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*Prime Minister*

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TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 2794 OF 20 AUGUST

INFO PARIS, AMMAN, BEIRUT, DAMASCUS, CAIRO, JEDDA, TEL AVIV, TUNIS, ALGIERS, MOSCOW, UKMIS NEW YORK, SANA'A, ADEN, ATHENS, ROME, BAGHDAD.

LEBANON

*attached*

1. SCHNEIDER (DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY, NEAR EAST) BRIEFED REPRESENTATIVES OF WESTERN EMBASSIES TODAY ABOUT THE AGREEMENT REACHED BY HABIB IN BEIRUT. HE HANDED OVER THE FULL TEXT OF THE AGREEMENT (TEXT BY BAG TO NENAD) TOGETHER WITH A SCHEDULE OF DEPARTURES STARTING TOMORROW, 21 AUGUST (TEXT IN M I F T - NOT TO ALL).

2. SCHNEIDER DREW ATTENTION TO THE VERY LIMITED MANDATE OF THE MULTINATIONAL FORCE (MNF) AS DEFINED BY THE AGREEMENT, NAMELY TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO THE LEBANESE ARMED FORCES AS THEY CARRIED OUT THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES, WHICH WERE TO ASSURE THE SAFE QUOTE WITHDRAWAL FROM LEBANESE TERRITORY OF THE PALESTINIAN LEADERS, OFFICES AND COMBATANTS RELATED TO ANY ORGANISATION NOW IN THE BEIRUT AREA UNQUOTE: TO ASSURE THE SAFETY OF THE PERSONS IN THE AREA; AND TO FURTHER THE RESTORATION OF THE SOVEREIGNTY AND AUTHORITY OF THE GOVERNMENT OF LEBANON OVER THE BEIRUT AREA. THE 800 MEMBERS OF THE U.S. CONTINGENT WOULD ARRIVE IN BEIRUT 5 TO 6 DAYS AFTER THE INITIAL DEPARTURE DATE IE BETWEEN 26-28 AUGUST. THERE WAS A PROVISION IN THE TEXT WHICH COULD, IF ALL AGREED, ALLOW THE MNF TO STAY IN LEBANON FOR MORE THAN 30 DAYS. BUT THERE WAS ABSOLUTELY NO QUESTION OF THE AMERICAN FORCES STAYING FOR MORE THAN 30 DAYS FROM THE DATE OF THEIR ARRIVAL (PRESIDENT REAGAN STATED PUBLICLY TODAY THAT UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD U.S. TROOPS REMAIN FOR MORE THAN 30 DAYS). THE MNF ITSELF WOULD NOT GO INTO WEST BEIRUT BUT WOULD BE DEPLOYED AT CHECK POINTS AND, IF NECESSARY, ALONG THE OVERLAND ROUTE INTO SYRIA. IF DEPARTURE OF THE PLO DID NOT TAKE PLACE ACCORDING TO SCHEDULE THE MANDATE OF THE MNF WOULD TERMINATE IMMEDIATELY AND ALL ITS PERSONNEL WOULD LEAVE LEBANON FORTHWITH. IN A SEPARATE PRESS CONFERENCE, SHULTZ SAID THAT IF THE CEASE FIRE WERE BROKEN BY SOME LUNATIC FIRING OFF AT RANDOM THAT WOULD NOT BE ENOUGH TO PROVOKE THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE MNF. BUT IF IT WERE CLEAR THAT THE CEASE FIRE, ON WHICH THE WHOLE ARRANGEMENT WAS PREMISED, HAD BROKEN DOWN, THEN THE MNF WOULD NOT STAY.

