep, No. 9, dtd 12Jun82.
9. Mead, Lebanon, p. 31. This is a classified tactical situation booklet concerning noncombatant evacuation operations among other matters, and published by FMFLant.
10. LtCol Dennis R. Blankenship intvw, 12Jan83, p. 5, hereafter Blankenship intvw. The articles referred to are Col Sydney H. Batchelder, Jr., and Major David A. Quinlan, "Operation Eagle Pull," *Marine Corps Gazette*, May76, and BGen Richard E. Cary and Maj David A. Quinlan, "Frequent Wind," *Marine Corps Gazette*, Feb, Mar, and Apr76.
11. Blankenship intvw, p. 6.
12. Maj William H. Barnetson intvw, 12Jan83, p. 11, hereafter Barnetson intvw. The MSSG ran the Evacuation Control Center on the *Hermitage*, while BLT 2/8 ran the one on the *Nashville*. All similarly deployed MSSGs have been trained to conduct these operations when so ordered.
13. Blankenship intvw, p. 10
14. Mead, Lebanon, p. 31.
15. *Ibid.*, pp. 32-33.
16. LtCol Robert B. Johnston intvw, pp. 1-2, dtd 13Jan83, hereafter Johnston intvw.
17. *Ibid.*
18. Sec III, 32d MAU AAR for Beirut, Lebanon Evacuation Operations, 16Aug-10Sep82, dtd 15Sep82, p. 2, hereafter 32d MAU AAR, Sep82.
19. Johnston intvw, p. 3.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
21. *Ibid.*
22. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
23. Mead, Lebanon, p. 33.
24. 32d MAU SitRep, No. 19, dtd 22Aug82.
25. Mead, Lebanon, p. 33.
26. *Ibid.*
27. Johnston intvw, p. 13.
28. *Ibid.*
29. Sec II, 32d MAU AAR, Sep82, p. 8; 32d MAU ComdC, Aug82.
30. Blankenship intvw, p. 21.
31. Johnston intvw, p. 14.

32. Capt Kenneth T. McCabe intvw, dtd 14Jan83, p. 32, hereafter McCabe intvw.
  33. Quoted in Mead, Lebanon, p. 36.
  34. After the Italians landed and moved to positions in southern Beirut, near Galerie Semaan, they were augmented by Marine ANGLICO and liaison teams. 32d MAU ComdC, Aug82.
  35. BLT 2/8 Initial AAR, encl 1 to 32d MAU AAR, Sep82, p. 4.
  36. Ibid., p. 5. Plastic flags to be flown from vehicles' antennae were soon received by the MAU, but they did not hold up well. Later FMFLant authorized the wearing of American flag patches on the left shoulder of both flight suits and camouflage utilities. The wearing of the patch by members of the U.S. Multi-National Forces was for operational identification purposes only, and FMFLant considered that the patch was just one more visible means to enhance the MAU as "presence force." The flag patch also identified the Marines as Americans when conducting joint patrols with the Lebanese and especially in the event of boundary/zone disputes. Each Marine in the MAU was issued three patches to be sewn on his utilities and/or flight suits. These were to be removed upon completion of his deployment to Lebanon. CG FMFLant msg to CMC, dtd 24May83.
  37. Maj Jack L. Farmer comments, 13Feb84.
  38. Mead, Lebanon, p. 37.
  39. Blankenship intvw, p. 23.
  40. Johnston intvw, p. 16.
  41. Ibid., p. 17.
  42. Ibid., p. 18.
  43. Ibid., p. 19.
  44. Ibid.
  45. U.S. Defense Attache, Beirut, msg to CMC, dtd 30Aug82.
  46. Sec III, p. 1. 32d MAU AAR, Sep82.
  47. Sec IV, pp. 1-3, Ibid.
  48. BLT 2/8 Initial AAR, p. 4, in 32d MAU AAR, Sep82.
  49. Ibid., p. 5.
  50. Ibid., p. 6.
  51. HMM-261 AAR, p. 2, in 32d MAU AAR, Sep82.
  52. 32d MAU ComdC, Sep82.
  53. Mead, Lebanon, p. 38.
- after the evacuation of the PLO guerrillas. "In reality, they were opportunistically going ahead with their desire to remove all caches from that area. They knew that substantial amounts of weapons and ammunition still existed in the area. This was fully substantiated later." Mead, Lebanon, p. 38.
2. Sec III, p. 1, 32d MAU AAR for Beirut, Lebanon Operation, 29Sep-1Nov82, dtd 12Nov82, hereafter 32d MAU AAR, Sep-Nov82.
  3. 32d MAU ComdC, Sep82.
  4. USCinCEur msg to CinCUSNavEur dtd 25Sep82.
  5. *Long Commission Rpt*, p. 7.
  6. Ibid.
  7. 32d MAU AAR, Sep-Nov82.
  8. *Long Commission Rpt*, p. 7.
  9. As a matter of record, at no time ever during their deployment did the MAUs downgrade the threat of terrorism or fail to recognize its ever-presence in Beirut. This is apparent in a review of training schedules of the various MAUs as well as the comments made during the course of oral history interviews beginning with the 32d/22d MAU and successive MAUs concerning their deployments to Lebanon.
  10. Mead, Lebanon, p. 39.
  11. Blankenship intvw, p. 41. Shortly after the deployment of the 24th MAU in November, a Marine public affairs bureau was established at the MAU headquarters with a Marine public affairs officer in charge.
  12. Johnston intvw, p. 26.
  13. Blankenship intvw, pp. 42-43.
  14. During the 1958 landing, the Marines designated this Red Beach.
  15. Maj Jack L. Farmer intvw, dtd 20Dec83, pp. 1-2, hereafter Farmer intvw I.
  16. Ibid.
  17. Ibid., pp. 4-5.
  18. Ibid.
  19. 32d MAU ComdC, Sep-Nov82. It was perceived by LtCol Johnston that the landing at the port was primarily for ceremonial reasons, as the MAU wanted to land across the beach and by air at the airport. Johnston intvw, p. 5.
  20. National Military Command Center msg to Com-SixthFlt, dtd 30Sep82.
  21. Farmer intvw I, p. 6.
  22. Ibid., p. 7.
  23. Although the 32d MAU's artillery was not landed, its artillerymen came ashore organized as a provisional infantry company.
  24. Ibid., p. 9.
  25. Johnston intvw, p. 47.

### Chapter 3 Footnotes

1. Upon the withdrawal of the MNF from Lebanon earlier in the month, Israeli forces returned to east Beirut and then entered west Beirut ostensibly to provide security for the PLO families remaining behind



26. The description of the MAU headquarters compound and buildings were derived from the Long Commission Rpt, pp. 69-86.
27. Another club was established at the opposite end of the building for sergeants and below, and in the MSSG building, still another club was set up and entitled "The Peace Keeper's Tavern." There was also a beer hall in the BLT headquarters building.
28. Farmer intvw I, p. 12.
29. Sect II, p. 1. 32d MAU AAR, Sep-Nov82.
30. HMM-261 AAR, p. 1, in 32d MAU AAR, Sep-Nov82.
31. MSSG-32 AAR, p. 3, in 32d MAU AAR, Sep-Nov82.
32. 32d MAU ComdC, Sep82.
33. Barnetson intvw, pp. 2-3.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
35. For a fuller description of MREs, see Capt Paul Loschiavo, "Ready to Eat Meals Replace C-rats," *Marine Corps Gazette*, Jun83, pp. 33. The BLT later commented that ". . . the new MRE was well received. It was tasty but the main portion offered substantially less than the old C-rations. The absence of cans or a plausible stove was found to be a problem and consequently most Marines ate MREs cold." BLT 2/8 AAR, p. 9, in 32d MAU AAR, Sep-Nov82.
36. 32d MAU ComdC, Sep82.
37. Mead, Lebanon, p. 40.
38. Maj Christopher M. Arey intvw, dtd 17Mar83, p. 6, hereafter Arey intvw.
39. 32d MAU SitRep, No. 32, dtd 21Nov82.
40. McCabe intvw, p. 35.
41. *Ibid.*
42. Blankenship intvw, p. 59.
43. CMC msg to COs, 32d MAU, 24th MAU, dtd 5Nov82.

#### Chapter 4 Footnotes

1. Col Thomas M. Stokes, Jr., intvw, dtd 15Mar83, hereafter Stokes intvw.
2. 24th MAU SitRep No. 13, dtd 3Oct82.
3. Stokes intvw, p. 2.
4. Stokes intvw, p. 6.
5. *Ibid.*
6. 24th MAU SitRep No. 19, dtd 14Nov82.
7. 24th MAU ComdC, Nov82.
8. Arey intvw, p. 10.
9. Maj John A. Tempone and Capt Charles T. Botkin intvw, dtd 15Mar83, p. 43, hereafter Tempone/Botkin intvw.
10. 24th MAU ComdC, Nov82.

11. 24th MAU SitRep No. 19, dtd 14Nov82.
12. LtCol John B. Matthews intvw, dtd 16Mar83, p. 13, hereafter Matthews intvw.
13. *Ibid.*
14. *Ibid.*, p. 15. As Marines use it, "arrugah" is akin to a war cry, an expression of enthusiasm and esprit de corps. When the author was with the 22d MAU at Beirut International Airport in May 1983, he noted groups of LAF recruits jogging in the vicinity of the MAU headquarters, chanting as they ran, while cautiously looking to see whether the Marines noted and approved.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 14.
16. Tempone/Botkin intvw, p. 26.
17. Matthews intvw, p. 37.
18. Stokes intvw, p. 18.
19. Maj David N. Buckner intvw, dtd 18Mar83, p. 21, hereafter Buckner intvw.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 26.
21. Stokes intvw, p. 49.
22. 24th ComdC, Jan83.
23. 24th MAU SitRep No. 31, dtd 6Feb83.
24. 24th MAU ComdC, Jan83, p. 2.
25. *Ibid.*
26. *Ibid.*
27. The British were there because they were going to move into a position directly across the road from the Marines.
28. Capt Charles B. Johnson intvw, dtd 16Mar83, p. 21, hereafter Johnson intvw.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 23.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 25.
31. Johnson interview on station WRC, Channel 4, Washington, D.C. "5:30 Live," television program, 29Mar83.
32. *Ibid.*
33. Johnson intvw, p. 28.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 30.
35. *Ibid.*, pp. 34-36.
36. 24th MAU ComdC, Feb83.
37. 24th MAU SitRep No. 37, dtd 21Mar83.
38. Stokes intvw, p. 43.
39. *Ibid.*
40. Buckner intvw, p. 21.
41. *Ibid.*, pp. 33-34.
42. Matthews intvw, p. 36.

#### Chapter 5 Footnotes

1. Frocking is the procedure of promoting a selected officer to the next higher grade, permitting him to wear the insignia, but not paying him the salary until

- there is a vacancy for him to fill in the new grade.
2. 22d MAU SitRep No. 1, dtd 3Dec82.
  3. Buckner intvw, p. 8.
  4. Ibid., p. 9.
  5. Ibid., p. 2.
  6. 22d MAU SitRep No. 9, dtd 29Jan83.
  7. Col James M. Mead, "Lebanon Revisited," *Marine Corps Gazette* Sep83, p. 67, hereafter Mead, Lebanon II.
  8. 22d MAU SitRep No. 12, dtd 20Feb83.
  9. Ibid.
  10. To "strongback" a tent is to provide a wooden frame for rigid support.
  11. Farmer intvw I, p. 16.
  12. 22d MAU ComdC, Feb83.
  13. Maj Jack L. Farmer intvw dtd 26May83, p. 1, hereafter Farmer intvw II.
  14. Mead, Lebanon II, p. 68.
  15. Farmer intvw, p. 20.
  16. Farmer intvw II, p. 2.
  17. 22d MAU ComdC, Feb83.
  18. Mead, Lebanon II, pp. 68-69.
  19. Farmer intvw II, pp. 16-17.
  20. Ibid., p. 18.
  21. Mead, Lebanon II, p. 69.
  22. 22d MAU ComdC, Feb83.
  23. Maj Jack L. Farmer comments to author, 6Mar84.
  24. The reports of neither of these intelligence surveys, or ones made later by Department of Defense and National Security Agency teams, are available for publication.
  25. Farmer intvw II, p. 10
  26. There were indications that the PLO had drifted back into Beirut and neighboring areas of Syria.
  27. Farmer intvw I, p. 22.
  28. Ibid., p. 23.
  29. Ibid., p. 24.
  30. LtCol Donald F. Anderson intvw, dtd 25May83, p. 17, hereafter Anderson intvw.
  31. 22d MAU ComdC, Mar83.
  32. Mead, Lebanon II, p. 70.
  33. Ibid.
  34. Farmer intvw II, p. 21.
  35. 22d MAU SitRep No. 17, dtd 27Mar83.
  36. Farmer intvw I, p. 28.
  37. Ibid.
  38. 22d MAU ComdC, Mar83.
  39. 22d MAU SitRep No. 19, dtd 9Apr83.
  40. Farmer intvw II, p. 24.
  41. Col James M. Mead intvw, dtd 23May83, p. 13, hereafter Mead intvw I.
  42. BGen James Mead presentation to Marine Corps

- History and Museums Division, MCHC, Washington, D.C., dtd 14Sep83, p. 34, hereafter Mead Presentation.
43. Mead, Lebanon II, p. 71.
  44. Farmer intvw II, p. 25.
  45. A special award was established by his friends and admirers in memory of LtCol Leftwich, who was killed during his second tour in Vietnam. The Leftwich Trophy, sculpted by Iwo Jima Memorial sculptor Felix de Weldon, is awarded annually to the outstanding ground combat element captain serving in the Fleet Marine Force. In 1984 it was awarded to Major Robert K. Dobson, Jr., who won the award for services as a captain, commanding Company G, BLT 2/8, 22d MAU, in the Grenada operation and Beirut deployment.
  46. 22d MAU SitRep No. 21, dtd 24Apr83.
  47. Farmer intvw II, p. 26.
  48. BGen James M. Mead, "Through the Looking Glass" (Unpublished ms, 1984), p. 27.
  49. SecState msg to CMC, dtd 4May83.
  50. 22d MAU ComdC, May83; 22d MAU SitRep No. 23, dtd 8May83.
  51. Ibid.
  52. Farmer intvw II, p. 28.
  53. Long Commission Rpt, p. 30.
  54. LtCol Arthur S. Weber memo for the Director, Plans Div, HQMC, dtd 2Jun83, p. 3.
  55. Mead, Lebanon II, p. 73.
  56. Ibid.
  57. Author's notes.

