

MIDDLE EAST: ADVANCE COPIES

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IMMEDIATE

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FM WASHINGTON 160100Z JUN 82
TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 2144 OF 15 JUNE
INFO IMMEDIATE TEL AVIV, BEIRUT, DAMASCUS, UKMIS NEW YORK,
PRIORITY JEDDA, AMMAN, CAIRO, PARIS

LEBAHON

1. THE AMERICANS ARE CONCERNED AT THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE ISRAELIS HAVE MISLED THEM AT EVERY STAGE OF THEIR LEBANESE OPERATION. THERE ARE CONTINUING DIVISIONS WITHIN THE ADMINISTRATION OVER THEIR TACTICS IN PARTICULAR FOR DEALING WITH BEGIN. BUT IT LOOKS INCREASINGLY LIKELY THAT, AS USUAL, THE PRO-ISRAELI FACTION WILL HAVE ITS WAY.

2. HAIG IS CLEARLY IMPRESSED BY THE EXTENT OF THE ISRAELI VICTORY WHICH HAS NEUTRALISED THE SYRIANS IN LEBANON AND VIRTUALLY ELIMINATED THE PLO AS AN EFFECTIVE FORCE. HE MENTIONED IN PARTICULAR THE ISRAELIS' SUCCESS IN DESTROYING THE SYRIAN SAM SITES AND THEIR EFFECTIVE USE OF TANKS AND E2C AIRCRAFT. HE THINKS THIS HAS CHANGED

THE REAL CORRELATION OF FORCES IN THE AREA. HE WAS STRUCK BY THE RELATIVE MILDNESS OF THE SOVIET AND ARAB REACTION. HE SAID THAT THE SAUDIS HAD BEEN EXCEPTIONALLY MILD TO THE AMERICANS AND THAT THE JORDANIANS WERE SIMPLY TERRIFIED LEST THE PALESTINIANS ATTEMPT TO RETURN TO JORDAN. HE SEEMED UNUSUALLY RELAXED ABOUT THE SITUATION. I DREW ATTENTION TO THE VERY DIFFERENT LINE THE SAUDIS HAD BEEN TAKING WITH US (AS REFLECTED IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT REAGAN - FCO TELNO 1173).

3. HAIG, AS YOU KNOW, SEES AN OPPORTUNITY TO TRY TO SECURE THE REMOVAL OF SYRIANS AS WELL AS ISRAELIS FROM THE LEBANON, AND OF ANY ARMED PRESENCE ON PART OF THE PLO. BUT HE DEMURRED WHEN I ASKED IF HE WAS SEEKING A CHRISTIAN DOMINATED GOVERNMENT, ON THE GROUNDS THAT SUCH A GOVERNMENT WOULD INEVITABLY BE CRITICISED AS PRO-ISRAELI. THE AMERICANS THINK THE PROCLAMATION OF THE LEBANESE COMMITTEE OF NATIONAL SALVATION A POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT AND HOPE THAT WALID JUNELATT CAN BE PREVAILED UPON TO TAKE PART.

4. HAIG SAID THAT THE AMERICANS WERE SEEKING THE EXTENSION OF UNIFIL'S MANDATE FOR 90 DAYS. THE ISRAELIS WERE ANXIOUS TO HAVE AN EXPANDED MULTINATIONAL FORCE WITH AMERICAN PARTICIPATION. HABIB HAS MADE IT CLEAR TO BEGIN THAT THE US (AND OTHER POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTORS) WOULD NOT BE INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING IN SUCH A FORCE IN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES. HAIG TOLD ME THAT THE PENTAGON WAS OPPOSED TO AMERICAN PARTICIPATION AND THAT BOTH THE PRESIDENT AND CONGRESS WERE UNENTHUSIASTIC. BUT HE THOUGHT THAT IT PROBABLY WOULD COME ABOUT IN THE END ONCE IT BECAME CLEAR THAT THIS WAS THE ONLY WAY OF DEALING WITH THE SITUATION.

5. HAIG ADMITTED THAT HE WAS HAVING DIFFICULTY WITH SOME ELEMENTS IN THE PENTAGON AND THE CONGRESS, ESPECIALLY SENATOR PERCY, ABOUT THE ISRAELIS' USE OF AMERICAN WEAPONS IN LEBANON. BUT HE DID NOT THINK THAT THIS WOULD BE A LASTING PROBLEM. PERCY HAS APPARENTLY ADVISED THE ADMINISTRATION TO DEFER SUBMITTING TO CONGRESS THE PROPOSED SALE TO ISRAEL OF SEVENTY-FIVE F16 AIRCRAFT.

6. EAGLEBURGER, WHO WAS PRESENT WHEN I SAW HAIG, NOTED THAT THE AMERICANS WERE WORRIED ABOUT THE SECURITY OF THEIR EMBASSY IN WEST BEIRUT (THOUGH THE STATE DEPARTMENT TOLD US THIS EVENING THAT THE ATMOSPHERE IN WEST BEIRUT HAS IMPROVED TODAY). HAIG SAID THAT THERE WERE SOME 7,000 PLO PERSONNEL IN WEST BEIRUT AND THE ADJOINING SUBURBS. THE AMERICANS BELIEVE THAT THE ISRAELIS INTEND TO DESTROY THESE FORCES AND THAT THEY HAVE GIVEN THE SYRIANS IN THE AREA AN ULTIMATUM TO LEAVE.

7. THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAVE NOT HAD A FULL REPORT FROM HABIB WHO IS IN EAST BEIRUT WITHOUT SECURE COMMUNICATIONS. BUT THEY SAY THAT WE FOUND SARKIS AND HIS COLLEAGUES IN AGREEMENT ON THE NEED TO STRENGTHEN THE LEBANESE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT.

HENDERSON

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