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CONFIDENTIAL

FM WASHINGTON 222316Z JUL 83

TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 2081 OF 22 JULY

INFO IMMEDIATE BEIRUT, TEL AVIV, ROUTINE DAMASCUS, AMMAN, JEDDA, CAIRO, UKMIS NEW YORK

INFO SAVING PARIS ROME MOSCOW

LEBANON

SUMMARY

1. HABIB IS RETURNING TO PRIVATE LIFE. MCFARLANE IS TO REPLACE HIM.

DETAIL

2. AFTER HIS TALKS WITH GEMAYEL TODAY, PRESIDENT REAGAN ANNOUNCED THE APPOINTMENT OF BUD MCFARLANE AS HIS SPECIAL ENVOY FOR THE MIDDLE EAST IN SUCCESSION TO HABIB WHO, HE SAID, HAD QUOTE OBLIGATIONS TO RETURN TO PRIVATE LIFE UNQUOTE. MCFARLANE IS TO RETAIN HIS POST AS DEPUTY NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISER.

3. FAIRBANKS (STATE DEPARTMENT) HAS TOLD US THAT HE AND MCFARLANE EXPECT TO LEAVE FOR VISITS TO THE MIDDLE EAST WITHIN THE NEXT WEEK OR TEN DAYS. WE HAVE BEEN TOLD, IN CONFIDENCE, THAT DRAPER IS TO TAKE LEAVE AND THAT IT IS NOT YET CLEAR WHETHER HE WILL RETAIN ANY RESPONSIBILITY FOR LEBANON.

4. HABIB HAS BEEN ANXIOUS FOR SOME TIME TO BE RELIEVED OF HIS RESPONSIBILITIES, PARTLY FOR HEALTH REASONS AND PARTLY BECAUSE HIS USEFULNESS IS LIMITED BY THE SYRIAN REFUSAL TO RECEIVE HIM. THE APPOINTMENT OF MCFARLANE HAS NEVERTHELESS COME AS SOMETHING OF A SURPRISE AND IS BEING INTERPRETED AS AN INDICATION OF THE PRESIDENT'S DISSATISFACTION WITH SHULTZ'S HANDLING OF LEBANON AND DETERMINATION TO GIVE NEW IMPETUS TO MOVES TO SECURE THE WITHDRAWAL OF ALL FOREIGN FORCES. VELIOTES, HOWEVER, REFUTED THIS AT A BACKGROUND PRESS BRIEFING THIS EVENING: MCFARLANE HAD BEEN SHULTZ'S PERSONAL CHOICE TO SUCCEED HABIB.

5. MCFARLANE HAS BEEN FOLLOWING MIDDLE EAST DEVELOPMENTS CLOSELY AND ENJOYS THE CONFIDENCE OF THE PRESIDENT. BUT THERE REMAINS A QUESTION MARK OVER HIS RELATIONS WITH THE ISRAELIS: ON HIS LAST VISIT TO ISRAEL AFTER THE RAID ON THE IRAQUI NUCLEAR REACTOR HE HAD A WELL-PUBLICISED ROW WITH BEGIN.

F C O PASS SAVING TO: PARIS ROME MOSCOW
WRIGHT

MIDDLE EAST

STANDARD

REPEATED AS REQUESTED

ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION

ARAB/ISRAEL DISPUTE

- NENAD MAED
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- ECD MR EGERTON
- WED MR THOMAS
- RID MR HAYES
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