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TELEGRAM NUMBER 1831 OF 15 JUNE

INFO PRIORITY VIENNA (FOR RESREP IAEA) CAIRO, BAGHDAD, TEL AVIV,  
BEIRUT, AMMAN, KUWAIT, JEDDA, DAMASCUS

INFO ROUTINE UKMIS NEW YORK, OTHER M E POSTS, PARIS AND BONN

LORD PRIVY SEAL'S MEETING WITH THE US SECRETARY OF DEFENSE:

IRAQ/ISRAEL

1. WHEN THE SUBJECT OF THE ISRAELI RAID ON THE IRAQI NUCLEAR PLANT WAS DISCUSSED TODAY BETWEEN THE LORD PRIVY SEAL AND MR WEINBERGER, THE LATTER SAID THAT THE RAID WOULD CERTAINLY MAKE THINGS MUCH MORE DIFFICULT IN THE MIDDLE EAST. IT WOULD ENCOURAGE THE EXTREMISTS AND DISCOURAGE THE MODERATES. FAR FROM BEING CONTRITE, BEGIN HAD SIMPLY DEMANDED FROM THE US GOVERNMENT ALL THE INTELLIGENCE THEY MIGHT HAVE ABOUT A POSSIBLE COUNTER-ATTACK BY THE IRAQIS. BEGIN HAD ALSO INDULGED IN A PERSONAL FEUD AGAINST HIM, WEINBERGER. FOR THE USA'S CREDIBILITY IN THE ARAB WORLD IT HAD BEEN ESSENTIAL TO HOLD UP THE DELIVERY OF THE FOUR PLANES TO ISRAEL. MR WEINBERGER REFERRED TO THE FACILITIES THAT THE US NEEDED IN THE AREA. IF THEIR RESPONSE WAS INSUFFICIENT THIS WOULD IMPAIR THEIR ABILITY TO ACQUIRE THESE FACILITIES.

2. THE LORD PRIVY SEAL ASKED WHETHER MR WEINBERGER THOUGHT THAT THE US RESPONSES HAD BEEN SUFFICIENT TO MAINTAIN US CREDIBILITY IN THE ARAB WORLD, TO WHICH MR WEINBERGER REPLIED THAT IT WAS TOO EARLY TO JUDGE. THE TEST WOULD BE HOW IT WAS VIEWED BY THE ARAB COUNTRIES. THEIR REACTIONS SO FAR HAD CERTAINLY BEEN EXTREMELY STRONG. HE MENTIONED SAUDI ARABIA AND KUWAIT IN PARTICULAR. THE KUWAITIS HAD SAID THAT THEIR AIR SPACE HAD BEEN VIOLATED EITHER BY IRANIANS OR ISRAELIS AND HAD ASKED FOR INTELLIGENCE MATERIAL FROM THE UNITED STATES WHICH THE US HAD SAID THAT THEY WERE READY TO PROVIDE. THE BRUNT OF ARAB FURY IN MR WEINBERGER'S VIEW WAS BEING DIRECTED MORE AGAINST ISRAEL THAN AGAINST THE USA: BUT THE NEXT PROBLEM OF CREDIBILITY WOULD ARISE IF ISRAEL BOMBED THE SYRIAN MISSILE SITES. THERE WAS NO DOUBT, MR WEINBERGER ADMITTED, THAT BEGIN BELIEVED THAT THE ACTION AGAINST IRAQ HAD ENHANCED HIS ELECTORAL PROSPECTS AND THIS MIGHT WELL HAVE BEEN SO.

