

2700

OO WASHINGTON

GRS 1,000  
 C O N F I D E N T I A L  
 FM CABINET OFFICE LONDON 281700Z SEP 83  
 TO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON  
 TELEGRAM NUMBER MISC 216 OF 28 SEPTEMBER 1983

<i>MR. COLES</i>	
ADVANCE COPY	
ALSO SENT TO:	
(	<i>P.O.</i> )
(	<i>HOFC</i> )

FOLLOWING PERSONAL FOR COLES.  
 FROM PARSONS.

LEBANON.

1. THE FOLLOWING MAY BE IRRELEVANT AS I AM NOT IN A POSITION TO TAKE FULL ACCOUNT OF THE DISCUSSIONS THE FOREIGN SECRETARY IS HAVING IN NEW YORK, NOR OF WHAT MAY BE TRANSPIRING IN WASHINGTON. BUT THIS IS HOW IT LOOKS TO ME FROM HERE.

2. THE IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVE MUST BE TO GET OBSERVERS IN POSITION. THE PROBABILITY IS THAT THE CEASE FIRE TOOK PLACE MORE BECAUSE OF THE EXHAUSTION OF THE COMBATANTS AND THEIR NEED FOR A RESPITE TO REGROUP AND RE-EQUIP THAN BECAUSE OF POLITICAL WIZARDRY OR WILLINGNESS ON ALL SIDES TO MAKE THE NECESSARY CONCESSIONS TO REACH A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT. HENCE, THE MORE LONG DRAWN OUT THE POLITICAL PROCESS, THE MORE LIKELY THE CEASE FIRE WILL BE TO COLLAPSE. OBSERVERS ARE NO GUARANTEE BUT THEY ARE A GREAT DEAL BETTER THAN NOTHING.

3. WHAT ARE THE PRACTICAL POSSIBILITIES?. THE MNF IS OBVIOUSLY DISQUALIFIED FROM THE SYRIAN POINT OF VIEW AND THE LAST THING WE WANT IS TO HAVE OUR CONTINGENT ROAMING ABOUT IN THE CHOUF. THERE HAS BEEN LOOSE TALK ABOUT " NEUTRAL " OBSERVERS, BUT I CANNOT SEE RUN-OF-THE-MILL NEUTRAL COUNTRIES SUCH AS INDIA, YUGOSLAVIA AND AUSTRIA PARTICIPATING EXCEPT UNDER A UN UMBRELLA. UNTSO IS THE OBVIOUS CANDIDATE. IT IS THE LONGEST ESTABLISHED AND LEAST CONTROVERSIAL OF THE UN PRESENCES IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND HAS BEEN DEPLOYED IN THE PAST FROM THE SUEZ CANAL TO THE LEBANESE BORDER.

4. THE PROBLEM IS THAT THE SECRETARY GENERAL NEEDS AUTHORITY FROM THE SECURITY COUNCIL, EITHER IN THE FORM OF A RESOLUTION OR AN EXCHANGE OF LETTERS BETWEEN HIM AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL, IN ORDER TO RECRUIT THE NECESSARY LARGE NUMBERS AND DEPLOY THEM. NO COUNCIL MEMBER IS LIKELY TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE. NEARLY ALL THE NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS ARE IRRELEVANT AND I DOUBT WHETHER JORDAN WOULD WISH TO ADOPT A HIGH PROFILE. THE WESTERN PERMANENT MEMBERS ARE TAINTED BY MNF MEMBERSHIP AND THE COMMUNISTS WILL BE OBSTRUCTIVE.

5. THIS LEAVES THE PRESIDENT (GUYANA) AND THE SECRETARY GENERAL. WOULD IT NOT BE BEST FOR THE SECRETARY GENERAL, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE PRESIDENT, TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE WITH THE COUNCIL MEMBERS TO PERSUADE THEM TO AUTHORISE HIM TO TAKE IMMEDIATE STEPS TO DEPLOY THE NECESSARY NUMBERS OF UNTSO OBSERVERS IN THE AREA?. ALTHOUGH THE SYRIANS WOULD NOT LIKE THIS, I WONDER IF THEY WOULD BE ABLE TO PERSUADE THE SOVIET UNION TO GO AS FAR AS TO BLOCK IT. THE ONLY POSSIBLE PRETEXT WOULD BE THAT LEBANON IS AN INTERNAL MATTER AND THUS NO BUSINESS OF THE UN. THIS WOULD SOUND VERY THIN IN AN OPEN SESSION OF THE COUNCIL AND THE RUSSIANS WOULD PUT THEMSELVES IN BAD WITH REASONABLE THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES, SOMETHING WHICH THEY PREFER TO AVOID. THEY MIGHT THEREFORE BE DISPOSED TO SETTLE FOR SURLY ACQUIESCENCE AND REFUSAL TO PAY, AS THEY DID WITH UNIFIL, IF THEY CONCLUDED THAT THE S-G'S INITIATIVE HAD BROAD, INCLUDING THIRD WORLD, SUPPORT.

6. WHAT I AM SAYING IS THAT THE TIME MAY HAVE COME FOR PEREZ DE CUELLAR TO TAKE HIS COURAGE IN BOTH HANDS AND RISK OFFENDING ONE OR MORE IMPORTANT MEMBER STATES. IT WOULD BE WELL WORTH IT IF HE SUCCEEDED AND HE WOULD NOT BE MUCH WORSE OFF IF HE FAILED.

7. SINCE DRAFTING THE ABOVE I HAVE SEEN UKMIS NEW YORK TEL NUMBER 924, VERY MUCH ON THE SAME LINES. STRONG PRESSURE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER ON THE SECRETARY GENERAL MIGHT DO THE TRICK. IN THE UN CONTEXT, WE ARE FAR BETTER PLACED TO APPLY THIS THAN THE AMERICANS OR ANYONE ELSE.

NNNN

INT QSL PSE