#### Chapter 6 Footnotes

1. 24th MAU SitRep No. 1, dtd 25Mar83.
2. FMFLant LOI 5-83 for LanForSixFlt 2-83, dtd 4Feb83.
3. 24th MAU SitRep No. 9, dtd 22May83.
4. Col Timothy J. Geraghty intvw dtd 28May83, pp. 4-5, hereafter Geraghty intvw I.
5. 24th MAU ComdC, Jun83.
6. Long Commission Rpt, pp. 74-75.
7. 24th MAU ComdC, Jun83.
8. 24th MAU SitRep No. 13, dtd 19Jun83.
9. 24th MAU ComdC, Jun83, p. 2-9.
10. Ibid., pp. 3-4
11. Geraghty intvw I, pp. 7-8.
12. 24th MAU ComdC, Jun83, p. 2-3.
13. Ibid., p. 2.
14. 24th MAU ComdC, Aug83, p. 2-2.
15. Ibid., p. 2-3.

16. Ibid.
17. Ibid., pp. 2-4
18. Ibid.
19. Earlier recognizing that the situation in Beirut was becoming such that the time would come when they would have to return fire in self defense, Commodore France and Colonel Geraghty jointly developed an alert system for both Phibron ships and the Marines ashore, with Condition 1 being the highest state of alert and 4 the least.
20. 24th ComdC, Aug83.
21. Ibid., p. 2-8.
22. Maj Robert S. Melton intvw, dtd 19Nov83, p. 4, hereafter Melton intvw.
23. Ibid., p. 28.
24. Ibid., p. 2.
25. Ibid., p. 27.
26. 24th MAU ComdC, Sep83.
27. LtCol Harold W. Slacum intvw, dtd 21Nov83, p. 5, hereafter Slacum intvw.
28. 24th MAU SitRep No. 25, dtd 11Sep83.
29. 24th MAU ComdC, Sep83, pp. 2-3.
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid.
32. Long Commission Rpt, p. 32.
33. 24th MAU ComdC, Sep83, p. 2-6.
34. 24th MAU SitRep No. 25, dtd 11Sep83.
35. Ibid.
36. Mead Presentation, pp. 37-38.
37. Ibid., p. 39.
38. 24th MAU ComdC, Sep83.
39. 24th MAU SitRep No. 26, dtd 18Sep83.
40. Ibid.
41. Slacum intvw, pp. 9-12.
42. Col Timothy J. Geraghty intvw dtd 2Nov83, pp. 11-14, hereafter Geraghty intvw II.
43. 24th ComdC, Sep83, p. 2-7.
44. The Cobra belonged to HMM-165, the air combat element of the 31st MAU, embarked on the *Tarawa*.
45. Ibid., p. 2-9.
46. Ibid., p. 2-10.
47. 24th MAU SitRep No. 28, dtd 2Oct83.
48. 24th MAU ComdC, Oct83, pt 2, p. 2-3.
49. 24th MAU SitRep No. 30, dtd 16Oct83.
50. LtCol Laurence C. Medlin intvw dtd 20Nov83, pp. 10-11, hereafter Medlin intvw.
51. 24th MAU ComdC, Oct83, pt 2, p. 2-4. The MAU operation report for the 15th notes that there was one observed kill.
52. CTF 62 msg to CTF 61 dtd 230500Z. This message was immediately passed up the line of command by CTF 61, who amplified it with the information that the explosive was caused by a car bomb or truck carrying explosives. Commodore France also notified Washington that he had activated medevac helicopters as well as the medical teams on all Phibron 8 shipping.
53. Geraghty intvw II, pp. 18-19.
54. Ibid.
55. Ibid., p. 19.
56. Slacum intvw, pp. 18-19.
57. This is a report submitted when U.S. forces are attacked by a hostile force.
58. Geraghty intvw II, p. 20. Within 24 hours, Lieutenant Colonel Edwin C. Kelley, Jr., had arrived with his BLT 2/6 headquarters—which was now redesignated BLT 1/8—and was joined on 30 October by his Company E. 24th ComdC, Oct83, pt 3, p. 3-2.
59. Slacum intvw, p. 20.
60. Ibid., p. 22.
61. 1stLt Stephen N. Mikolaski intvw, dtd 20Nov83, p. 6, hereafter Mikolaski intvw.
62. CTF 61 msg to NMCC 230743Z. The Beirut local time of this message was 0943. For his mass casualty evacuation plan, Commodore France had previously made arrangements for casualties to be flown to the RAF hospital on Cyprus.
63. LCdr George W. Pucciarelli intvw, dtd 21Nov83, pp. 9-10, hereafter Pucciarelli intvw.
64. Ibid., pp. 11-12.
65. Ibid.
66. Mikolaski intvw, p. 18.
67. Melton intvw, p. 15.
68. CMC comments on draft ms, dtd 23Jun86, hereafter CMC comments.
69. Ibid.
70. LtCol Frank Libutti intvw, dtd 7Feb84, p. 1, hereafter Libutti intvw.
71. Eve Zibart, quoting General Kelley in "Wounded 'Semper Fi' Marine gets a General's Four Stars," *Washington Post*, 16Nov83, p. 1.
72. Libutti intvw, pp. 7-8.
73. Ibid., p. 16.
74. CMC comments.
75. General Paul X. Kelley remarks to Senate Armed Services Committee, dtd 31Oct83, p. 1, hereafter CMC Statement. See Appendix D for the complete statement.
76. Ibid., p. 3.
77. Ibid., p. 12.
78. Ibid., pp. 15-16.
79. Ibid.
80. Ibid., p. 17.
81. Ibid., pp. 17-18.

82. Ibid., pp. 18-19. Ironically, upon his return to Camp Lejeune with the 22d MAU in June 1983, Major Farmer remained for the changeover of staffs and then was transferred to Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, where he was assigned as head of the Casualty Section. He had not been in this new billet two weeks before the attack occurred. Major Farmer and staff set up a 24-hour telephone watch to take the thousands of calls received from anxious relatives. This condition also prevailed in the Division of Public Affairs.

83. Ibid., p. 20.

84. CMC msg to 24th MAU, dtd 9Nov83.

#### Chapter 7 Footnotes

1. Unless otherwise indicated the material in this section is largely derived from the *Long Commission Rpt.*

2. *Long Commission Rpt.*, pp. 17-18.

3. Ibid., pp. 134-135.

4. Ibid., pp. 135-136.

5. U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Armed Services, Adequacy of U.S. Marine Corps Security in Beirut, 98th Cong., 1st sess., 1983, hereafter, *House Rpt.*

6. Ibid., pp. 1-2.

7. U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Armed Services, Adequacy of U.S. Marine Corps Security in Beirut, Summary of Findings and Conclusions, 98th Cong., 1st sess., 1983, p. 1, hereafter *House Summary*.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid., p. 2.

10. Ibid., p. 3.

11. Ibid.

#### Chapter 8 Footnotes

1. 24th MAU SitRep No. 31, dtd 31Oct83.

2. CTF 62 msg to CMC, dtd 7Nov83.

3. 24th MAU ComdC, Oct83, pt 2, p. 2-7.

4. 24th MAU SitRep No. 31, dtd 31Oct83.

5. 24th MAU SitRep No. 32, dtd 6Nov83.

6. 24th MAU SitRep No. 33, dtd 13Nov83.

7. White House msg to CO, 24th MAU, dtd 10Nov83.

8. Pucciarelli intvw, p. 18.

9. 24th MAU SitRep No. 35, dtd 21NOV83.

10. 24th MAU SitRep No. 37, dtd 5Dec83.

11. CMC msg to 24th MAU, dtd 29Nov83.

#### Chapter 9 Footnotes

1. 22d MAU Preliminary AAR for Operation Urgent Fury; Operational Summary of Landing Force Participation, dtd 1Nov83.

2. Col James P. Faulkner intvw dtd 13Nov83, hereafter Faulkner intvw I. For the complete story of the Marine operation in Grenada, see LtCol Ronald A. Spector, *U.S. Marines in Grenada, 1983* (Washington, D.C.: HQMC, 1987).

3. CG, FMFLant msg to 22d MAU, dtd 3Nov83.

4. BGen Jim R. Joy intvw dtd 26-27May84, p. 75, hereafter Joy intvw. A MAB is usually commanded by a brigadier general.

5. Ibid., p. 76.

6. CinCEur msg to Gen Joy dtd 9Nov83.

7. 22d MAU SitRep No. 11, dtd 19Nov83.

8. CTF 62 msg to Commander, Naval Construction Battalion 1, dtd 19Nov83.

9. 22d MAU SitRep No. 11, dtd 19Nov83.

10. CG, 22d MAU msg to CGFMFLant, dtd 23Nov83.

11. 22d MAU Post-Deployment Rpt, p. 21.

12. 22d MAU SitRep No. 12, dtd 27Nov83.

13. CTF 62 msg to CGFMFLant, dtd 25Nov83.

14. LtCol Granville R. Amos intvw, dtd 22May84, pp. 6-7, hereafter Amos intvw.

15. Ibid., p. 8.

16. Maj Richard J. Gallagher intvw, dtd 22May84, pp. 6-7, hereafter Gallagher intvw.

17. 22d MAU ComdC, 1Jan-11May84, pt 3, p. 3.

18. 22d MAU SitRep No. 13, dtd 4Dec83.

19. LtCol Smith quoted in *Newsweek*, 19Dec83, p. 40.

20. 22d MAU ComdC, 5Jul-31Dec83.

21. LtCol Ray L. Smith intvw, dtd 21May84, p. 4, hereafter Smith intvw.

22. Directly across from Company G was Burj al Barajinah, dubbed "Hooterville" by the 32d MAU Marines in September 1982 and known as such by Beirut Marines ever since. On the corner of an alley opposite MAU positions was what appeared to be a restaurant with a sign over the door reading, "Cafe Daniel." As Lieutenant Colonel Smith related, however, "We were there three months before I discovered this, that actually 'Cafe Daniel' is a brand of coffee." Smith intvw, p. 9.

23. Ibid., p. 10.

24. Ibid., p. 12.

25. LtCol Earnest A. Van Huss intvw, dtd 21May84, p. 30, hereafter Van Huss intvw.
26. Ibid., p. 37.
27. Smith intvw, p. 27.
28. Ibid., p. 28.
29. Ibid., pp. 28-29.
30. 22d MAU SitRep No. 15, dtd 20Dec83. The Dragon Teeth were blocks of concrete, approximately 4'x4'x2' in size, and solid obstacles to any vehicle attempting to crash into the MAU areas.
31. Ibid.
32. Commenting on this matter, Colonel Faulkner said, "We had . . . different type [s] of threat [s] daily. And I think you have to choose which one you're going to counter today, which one you're going to take action against." Col James P. Faulkner intvw, dtd 25May84, p. 27, hereafter Faulkner intvw II.
33. 22d MAU SitRep No. 15, dtd 20Dec83.
34. Amos intvw, pp. 13-14.
35. 22d MAU SitRep No. 16, dtd 26Dec83.
36. The "vital area" was that area where the MAU, MSSG, and the BLT headquarters had been located prior to the bombing. After the bombing and until it re-embarked in February, the MSSG elements which had not gone back on board ships earlier, remained in place. The BLT and the MAU remained in the vital area until their new dug-in bunkers were ready for occupation in the southwest portion of the airport. Throughout the post-bombing period, the vital area was protected by significant defenses—the tank ditch, Dragon Teeth, and wire obstacles. A rifle company defended the area, augmented at night by an engineer platoon. Capt Christopher J. Guenther intvw, dtd 22May84, pp. 29-30, hereafter Guenther intvw.
37. 22d MAU SitRep No. 16, dtd 26Dec83.
38. LtCol Ronald R. Rice intvw, dtd 24May84, p. 5, hereafter Rice intvw.
39. Ibid., p. 8.
40. 22d MAU ComdC, 5Jul-31Dec83, pt 3, p. 11.
41. 22d MAU SitRep No. 17, dtd 2Jan84.
42. Rice intvw, p. 9.
43. 1stLt Michael L. Ettore intvw, dtd 22May84, p. 2, hereafter Ettore intvw.
44. Ibid., pp. 4-5.
45. Ibid., p. 9.
46. Ibid., p. 11.
47. Ibid., pp. 11-12.
48. Joy intvw, p. 59.
49. 22d MAU SitRep No. 19, dtd 16Jan84.
50. 22d MAU ComdC, 1Jan-11May84, pt 3, p. 2.
51. 22d MAU SitRep No. 19, dtd 15Jan84.
52. 22d MAU ComdC, 1Jan-11May84, loc cit.
53. Ibid., p. 6.
54. 22d MAU SitRep No. 21, dtd 29Jan84.
55. 22d MAU SitRep No. 22, dtd 12Feb84.
56. 22d MAU SitRep No. 22, dtd 5Feb84. Because of a numbering error the MAU issued two SitReps numbered "22": one on 5Feb84 and the second on 12Feb84.
57. Ibid. EUCOM engineers and logisticians had earlier recommended that the bunkers being built in Phase II of the MAU construction plan were to be hardened to provide adequate protection from delayed fuze-detonated ordnance, which had not yet been used against the Marines. Accordingly, the materials to accomplish this were requisitioned through channels. When JCS Chairman General Vessey visited the MAU headquarters and toured the Marine positions on 8 January, he was not convinced that Phase III needed to be fulfilled. Although he made no decision one way or another, completion of Phase III construction was overtaken by events. Nonetheless, a lot of material necessary for Phase III construction had already been delivered and more was in the pipeline. According to General Joy, ". . . if we had completed the whole construction plan of Phase III, we would have spent about \$7.5 million for construction. As it turned out, we spent about \$4.5 million." Joy intvw, p. 56.
58. Smith intvw, pp. 35-36.
59. Ibid.
60. 22d MAU SitRep No. 22, dtd 12Feb84.
61. Ibid.
62. 22d MAU ComdC, 1Jan-11May84, dtd 11May84, pt 1, p. 2.
63. 22d MAU SitRep No. 22, dtd 12Feb84.
64. Van Huss intvw, p. 47.
65. Ibid., p. 48.
66. Joy intvw, pp. 66-67. The headquarters of the British contingent was located across the Old Sidon Road from the Marine outpost at Lebanon University. When the Americans were withdrawn from here and put on board ships in November 1983, the British had found themselves rather isolated from the rest of the MNF units.
67. Van Huss intvw, pp. 48-49.
68. BGen Joy telecon with author, 31Jul84.
69. Joy intvw, p. 62.
70. 22d MAU SitRep No. 23, dtd 19Feb84.
71. LtCol Douglas M. Davidson intvw, dtd 24May84, p. 27, hereafter Davidson intvw.
72. Ibid., p. 28.