3. SCHNEIDER SAID THE U.S. NOW ENVISAGED TWO WEEKS OF CHAOS, THE FIRST DEPARTURES FROM BEIRUT SHOULD START AT 11 O'CLOCK ON 21 AUGUST WHEN A SHIPLOAD OF PLO WOULD LEAVE FOR CYPRUS AND THENCE BY AIR FOR JORDAN AND IRAQ. THE EXACT TOTAL OF PLO MEMBERS GOING TO RECIPEINT COUNTRIES WAS NOT CLEAR AND WOULD NOT BE MADE PUBLIC BUT THE FIGURES WERE APPROXIMATELY AS FOLLOWS: ALGERIA: 200 (POSSIBLY RISING TO 600): IRAQ: 135: JORDAN: 265: SYRIA: A TOTAL OF ABOUT 6000 CONSISTING

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OF APPROXIMATELY 2,600 MEMBERS OF THE PLO AND UP TO 3,600 SYRIANS AND MEMBERS OF THE PLA. ALL SYRIAN FORCES IN BEIRUT, EVEN IF THEY WERE NOMINALLY MEMBERS OF THE ADF, MUST LEAVE. TUNISIA: 1000; NORTH YEMEN: 500 PLO AND UP TO 500 NORTH YEMENIS; SOUTH YEMEN 1000. IN ADDITION, WHILE EGYPT HAD NOT BEEN PREPARED TO TAKE ANY PLO FIGHTERS WITHOUT A POLITICAL QUID PRO QUO WHICH THE U.S. HAD NOT BEEN WILLING TO MAKE, THE EGYPTIANS MIGHT TAKE AN UNSPECIFIED NUMBER OF SICK AND WOUNDED. GREECE HAD ALSO OFFERED TO TAKE 300 SICK AND WOUNDED. THE U.S. DID NOT YET KNOW TO WHICH ARAB COUNTRY THE PLO LEADERSHIP WOULD GO.

4. SCHNEIDER STRESSED THAT IT HAD NOT BEEN DELIBERATE U.S. POLICY TO TRY TO SPREAD THE PLO OVER A NUMBER OF ARAB COUNTRIES: THEIR ORIGINAL AIM HAD BEEN TO GET ONE COUNTRY TO TAKE THEM ALL. HOWEVER, U.S. WILLINGNESS TO COMMIT TROOPS TO THE MNF HAD EVOKED A RESPONSE IN THE ARAB WORLD AND MANY OF THE OFFERS, E G. TUNISIA'S HAD COME AS A SURPRISE.

5. SCHNEIDER WOULD NOT BE DRAWN ABOUT WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN AFTER PLO WITHDRAWAL. ASKED ABOUT THE U.S. VIEW OF UNIFIL'S ROLE HE SAID THAT, FOR THE TIME BEING, THE U.S. SIMPLY WANTED TO PRESERVE UNIFIL AS AN IMPORTANT OPTION BUT HAD NOT REACHED ANY CONCLUSIONS ABOUT WHAT KIND OF PEACEKEEPING ROLE IT MIGHT FULFIL IN THE FUTURE. SHULTZ, AT A PRESS CONFERENCE THIS AFTERNOON, SAID THAT THE WITHDRAWAL OF ISRAELI AND SYRIAN FORCES FROM LEBANON WOULD BE COMPLICATED AND DIFFICULT. SYRIA HAD PROMISED TO LEAVE WHEN ASKED TO DO SO BY THE LEBANESE. AS THE GOVERNMENT OF LEBANON INCREASINGLY TOOK CONTROL, AND AS SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS ON ISRAEL'S NORTHERN BORDER COULD BE ADEQUATELY DEVELOPED, THE U.S. WOULD EXPECT TO SEE FOREIGN FORCES WITHDRAWN.

6. ON THE WIDER PALESTINIAN QUESTION, THE PRESIDENT AT A PRESS CONFERENCE THIS MORNING SAID THAT AFTER THE LEBANON AGREEMENT HAD BEEN PUT INTO EFFECT THE U.S. WISHED TO MOVE QUICKLY, WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE CAMP DAVID AGREEMENTS, TO RESOLVE THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE IN ALL ITS ASPECTS. SHULTZ, AT HIS PRESS CONFERENCE, SUGGESTED THAT THE DISPERSAL OF THE PLO WOULD PROVIDE GREATER OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACHIEVING A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT IN THE MIDDLE EAST, WHICH WAS NOW MORE URGENT THAN EVER: QUOTE IF THE OPPORTUNITY IS GREATER, YOU SHOULD MOVE IN HARDER AND FASTER AND TRY TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF IT UNQUOTE.

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