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TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TEL NO 792 OF 8 SEPTEMBER 1983

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YOUR TELNO 434: **LEBANON**

1. WHEN I SAW THE SECRETARY GENERAL THIS MORNING I ASKED HIM WHAT HE THOUGHT OF THE LEBANESE SITUATION WHICH WAS OBVIOUSLY DRAMATICALLY BAD AND COULD GET STILL WORSE. THE SG SAID THAT HE WAS EXTREMELY CONCERNED ABOUT THE SITUATION BUT FELT THAT IN A SITUATION WHICH RESEMBLED CIVIL WAR THERE WAS NOT MUCH BASIS FOR EITHER HIMSELF OR THE SECURITY COUNCIL TO INTERVENE. IN ANY CASE HE WAS IN THE DARK ABOUT WHAT THE AMERICANS WERE DOING. HE WAS PREPARED TO CONTRIBUTE IN ANY WAY HE COULD AND FELT THAT HE SHOULD BE INITIATING CONSULTATIONS FIRST WITH THE RUSSIANS, THE MNF CONTRIBUTORS AND THE SYRIANS. BUT HE WOULD HATE TO DUPLICATE OR INTERFERE WITH SOMETHING THAT MCFARLANE WAS ALREADY DOING. I SAID THAT I SHOULD BE GLAD TO KEEP IN TOUCH WITH HIM NOT LEAST BECAUSE OF THE PRESENCE OF BRITISH TROOPS IN LEBANON THOUGH, PERSONALLY SPEAKING, I COULD SEE NO VALUE IN A COUNCIL MEETING.

2. UNDER SECRETARY GENERAL URGUHART, WHOM I SAW ON THE WAY IN, SAID THAT HE HAD HEARD FROM THE AMERICANS THAT MCFARLANE HAD SEEN KHADDAM IN DAMASCUS WHO HAD SAID THAT HE MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN A CEASEFIRE IN CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES. THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, HOWEVER, WHICH INCLUDED A BALANCE IN BEIRUT, AN AGREEMENT WITH THE DRUZE, THE WITHDRAWAL OF SOME PHALANGIST POSITIONS AND INTENSIVE NEGOTIATIONS FOR NATIONAL RECONCILIATION EXCLUDING SAEB SALAM AND GHASSAN TUENI, WERE UNLIKELY TO BE ACCEPTABLE TO GEMAYEL. HIS INFORMATION AT THAT STAGE WAS THAT THE SAUDIS HAD GIVEN UP THEIR MEDIATION EFFORT, THOUGH I HAVE SINCE SEEN WASHINGTON TEL NO 2509. HE ALSO COMMENTED THAT BY ATTACKING THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT FOR INVOKING THE SYRIAN THREAT THE ISRAELIS SEEMED TO BE PLAYING THE SYRIAN GAME.

3. I AM SEEING TUENI TOMORROW MORNING AND MRS KIRKPATRICK HAS CALLED A MEETING OF MNF TROOP CONTRIBUTORS WITH HIM, ALSO TOMORROW MORNING. HE TOLD THE FRENCH CHARGE D'AFFAIRES THIS MORNING THAT IF THERE WAS A CEASEFIRE HE WOULD COME TO THE COUNCIL TO SEE WHETHER AGREEMENT COULD BE REACHED ON DEPLOYING UN TROOPS INTO THE CHOUF TO MAINTAIN THAT CEASEFIRE.

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4. THIS SUBJECT WAS RAISED AT THE LUNCH WHICH THE THEN GAVE TODAY FOR THE SECRETARY GENERAL. THE LATTER SAID THAT THE PROBLEM OF THE LEBANESE WAS A GOOD DEAL MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE KOREAN AIRLINER. THE AMBASSADORS OF THE TEN APPEARED TO CONCUR. THE SECRETARY GENERAL SAID HE WAS CLOSELY IN TOUCH WITH THE AMERICANS AND REPORTED THAT PRINCE BANDAR WAS AGAIN IN PLAY.

THOMSON

MIDDLE EAST

STANDARD

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