73. MSSG 22 Post-Deployment Rpt, pt 1, p. 9, dtd 6Apr84, enclosure (3) to 22d MAU Post-Deployment Rpt. LtCol Davidson was not an advocate of seabasing, particularly for prolonged operations. "It's good for short duration exercises where you don't have time to put everything ashore anyway." Davidson intvw, p. 14.
74. Maj Stephen D. Anderson intvw, dtd 21May84, p. 18.
75. Amos intvw, pp. 22-23.
76. Van Huss intvw, p. 56.
77. Ibid., pp. 56-57.
78. 22d MAU SitRep No. 25, dtd 5Mar84.
79. Van Huss intvw, pp. 61-62.
80. Ibid.
81. 22d MAU ComdC, 1Jan-11May84, dtd 11May84, pt 3, p. 13
82. The material in this section about deactivation of JTFL was derived from Joy intvw, pp. 72-73.

# Appendix A

## Chronology: Marines in Lebanon, 1982-1984

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### 1982

- 25 August Roughly 800 Marines of the 32d Marine Amphibious Unit (MAU), commanded by Colonel James M. Mead, landed in Beirut as part of a multinational peacekeeping force to oversee evacuation of Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) guerrillas. The force also includes 400 French and 800 Italian soldiers.
- 10 September Evacuation of PLO complete; 32d MAU was ordered out of Beirut by the President of the United States.
- 26 September Preparation for redeployment of the 32d MAU to Beirut got under way, in the wake of the assassination of Lebanese President-elect Bashir Gemayel, an Israeli push into Moslem West Beirut, and the massacre of Palestinians at the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps. Marines and sailors of the 32d MAU received the Navy Unit Commendation for their part in the PLO evacuation, in ceremonies on board the USS *Guam* (LPH-9), 60 miles off the coast of Lebanon.
- 29 September The 32d MAU returned to Beirut, to join 2,200 French and Italian troops already in place.
- 30 September Marines suffer first casualties (one killed in action, three wounded in action) while clearing unexploded ordnance from the vicinity of Beirut International Airport.
- 30 October The 32d MAU was relieved by the 24th MAU, commanded by Colonel Thomas M. Stokes, Jr.
- 4 November The 24th MAU extends its presence in Beirut to the eastern (Christian) sector, patrolling the "Green Line" that divides the city into sectarian parts.
- 3 December 24th MAU artillery was moved ashore (Battery of six 155mm howitzers).
- 10 December 24th MAU armor was moved ashore (Platoon of five M60A7 tanks).
- 13 December Marines commence training of Lebanese Armed Forces. About 75 Lebanese soldiers underwent 21 days' training in basic infantry skills and helicopter assaults.

### 1983

- 29 January Emergency communication network established between American and Israeli forces as tensions mounted between adjacent ground units.
- 2 February Captain Charles B. Johnson confronted three Israeli tanks as they attempted to pass through his company check point.



- 15 February The 32d MAU, redesignated the 22d MAU and still commanded by Colonel Mead, returned to Lebanon to relieve the 24th MAU.
- 21 February Marines commence four days of relief operations in the town of Quartaba during Lebanon's worst blizzard in memory. With Syrian acquiescence, Marine helicopters also flew into Syrian-held territory in Lebanon's central mountains to rescue victims of frostbite and exposure.
- 16 March Five Marines were wounded in action in first direct attack on American peacekeeping troops. An Islamic fundamentalist group claims responsibility.
- 17 March The 24th MAU received the Navy Unit Commendation for Lebanon service from October 1982 to February 1983.
- 18 April A large car bomb explodes at the U.S. Embassy in Beirut, causing massive structural damage and killing 61, including 17 Americans. More than 100 were injured. Islamic fundamentalists again claim responsibility.
- 5 May Marine helicopter with six aboard, including Colonel Mead, is hit by ground fire as it investigates artillery duels between Druze and Christian gunners.
- 17 May Lebanon-Israeli withdrawal agreement is signed.
- 30 May The 24th MAU, commanded by Colonel Timothy J. Geraghty, relieves the 22d MAU.
- 25 June Marines conduct first combined patrols with Lebanese Army troops.
- 27 June The 22d MAU received the Navy Unit Commendation for Lebanon service from 15 February to 30 June 1983.
- 22 July Two Marines and one sailor wounded in action by shell fragments during shelling of Beirut International Airport, part of a general pattern of increasing indirect fire against the Lebanese Army, the airport, and the multinational force.
- 10 August About 27 artillery and mortar rounds were fired by Druze militia from the high ground east of Beirut into Beirut International Airport, resulting in one Marine wounded in action. Rockets also hit the Defense Ministry and the Presidential Palace. Three Cabinet ministers were kidnapped by the Druze.
- 11 August Eight more rocket/artillery rounds fired into Beirut International Airport. No casualties.
- 28 August A combat outpost manned by 30 Marines and Lebanese Army troops east of Beirut International Airport came under fire from semiautomatic weapons and rocket-propelled grenades. Marines return fire for the first time, with rifles and M-60 machine guns. No friendly casualties, after a 90-minute firefight.
- 29 August A heavy rocket, mortar, and artillery attack on 24th MAU positions on the eastern side of Beirut International Airport resulted in two Marines killed in action and 14 Marines wounded in action. Marines retaliate with 155mm artillery.
- 30 August French and Italian command posts hit by mortar fire. One French soldier killed, five Italians wounded.

- 31 August Department of Defense authorized hostile fire pay of \$65 per month for Marines and sailors of the 24th MAU serving in Lebanon.
- 31 August Marines retaliate with 155mm artillery after Moslem shelling of U.S. Embassy residence.
- 1 September Joint Chiefs of Staff directed deployment of Amphibious Ready Group Alpha with the 31st MAU embarked, from the Western Pacific to the Mediterranean, in the vicinity of Lebanon.
- 4 September Israeli forces withdrew to positions on the Awwali River, creating a void to be filled by factional hostilities among the Lebanese.
- 6 September Rocket attack on Beirut International Airport from Druze positions in Shouf mountains resulted in two Marines killed, two Marines wounded. Total since 28 August: four KIA, 28 WIA.
- 8 September Frigate USS *Bowen* (FF-1079) fired 5-inch guns in first American use of naval gunfire support, silencing a Druze militia battery that had shelled Beirut International Airport. Marines also responded with 155mm artillery fire.
- 10 September Battleship USS *New Jersey* (BB-62) was alerted for deployment to the Eastern Mediterranean.
- 12 September 31st MAU arrived off Lebanon, assumed standby role.
- 16 September Destroyer USS *John Rodgers* (DD-983) and frigate USS *Bowen* responded with 5-inch gunfire into Syrian-controlled parts of Lebanon, after continued shelling near the residence of the U.S. ambassador.
- 19 September USS *John Rodgers* and USS *Virginia* (CGN-38) fire 338 five-inch rounds to help Lebanese Army troops retain hold on strategic Shouf Mountains village of Suq al Gharb. American role shifted from "presence" to direct support of Lebanese Armed Forces, in perception of rebel factions.
- 20 September Residence of U.S. ambassador was shelled; USS *John Rodgers* and USS *Virginia* respond.
- 21 September USS *John Rodgers* and USS *Arthur Radford* (DD-968) responded to shelling of Marines at Beirut International Airport.
- 23 September Indirect fire attack on Marine positions countered by 155mm artillery fire and five-inch gunfire from USS *Virginia*.
- 24 September USS *New Jersey* arrived off Lebanese coast following high-speed transit from duty off Central America.
- 26 September Cease-fire went into effect at 0600. Announced by Saudi Arabian and Syrian officials in Damascus, supported by Druze. Talks begin on formation of new coalition government for Lebanon. Marine casualties to date: five killed, 49 wounded.
- 1 October 31st MAU departed Mediterranean for Indian Ocean, in response to threatened crisis near Strait of Hormuz.
- 5 October Two Marine helicopters hit by ground fire.
- 8 October Two Marines wounded by sniper fire.
- 13 October One Marine wounded by grenade fragments.
- 14 October One Marine killed, three wounded by sniper fire. Marine sharpshooters responded, setting off three-hour fire-fight. Ceasefire of 26 September allegedly still in place.
- 15 October Marine sharpshooters kill four snipers.

- 16 October One Marine killed, five wounded by sniper fire.
- 19 October Four Marines wounded as attempt to ambush Marine convoy with car bomb was thwarted.
- 23 October Suicide truck loaded with equivalent of 12,000 pounds of explosives destroyed headquarters building of BLT 1/8 at Beirut International Airport. Almost simultaneous suicide attack destroyed building occupied by French paratroopers. U.S. casualties: 241 killed, 70 wounded. French casualties: 58 killed. Marine replacement airlifts, via 13 C-141 aircraft, begin the same day.
- 25 October Commandant of the Marine Corps General Paul X. Kelley visited wounded in West German hospital and flies on to Lebanon to inspect scene of suicide attack.
- 4 November Department of Defense established commission headed by Admiral Robert L. G. Long, USN (Ret.), to investigate 23 October suicide attack at Beirut International Airport. Suicide driver blows up Israeli headquarters in Tyre, killing 29 soldiers and 32 prisoners.
- 7 November Brigadier General Jim R. Joy, USMC, arrived in Beirut to assume command of Marine operations in Lebanon.
- 19 November The 24th MAU was relieved by the 22d MAU, which had participated in the 25 October-2 November Grenada intervention en route to the Mediterranean. Brigadier General Joy was overall commander of Lebanon operations for the Marines.
- 22 November Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger stated that the 23 October suicide attack on the Marines was carried out by Iranians with the "sponsorship, knowledge, and authority of the Syrian government."
- 4 December Marines at Beirut International Airport came under heavy fire from gun positions in Syrian-held territory. Marine casualties: eight killed, two wounded. Naval gunfire missions fired in retaliation. Earlier in the day, a 28-plane raid was conducted on Syrian antiaircraft positions in the mountains east of Beirut, in retaliation for Syrian fire directed at American aerial reconnaissance missions. Two U.S. aircraft are downed, in this first combat mission over Lebanon.
- 15 December The battleship USS *New Jersey* delivered 16-inch gunfire on antiaircraft positions in the Syrian-occupied mountains southeast of Beirut, as the Syrians continue to fire at U.S. reconnaissance flights over the area. This was the USS *New Jersey's* first action off Lebanon.
- 28 December The Long Commission released an unclassified 140-page report on the 23 October suicide attack.

#### 1984

- 8 January A Marine is killed by unidentified assailants as he exits a helicopter at a landing zone on the edge of downtown Beirut. The helicopter flew to safety, after returning fire with its machine guns.
- 13 January Marines in the Beirut International Airport area fought a 30-minute battle with gunmen firing from a building east of their perimeter.
- 15 January Druze gunners closed Beirut International Airport for three hours with intense 23mm fire on Marine positions east and southeast of

the airport. U.S. forces responded with small arms fire, mortars, rockets, tank fire, and naval gunfire from the battleship USS *New Jersey* and destroyer USS *Tattnall*. No U.S. casualties.

- 2 February Heavy fighting erupted in the suburbs of Beirut, between the Lebanese Army and Shiite militiamen.
- 3 February Shiite leadership called for resignation of Moslem cabinet members and urges Moslems in the Lebanese Army to disregard the orders of their leaders. Prime Minister Wazzan and the Lebanese cabinet resigned, to clear way for formation of new coalition government.
- 6 February Druze and Moslem militiamen seized much of Beirut in street fighting and demanded resignation of Gemayel.
- 7 February President Reagan announced decision to redeploy Marines from Beirut International Airport to ships offshore, leaving a residual force behind to protect the U.S. Embassy and other American interests. Increased reliance on air strikes and naval gunfire support indicated.
- 8 February USS *New Jersey* bombarded Druze and Syrian gun positions as part of the heaviest naval gunfire support since the arrival of the Marines in 1982.
- 10-11 February American civilians and other foreign nationals were evacuated from Beirut by helicopter.
- 21 February Marines began their redeployment to ships of the Sixth Fleet offshore. About 150 Marines departed in the first increment.
- 26 February Redeployment of the 22d MAU to offshore ships completed.

