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TO IMMEDIATE UKMIS NEW YORK

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INFO IMMEDIATE BEIRUT: TEL AVIV: DAMASCUS: WASHINGTON: PARIS:

ROME: HONG KONG (FOR PM'S PARTY).

INFO PRIORITY CAIRO: TUNIS: JEDDA: AMMAN

FROM NEWS DEPARTMENT

LEBANON

1. MR HURD GAVE AN INTERVIEW TO LONDON WEEKEND TELEVISION FOR THEIR PROGRAMME QUOTE WEEKEND WORLD UNQUOTE BROADCAST TODAY AT NOON. FULL TRANSCRIPT FOLLOWS BY BAG.

2. THE FOLLOWING EXTRACT FROM THE INTERVIEW, WHICH DWELT LARGELY ON THE THEME OF PEACEKEEPING IN THE LEBANON, PROVIDES A USEFUL SUMMARY OF OUR CURRENT THINKING ON BRITISH PARTICIPATION.

INTERVIEWER: I WONDER IF I COULD SUM UP YOUR VIEW ON THIS POINT BEFORE MOVING ON TO OTHERS, SIMPLY TO SEE WHETHER YOU AGREE THAT THIS IS AN ACCURATE SUMMATION OF WHAT IN FACT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S CURRENT POLICY IS. YOU TAKE THE VIEW THAT BRITAIN HAS NOT AT THE MOMENT BEEN ASKED TO CONTRIBUTE TO THIS FORCE, SO THERE IS NO IMMEDIATE PROBLEM THERE FOR THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT, BUT IF YOU WERE ASKED BY PRESIDENT REAGAN OR BY THE UNITED STATES OR BY SOME OTHER INTERESTED PARTY WITH WHOM BRITAIN HAS GOOD RELATIONS, YOU WOULD GIVE THAT VERY SYMPATHETIC CONSIDERATION AND IT'S POSSIBLE THAT BRITISH TROOPS MIGHT FORM PART OF THAT PEACEKEEPING FORCE. NOW IS THAT A FAIR SUMMATION?

MR HURD: I THINK YOU'VE PUSHED THE LAST SENTENCE A BIT FAR.
WE WOULD LOOK AT SUCH A REQUEST TO SEE WHAT WE COULD DO AS A RESPONSIBLE MEMBER OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY.

INTERVIEWER: BUT YOU SEE ALL THAT DISPOSES ME TO - WHEN POLITICIANS SAY QUOTE A SYMPATHETIC LOOK UNQUOTE, THAT USUALLY MEANS THAT THEY WILL SAY YES.

MR HURD: IT DOESN'T REALLY. IT SIMPLY MEANS THAT WE'RE BEING ASKED A QUESTION WHICH ISN'T ACTUALLY BEING ASKED YET IN REAL LIFE, AND THEREFORE BEING CAUTIOUS I GIVE A CAUTIOUS ANSWER. THAT'S NOT THE POSITION WE'RE IN ACTUALLY AT THE MOMENT AND I'VE NO REASON TO SUPPOSE THAT WE'RE GOING TO BE PUT IN THAT POSITION IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE. BUT IF IT WERE TO HAPPEN - AND THAT'S WHERE YOU PRESS ME - IF IT WERE TO HAPPEN THEN OBVIOUSLY WE WOULD LOOK AT IT TO SEE WHAT WE COULD DO TO HELP.

INTERVIEWER: WELL, YOU COULDN'T LOOK AT IT SYMPATHETICALLY AND SAY NO, COULD YOU?

MR HURD: YOU COULD LOOK AT IT SYMPATHETICALLY AND SAY QUOTE I'M VERY SORRY, BUT IT HAPPENS THAT THE THINGS YOU NEED ARE IN THE FALKLANDS OR THEY'RE COMMITTED TO NATO AND THEREFORE WE CAN'T HELP IN THE WAY THAT YOU WANT. UNQUOTE. THAT WOULD BE A POSSIBLE ANSWER.

INTERVIEWER: AND SUPPOSING, FOR INSTANCE, THE AMERICANS SAID TO YOU QUOTE WELL, WE DO UNDERSTAND THAT. YOU DO HAVE A LOT OF PROBLEMS IN THE WORLD, BUT DON'T WORRY ABOUT NATO. WE'RE QUITE PREPARED TO ALLOW YOU TO TAKE TROOPS OUT TEMPORARILY BECAUSE IT IS SO CRUCIAL THAT THEY GO IN THIS PEACEKEEPING FORCE. UNQUOTE.

MR HURD: WELL, I WOULDN'T EXCLUDE US SAYING YES, BUT I'M SIMPLY REMINDING YOU AGAIN THAT IT'S VERY HYPOTHETICAL AT THE MOMENT.

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