3. MR WEINBERGER REFERRED TO THE STRONG PRO-ISRAEL LOBBY IN THE UNITED STATES. THERE WOULD BE PRESSURE TO RESUME ARMS SHIPMENTS. HE DID NOT KNOW HOW LONG THE PRESENT RESTRICTIONS WOULD BE MAINTAINED. FURTHER DELIVERY OF ARMS TO ISRAEL WAS DUE IN JULY. SENATOR BAKER HAD SAID THAT THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE WOULD WANT TO BE CONSULTED ON THE SUBJECT./

MR WEINBERGER SAID THAT THE COMMITTEE HAD AUTHORITY TO STOP SHIPMENTS IF THEY WISHED TO, BUT THEY WOULD BE MOST UNLIKELY TO DO THIS. HE DESCRIBED THE ISRAELI ACTION AS QUOTE COMPLETE INTERNATIONAL

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LAWLESSNESS UNQUOTE. THE U.S. HAD BEEN TAKEN COMPLETELY BY SURPRISE THOUGH ALLEGATIONS HAD BEEN MADE THAT THEY KNEW IN ADVANCE OF THE ATTACK. SO FAR AS THEIR INFORMATION WENT, THE IRAQIS HAD NO WEAPON GRADE FUEL AVAILABLE AND COULD NOT PRODUCE A NUCLEAR WEAPON FOR ANOTHER FOUR OR FIVE YEARS. HE ALSO POOH-POOHED BEGIN'S ALLEGATIONS ABOUT A SECRET UNDERGROUND CHAMBER.

4. REVERTING TO THE ISRAELI ELECTION, MR WEINBERGER SAID THAT HE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT TO TAKE ANY ACTION THAT COULD REDUCE THE ADVANTAGES THAT BEGIN HOPED TO DERIVE FROM THE ATTACK ON IRAQ, THOUGH IT WAS POSSIBLE THAT INFORMATION ABOUT THE ALIENATION OF U.S. OPINION COULD HAVE SOME EFFECT. IN MR WEINBERGER'S VIEW, BEGIN WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT TO WORK WITH AFTER THE ELECTION, PARTICULARLY IF HE HAD GOT AWAY WITH THE ATTACK ON IRAQ. HE EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THE U.S. WOULD TAKE STRONGER ACTION IF ISRAEL CARRIED OUT A PRE-EMPTIVE ATTACK AGAINST THE SYRIAN MISSILE SITES.

5. MR WEINBERGER ALSO SAID THAT HE THOUGHT THAT THE ISRAELI ACTION HAD AGGRAVATED SADAT'S POSITION. IT WOULD MAKE HIS PEACE-MAKER ROLE MORE DIFFICULT, PARTICULARLY GIVEN THE PUBLICITY ACCORDED TO HIS MEETING WITH BEGIN SHORTLY BEFORE THE ATTACK.

6. MR WEINBERGER REFERRED TO A PERSONAL LETTER THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD RECEIVED FROM BEGIN GIVING GROUND FOR THE RAID. HE HAD MADE MUCH OF THE ALLEGED STATEMENT BY SADDAM THAT THE IRAQI NUCLEAR PLANT WAS INTENDED TO PRODUCE WEAPONS FOR USE AGAINST ISRAEL. THE LORD PRIVY SEAL DREW ATTENTION TO OUR INFORMATION (BAGHDAD TELNO 327) THAT SADDAM HAD NOT IN FACT THREATENED ISRAEL IN THE TERMS ALLEGED AND HAD, INDEED, ON OTHER OCCASIONS EMPHASISED THE PEACEFUL NATURE OF THE IRAQI NUCLEAR PROGRAMME. MR WEINBERGER SAID THAT WAS OF THE GREATEST INTEREST BECAUSE THE PRESIDENT HAD ATTACHED THE HIGHEST IMPORTANCE TO THIS JUSTIFICATION FOR THE RAID THAT BEGIN HAD FASTENED UPON. WHAT THE LORD PRIVY SEAL HAD JUST TOLD HIM PUT A DIFFERENT COMPLEXION ON IT.

HENDERSON

Repetition to SANA'A.....

referred for departmental decision,

repeated as requested to other posts.

## MIDDLE EAST STANDARD

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