# Appendix B

## Marine Command and Staff List

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### 32D MARINE AMPHIBIOUS UNIT

*16 August-10 September; 25 September-1 November 1982*

#### 32D MARINE AMPHIBIOUS UNIT HEADQUARTERS

CO.....Col James M. Mead  
 ExO.....LtCol Charles R. Smith, Jr.  
 S-1.....1stLt Michael H. Burnett  
 S-2.....CWO-2 Joe L. Winbush  
 S-3.....Maj Dennis R. Blankenship  
 S-4.....Maj Reuben B. Payne III

Detachment, Photographic Imagery Interpretation Unit, Marine Wing Headquarters  
 Squadron 2, 2d Marine Aircraft Wing  
 Detachment, Marine Air Base Squadron 32, Marine Aircraft Group 32, 2d Marine  
 Aircraft Wing  
 Subteam (-), Counterintelligence Team, Headquarters Battalion, 2d Marine Division  
 Detachment, Public Affairs Office, 2d Marine Division  
 Detachment, National Security Agency/Cryptological Security Service, Defense Sys-  
 tems Security Team  
 Detachment, Air and Naval Gunfire Liason Company, 2d Force Service Support Group

#### Battalion Landing Team (BLT) 2/8

CO.....LtCol Robert B. Johnston

2d Battalion, 8th Marines  
 Battery H (Reinforced), 3d Battalion, 10th Marines  
 Detachment, Headquarters Battery, 3d Battalion, 10th Marines (Ships Fire Control  
 Party)  
 2d Platoon, Company A, 2d Reconnaissance Battalion  
 2d Platoon (Reinforced), Company B, 2d Tank Battalion  
 Detachment, Headquarters and Service Company, 2d Tank Battalion  
 1st Platoon (Reinforced), Company A, 2d Assault Amphibian Battalion  
 Detachment, Headquarters and Service Company, 2d Assault Amphibian Battalion  
 2d Platoon (Reinforced), Company C, 2d Combat Engineer Battalion  
 Detachment, Headquarters and Service Company, 2d Combat Engineer Battalion  
 Detachment, Engineer Support Company, 2d Combat Engineer Battalion  
 3d Section, 3d Platoon, Antitank Company (TOW), 2d Tank Battalion  
 Detachment, Headquarters Company, 8th Marines (Multi-Channel Radio Team)

#### Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 261 (-) (Reinforced)

CO.....LtCol Graydon F. Geske

- Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 261
- Detachment, Marine Light Helicopter Squadron 167
- Detachment, Marine Attack Helicopter Squadron 269
- Detachment, Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 362
- Detachment, Headquarters and Maintenance Squadron 26
- Detachment, Marine Air Base Squadron 26
- Detachment, Marine Wing Service Group 27
- Detachment, Headquarters and Maintenance Squadron 29
- Detachment, Marine Air Base Squadron 29

**Marine Amphibious Unit Service Support Group 32**

- CO.....Maj William H. Barnetson
- 1st Platoon (-) (Reinforced), Company A, 2d Landing Support Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group
- Detachment, Headquarters and Service Company, 2d Landing Support Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group
- Detachment, 2d Maintenance Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group
- Detachment, 2d Supply Company, 2d Force Service Support Group
- Detachment, 9th Engineer Support Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group
- Detachment, 2d Medical Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group
- Detachment, 22d Dental Company, 2d Force Service Support Group
- Detachment, Military Police Company, Headquarters Battalion, 2d Marine Division
- Detachment, Headquarters and Service Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group
- Detachment, 8th Motor Transport Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group

**24TH MARINE AMPHIBIOUS UNIT**

*1 November 1982-15 February 1983*

**24TH MARINE AMPHIBIOUS UNIT HEADQUARTERS**

- CO.....Col Thomas M. Stokes, Jr.
- ExO.....LtCol George T. Schmidt
- S-1.....1stLt Michael K. Ritchie
- S-2.....1stLt Joseph F. Ciano, Jr.
- S-3.....Maj John A. Tempone
- S-4.....Maj Frederick J. Moon
- Subteam, Imagery Interpretation Unit, Fleet Marine Force, Atlantic
- Subteam, Imagery Interpretation Unit, 2d Marine Division
- Detachment, Counterintelligence Team, Fleet Marine Force, Atlantic
- Subteam, Interrogator/Translator Team, Headquarters Battalion, 2d Marine Division
- Detachment, Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 2, 2d Marine Aircraft Wing (Phcto)
- Section, Sensor Control and Management Platoon, Headquarters Battalion, 2d Marine Division
- Detachment, Public Affairs Division, Headquarters Marine Corps
- Detachment, 2d Radio Battalion, 2d Marine Division
- Detachment, Air and Naval Gunfire Liaison Company, 2d Force Service Support Group
- Detachment, Communication Company, Headquarters and Service Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group

**Battalion Landing Team 3/8**

CO.....LtCol John B. Matthews  
 3d Battalion, 8th Marines  
 Battery G, 3d Battalion, 10th Marines  
 3d Platoon, Company A, 2d Reconnaissance Battalion  
 1st Platoon, Company A, 2d Tank Battalion  
 2d Platoon, Company B, 2d Assault Amphibian Battalion  
 3d Platoon, Company C, 2d Combat Engineer Battalion  
 2d Section, 2d Platoon, Antitank Company (TOW), 2d Tank Battalion  
 Detachment, Headquarters Company, 8th Marines

**Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 263 (-) (Reinforced)**

CO.....LtCol William G. Barnes  
 Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 263  
 Detachment, Marine Light Helicopter Squadron 167  
 Detachment, Marine Attack Helicopter Squadron 269  
 Detachment, Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 461  
 Detachment, Marine Air Base Squadron 26  
 Detachment, Marine Air Base Squadron 29  
 Detachment, Headquarters and Maintenance Squadron 26  
 Detachment, Headquarters and Maintenance Squadron 29  
 Detachment, Marine Wing Service Group 27

**Marine Amphibious Unit Service Support Group 24**

CO.....Maj David N. Buckner  
 Headquarters, Marine Amphibious Unit Service Support Group 24  
 Detachment, 2d Maintenance Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group  
 Detachment, 2d Supply Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group  
 Detachment, 8th Engineer Support Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group  
 Detachment, 8th Motor Transport Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group  
 Detachment, 2d Dental Company, 2d Force Service Support Group  
 Detachment, Explosive Ordnance Demolition Team, 2d Support Battalion, 2d Force  
 Service Support Group  
 Detachment, Navy Environmental Preventive Medicine Unit 2, Norfolk, Virginia  
 Detachment, Navy Environmental Preventive Medicine Unit 5, San Diego, California  
 Detachment Company B, 2d Combat Engineer Battalion, 2d Marine Division  
 Detachment, Utilities, 8th Engineer Support Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group

**22D MARINE AMPHIBIOUS UNIT***15 February-29 May 1983***22D MARINE AMPHIBIOUS UNIT HEADQUARTERS**

CO.....Col James M. Mead  
 XO.....LtCol Ronald R. Rice  
 S-1.....1st Thomas F. Amsler  
 S-2.....CWO-3 Joe L. Winbush  
 S-3.....Maj Jack L. Farmer  
 S-4.....Maj Reuben B. Payne III



Detachment, Photographic Imagery Interpretation Unit, Marine Wing Headquarters  
 Squadron 2, 2d Marine Aircraft Wing  
 Subteam, Interrogator/Translator Team, Headquarters Battalion, 2d Marine Division  
 Detachment, Marine Air Base Squadron 32, Marine Aircraft Group 32, 2d Marine  
 Aircraft Wing (Photo)  
 Detachment, Sensor Control and Management Platoon, Headquarters Battalion, 2d  
 Marine Division

**Battalion Landing Team 2/6**

CO.....LtCol Donald F. Anderson  
 2d Battalion, 6th Marines  
 Battery I (Reinforced), 3d Battalion, 10th Marines  
 Detachment, Headquarters Battery, 3d Battalion, 10th Marines (Ships Fire Control  
 Party)  
 3d Platoon, Company B, 2d Reconnaissance Battalion  
 1st Platoon (Reinforced), Company D, 2d Tank Battalion  
 Detachment, Headquarters and Service Company, 2d Tank Battalion  
 2d Platoon (Reinforced), Company A, 2d Assault Amphibian Battalion  
 Detachment, Headquarters and Service Company, 2d Assault Amphibian Battalion  
 1st Platoon (Reinforced), Company A, 2d Combat Engineer Battalion  
 Detachment, Headquarters and Service Company, 2d Combat Engineer Battalion  
 Detachment, Engineer Support Company, 2d Combat Engineer Battalion  
 2d Section, 1st Platoon, Antitank Company (TOW), 2d Tank Battalion  
 Detachment, Headquarters Company, 8th Marines (Multichannel Radio Team)

**Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 264 (-) (Reinforced)**

CO.....LtCol Richard J. Kalata  
 Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 264  
 Detachment, Marine Light Helicopter Squadron 167  
 Detachment, Marine Attack Helicopter Squadron 269  
 Detachment, Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 362  
 Detachment, Headquarters and Maintenance Squadron 26  
 Detachment, Marine Air Base Squadron 26  
 Detachment, Headquarters and Maintenance Squadron 29  
 Detachment, Marine Air Base Squadron 29

**Marine Amphibious Unit Service Support Group 22**

CO.....Maj Albert E. Shively  
 Headquarters, Marine Amphibious Unit Service Support Group 22  
 1st Platoon (-) (Reinforced), Company A, Landing Support Battalion, 2d Force Service  
 Support Group  
 Detachment, Headquarters and Service Company, 2d Landing Support Battalion, 2d  
 Force Service Support Group  
 Detachment, 2d Maintenance Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group  
 Detachment, 2d Supply Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group  
 Detachment, 8th Engineer Support Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group  
 Detachment, 2d Medical Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group  
 Detachment, 2d Dental Company, 2d Force Service Support Group  
 Detachment, Military Police Company, Headquarters Battalion, 2d Marine Division  
 Detachment, Headquarters and Service Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group

**24TH MARINE AMPHIBIOUS UNIT***30 May-18 November 1984***24TH MARINE AMPHIBIOUS UNIT HEADQUARTERS**

CO..... Col Timothy J. Geraghty  
 ExO..... LtCol William A. Beebe II (to 18 July)  
                   LtCol Harold W. Slacum (from 18 July)  
 S-1..... 1stLt Charles F. Davis III  
 S-2..... Capt Kevin J. McCarthy  
 S-3..... Maj George S. Converse  
 S-4..... Maj Robert S. Melton

Detachment, Joint Public Affairs Bureau, Headquarters Marine Corps  
 Detachment, 2d Air and Naval Gunfire Liaison Company, 2d Force Service Support  
 Group  
 Detachment, Ashore Mobile Communications Center  
 Detachment, 2d Radio Battalion  
 Detachment, Interrogator/Translator Team  
 Detachment, Field Artillery School Target Acquisitions Battery

**Battalion Landing Team 1/8**

CO..... LtCol Howard L. Gerlach (to 23 October)  
                   LtCol Edwin C. Kelley, Jr. (From 24 October)

1st Battalion, 8th Marines  
 1st Platoon, Company C, 2d Tank Battalion  
 1st Platoon, Company C, 2d Reconnaissance Battalion  
 3d Platoon, Company B, 2d Assault Amphibian Battalion  
 1st Platoon, Company C, 2d Combat Engineer Battalion  
 1st Section, Antitank Company (TOW), 2d Tank Battalion  
 Target Acquisition Battery, 10th Marines  
 Battery C, 1st Battalion, 10th Marines

**Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 162 (-) (Reinforced)**

CO..... LtCol Laurence R. Medlin

Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 162  
 Detachment, Marine Light Helicopter Squadron 167  
 Detachment, Marine Attack Helicopter Squadron 269  
 Detachment, Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 464  
 Detachment, Marine Air Base Squadron 29  
 Detachment, Headquarters and Maintenance Squadron 26  
 Detachment, Headquarters and Maintenance Squadron 29  
 Detachment, Marine Wing Support Group 27

**Marine Amphibious Unit Service Support Group 24**

CO..... Maj Douglas C. Redlich

Detachment, Headquarters and Service Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group

Detachment, 2d Maintenance Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group  
 Detachment, 2d Landing Support Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group  
 Detachment, 8th Engineer Support Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group  
 Detachment, 8th Motor Transport Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group  
 Detachment, 2d Medical Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group  
 Detachment, 2d Dental Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group  
 Detachment, 2d Supply Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group  
 Detachment, 8th Communications Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group  
 Detachment, Headquarters Battalion, 2d Marine Division  
 Detachment, Marine Wing Support Group 27, 2d Marine Aircraft Wing  
 Detachment, Communications Company, Headquarters and Service Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group  
 Detachment, Postal Section, Service Company, Headquarters and Service Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group  
 Detachment, Disbursing Section, Service Company, Headquarters and Service Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group  
 Detachment, Beach and Port Company, 2d Landing Support Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group  
 Detachment, Ammunition Company, 2d Supply Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group  
 Detachment, Explosive Ordnance Disposal Team, 2d Support Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group  
 Detachment, Navy Preventive Environmental Medicine Unit, Team 2, Norfolk, Virginia

## 22D MARINE AMPHIBIOUS UNIT

*17 November 1983-9 April 1984*

### 22D MARINE AMPHIBIOUS UNIT HEADQUARTERS

CG.....BGen Jim R. Joy (17 November-19 February 84)  
 CO.....Col James P. Faulkner (from 19 February 84)  
 C/S.....Col James P. Faulkner (17 November 83-19 February 84)  
 ExO.....LtCol Ronald R. Rice (From 20 February 84)  
 S-1/G-1.....1stLt Kenneth R. Bergman  
 G-2.....LtCol Forrest L. Lucy (17 November 83-19 February 84)  
 S-2.....Capt Paul M. Jungel (from 20 February 84)  
 G-3.....LtCol Edmund J. Connelly, Jr. (November 83-19 February 84)  
 S-3.....LtCol Ernest A. Van Huss (from 20 February 84)  
 G-4.....LtCol Charles S. Rinehart (17 November 83-19 February 84)  
 S-4.....Maj Albert J. Martin (from 20 February 84)

Headquarters, 22d Marine Amphibious Unit  
 Detachment, Photographic Imagery Interpretation Unit, Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 2, 2d Marine Aircraft Wing  
 Subteam, Interrogator/Translator Team, Headquarters Battalion, 2d Marine Division

### Battalion Landing Team 2/8

CO.....LtCol Ray L. Smith  
 2d Battalion, 8th Marines  
 Battery H (Reinforced), 3d Battalion, 10th Marines  
 Detachment, Headquarters Battery, 3d Battalion, 10th Marines  
 3d Platoon, Company A, 2d Tank Battalion

