

GRS 260
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FM BEIRUT 211316Z JULY 82
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELEGRAM NUMBER 434 OF 21 JULY 82
INFO USUAL POSTS AND JEDDA
AND SAVING TO UK REP BRUSSELS, PARIS.
UKREP BRUSSELS TEL. NO. 2951

LEBANON

1. AFTER BRUSSELS AND WASHINGTON IT MAY BE TIME TO TAKE STOCK.
2. FIRST, EVEN THE HARD-LINE PALESTINIANS (FOLLOWING TWO WORDS UNDERLINED) IN BEIRUT ADMIT THAT THE GAME IS UP AND THAT THEY MUST GET OUT. THE QUESTION IS HOW AND WHERE. OF COURSE THEY WILL TRY TO WRIGGLE OUT OF IT, GIVEN HALF THE CHANCE.
3. SECONDLY, IT WOULD BE FATAL TO THROW AWAY THIS ADVANTAGE BY MIXING UP BEIRUT WITH THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION AT LARGE. THE AMERICANS MIGHT WITH ADVANTAGE, HOWEVER, PROMISE THE SYRIANS AND PALESTINIANS THAT THEY WOULD TACKLE THE WHOLE ARAB/ISRAEL QUESTION PROVIDED THE LATTER WERE OF GOOD BEHAVIOUR OVER THE LEBANON.
4. THIRDLY, THE AMERICANS MUST SOMEHOW TALK DIRECTLY TO THE PALESTINIANS. INABILITY TO DO SO HAS BEDEVILLED NEGOTIATIONS HERE. PERHAPS THE ISRAELIS MIGHT BE ASSUAGED BY DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN " TALKING TO " AND "RECOGNIZING". IT IS AFTER ALL NORMAL AFTER A WAR TO TALK TO A PARTY WHOM BY DEFINITION YOU DO NOT AT THAT MOMENT "RECOGNIZE" IN A DIPLOMATIC SENSE. THEOLOGY MUST NOT OBSTRUCT COMMON SENSE.
5. WHEN SHOULD THE AMERICANS DO THIS? I SHOULD HAVE THOUGHT (BUT THIS MUST BE A MATTER FOR JUDGEMENT BY OTHERS) THAT THE ISRAELIS MIGHT BE BROUGHT TO ACCEPT IT WHEN THE PALESTINIANS WERE AS FAR AWAY AS THE NORTH BEKA'A AND THE SYRIANS OFF SANNINE/DHAHR AL BAIDAR/BAROUK. WE ARE NOT FAR FROM THAT NOW.
6. THE CRUX, HOWEVER, IS THAT, ONCE THE LEBANON IS CLEAR, THE SYRIANS, PALESTINIANS, (AND RUSSIANS) WILL BE ROBBED OF THEIR MAIN SOURCE OF BLACKMAIL. THE AMERICANS WILL THEN HAVE A MUCH CLEARER RUN AT THE MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM AT LARGE.
7. I SHOULD BE MOST GRATEFUL FOR COMMENTS.

ROBERTS

REPEATED AS REQUESTED

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