

MIDDLE EAST: ADVANCE COPIES 15

IMMEDIATE

PS
PS/MR LUCE
PS/PUS
SIR J LEAHY
MR EGERTON.
SIR J BULLARD
HD/NENAD
HD/MED
HD/UND

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CABINET OFFICE D10

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CONFIDENTIAL

FM BEIRUT 301130Z JUN 83

TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 352 OF 30 JUNE 1983

AND TO IMMEDIATE MODUK, TEL AVIV, DAMASCUS, WASHINGTON

AND TO ROUTINE AMMAN, CAIRO, JEDDA, PARIS, ROME

SAVING TO OTHER ME POSTS, UKREP BRUSSELS, UKMIS NEW YORK

MY TELNO 343. LEBANON/ISRAEL AGREEMENT

1. HABIB SAW ME AND MY FRENCH AND ITALIAN COLLEAGUES ON 30 JUNE.
DRAPER AND FAIRBANKS WERE PRESENT. PALMER ACCOMPANIED ME.

2. HABIB BELIEVED THAT A PARTIAL ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL WAS
INEVITABLE. THE DECISION COULD BE TAKEN AS SOON AS THIS WEEKEND.
HE SAID THAT THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT DID NOT LIKE PARTIAL
WITHDRAWAL BECAUSE IT WOULD PROLONG THE PRESENT PARTITION OF
LEBANON AND MIGHT HASTEN THE DETERIORATION OF THE INTER-COMMUNAL
CONSENSUS. BUT I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT, AS THE BBC HAVE TODAY
(30 JUNE) REPORTED, THE LEBANESE REFUSE TO DISCUSS THE SUBJECT.
(CF ALSO MY TELNO 349).

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3. HABIB ASKED US ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR THE MNF DEPLOYMENT IN THE CHOUF FOLLOWING AN ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM THE AREA - WHICH THE ISRAELIS COULD DO VERY QUICKLY ONCE A DECISION HAD BEEN TAKEN. THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR ARGUED VERY STRONGLY FOR THE EARLY DEPLOYMENT OF THE LEBANESE ARMY BACKED BY THE MNF INTO ALEY. THE SYMBOLIC PRESENCE OF THE MNF WOULD HAVE AN IMPORTANT PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECT AND WOULD CREATE A NEW AND PROBABLY BETTER POLITICAL SITUATION IN THAT TROUBLED AREA.

4. HABIB WAS NOT CLEAR WHETHER THE LEBANESE REQUEST TO THE MNF PARTICIPANTS TO DEPLOY THEIR CONTINGENTS IN THE CHOUF (PARA 4 OF MY TELNO 315) WAS A FORMAL REQUEST OR NOT. HOWEVER WE AGREED THAT AT THE VERY LEAST THE LEBANESE HAD PUT US ON NOTICE AND THAT IT WOULD BE WISE FOR GOVERNMENTS TO PREPARE THEIR POSITIONS SOONER RATHER THAN LATER.

5. F C O PLEASE PASS TO SAVING ADDRESSEES.

ROBERTS

BT

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