4th Platoon (Reinforced), Company A, 2d Assault Amphibian Battalion  
 Detachment, Headquarters and Service Company, 2d Assault Amphibian Battalion  
 2d Platoon, Company C, 2d Combat Engineer Battalion  
 1st Section, 1st Platoon, Antitank Company (TOW), 2d Tank Battalion  
 1st Platoon, Company A, 2d Reconnaissance Battalion

**Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 261 (-) (Reinforced)**

CO.....LtCol Granville R. Amos  
 Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 261  
   Detachment, Marine Light Helicopter Squadron 167  
   Detachment, Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 362  
   Detachment, Marine Headquarters and Maintenance Squadron 26  
   Detachment, Marine Air Base Squadron 26  
   Detachment, Marine Wing Service Group 27

**Marine Amphibious Unit Service Support Group 22**

CO.....LtCol Douglas M. Davidson  
 Headquarters, Marine Amphibious Unit Service Support Group 22  
 Detachment, 8th Engineer Heavy Support Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group  
 Detachment, 2d Landing Support Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group  
 Detachment, 2d Maintenance Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group  
 Detachment, 2d Medical Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group  
 Detachment, 2d Dental Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group  
 Detachment, 2d Supply Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group  
 Detachment, Military Police Company, Headquarters Battalion, 2d Marine Division  
 Detachment, Explosive Ordnance Disposal Team, 2d Support Battalion, 2d Force Service Support Group

# Appendix C

## Foreign Multi-National Force Units

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### British Forces, Lebanon (8Feb83-8Feb84)

#### *Units*

C Squadron, Queen's Dragoon Guards (8Feb-8Aug83)  
A Squadron, Queen's Dragoon Guards (8Aug-7Dec83)  
A Squadron, 16/5 Lancers (7Dec83-8Feb84)

#### *Commanders*

LtCol John C. Cochrane, Royal Irish Dragoons, 1Feb-5Aug83  
LtCol David L. Roberts, Parachute Regiment, 5Aug-15Sep83  
LtCol John deP. Ferguson, Queen's Dragoon Guards, 16Sep83-3Jan84  
LtCol Peter E. Woolley, Prince of Wales' Own, 3Jan-8Feb84

### French Forces\* (24Aug82-31Mar84)

#### *Units and Commanders*

11th Airborne Division, BGen Jacques Granger (24Aug-14Sep82)  
9th Marine Infantry Division  
2d Foreign Legion Airborne Battalion  
3d Marine Airborne Battalion  
9th Headquarters Support Battalion  
17th Airborne Engineers Battalion

11th Airborne Division, BGen Jacques Granger (Sep82-Jan83)  
8th Marine Airborne Battalion  
1st Airborne Hussars Battalion  
2d Marine Infantry Battalion  
17th Airborne Engineers Battalion  
1st Headquarters Support Battalion

9th Marine Infantry Division, BGen Michel Datin (Jan-May83)  
2d Marine Infantry Battalion  
3d Marine Infantry Battalion  
11th Marine Artillery Battalion  
Marine Armored Infantry Battalion

31st Brigade, BGen Jean-Claude Coulon (May-Sep83)  
21st Marine Infantry Battalion  
Engineers Company, 21st Marine Infantry Battalion  
2d Foreign Legion Infantry Battalion  
1st Foreign Legion Cavalry Battalion  
17th Airborne Engineers Battalion

11th Airborne Division, BGen Francois Cann (Sep83-Jan84)  
 3d Marine Airborne Battalion  
 6th Airborne Infantry Battalion  
 6th Airborne Battalion (company)  
 1st Airborne Infantry Battalion (company)  
 9th Airborne Infantry Battalion (company)  
 1st Airborne Hussars Battalion (platoon)  
 17th Airborne Engineers Battalion (company)  
 12th Field Artillery Battalion (battery)  
 7th Headquarters Airborne Support Battalion (support detachment)

9th Marine Infantry Division, BGen Datin (Feb-Mar84)  
 9th Headquarters Support Battalion (detachment)  
 501st Tank Battalion (platoon)  
 Marine Armored Infantry Battalion (platoon)  
 Gendarmerie (MPs) (platoon)  
 2d Marine Infantry Battalion (2 companies)  
 12th Field Artillery Battalion (battery) (later replaced by 68th Field Artillery Battalion)  
 59th Engineer Company  
 41st Transmission Battalion (company)

**Italian Forces\***  
**(Aug82-Jan84)**

*Commander:* BGen Franco Angioni (Aug82-Jan84)

*Units*

2d Bersaglieri (Mechanized) Battalion "Governolo" (22Aug-12Sep82)  
 10th Bersaglieri Battalion "Bezzecca" (Feb-Jun83)  
 5th Airborne Battalion "El Alamein" (Feb83-Jan84)  
 "San Marco" Naval Infantry Battalion (27Sep82-Jan84)  
 "Folgore" Airborne Brigade (27Sep82-Jan84)  
   1st Carabinieri Airborne Battalion "Tuscania" (two companies)  
   9th Airborne Assault Battalion "Col Moschin" (one company)  
 Field hospital  
 Logistics unit (unnamed)  
 67th Mechanized Battalion "Montelungo" (Jun-Oct83) (four companies)  
 3d Bersaglieri Battalion "Cernaia" (Oct83-Jan84)

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*\*In many cases, units identified may be components/detachments/headquarters staffs, and not the entire organization.*

## Appendix D

### Remarks by the Commandant of the Marine Corps Senate Armed Services Committee, 31 October 1983

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On 23 October 1983, two suicidal drivers, representing interests which are totally hostile to the United States of America and the Republic of France, conducted unprecedented and massive terrorist attacks—not against American Marines, sailors, and soldiers and French airborne troops—but against the free world.

While all Americans and Frenchmen are feeling the strong emotions resulting from this act, and while I am deeply saddened by the reason for my presence before this Committee, I am relieved and heartened to know that today we start the process I have sworn to defend for all of my adult life. For the past week we have been groping at straws—asking ourselves the agonizing questions as to how this could happen. For all of us, it has been a week full of haunting speculation.

Today, we start the process which was envisioned by our founding fathers—today we start an orderly due process designed to provide the citizens of this great land with accountability.

To insure that this process remains fully intact, upon my return from Beirut I urgently requested that the Secretary of Defense conduct an inquiry into events leading up to the terrorist act which took the precious lives of young Americans at 0622 on 23 October. We owe this to the loved ones of those who have been killed, to the American people, to the Congress of the United States—and, of tremendous importance to me—to our Marines—past, present and future.

With that said—first, Mr. Chairman, let me set the scene.

Our Marines are situated in the middle of Beirut International Airport—this is a highly active commercial airport—the international terminal for a country of over three million people. We are there as guests, not invaders, so our facilities are provided in coordination with the Lebanese government.

Picture, if you will, the commercial activity at this airport—people, cars, trucks, major new construction, repair, new drainage systems under construction. This is a civilian environment, a hub-bub of activity by civilians, not military.

*It is not a tactical strong point as some may envision.*

Our mission is not, in a direct sense, the physical security of the airport—that specific mission is assigned to the Lebanese Armed Forces. Our basic mission is presence, and the logical question is—how do you define presence. Well, first let me tell you that presence as a mission is not in any military dictionary. It is not a classic military mission.

But the chain of command at the time correctly took presence to mean—be visible—provide a backdrop of U.S. presence which would be conducive to the stability of Lebanon—a sovereign Nation with a duly constituted government. I guess the best description is that we are a visible manifestation of U.S. strength and resolve to Lebanon and to the free world.

Besides, given the area we occupied—the threat as described by all available intelligence sources—a highly active commercial environment which was literally crawling with civilians—it would have been impossible for the Commander to establish a hard point defense in a classic tactical sense.



Again, please remember—we were guests of a friendly Nation—not on occupation duty!

My remarks today will take into account my trip to Beirut immediately after the terrorist attack. They include background information on the mission of the Marines since their second entry into Beirut on 29 September 1982. This background is essential to a complete understanding of what happened and how it could have happened.

These remarks will avoid discussion of the political or diplomatic considerations of our presence in Lebanon. It is not the place of a Marine to discuss those imperatives for military employment.

My remarks are based upon historical facts as I know them at this time.

The facts clearly show that our presence in Lebanon has gone through phases, each different, but clearly identifiable in the kaleidoscope of events over the past year. Each phase saw the threat to the security of the Marines ebb and flow in form and scope. Because of ever-changing circumstances and events, our forces banked heavily on the information, and warnings of danger, from the intelligence community—national and multinational. On the basis of this information, the Marines sought to anticipate events and take protective measures rather than just react after an event.

Subsequent to the successful evacuation of the PLO from Beirut, from 25 August to 9 September, the Marines withdrew from Lebanon on 10 September 1982, and resumed their normal duties as part of the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean.

The Marines (as part of the MNF) returned to Lebanon on 29 September 1982. The government of Lebanon requested the MNF to restore order after the assassination of their President, Bashir Gemeyal, and the tragic massacre of Palestinian refugees at the Sabra and Shatila camps. The Lebanese Armed Forces alone were clearly unable to exercise control in Beirut and the surrounding countryside.

As I mentioned previously, the assigned mission of the MNF, simply stated, was “presence.”

It should be clearly understood that this was basically a diplomatic/political mission, not a military one in the classic sense, and the positioning of Marine forces at Beirut International Airport was not driven by tactical considerations. Moreover, the threats at the time, as reported to the Marines by the intelligence available did not require tactical deployment. Indeed, the mission of “presence” mitigated against such measures. Put another way, the Marines had to be seen by the Lebanese people.

The major threat when Marines returned to Beirut was from the accidental detonation of over 100,000 pieces of unexploded ordnance. This ordnance lay strewn and buried in and around the airfield, which was the “no-man’s-land” during the battle of Beirut.

The rules of engagement under which the Marines were to operate were carefully constructed and promulgated by the Operational Commander. These were normal peacetime rules of engagement. They were restrictive in nature, but provided the right of self-protection and self-defense. The mission and rules of engagement were considered appropriate and adequate for the environment and threat.

During this phase the Marines were warmly greeted by the Lebanese people. Ordnance clearing operations and civic action projects undertaken by the Marines were appreciated by the populace. The overall security of BIA was, however, and still is, the responsibility of the LAF. In compliance with the mission, Marine dispositions were made at the airport to accommo-

date the LAF and to facilitate construction projects which would return the airport to normal use. Until November all went well.

By the beginning of November we entered a new and more ominous phase. The Marines had received intelligence reports that the passive threat environment of the previous month had changed. The intelligence community reported the problems from dissidents had become not just a possibility, but a probability. Armed with this intelligence, the Commander on the scene prudently initiated a variety of defensive measures.

The combination of warning and preparation paid off on 1 November 1982, when a 300-pound car-bomb was exploded on the main thoroughfare near the beach area, over which Marines received supplies from the ships offshore. A review of the measures previously taken to safeguard the beach area reveals that the Commander had:

- Hardened beach positions.
- Dispersed the beach support facilities.
- Limited access to the beach.
- Segregated all Marines from civilians (vendors, autos, etc.).
- Increased alert.
- Provided mobility at each checkpoint.

The terrorist effort was clumsy, amateurish and a failure. With the failure of the car-bomb, no further incidents occurred against the Marines during this period.

It was also during this phase that the Marines were authorized to begin an informal program to assist in training the LAF. This help was part of an overall effort to create a viable military entity which could eventually assume the security responsibilities for Beirut and later expand to greater Lebanon. While in itself this training effort may not be germane to the October bombing incident, it may be relative to the local perception of the role of the Marines in Beirut. Some may have perceived that Americans were no longer exclusively in a "presence" role; that we were in an assistance role. Motorized patrols were also initiated during this phase, and were conducted in east Beirut to provide clear visibility of the American presence.

In the latter part of December 1982, Marines were ordered not to patrol the Old Sidon road southwest of the airport. The rationale for this restriction is not immediately relative to the issue at hand, but it should be remembered that by the first of the year, for all practical purposes, the Marine perimeter was limited to the commercial complex and runways of BIA.

In February 1983, the low-threat environment continued. The Marines participated in a major rescue operation during a severe blizzard in the mountains east of Beirut. As part of the MNF, they operated beyond Syrian lines, rescuing Christians and Moslems. These operations helped sustain the principle of evenhandedness and confessional neutrality. It also had a major impact on the credibility of our "presence."

A new phase of the Beirut story began in March of this year. The situation began to deteriorate somewhat at the time. Although there was no intelligence of an increased threat, a 12-man Marine presence patrol in a community north of the airfield was attacked by a grenade thrown from a building. It resulted in five Marines receiving minor wounds. It was not predicted and was the first such incident against the Marines in four-

and-a-half months. Commanders immediately increased passive defense measures such as varying patrol routes, times, and size of patrols. In the opinion of some, about this time several Lebanese factions may have perceived a subtle shift of the USMNF from being pro-Lebanese to pro-Christian.

In April, the tragic car-bombing of the U.S. Embassy took place. Clearly, the United States was emerging as a prime target for those who either opposed or misinterpreted the role of the MNF in Lebanon. The former reason is more likely, in that the Italians and the French were also victims of terrorist harassment, even though they were not significantly involved in the reconstitution of the LAF.

Although I know of no intelligence warning which indicated that the spectacular car-bombing of the Embassy was in the offing, there were renewed warnings that terrorist attacks were likely to continue. Car-bombs were viewed as a likely form of attack. The Embassy bombing prompted several decisive steps to counter the threat. The Marines provided a special protective detail for the temporary U.S. Embassy and initiated a significant number of increased security measures.

- A Marine unit provided security and constructed defensive obstacles at the Ambassador's residence.
- Intensive efforts were made to increase intelligence sources in the immediate area of the Marine positions.

