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FM FCO 301130Z APR 81

TO IMMEDIATE TEL AVIV

TELEGRAM NUMBER 72 OF 30 APRIL

AND TO IMMEDIATE BEIRUT, DAMASCUS, KUWAIT, MOSCOW, TUNIS.

REPEATED TO (FOR INFO) JEDDA, ALGIERS, ABU DHABI, UKMIS NEW YORK.

SAVING TO (FOR INFO) WASHINGTON, EC POSTS.

YOUR TELNO 179: LEBANON

1. I AGREE THAT THE SITUATION HAS MOVED ON. I AM PARTICULARLY CONCERNED NOW AT THE NEW ISRAELI INVOLVEMENT IN THE FIGHTING AROUND ZAHLE (YOUR TELNO 182 AND FF). I NOTE YOU CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THE ISRAELIS WILL NOT DELIBERATELY SEEK MAJOR HOSTILITIES. BUT I AGREE WITH YOU THAT THIS IS A SERIOUS NEW STEP WHICH, TAKEN WITH THE HIGH LEVEL OF THEIR ACTIVITY IN THE SOUTH, I DO NOT BELIEVE WE CAN LET PASS.

2. IDEALLY I WOULD PREFER AN EC DEMARCHE BUT EXPERIENCE SUGGESTS THIS CANNOT BE ARRANGED SUFFICIENTLY QUICKLY. PLEASE THEREFORE YOURSELF SPEAK TO THE MFA MAKING THE FOLLOWING POINTS:-

(A) WE ARE GRAVELY CONCERNED AT THE ADMITTED ATTACK ON SYRIAN HELICOPTERS. THIS IS A POTENTIALLY VERY DANGEROUS INTERVENTION IN A VOLATILE SITUATION. IT IS A GROSS INFRINGEMENT OF LEBANESE SOVEREIGNTY AND A VIOLATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW.

(B) THE OBJECTIVE OF US ALL SHOULD BE TO COOL THE SITUATION TO ENABLE ATTEMPTS AT POLITICAL CONCILIATION TO SUCCEED. WE ARE SPEAKING TO THE SYRIANS AND OTHERS TO THE SAME EFFECT.

(C) WE ARE CONCERNED THAT ISRAELI SUPPORT, BOTH POLITICAL AND MATERIAL, FOR CHRISTIANS IN THE NORTH SERVES TO WEAKEN RATHER THAN OTHERWISE THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT'S AUTHORITY WHICH IT SHOULD BE THE PRIME OBJECTIVE OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO STRENGTHEN. SUCH SUPPORT RUNS COUNTER TO DECLARED OBJECTIVE OF ISRAELI POLICY TO SEE THE INTEGRITY AND INDEPENDENCE OF LEBANON MAINTAINED.

(D) THE ISRAELIS KNOW WELL OUR VIEWS ON THEIR ACTIVITIES IN SOUTH LEBANON. THE INCREASED LEVEL OF THEIR ATTACKS THERE OVER THE LAST WEEK WHILE THE FIGHTING IN THE NORTH CONTINUES

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INTENSIFIES THE RISKS OF ESCALATION.

3. YOU SHOULD INFORM YOUR EC COLLEAGUES OF THESE INSTRUCTIONS.

4. FOR DAMASCUS. PLEASE SPEAK TO THE MFA AND DESCRIBE THE ACTION BEING TAKEN WITH THE ISRAELIS. YOU SHOULD UNDERLINE MY CONCERN THAT THE SYRIANS SHOULD EXERCISE RESTRAINT AND PRESS THE URGENCY OF ACHIEVING A POLITICAL SOLUTION.

5. FOR BEIRUT. PLEASE INFORM THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT OF THE ACTION BEING TAKEN. PLEASE ALSO INFORM THE PHALANGE AND DO WHAT YOU CAN TO CONVINCING THEM THAT RESTRAINT ON THEIR PART (E.G. IN RESPECT OF BEIRUT AIRPORT) IS NEEDED. WE WERE ENCOURAGED TO LEARN OF THEIR INTEREST IN THE KUWAIT CONFERENCE.

6. FOR KUWAIT. PLEASE INFORM THE KUWAITIS OF THE ACTION BEING TAKEN, AND THANK THEM FOR THE INFORMATION THEY HAVE GIVEN YOU. YOU MAY SAY THAT I AM KEEN TO HELP THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT, BUT THAT OBJECTIONS TO 'INTERNATIONALISATION' OF THE PROBLEM IMPLY THAT IT IS FOR RESPONSIBLE ARAB STATES TO TAKE THE LEAD.

7. FOR MOSCOW. UNLESS YOU SEE OBJECTION, PLEASE GIVE THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT AN OUTLINE OF THE ACTION WE ARE TAKING AND ASK THEM WHETHER THEY SEE ANY WAY OF GETTING THE SYRIANS TO OBSERVE RESTRAINT.

8. FOR TUNIS (TUNIS TELNO 69). PLEASE SAY TO KLIBI THAT WE ARE URGING RESTRAINT ON ALL THE PARTIES BUT THAT WE BELIEVE THAT ACTION BY THE ARAB LEAGUE AND RESPONSIBLE ARAB STATES IS NEEDED TO CALM THINGS DOWN INSIDE LEBANON, AND WE BELIEVE THAT THIS VIEW IS SHARED BY SOME OF THE ARAB STATES.

9. FOR ALL. WE ARE TAKING ACTION SEPARATELY TO ENGAGE THE AMERICANS, WHO ARE ALREADY ACTIVE ON SIMILAR LINES.

CARRINGTON

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