

C D Powell Esq

No. 10.

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MDHIAN 7429

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FM BEIRUT  
TO IMMEDIATE FCO  
TELNO 837  
OF 040740Z DECEMBER 89

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MY TELNO 832: POSSIBLE EVACUATION

1. I EXPLAINED OUR CURRENT DIFFICULTIES TO BOTH HOSS AND HRAOUI, WARNING THAT MINISTERS WERE INCREASINGLY CONCERNED FOR OUR SECURITY. BOTH EXPRESSED ALARM AT ANY THOUGHT OF WITHDRAWAL. HRAOUI SAID THAT LEBANON HAD DESPERATE NEED FOR HMG'S JUDGEMENT IN ITS PRESENT DIFFICULTIES.

2. HOSS ECHOED THESE REMARKS 'WE MUST KEEP YOU HERE AT ALL COSTS. YOU CANNOT GO NOW, JUST WHEN WE NEED YOU MOST. SAY WHERE YOU WANT TO GO, AND I PERSONALLY GUARANTEE YOUR SECURITY'. HOSS POINTED OUT THAT OUR EVACUATION FROM THE ENCLAVE, IF IT WERE NOT FOLLOWED BY A MOVE TO ANOTHER PART OF THE COUNTRY WOULD NOT MERELY SEND A SIGNAL TO AOUN: IT WOULD ALSO INDICATE IN THE CLEARST POSSIBLE WAY OUR LACK OF CONFIDENCE IN THE FUTURE OF HIS ADMINISTRATION, AND OF LEBANON ITSELF. IF A TEMPORARY REFUGE WAS NEEDED ONE COULD BE FOUND IN THE COUNTRY.

3. WHEN I CALLED ON JUMBLATT I ASKED WHETHER HE COULD ENSURE OUR SAFETY IF AT ANY TIME WE NEEDED TEMPORARILY TO RE-OCCUPY THE ABEY VILLA FOR A PERIOD. HE REPLIED IMMEDIATELY THAT THIS WAS ONE THING WE NEED NEVER HAVE ANY ANXIETY ABOUT: SO LONG AS WE WERE IN THE CHOUF WE WOULD BE UNDER DRUZE PROTECTION. THE PEOPLE OF ABEY REGARDED US AS THEIR OWN. HE WOULD ENSURE A STRONG 11 BRIGADE GUARD, AND UNDERTAKE TO ENSURE THAT HIS PALESTINIAN GUESTS CAUSED US NO TROUBLE.

4. YOU MAY LIKE TO CONSIDER THIS FURTHER, IF A MOVE NORTH IS NOT FEASIBLE. ABEY IS OUT OF THE WAY OF SHELLING THOUGH EASILY ACCESSIBLE AND ONLY 30 MINUTES FROM THE CENTRE OF BEIRUT WHICH WOULD ENABLE US TO KEEP IN TOUCH WITH LE STAFF LEFT IN RABIEH AND WEST BEIRUT. THE VILLA IS SECLUDED AND RELATIVELY EASY TO SECURE. THERE WOULD BE NO DIFFICULTY IN SETTING UP A TEMPORARY OPERATION THERE, AND IF FURTHER WITHDRAWAL WERE NECESSARY, THERE IS ACCESS TO THE MAIN BEIRUT-DAMASCUS ROAD, WHICH IS STILL BY FAR THE BEST AND MOST DIRECT ROUTE OUT OF THE COUNTRY.,

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PROVIDED THERE WERE NO THREAT OF ISRAELI INTERVENTION FROM THE AIR.

RAMSAY  
YYYY

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