As pertains to the headquarters area:

- Civilian traffic was prohibited from the headquarters area.
- All civilian and military vehicles were searched in the proximity of the headquarters complex.
- Headquarters buildings and facilities were sandbagged. Over a quarter million sandbags were emplaced.
- Barbed wire entanglements were emplaced throughout. Concertina wire was strung in the civilian parking lot in front of headquarters. While the civilian parking lot adjacent to the BLT Headquarters lot was ideally suited for a mine field in a tactical sense, mines were not emplaced as the lot served the commercial airport and was actively used by civilians.
- Additional Marines were posted in each guard post during high-threat periods.
- Roof-top surveillance was increased.
- Foot patrols were increased within the headquarters area.
- A metal sewer pipe barrier was placed in front of the BLT headquarters building.
- Tunnels beneath the headquarters complex were sealed.
- The use of night observation devices was increased.
- Magazines were inserted in weapons at appropriate posts. (This in addition to previous orders which directed Marines on the perimeter and on patrol to stand duty with loaded weapons.)
- Tank ditches were contemplated, but considered unnecessary and impractical in view of the threat existing at the time and the commercial nature of the airport.

Throughout May, Marines operated in a high-threat environment and continued to actively patrol, train the LAF, and improve security. During June, there was a noticeable deterioration in relations with some factions

of the local population. This was exacerbated by the reinfiltration of PLO elements into neighborhoods surrounding the airport. Among other indications, verbal harassment was directed against Marine patrols. The first rocket and mortar attacks against the LAF in the BIA complex occurred. Spillover of stray rounds came into the Marine positions. The Marines fully recognized the increased threat posed by this firing, and continued to harden positions by emplacing sandbags and digging-in deeper. Marine and LAF patrols were also integrated. Intelligence now indicated that rockets and mortars were to continue to be a primary concern to the safety of the troops.

During August, the periodic rocket attacks did increase against LAF targets, with a continued spillover into Marine positions. It was decided at this time to move the remainder of the BLT support personnel, and reaction platoon (approximately 150 men), into the BLT headquarters building to afford maximum protection against small arms, mortar, rocket and artillery fires.

It should be pointed out that the building was chosen because during the earlier fighting for Beirut it endured furious Israeli artillery barrages without being destroyed. An earth tremor in June also failed to cause any structural damage. It should be also noted that in a 13-month period, no Marine billeted in the building was killed or injured due to incoming artillery, mortar, rockets or small arms.

In late August, armed conflict between the LAF and AMAL militia in West Beirut began in earnest. On 4 September the Israeli Defense Forces withdrew to the Awwali River, bringing active fighting and factional conflict to the Alayh and Chouf regions above Beirut. Sustained hostile fire, some directed primarily at our Marines, impacted at the airport with increasing frequency. The shooting in and around Beirut was at ammunition levels rivaling major battles of World War II—over a million artillery rounds. Our Marines took appropriate measures to harden their positions, increase their alert status, and to move all support personnel in the terminal complex into reinforced buildings for protection against this intense shelling. The shelling was sufficient to halt all operations at the airport. When fired upon, the USMNF fired at specific targets with appropriate counterbattery fire.

Our naval gunfire support for the LAF was a major influence on the subsequent ceasefire, but unfortunately some could conclude that it may have increased the Moslem perception that our Marines were pro-Christian and no longer neutral. Be that as it may, I am in no position to judge. During this trying period of heavy fighting, the intelligence community continued to carry terrorist attacks as an active threat, but the threat was nonspecific and general, and overshadowed by the very specific and active reality of conventional military action.

The ceasefire on 26 September brought a fragile and uneasy peace to Beirut, but sniping at Marines became a daily occurrence. This brought us to a new phase. The warnings of the terrorist threat resurfaced from the intelligence community. While terrorist bomb intelligence continued to be non-precise, the focus of attention appeared to be the threat of car bombs to convoys providing support to the US diplomatic community in Beirut. Roughly 100 car bomb possibilities were developed since 1 June 1983. In some instances, the makes, colors and license numbers were provided. Marines on security duty received this information. All U.S., French, British and LAF units were looking for suspicious automobiles—

particularly as they related to convoys. The threat became a reality on 19 October 1983, when a car bomb was detonated in an attempt to impede a Marine supply convoy enroute to the temporary Embassy about 12km from the headquarters. Alertness and protective measures already taken by the Marines minimized the results of this attack. Like the car bomb at the beach the previous November, the attack against the convoy can be judged a failure.

At the same time, it must also be remembered that the cease fire was beginning to break down. Artillery fire in the Chouf was intermittently resumed, as was the small arms fire against the Marines. The terrorist threat remained vague while the active threat from artillery and small arms was increasing.

What I have been attempting to paint for you is a picture of Beirut for the past year. It is only within the framework of that picture can you have any hope of understanding the tragic events of a week ago.

A world where violence and normalcy live side by side. Marines on a diplomatic mission—located in a busy airport complex whose traffic and congestion rival that of any city—a Marine unit whose well-being depends upon the intelligence furnished to protect itself. A Marine unit which for months has undergone the indignity of attack with discipline and forbearance. A force of men whose morale remains high in spite of all that has happened.

I would now like to describe what occurred on Sunday morning, October 23, and why we believe that only extraordinary security could have met that massive and unanticipated threat.

At daybreak, a five-ton capacity Mercedes truck (roughly the size of a large dump truck and a type commonly seen at the Beirut International Airport) entered a public parking lot adjacent to the four-story, steel-reinforced concrete and sandbagged building which housed the headquarters elements of BLT 1/8. After making a complete circle of the parking lot for acceleration, and while travelling at a high speed, this truck:

- crashed through the outer defense of a barbed wire emplacement,
- moved at high speed between two sandbagged sentry posts,
- passed through a gate in an iron fence—jumped over a sewer pipe which had been placed as an obstacle to impede the forward movement of vehicles,
- plowed through a sandbag barrier,
- hit with precision a four-foot wide passenger entry into the lobby where its cargo, estimated by the Defense Intelligence Agency to be 5,000 pounds of explosives, detonated.

The entire event, which can best be described as the delivery by a suicidal driver of a 5,000-pound truck-bomb at very high speed, took approximately six seconds from start to finish. Rough calculations indicate that it would require a massive concrete wall to stop a vehicle of this weight and travelling at this speed. It is of particular importance to note that the Commander's security was oriented toward the threat of the past several months, i.e., artillery, rockets, mortars, small arms and car bombs. In this context, his security efforts had been successful. Obviously, the Commander's security arrangements were inadequate to counter this form of "kamikaze" attack. But, we have yet to find any shred of intelligence which would have alerted a reasonable and prudent commander to this new and

unique threat. There was not even the indication of a capability to undertake such a monumental and precise action. General Tannous, the Commander of the Lebanese Armed Forces, informed me that he cannot recall, in his vast experience, a terrorist attack of the type which hit the headquarters of BLT 1/8 on 23 October 1983. In his opinion, it represents a new and unique terrorist threat, one which could not have been reasonably anticipated by any Commander.

Almost simultaneously, a smaller vehicle approached an eight-story apartment building to the north of Beirut International Airport which housed the French contingent. Since this building is on a busy thoroughfare, there would be no reason to suspect its intention. As it approached the building, it accelerated, took a sharp right into the driveway, and forced entry into an underground garage—where it exploded. During a personal conversation, General Cann, the Commander of the French contingent of the MNF, informed me he had no intelligence which would have warned him of this threat, as did General Angioni, the Commander of the Italian contingent.

I believe it important to recognize that there is sufficient evidence to conclude that both incidents were not suicidal acts by some individual fanatic. They were instead, well planned and professionally executed acts of terrorism which appear designed to drive our U.S. presence from Lebanon.

To bring you up-to-date, it is my professional estimate that our Marines have been targeted for terrorism by highly professional non-Lebanese elements. In my view, these acts of violence will continue, and the perpetrators will carefully examine and analyze our vulnerabilities and make every effort to exploit them. In short, I firmly believe that highly sophisticated and well-trained terrorists will target our Marines in the months to come. Therefore, I do not believe that we can ever create an effective passive capability which can counter all forms of terrorism in Lebanon or anywhere else.

With the foregoing said, I will now discuss initiatives which are underway or contemplated for increased security. The 24th MAU is in the process of decreasing vulnerability associated with large concentrations of Marines. Specifically:

- LAF APC's have been positioned at the BIA terminal and at the traffic circle in front of the airport.
- Vehicle access to command posts is now restricted to emergency and military vehicles.
- Civilian pedestrian access to the command post has been restricted to one location.
- MAU units have been placed in an indefinite "Condition I" (highest level) alert status.
- All entrances to the command posts have been blocked and reinforced.
- All rifle companies have reinforced the perimeter fence lines adjacent to their positions.
- An additional .50 caliber machine gun has been positioned to cover avenues of approach into the command post.
- Additional guard posts have been established throughout the MAU area, and an additional rifle company was sent from Camp Lejeune to provide security during the period of the recovery operations.
- Mobile reconnaissance patrols with anti-tank weapons have been established within the BIA perimeter.

- BLT 2/6 command element arrived at Beirut on 25 October to replace BLT 1/8 command elements.
- Definitive action is underway to strengthen the 24th MAU positions and to reduce vulnerability to terrorist attacks by isolating and barricading command and control and support areas.

In summary, I believe that:

- Our security measures were not adequate to stop a large, heavily laden truck, loaded with 5,000 pounds of high explosive, travelling at a high speed and driven by a suicide driver, which executed the attack in seconds from start to finish. This “flying truck bomb” was an unprecedented escalation in the previous terrorist threat, both in size of the weapon and method of delivery. I must continue to emphasize, however, that under our current disposition, restrictions, and mission, we will always have vulnerabilities, and that the other side will make every effort to exploit them.

That completes my statement. I would like to make two final comments:

I recognize that there remain many unanswered questions and a great deal of confusion surrounding this tragic event. For example, it is reported that the Commander, Colonel Geraghty, stated that he received a warning of the threat two days before the incident. The following message from him clarifies what he actually said, and I quote: “Sir, comment made to media was a general statement on car bomb warnings. At the weekly intelligence meeting between MNF Intel Officers and the Office of Beirut Security (*Surete Generale*), a listing of suspected car bombs, complete with car descriptions and license plate numbers is disseminated to the MNF by security officials. These car descriptions are copied and disseminated to our posts. Since our arrival, at least 100 potential car bombs have been identified to the MNF. After the attack on our convoy on 19 October 1983, the car bomb threat was quite obviously real to the USMNF; however, specific information on how car bomb attacks were to be conducted (i.e., kamikaze) or a description of the large truck that conducted the attack on the BLT were never received by 24 MAU.”

Another example is that I was reported to have stated last week that security was adequate. Here let me set the scene and the context in which my remarks were made.

Five thousand pounds of high explosives destroyed a four-story steel reinforced concrete building. It was a heap of rubble. For over 50 hours, day and night, young Marines clawed at steel and concrete — more to save the injured who were trapped at the time than to recover the dead. The emotional scars were already deep — “Why me?” they asked. “Why am I alive and my buddies are dead?”

Their Commandant was asked, “Was security adequate?” I replied yes — it was adequate to meet what any reasonable and prudent commander should have expected prior to dawn on Sunday, October 23, 1983. And, I want you to know in that atmosphere my remarks were directed to weary and frustrated Marines.

Let me phrase what I was saying in a different way:

If you were to ask me whether the security around the headquarters building was adequate to protect the occupants against a five-ton Mercedes truck carrying 5,000 pounds of explosives at high speed — my answer would be NO!



And, if you would ask me whether the Commander should have known, given the explosion in the Embassy in April, my answer again would be NO! Both instances involved a terrorist bombing from a motor vehicle, but there the similarity ends. The delivery system was totally different as was every other aspect of the two incidents.

For these reasons, Mr. Chairman, I urgently requested the inquiry previously mentioned to determine the facts in an atmosphere that is conducive to such an inquiry. Knowing the Secretary of Defense as I do, and the respect I have for Admiral Long, there is no question in my mind that it will be a complete and thorough examination of this awful tragedy. I suggest we all await the board's findings.

I could not conclude my report to you without addressing the manner in which we reported our casualties. I know of your concern and share it. Our procedures have appeared to be excruciatingly slow. Please understand that in the impact of the destruction of the BLT Headquarters, and the tragic loss of life, our casualty reporting procedures for BLT 1/8 were destroyed. The requirements placed on the survivors to extricate and evacuate killed and wounded Marines as soon as possible, and the necessity to proceed slowly with regard to reporting for the sake of accurate identification and notification of the next of kin, were staggering. Due to the size of the task at hand and the painfully slow progress in this regard, the decision was made to release the names of those Marines who survived this disaster. We did not do this before for obvious reasons. The process was slow, mainly because of the need for complete accuracy. We didn't want to hurt anyone needlessly. Marines and members of your staffs worked tirelessly to ensure that timely and accurate information was released. The enormity of the situation is still upon us, and no one could feel more remorse than I over the prolonged suffering caused to many families by unavoidable delays in notifying them of their loved one's status.

The Marine Corps is proud of many things, but nothing more than the way we take care of our own. I want each of you to know that everything humanly possible is being done to facilitate the process. I would like to thank you and your staff for your assistance and understanding.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, let me say that the subject of increased terrorism against all Americans around the world may be one of the most serious problems which could be addressed by this Committee on a priority basis. This unprecedented, massive "kamikaze" attack was not against young Marines, sailors, and soldiers—it was a vicious, surprise attack against the United States of America and all we stand for in the free world.

Let me say, with all of the emphasis I can, that there are skilled and professional terrorists out there right now who are examining our vulnerabilities and making devices which are designed to kill Americans, lots of Americans around the world, in further acts of mass murder by terrorism. Let there be no doubt about it.

I would hope that the Congress would use this incident of cruel and premeditated mass murder to help us determine way which tell nations that they cannot export and support terrorists who kill innocent Americans with impunity.

The perpetrators and supporters of this challenge to the rights of free men everywhere must be identified and punished. I will have little sleep until this happens.

Thank you.

# Appendix E

## Long Commission Conclusions and Recommendations

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All conclusions and recommendations of the Commission from each substantive part of this report are presented below.

### Part One - The Military Mission

#### A. Mission Development and Execution

##### (1) Conclusion:

(a) The Commission concludes that the “presence” mission was not interpreted the same by all levels of the chain of command and that perceptual differences regarding that mission, including the responsibility of the USMNF for the security of Beirut International Airport, should have been recognized and corrected by the chain of command.

