

GRS 025

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FM BEIRUT 100900Z OCT 82  
TO ROUTINE F C O  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 661 OF 10 OCTOBER 82  
INFO ROUTINE DAMASCUS TEL AVIV AMMAN MOBOK(D14)  
SAVING FOR INFO WASHINGTON CAIRO JEDDA UKNIS NEW YORK UKREP  
BRUSSELS BONN PARIS ROME

SECURITY SEARCHES IN BEIRUT

1. THE LEBANESE ARMY HAVE BEEN CARRYING OUT AN INTENSIVE SEARCH FOR ARMS, CRIMINALS, RESIDENTS WITHOUT PAPERS AND PALESTINIANS IN WEST BEIRUT IN THE LAST FEW DAYS. THEY BLOCK OFF STREETS, HOLD UP CARS, AND SEARCH HOUSES, USING SOLDIERS ON FOOT SUPPORTED BY TANKS, ARMoured CARS, AND ARMoured PERSONEL CARRIERS.
2. FRENCH AND ITALIAN TROOPS OF THE MULTI-NATIONAL FORCE HAVE STOOD BY IN SUPPORT. THE FRENCH SEEMED TO BE PARTICIPATING IN THE OPERATION IN THE FIRST FEW DAYS.
3. THE AUTHORITIES CLAIM TO HAVE CAPTURED SUBSTANTIAL QUANTITIES OF ARMS AND TO HAVE APPREHENDED CRIMINALS AND ILLEGAL RESIDENTS, INCLUDING SEVERAL BAADER-MEINHOF AND RED BRIGADE TERRORISTS. THEY HAVE LET IT BE KNOWN THAT THEY WILL EXTEND THE OPERATION TO EAST BEIRUT.
4. THERE HAVE BEEN PROTESTS SEMICOLON AND THE PRESS, BOTH LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL, HAVE POINTED TO DISTRESS AND ABUSE. ARAFAT HAS PROTESTED, AS HAS WALID JUMBLATT (IN PARIS). MUSLIMS ARE ALSO NATURALLY ALARMED, SINCE THEIR MILITIAS ARE MORE OR LESS DEFEATED IN BEIRUT AND THE KATAEB ARE AT LARGE.
5. JUMBLATT AND ARAFAT ARE THE MOST LIKELY PROPRIETORS OF THE ARMS FOUND SO FAR IN WEST BEIRUT. I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT ABUSES OCCURRED. INDEED IT WOULD BE ASTONISHING IF THEY DID NOT IN AN OPERATION OF THIS KIND. I HAVE HEARD OF NO INJURY TO BRITISH SUBJECTS OR DAMAGE TO BRITISH PROPERTY.
6. THE OBJECT OF THIS RATISSAGE SEEMS TO BE TWO-FOLD:
  - (A) TO STAMP OUT THE HORNET'S NEST OF WEST BEIRUT
  - (B) TO LET THE LEBANESE ARMY ASSERT ITSELF.
 I AM DOUBTFUL OF THE SUCCESS OF (A). THE AUTHORITIES MUST HAVE FOUND TONS OF ARMS AND AMMUNITION, BUT THERE MUST BE MORE IN THE SORT OF PLACE THAT WEST BEIRUT HAS BEEN FOR THE LAST EIGHT YEARS. IN (B), I SUSPECT THEY ARE SUCCEEDING.
7. ON BALANCE, I CAN SEE NOTHING BUT GOOD SO FAR IN THE EXERCISE, PROVIDED THAT IT IS KEPT UNDER REASONABLE CONTROL. IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN DONE A LONG TIME (7 YEARS) AGO.

ROBERTS....

(REPEATED AS REQUESTED)

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