

MIDDLE EAST: ADVANCE COPIES

17/16

PS/MR HURD
PS/PUS
SIR J LEAHY
MR MOBERLY
~~SIR J BULLARD~~ *MR GOODISON*
HD/NENAD
HD/MED
HD/UND
HD/SEC DEPT

NO 10 DOWNING STREET
CABINET OFFICE D10

HD/... ..

HD/CONSULAR DEPT

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PUSD (2)
NEWS D
~~RESIDENT CLERK~~

ADVANCE COPY

GR 450

CONFIDENTIAL

FROM TEL AVIV 211045Z JUL 82

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELNO 318 OF 21 JULY 1982

INFO PRIORITY MODUK, WASHINGTON, UKMIS NEW YORK, AMMAN, DAMASCUS,
CAIRO AND JEDDA.

IMMEDIATE

MY TELEGRAM NUMBER 317: ISRAEL/LEBANON

1. THE MINISTER/COUNSELLOR AT THE AMERICAN EMBASSY TOLD ME THIS MORNING THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO BELIEVE, FOLLOWING LAST NIGHT'S MEETING BETWEEN LEWIS AND BEGIN, THAT THE ISRAELIS WOULD ALLOW A LITTLE MORE TIME FOR A DIPLOMATIC SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM OF WEST BEIRUT. LIKE HARE (PARAGRAPH 1 OF TUR REFERS), BROWN EXPECTED A TOUR BY HABIB OF THOSE ARAB CAPITALS AMONG WHOM THE PLO IN BEIRUT MIGHT BE PARCELLED OUT. IT WAS ALSO TIME THAT HABIB VISITED ISRAEL AGAIN. ALL THIS WAS BOUND TO TAKE AT LEAST A WEEK.

2. ASKED HOW THE PLO MIGHT BE DISPERSED, BROWN SAID THAT THE FOCUS WAS ON THOSE COUNTRIES IN THE IMMEDIATE VICINITY OF ISRAEL. IN REPLY TO QUESTIONS ABOUT JORDAN AND EGYPT, HE CONFIRMED THAT THEY WERE INCLUDED.

3. BROWN SAID THAT THE PRESENT MOOD OF ISRAELI MINISTERS WAS

... THE CEASEFIRE WHICH HAD

3. BROWN SAID THAT THE PRESENT MOOD OF ISRAELI MINISTERS WAS PESSIMISTIC, SCEPTICAL AND CYNICAL. THE CEASEFIRE, WHICH HAD LASTED SINCE 11 JULY, WAS FRAYING BADLY AT THE EDGES. THE ISRAELI WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY WISH TO RETALIATE SHARPLY, AND SOON, FOR THE AMBUSH EAST OF LAKE KAROUN YESTERDAY BY PLO WHO HAD INFILTRATED FROM TERRITORY UNDER SYRIAN CONTROL, IN WHICH 5 MEMBERS OF THE IDF HAD BEEN KILLED, AND FOR ANOTHER AMBUSH SOUTH OF TYRE LAST NIGHT IN WHICH 5 ISRAELI SOLDIERS WERE WOUNDED. RETALIATION WOULD NOT NECESSARILY BE IN THE AREA IN WHICH THE INCIDENTS TOOK PLACE (RATHER OMINOUSLY, SHARON YESTERDAY DREW A DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE CITY OF BEIRUT AND THE PLO CAMPS TO THE SOUTH, WHICH HE DEFINED AS BEING OUTSIDE BEIRUT).

4. BROWN COMMENTED THAT AT BEST THE COURSE OF EVENTS WOULD CONTINUE TO RESEMBLE A FEVER CHART. THE ISRAELIS WERE ALSO EXTREMELY EDGY ABOUT ANYTHING WHICH MIGHT IMPLY A POSSIBLE CHANGE OF US POLICY TOWARDS THE PLO. THEY HAD EARLIER ENQUIRED ABOUT THE PRESENCE OF KHALID EL HASSAN IN THE ARAB LEAGUE DELEGATION IN WASHINGTON AND ABOUT REPORTS THAT HABIB HAD ASKED FOR AUTHORITY IN EXTREMIS TO TALK TO THE PLO DIRECT. THE INADVERTENT MEETING YESTERDAY BETWEEN ABRAMS AND HATEM HUSSAINI HAD NOT HELPED.

5. BROWN HAD NO FURTHER NEWS ABOUT A POSSIBLE VISIT BY SHAMIR TO WASHINGTON NEXT WEEK, THOUGH THE STATE DEPARTMENT WERE EVIDENTLY DRAFTING SOME SORT OF MEMORANDUM. NOR DID HE HAVE ANY INFORMATION ABOUT REPORTS ON ISRAELI RADIO THIS MORNING THAT SHAMIR HAD RETURNED YESTERDAY FROM A SECRET VISIT SOMEWHERE IN EUROPE, EXCEPT TO CONFIRM THAT SHAMIR HAD NOT BEEN PRESENT AT THE MEETING BETWEEN LEWIS AND BEGIN AND SHARON LAST NIGHT, WHICH IS UNUSUAL.

6. MEANWHILE, IT HAS BEEN ANNOUNCED THAT A SINGLE KATYUSHA ROCKET WAS FIRED INTO UPPER GALILEE FROM LEBANON ON THE EVENING OF 20 JULY, AND THAT THOSE CONCERNED HAVE BEEN CAUGHT.

PRENDERGAST

BT

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