#### B. The Expanding Military Role

##### (1) Conclusion:

(a) The Commission concludes that U.S. decisions as regards Lebanon taken over the past fifteen months have been, to a large degree, characterized by an emphasis on military options and the expansion of the U.S. military role, notwithstanding the fact that the conditions upon which the security of the USMNF were based continued to deteriorate as progress toward a diplomatic solution slowed. The Commission further concludes that these decisions may have been taken without clear recognition that these initial conditions had dramatically changed and that the expansion of our military involvement in Lebanon greatly increased the risk to, and adversely impacted upon the security of, the USMNF. The Commission therefore concludes that there is an urgent need for reassessment of alternative means to achieve U.S. objectives in Lebanon and at the same time reduce the risk to the USMNF.

##### (2) Recommendation:

(a) The Commission recommends that the Secretary of Defense continue to urge that the National Security Council undertake a reexamination of alternative means of achieving U.S. objectives in Lebanon, to include a comprehensive assessment of the military security options being developed by the chain of command and a more vigorous and demanding approach to pursuing diplomatic alternatives.

### Part Two - Rules of Engagement (ROE)

#### ROE Implementation

##### (1) Conclusions:

(a) The Commission concludes that a single set of ROE providing specific guidance for countering the type of vehicular terrorist attacks that destroyed the U.S. Embassy on 18 April 1983 and the BLT Headquarters building on 23 October 1983 had not been provided to, nor implemented by, the Marine Amphibious Unit Commander.

(b) The Commission concludes that the mission statement, the

original ROE, and the implementation in May 1983 of dual "Blue Card - White Card" ROE contributed to a mind-set that detracted from the readiness of the USMNF to respond to the terrorist threat which materialized on 23 October 1983.

### Part Three - The Chain of Command

#### A. Exercise of Command Responsibility by the Chain of Command

Prior to 23 October 1983.

##### (1) Conclusions:

(a) The Commission is fully aware that the entire chain of command was heavily involved in the planning for, and support of, the USMNF. The Commission concludes however, that USCinCEur, CinCUSNavEur, COMSixthFlt and CTF 61 did not initiate actions to ensure the security of the USMNF in light of the deteriorating political/military situation in Lebanon. The Commission found a lack of effective command supervision of the USMNF security posture prior to 23 October 1983.

(b) The Commission concludes that the failure of the operational chain of command to correct or amend the defensive posture of the USMNF constituted tacit approval of the security measures and procedures in force at the BLT headquarters building on 23 October 1983.

(c) The Commission further concludes that although it finds the USCinCEur operational chain of command at fault, it also finds that there was a series of circumstances beyond the control of these commands that influenced their judgement and their actions relating to the security of the USMNF.

##### Recommendation:

(a) The Commission recommends that the Secretary of Defense take whatever administrative or disciplinary action he deems appropriate, citing the failure of the USCinCEur operational chain of command to monitor and supervise effectively the security measures and procedures employed by the USMNF on 23 October 1983.

### Part Four - Intelligence

#### A. Intelligence Support

##### (1) Conclusions:

(a) The Commission concludes that although the USMNF Commander received a large volume of intelligence warnings concerning potential terrorist threats prior to 23 October 1983, he was not provided with the timely intelligence, tailored to his specific operational needs, that was necessary to defend against the broad spectrum of threats he faced.

(b) The Commission further concludes that the HUMINT support to the USMNF Commander was ineffective, being neither precise nor tailored to his needs. The Commission believes that the paucity of U.S. controlled HUMINT provided to the USMNF Commander is in large part due to policy decisions which have resulted in a U.S. HUMINT capability commensurate with the resources and time that have been spent to acquire it.

##### (2) Recommendations:

(a) The Commission recommends that the Secretary of Defense

establish an all-source fusion center, which would tailor and focus all-source intelligence support to U.S. military commanders involved in military operations in areas of high threat, conflict or crisis.

(b) The Commission further recommends that the Secretary of Defense take steps to establish a joint CIA/DOD examination of policy and resource alternatives to immediately improve HUMINT support to the USMNF contingent in Lebanon and other areas of potential conflict which would involve U.S. military operating forces.

#### Part Five - Pre-Attack Security

##### A. Command Responsibility for the Security of the 24th MAU and BLT 1/8 Prior to 23 October 1983.

###### (1) Conclusions:

(a) The combination of a large volume of specific threat warnings that never materialized and the perceived and real pressure to accomplish a unique and difficult mission contributed significantly to the decision of the MAU and BLT Commanders regarding the security of their force. Nevertheless, the Commission concludes that the security measures in effect in the MAU compound were neither commensurate with the increasing level of threat confronting the USMNF nor sufficient to preclude catastrophic losses such as those that were suffered on the morning of 23 October 1983. The Commission further concludes that while it may have appeared to be an appropriate response to the indirect fire being received, the decision to billet approximately one quarter of the BLT in a single structure contributed to the catastrophic loss of life.

(b) The Commission concludes that the BLT Commander must take responsibility for the concentration of approximately 350 members of his command in the BLT Headquarters building, thereby providing a lucrative target for attack. Further, the BLT Commander modified prescribed alert procedures, thereby degrading security of the compound.

(c) The Commission also concludes that the MAU Commander shares the responsibility for the catastrophic losses in that he condoned the concentration of personnel in the BLT Headquarters building, concurred in the modification of prescribed alert procedures, and emphasized safety over security in directing that sentries on Posts 4, 5, 6, and 7 would not load their weapons.

(d) The Commission further concludes that although it finds the BLT and MAU Commanders to be at fault, it also finds that there was a series of circumstances beyond their control that influenced their judgment and their actions relating to the security of the USMNF.

###### (2) Recommendation:

(a) The Commission recommends that the Secretary of Defense take whatever administrative or disciplinary action he deems appropriate, citing the failure of the BLT and MAU Commanders to take the security measures necessary to preclude the catastrophic loss of life in the attack on 23 October 1983.

#### Part Seven - Post-Attack Security

##### Redeployment, Dispersal and Physical Barriers

###### (1) Conclusions:

(a) The Commission concludes that the security measures taken since 23 October 1983 have reduced the vulnerability of the USMNF to catastrophic losses. The Commission also concludes, however, that the security measures implemented or planned for implementation for the USMNF as of 30 November 1983, were not adequate to prevent continuing significant attrition of the force.

(b) The Commission recognizes that the current disposition of USMNF forces may, after careful examination, prove to be the best available option. The Commission concludes, however, that a comprehensive set of alternatives should be immediately prepared and presented to the National Security Council.

(2) Recommendation:

(a) Recognizing that the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff have been actively reassessing the increased vulnerability of the USMNF as the political/military environment in Lebanon has changed, the Commission recommends that the Secretary of Defense direct the operational chain of command to continue to develop alternative military options for accomplishing the mission of the USMNF while reducing the risk to the force.

Part Eight - Casualty Handling

A. On-Scene Medical Care

(1) Conclusion:

(a) The Commission concludes that the speed with which the on-scene U.S. military personnel reacted to rescue their comrades trapped in the devastated building and to render medical care was nothing short of heroic. The rapid response by Italian and Lebanese medical personnel was invaluable.

B. Aeromedical Evacuation/Casualty Distribution

(1) Conclusions:

(a) The Commission found no evidence that any of the wounded died or received improper medical care as a result of the evacuation or casualty distribution procedures. Nevertheless, the Commission concludes that overall medical support planning in the European theater was deficient and that there was an insufficient number of experienced medical planning staff officers in the USCinCEur chain of command.

(b) The Commission found that the evacuation of the seriously wounded to U.S. hospitals in Germany, a transit of more than four hours, rather than to the British hospital in Akrotiri, Cyprus, a transit of one hour, appears to have increased the risk of those patients. Similarly, the Commission found that the subsequent decision to land the aircraft at Rhein Main rather than Ramstein, Germany, may have increased the risk to the most seriously wounded. In both instances, however, the Commission has no evidence that there was an adverse medical impact on the patients.

(2) Recommendations:

(a) The Commission recommends that the Secretary of Defense direct the Joints Chiefs of Staff, in coordination with the Services, to review medical plans and staffing of each echelon of the operational and administrative chains of command to ensure appropriate and adequate medical support of the USMNF.

(b) The Commission further recommends that the Secretary of Defense direct USCinCEur to conduct an investigation of the decisions made regarding the destination of aeromedical evacuation aircraft and the distribution of casualties on 23 October 1983.

#### C. Definitive Medical Care

##### (1) Conclusion:

(a) The Commission concludes that the definitive medical care provided the wounded at the various treatment facilities was excellent, and that as of 30 November 1983, there is no evidence of any mortality or morbidity resulting from inappropriate or insufficient medical care.

#### D. Israeli Offer of Medical Assistance

##### (1) Conclusion:

(a) The Commission found no evidence that any factor other than the desire to provide immediate, professional treatment for the wounded influenced decisions regarding the Israeli offer; all offers of assistance by Israel were promptly and properly referred to the theater and on-scene commanders. At the time the initial Israeli offer was reviewed by CTF 61, it was deemed not necessary because the medical capabilities organic to CTF 61 were operational and functioning adequately, the RAF hospital at Akrotiri was mobilized and ready, and sufficient U.S. and RAF medical evacuation aircraft were enroute.

#### E. Identification of the Dead

##### (1) Conclusion:

(a) The Commission concludes that the process for identification of the dead following the 23 October 1983 catastrophe was conducted very efficiently and professionally, despite the complications caused by the destruction and/or absence of identification data.

##### (2) Recommendation:

(a) The Commission recommends that the Secretary of Defense direct the creation of duplicate medical/dental records, and assure availability of fingerprint files, for all military personnel. The Commission further recommends that the Secretary of Defense direct the Service Secretaries to develop jointly improved, state-of-the-art identification tags for all military personnel.

### Part Nine - Military Response to Terrorism

#### A. A Terrorist Act

##### (1) Conclusion:

(a) The Commission concludes that the 23 October 1983 bombing of the BLT Headquarters building was a terrorist act sponsored by sovereign States or organized political entities for the purpose of defeating U.S. objectives in Lebanon.

#### B. International Terrorism

##### (1) Conclusion:

(a) The Commission concludes that international terrorist acts endemic to the Middle East are indicative of an alarming world-wide phenomenon that poses an increasing threat to U.S. personnel and facilities.

### C. Terrorism as a Mode of Warfare

#### (1) Conclusion:

(a) The Commission concludes that state sponsored terrorism is an important part of the spectrum of warfare and that adequate response to this increasing threat requires an active national policy which seeks to deter attack or reduce its effectiveness. The Commission further concludes that this policy needs to be supported by political and diplomatic actions and by a wide range of timely military response capabilities.

#### (2) Recommendation:

(a) The Commission recommends that the Secretary of Defense direct the Joint Chiefs of Staff to develop a broad range of appropriate military responses to terrorism for review, along with political and diplomatic actions, by the National Security Council.

### D. Military Preparedness

#### (1) Conclusion:

(a) The Commission concludes that the USMNF was not trained, organized, staffed, or supported to deal effectively with the terrorist threat in Lebanon. The Commission further concludes that much needs to be done to prepare U.S. military forces to defend against and counter terrorism.

#### (2) Recommendation:

(a) The Commission recommends that the Secretary of Defense direct the development of doctrine, planning, organization, force structure, education and training necessary to defend against and counter terrorism.



# Appendix F

## American Deaths in Beirut

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Corporal Terry W. Abbott  
Lance Corporal Clemon Alexander  
Private First Class John R. Allman  
Corporal Moses Arnold, Jr.  
Private First Class Charles K. Bailey

Lance Corporal Nicholas Baker  
Lance Corporal Johansen Banks  
Lance Corporal Richard E. Barrett  
Hospital Corpsman First Class Ronny K. Bates, USN  
First Sergeant David L. Battle

Lance Corporal James R. Baynard  
Hospitalman Jesse W. Beamon, USN  
Gunnery Sergeant Alvin Belmer  
Private First Class Shannon D. Biddle  
Private First Class Stephen B. Bland

Corporal Richard L. Blankenship  
Private First Class John W. Blocker  
Captain Joseph J. Boccia, Jr.  
Corporal Leon W. Bohannon  
Staff Sergeant John R. Bohnet, Jr.

Corporal John J. Bonk, Jr.  
Lance Corporal Jeffrey J. Boulos  
Corporal David R. Bousum  
First Lieutenant John N. Boyett  
Corporal Anthony K. Brown

Lance Corporal David W. Brown  
Lance Corporal Bobby B. Buchanan, Jr.  
Corporal John B. Buckmaster  
Private First Class William F. Burley  
Major Alfred L. Butler III

Hospitalman Jimmy R. Cain, USN  
Corporal Paul L. Callahan  
Corporal Mecot E. Camara  
Private First Class Bradley J. Campus  
Major Randall A. Carlson, USA

Lance Corporal Johnnie D. Ceasar  
Lance Corporal Sam Cherman  
Lance Corporal Randy W. Clark  
Private First Class Marc L. Cole  
Specialist Four Marcus E. Coleman, USA

Private First Class Juan M. Comas  
Sergeant Robert A. Conley  
Corporal Charles D. Cook  
Lance Corporal Curtis J. Cooper  
Lance Corporal Johnny L. Copeland

Corporal Bert D. Corcoran  
Lance Corporal David L. Cosner  
Sergeant Kevin P. Coulman  
Sergeant Manuel A. Cox  
Lance Corporal Brett A. Croft

Lance Corporal Rich R. Crudale  
Lance Corporal Kevin P. Custard  
Lance Corporal Russell E. Cyzick  
Corporal David L. Daugherty  
Major Andrew L. Davis

Private First Class Sidney J. Decker  
Private First Class Michael J. Devlin  
Corporal Thomas A. Dibenedetto  
Private First Class Nathaniel G. Dorsey  
Sergeant Major Frederick B. Douglass

Lance Corporal George L. Dramis  
Corporal Timothy J. Duinnigan  
Hospitalman Bryan L. Earle, USN  
Master Sergeant Roy L. Edwards  
Hospital Corpsman Third Class William D. Elliott, Jr., USN

Lance Corporal Jesse J. Ellison  
Private First Class Danny R. Estes  
Private First Class Sean F. Estler  
Lance Corporal Thomas A. Evans  
Hospital Corpsman Third Class James E. Faulk, USN

Private First Class Richard A. Fluegel  
Corporal Steven M. Forrester  
Hospital Corpsman Third Class William B. Foster, Jr., USN  
Corporal Michael D. Fulcher  
Lance Corporal Benjamin E. Fuller

Lance Corporal Michael S. Fulton  
Corporal William R. Gaines, Jr.  
Lance Corporal Sean R. Gallagher  
Lance Corporal David B. Gander  
Lance Corporal George M. Gangur

Staff Sergeant Leland E. Gann  
Lance Corporal Randall J. Garcia  
Staff Sergeant Ronald J. Garcia  
Sergeant Edward J. Gargano  
Lance Corporal David D. Gay

Staff Sergeant Harold D. Ghumm  
Lance Corporal Warner Gibbs, Jr.  
Corporal Timothy R. Giblin  
Chief Electronics Technician Michael W. Gorchinski, USN  
Lance Corporal Richard J. Gordon

Lance Corporal Harold F. Gratton  
Sergeant Robert B. Greaser  
Lance Corporal Davin M. Green  
Lance Corporal Thomas A. Hairston  
Sergeant Freddie L. Haltiwanger, Jr.

