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GRIEF IS NOT ENOUGH

We can apply two human qualities to the tragedy in Beirut: Our capacity for grief and our ability to solve problems. Unless we do the problem-solving, we will only have more and more grief.

There are two related problems in this case: peace in Lebanon and peace in the Middle East.

Peace in Lebanon is partly dependent on peace throughout the Middle East, but it is also a special problem in itself. France first created that special problem in 1920 when it merged an overwhelmingly Christian district with some overwhelmingly Moslem districts and called it the "nation" of Lebanon. The population was half Christian and half Moslem, culturally as well as religiously different, and they co-existed not too peacefully under a delicate constitutional arrangement.

The last major civil war broke out after Jordan expelled the PLO, killing 10 thousand Palestinian Arabs in the process. The Palestinian Arab refugees from Jordan joined with Moslem groups to upset Lebanon's delicate balance. Syria moved into the North, the PLO took over the South, and there was no longer a central Lebanese government.

The Beirut newspapers reported in 1980 that almost 99 thousand Lebanese had been killed and over a quarter of a million wounded in the previous five years of civil war and occupation. Most of those killed and wounded were Lebanese Christians.

There are dissident factions within both the Christian and Moslem populations. The enmities are bitter and run deep. There seems to be no national consensus. In the nature of things, the Arab nations cannot create peace within Lebanon, and neither can Israel. In short, there is no quick "solution" for the Lebanese problem. The most that can be hoped for is some interim measure of civil order, which might lead to better things. And that will require international intervention of the kind invoked by President Reagan and supported by Israel.

Indeed that intervention is already too late for the men, women and children who were murdered last week. While many more Palestinian Arabs would probably have been murdered in other camps last week, if Israel had not been on the scene, both Israel and the U.S. culpably miscalculated in thinking that Israel could control the situation. Even for an initial period of peace, a world presence is needed.

No one should ever forget the massacre in Beirut. It cries for mourning; our grief should be unqualified and unremitting. The Jews of all people understand the depths of such depravity. It calls for a full investigation to place responsibility on all levels for the crime or for not preventing it. But the grief will not be enough if it does not motivate a more dedicated return to the focus of a general peace in the Middle East.

The crisis in Lebanese internal peace was set off by the overflow from the general turmoil in the Middle East. *And the problem of peace in the Middle East generally is the same as it was before the tragedy in Beirut:* those Arab nations which refuse to recognize the existence of Israel, and therefore make peace in the Middle East impossible. That is still the base line for peace in the Middle East, and probably for Lebanon in the long range.