

CONFIDENTIAL

TELEGRAM NO. 2545 OF 10 SEPTEMBER FROM WASHINGTON

MY TELNO 2531: LEBANON

1. Mack (State Department) told us today that an agreement might be a little closer as a result of Prince Bandar's further talks in Damascus on the Saudi 4-point plan. The main outstanding issue was the role of the LAF in supervising any security arrangements in the Chouf. A venue for the meeting between Gemayel and other leaders had yet to be agreed. Mcfarlane hopes to see Bandar shortly in either Larnaca or Beirut.

 2. The Americans were still trying in both Damascus and Beirut to secure agreement to a local ceasefire in Qabr Chamoun and Deir El Qamar. The ICRC had sent medical supplies to Deir El Qamar but the Druze were not allowing food into the village while Qabr Chamoun remained under attack. The Americans now estimate that there are 20,000 - 25,000 Christians in Deir El Qamar.

 3. Beirut had again been relatively quiet. There had been no change in US military deployments. The State Department have no confirmation of reported massacres of Christians at Bireh (North of Deir El Qamar) and Magdel Barouk.

 4. Mack said that Craxi had suggested to the US Ambassador in Rome that if the MNF sustained any more casualties it should respond as a joint force. This seemed a sensible idea, but Mack did not know what additional command and control arrangements would be required in Beirut to implement it.
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