Lance Corporal Virgel D. Hamilton  
Sergeant Gilbert Hanton  
Lance Corporal William Hart  
Captain Michael S. Haskell  
Private First Class Michael A. Hastings

Lance Corporal Jeffrey T. Hattaway  
Captain Paul A. Hein  
Lance Corporal Douglass E. Held  
Private First Class Mark A. Helms  
Lance Corporal Ferrandy D. Henderson

Gunnery Sergeant Matilde Hernandez, Jr.  
Lance Corporal Rodolfo Hernandez  
Corporal Stanley G. Hester  
Gunnery Sergeant Donald W. Hildreth  
Staff Sergeant Richard H. Holberton

Hospital Corpsman Third Class Robert S. Holland, USN  
Lance Corporal Bruce A. Hollingshead  
Private First Class Melvin D. Holmes  
Corporal Bruce L. Howard  
Lieutenant John R. Hudson, USNR

Corporal Terry L. Hudson  
Lance Corporal Lyndon J. Hue  
Second Lieutenant Maurice E. Hukill  
Lance Corporal Edward S. Iacovino, Jr.  
Private First Class John J. Ingalls

Warrant Officer Paul G. Innocenzi III  
Lance Corporal James J. Jackowski  
Lance Corporal Jeffrey W. James  
Lance Corporal Nathaniel W. Jenkins  
Hospital Corpsman Second Class Michael H. Johnson, USN

Corporal Edward A. Johnston  
Lance Corporal Steven Jones  
Private First Class Thomas A. Julian  
Hospital Corpsman Second Class Marion E. Kees, USN  
Sergeant Thomas C. Keown

Gunnery Sergeant Edward E. Kimm  
Lance Corporal Walter V. Kingsley  
Sergeant Daniel S. Kluck, USA  
Lance Corporal James C. Knipple  
Lance Corporal Todd A. Kraft

Lance Corporal Freas H. Kreischer III  
Lance Corporal Keith J. Laise  
Lance Corporal Thomas G. Lamb  
Lieutenant Mark A. Lange, USN  
Lance Corporal James J. Langon IV

Sergeant Michael S. Lariviere  
Corporal Stephen B. Lariviere  
Master Sergeant Richard L. Lemnah  
Corporal David A. Lewis  
Sergeant Val S. Lewis

Corporal Joseph R. Livingston  
Second Lieutenant Donald G. Losey, Jr.  
Lance Corporal Paul D. Lyon, Jr.  
Major John W. Macroglou  
Corporal Samuel Maitland

Staff Sergeant Charlie R. Martin  
Private First Class Jack L. Martin  
Corporal David S. Massa  
Corporal Michael R. Massman  
Private Joseph J. Mattacchione

Staff Sergeant Ben Henry Maxwell, USA  
Lance Corporal John McCall  
Corporal James E. McDonough  
Private First Class Timothy R. McMahon  
Corporal Robert V. McMaugh

Lance Corporal Timothy D. McNeely  
Hospital Corpsman Second Class George N. McVicker II, USN  
Private First Class Louis Melendez  
Corporal Richard H. Menkins II  
Corporal Michael D. Mercer

Lance Corporal Ronald W. Meurer  
Hospital Corpsman Third Class Joseph P. Milano, USN  
Corporal Joseph P. Moore  
Lance Corporal Richard A. Morrow  
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Lance Corporal Luis A. Nava  
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Lance Corporal Marvin H. Perkins  
Private First Class Thomas S. Perron  
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Lance Corporal Kirk H. Smith  
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Sergeant Allen H. Soifert  
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Intelligence Specialist First Class Michael R. Wagner, USN  
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Corporal Obrian Weekes  
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Lance Corporal Steven B. Wentworth  
Sergeant Allen D. Wesley  
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Corporal Burton D. Wherland

Lance Corporal Dwayne W. Wigglesworth  
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Corporal John E. Wolfe  
First Lieutenant Donald E. Woollett  
Hospital Corpsman Third Class David E. Worley, USN  
Private First Class Craig L. Wyche

Private First Class James G. Yarber, USA  
Corporal Jeffrey D. Young  
First Lieutenant William A. Zimmerman

# Appendix G

## Unit Commendations

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The Secretary of the Navy takes pleasure in presenting the NAVY UNIT COMMENDATION to

MEDITERRANEAN AMPHIBIOUS READY GROUP 2-82  
AND  
THIRTY-SECOND MARINE AMPHIBIOUS UNIT

for service as set forth in the following

### CITATION:

For exceptionally meritorious service in a mission of great importance to the Government of the United States from 16 August 1982 to 10 September 1982 which resulted in the cessation of armed conflict between Israeli and Syrian and Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) Forces. On 25 August 1982, elements of Mediterranean Amphibious Ready Group 2-82 and THIRTY-SECOND Marine Amphibious Unit conducted a flawless landing from the sea into the Port of Beirut, Lebanon. On occupying the Port, elements of the THIRTY-SECOND Marine Amphibious Unit, serving as the United States contingent of a multinational force, immediately commenced the supervision of the evacuation of 6,436 PLO and Syrian combatants. The superior performance and tireless dedication of all personnel reflected the epitome of professionalism and exceeded the performance normally expected. The total success of the mission contributed visibly and significantly to the United States' objectives of world peace and Middle East stability. By their steadfast courage, resourcefulness, and unwavering devotion to duty, the officers and enlisted personnel of Mediterranean Amphibious Ready Group 2-82 and THIRTY-SECOND Marine Amphibious Unit reflected great credit upon themselves and upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service.

*/s/* John Lehman  
Secretary of the Navy



The Secretary of the Navy takes pleasure in presenting the NAVY UNIT COMMENDATION to

MEDITERRANEAN AMPHIBIOUS READY GROUP 3-82  
AND  
MARINE AMPHIBIOUS UNIT 24

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

For exceptionally meritorious service from 29 October 1982 to 15 February 1983 in a mission of great national and international importance while serving as the United States Forces Ashore Lebanon and supporting forces of the Multinational Force peace initiatives in Lebanon. On 29 October 1982, Mediterranean Amphibious Ready Group 3-82 and Marine Amphibious Unit 24 conducted a combined surface and helo landing across Black Beach and the International Airport of Beirut, Lebanon and immediately commenced coordinated motorized and foot patrols with other Multinational Force contingents throughout the City of Beirut. Simultaneously with operations ashore, Amphibious Task Force helicopters provided special support to the U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon and special Presidential envoys, and provided major logistics lifts from Air Support Head at Larnaca, Cyprus, to Beirut. Their superior performance and tireless devotion contributed significantly to the national objectives of world peace and Middle East stability. By their resolute determination, unrelenting perseverance, and steadfast dedication to duty, the officers and enlisted personnel of Mediterranean Amphibious Ready Group 3-82 and Marine Amphibious Unit 24 reflected great credit upon themselves and upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service.

/s/ John Lehman  
Secretary of the Navy

The Secretary of the Navy takes pleasure in presenting the NAVY UNIT COMMENDATION to

COMMANDER AMPHIBIOUS SQUADRON 2  
AND  
TWENTY-SECOND MARINE AMPHIBIOUS UNIT

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

For exceptionally meritorious service from 14 February 1983 to 30 May 1983 in a mission of great national and international importance while serving as the United States Forces Ashore Lebanon and supporting forces of the Multinational Peacekeeping Force in Lebanon. Shortly after arrival, the Amphibious Task Force was requested to conduct and carry out humanitarian relief operations to assist the Lebanese Government in dealing with the effects of a severe snowstorm in the mountainous areas of Central Lebanon. On 18 April 1983, following the catastrophic destruction of the U.S. Embassy in Beirut by terrorist bombing, Amphibious Task Force Units rapidly and decisively provided lifesaving assistance, security, and communications support and follow-on security for all Embassy operations in Beirut. Simultaneously with operations ashore, the Amphibious Task Force provided helicopter and special security support for the Secretary of State, U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon, and special Presidential Envoys. The total success of the mission contributed visibly and significantly to the national objectives of world peace and Middle East stability. By their resolute determination, steadfast perseverance, and selfless devotion to duty, the officers and enlisted personnel of Commander Amphibious Squadron TWO and TWENTY-SECOND Marine Amphibious Unit reflected great credit upon themselves and upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service.

/s/ John Lehman  
Secretary of the Navy

The Secretary of the Navy takes pleasure in presenting the NAVY UNIT COMMENDATION to

MEDITERRANEAN AMPHIBIOUS READY GROUP (MARG) 2-83  
AND  
24TH MARINE AMPHIBIOUS UNIT

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

For exceptionally meritorious service in support of U.S. peace initiatives in Lebanon from 28 May 1983 to 19 November 1983. Performing a difficult mission to ensure stability during a period of complex political and life-threatening conditions in Lebanon, the units of U.S. Peacekeeping Forces Lebanon displayed exceptional courage, resolve, and flexibility in providing supporting actions and evidence of U.S. national concern, often in the face of danger to personnel and equipment, to provide conditions in which the duly constituted Government of Lebanon could survive. Displaying superb dedication and flexibility in the face of hostile fire, the Navy and Marine Corps units ensured and supported conditions to permit the vital work of diplomacy to go forward and the Government of Lebanon to remain intact. With extraordinary heroism, the 24th Marine Amphibious Unit (24TH MAU) made possible conditions for national reconciliation in an area vital to U.S. national security. On 23 October 1983, the 24TH MAU suffered unprecedented personnel losses of approximately 330 killed and wounded as a result of terrorist bombing of the 24TH MAU Headquarters building. In the face of this adversity, they continued to fulfill their assigned mission while carrying out rescue and evacuation efforts. By their exceptional courage, perseverance, and steadfast devotion to duty, the officers and enlisted personnel of Mediterranean Amphibious Ready Group (MARG 2-83) and 24th Marine Amphibious Unit reflected great credit upon themselves and upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service.

/s/ John Lehman  
Secretary of the Navy

The Secretary of the Navy takes pleasure in presenting the NAVY UNIT COMMENDATION to

MEDITERRANEAN AMPHIBIOUS READY GROUP (MARG) 1-84  
AND  
22ND MARINE AMPHIBIOUS UNIT (MAU)

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

For exceptionally meritorious service against a heavily armed rebel force threatening the personal safety of American citizens and the established Government of Grenada, and in subsequent operations with the Multinational Force, Lebanon, from 20 October 1983 to 26 February 1983. Through calculated forethought and incisive action by the officers and men of Task Force ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-FOUR (Mediterranean Amphibious Ready Group [MARG] 1-84 and 22nd Marine Amphibious Unit [MAU]), the lives of hundreds of American civilians were saved, rebel forces were subdued, and the Government of Grenada restored. While serving with the Multinational Force, Lebanon, these units maintained a positive U.S. presence under the most demanding circumstances during a period of extremely dynamic, interrelated, and complex political instability. Demonstrating determined resolve in the face of open hostilities, MARG 1-84/22ND MAU dramatically improved defensive positions, provided support for diplomatic efforts, evacuated U.S. civilians, foreign nationals, and non-essential support personnel, and repositioned U.S. Multinational Forces. By their selfless determination, exceptional performance, personal sacrifice, and steadfast devotion to duty, the officers and enlisted personnel of Mediterranean Amphibious Ready Group (MARG) 1-84 and the 22nd Marine Amphibious Unit (MAU) reflected great credit upon themselves and upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service.

/s/ John Lehman  
Secretary of the Navy

The Secretary of the Navy takes pleasure in presenting the MERITORIOUS UNIT COMMENDATION to

TASK GROUP 61.8  
AND  
31ST MARINE AMPHIBIOUS UNIT

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

For meritorious service while serving as afloat support to U.S. Peacekeeping Forces Lebanon from 12 September 1983 to 10 October 1983 during their mission to ensure stability during a period of complex political and life-threatening conditions in Lebanon. Throughout this arduous period, Task Group 61.8 and 31st Marine Amphibious Unit maintained active presence offshore in a state of total readiness to reinforce when called upon for support. Their unrelenting commitment provided evidence of U.S. national concern to enable conditions in which the duly constituted government of Lebanon could survive. By their resolute determination, courage and complete dedication to duty, the officers and enlisted personnel of Task Force 61.8 and 31st Marine Amphibious Unit reflected credit upon themselves and upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service.

/s/ John Lehman  
Secretary of the Navy

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*BACK: The device reproduced on the back cover is the oldest military insignia in continuous use in the United States. It first appeared, as shown here, on Marine Corps buttons adopted in 1804. With the stars changed to five points this device has continued on Marine Corps buttons to the present day.*

