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OO AMMAN
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CONFIDENTIAL
FM WASHINGTON 210040Z
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELEGRAM NUMBER 3103 OF 20 SEPTEMBER

M
Mr. Darnack
cc Mrs. Parly

INFO IMMEDIATE BEIRUT TEL AVIV DAMSCUS AMMAN CAIRO JEDDA TUNIS
PARIS UKMIS NEW YORK MOSCOW ROME TOKYO

INFO SAVING ATHENS BONN BRUSSELS COPENHAGEN DUBLIN LUXEMBOURG
THE HAGUE UKREP BRUSSELS OTHER MIDDLE EAST POSTS

M I P T : LEBANON

1. IN A BRIEFING FOR WESTERN DIPLOMATS EAGLEBURGER SAID THAT THE TASKS OF THE MULTINATIONAL FORCE (MNF) WOULD BE TO END BLOODSHED IN BEIRUT AND TO SEEK TO REESTABLISH THE CONFIDENCE OF BOTH THE INHABITANTS AND THE LEBANESE AUTHORITIES WHICH HAD BEEN BADLY SHAKEN BY THE ISRAELI MOVE INTO WEST BEIRUT. ONCE LEBANESE CONTROL OF BEIRUT WAS REESTABLISHED THE NEXT TASK WOULD BE THE WITHDRAWAL OF ALL FOREIGN FORCES FROM LEBANON, BUT THE MANDATE OF THE MNF WAS LIMITED TO BEIRUT.

2. THE MNF WOULD PROBABLY NUMBER 2500 - 3000. THE FIRST UNITS COULD BE IN BEIRUT WITHIN 72 HOURS. NO TIME LIMIT HAD BEEN SET FOR ITS MISSION; THIS WOULD BE DISCUSSED BY THE PARTICIPANTS WITH THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT. IT WAS TOO EARLY TO SAY HOW LONG IT WOULD BE NEEDED. THE US WOULD COMPLY WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE WAR POWERS ACT REGARDING CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION.

3. EAGLEBURGER SAID THAT THE AMERICANS HAD BEEN IN TOUCH WITH THE ISRAELIS WHOSE OFFICIAL RESPONSE TO THE PROPOSAL TO REVIVE THE MNF WAS EXPECTED AFTER THEIR CABINET MEETING ON 21 SEPTEMBER. THE MNF WOULD NOT DEPLOY TO BEIRUT WITHOUT ISRAELI AGREEMENT. HE WOULD NOT SPECULATE ON WHAT WOULD BE DONE IF THE ISRAELIS REJECTED THE MNF, BUT NOTED THAT THE ISRAELIS HAD COOPERATED IN THE DEPLOYMENT OF 25 MORE UN OBSERVERS IN BEIRUT ON 20 SEPTEMBER AND THAT THE PROCESS OF TURNING OVER ISRAELI POSITIONS IN BEIRUT TO THE LEBANESE ARMY SEEMED TO HAVE ACCELERATED.

4. EAGLEBURGER REVEALED THAT SHULTZ HAD CONVEYED TO THE ISRAELIS A SUGGESTION FROM PEREZ DE CUELLAR THAT SOME UNIFIL FORCES SHOULD BE DESPATCHED TO BEIRUT. THE ISRAELIS HAD REPLIED THAT THIS WOULD BE QUOTE TROUBLESOME UNQUOTE (THOUGH AN OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN HAD SAID THAT THE ISRAELI CABINET REJECTED IT). THE OTHER OBJECTIONS TO THE USE OF UNIFIL WERE THAT IT WOULD REQUIRE A NEW SECURITY COUNCIL MANDATE, WHICH WOULD INVOLVE DELAY AND AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THE RUSSIANS TO MAKE TROUBLE, AND THAT THE LEBANESE PREFERRED AN MNF AND HAD SO INFORMED PEREZ DE CUELLAR.

5. IF ISRAEL ACCEPTED THE MNF THERE WOULD HAVE TO BE DISCUSSIONS ON THE MODALITIES OF ITS DEPLOYMENT. EAGLEBURGER THOUGHT THAT THE OBJECTIVE SHOULD BE FOR THE IDF TO WITHDRAW AS THE MNF ARRIVED. THE PRESIDENT WAS INSISTENT THAT THE ISRAELIS SHOULD WITHDRAW FROM BEIRUT : THE AMERICANS HAD SUGGESTED TO THEM PRIVATELY THAT THEY SHOULD WITHDRAW TO POSITIONS SOUTH OF BEIRUT AIRPORT, WHICH COULD THEN BE REOPENED.

6. EAGLEBURGER EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT THE LEBANESE ARMY COULD EXERCISE ITS AUTHORITY IN BEIRUT (THOUGH IT OBVIOUSLY COULD NOT TAKE ON THE ISRAELIS) : THERE WAS NO EVIDENCE OF ITS FAILURE TO DO SO IN ANY AREA IN WHICH IT HAD ESTABLISHED ITSELF. ASKED ABOUT RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE MASSACRES, HE REPLIED THAT THE FACTS WOULD COME OUT IN DUE COURSE BUT THAT THE ISRAELIS BORE A SUBSTANTIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR ACTIONS WHICH OCCURRED AFTER THEIR MOVE INTO WEST BEIRUT.

7. EAGLEBURGER SAID THAT BREZHNEV'S LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT OF 19 SEPTEMBER EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER EVENTS IN BEIRUT AND WAS POLEMICAL BUT NOT THREATENING. THE AMERICANS WERE NOT TAKING IT TOO SERIOUSLY.

FCO PASS SAVING ATHENS ABU DHABI ADEN ALGIERS BAGHDAD BAHRAIN
BONN BRUSSELS COPENHAGEN DOHA DUBAI DUBLIN JERUSALEM KHARTOUM
KUWAIT LUXEMBOURG MUSCAT RABAT SANA'A THE HAGUE TRIPOLI
UKREP BRUSSELS

WRIGHT

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