

5
136
FOBONN 063/08

00 BONN
GRS 660
SECRET/ECLIPSE
DEDIP
FM FCO 081950Z NOV 83
TO IMMEDIATE BONN
TELEGRAM NUMBER 559 OF 8 NOVEMBER.
FOLLOWING TELEGRAM NOW REPEATED TO YOU AT REQUEST OF DEPT:-
SECRET/ECLIPSE
DEDIP

DESKBY 081400Z WASHINGTON
FM FCO 081346Z NOV 83
TO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON
TELEGRAM NUMBER 1870 OF 8 NOVEMBER
INFO IMMEDIATE PARIS, ROME,
INFO PRIORITY BEIRUT, TEL AVIV, DAMASCUS
MY TELNO 1862, AND YOUR TELNO 3335.

LEBANON: POSSIBLE US RETALIATION IN COLLUSION WITH ISRAEL.

1. YOU ARE BEING SENT RELEVANT EXTRACTS OF THE PRIME MINISTER AND MY TALKS WITH DAM ON 7 NOVEMBER ON POSSIBLE RETALIATION IN LEBANON BY THE US. THOUGH WE TAXED HIM HARD AND POINTED TO THE EXTREME DIFFICULTY OF IDENTIFYING INDIVIDUALS AT THE ROOT OF THE 23 OCTOBER AND 4 NOVEMBER ATTACKS, DAM COULD NOT SAY WHETHER RETALIATION WOULD OCCUR OR NOT.
2. IN A FURTHER MESSAGE TO THE PRIME MINISTER DATED 6 NOVEMBER (TEXT OF WHICH IS BEING SENT YOU) PRESIDENT REAGAN SAID THAT THE US HAD NOW IDENTIFIED THE LIKELY CULPRITS. DECISIONS ON THE APPROPRIATE US RESPONSE WOULD TAKE ACCOUNT OF ALL THE LIKELY CONSEQUENCES, AND MIGHT BE TAKEN AS EARLY AS 7 NOVEMBER. THE PRESIDENT PROMISED TO BE IN TOUCH WITH THE PRIME MINISTER SHORTLY AFTER A REVIEW MEETING PLANNED FOR THAT DAY. NO FURTHER MESSAGE HAS YET BEEN RECEIVED HERE.
3. I AM SERIOUSLY CONCERNED THAT, PERHAPS AS A CONSEQUENCE OF THE TYRE ATROCITY WHICH CAUSED EAGLEBURGER TO EXTEND HIS STAY IN ISRAEL, THE AMERICANS MAY REVERT TO THE EARLIER STATE DEPARTMENT PREFERENCE (LEAKED TO US HERE BY THE US EMBASSY ON 2 NOVEMBER - PLEASE PROTECT) FOR AN ISRAELI COMMANDO ACTION AGAINST ISLAMIC SHIA ELEMENTS IN THE BEQAA, IN WHICH THE AMERICANS WOULD BE SEEN TO BE USING ISRAEL AS THEIR AGENTS; OR, WORSE STILL, A JOINT ACTION IN WHICH THE ISRAELIS TOOK ENTEBBE-TYPE ACTION BY LAND AGAINST THE CULPRITS, WHILE THE US PROVIDED AIR STRIKES OR POSSIBLE NAVAL BOMBARDMENT OF STRICTLY UNRELATED TARGETS, EG SYRIAN GUN EMPLACEMENTS ON THE METN. IN OTHER WORDS, US RETALIATORY ACTION AS A PRECISE SURGICAL OPERATION - ASSUMING THAT THE TARGET WAS DEMONSTRABLY THE PERPETRATORS OF THE 23 OCTOBER RAID - WOULD BE ONE THING, ALTHOUGH THE MOMENT FOR IT MAY HAVE PASSED, BUT COLLUSIVE US/ISRAELI ACTION WOULD BE ANOTHER, AND FROM THE WESTERN POINT OF VIEW MUCH MORE SERIOUS IN ITS LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL EFFECTS.
4. I SHOULD BE GRATEFUL IF YOU COULD TAKE THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE OPPORTUNITY, PERHAPS WITH MCFARLANE AT THE NSC, TO PLACE ON RECORD THE FOLLOWING POINTS:-
 - (A) WE KEENLY AWAIT PRESIDENT REAGAN'S FOLLOW-UP MESSAGE TO THE PRIME MINISTER ON THE FINDINGS OF THE INTERDEPARTMENTAL GROUP ABOUT WHO WAS BEHIND THE 23 OCTOBER OUTRAGES.
 - (B) IF THESE FINDINGS SUGGEST THAT A CLEAR-CUT SURGICAL OPERATION AGAINST EG HUSSAIN MUSAWI MAY BE POSSIBLE, THAT WOULD BE ONE THING, THOUGH IN LEBANON NOW IT MUST BE LIKE FINDING A NEEDLE IN A HAYSTACK.
 - (C) A US OPERATION WHICH WAS NOT (NOT) VISIBLY SURGICAL WOULD BE WIDELY REPRESENTED AS DISPROPORTIONATE AND VENGEFUL.
 - (D) ANY JOINT RETALIATORY ACT BY THE US WITH THE ISRAELIS, OR ONE IN WHICH ISRAEL APPEARED TO BE ACTING AS A US AGENT, WOULD HOWEVER HAVE EVEN MORE SERIOUS EFFECTS THROUGHOUT THE REGION. IT WOULD FURTHER SHAKE THE CONFIDENCE OF MODERATE ARAB STATES IN THE US ROLES IN LEBANON, AND IN THE MIDDLE EAST GENERALLY: IT WOULD UNDERMINE THE POSITION IN LEBANON OF ALL THE MNF CONTRIBUTORS, AND LAY THEM OPEN TO COUNTER-RETALIATION, PROBABLY WITH THE SUPPORT OF LEBANESE MUSLIM ELEMENTS WHO HAVE HITHERTO REFRAINED FROM SUPPORTING MUSAWI OR THE LEBANESE HIZBULLAHIS; AND IT WOULD GIVE THE RUSSIANS AND SYRIANS GROUNDS FOR THEIR ASSERTIONS OF AN ANTI-ARAB CONSPIRACY, ETC.
 - (E) FURTHERMORE IT WOULD COMPOUND OUR OWN DIFFICULTIES, ESPECIALLY OUR DOMESTIC ONES, IN CONTINUING TO ARGUE THAT OUR MNF PRESENCE IN LEBANON WAS JUSTIFIED AND FULFILLING A USEFUL ROLE. IF THERE ARE NO EARLY PROSPECTS OF NATIONAL RECONCILIATION, THE ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN MNF BECOMES INCREASINGLY QUESTIONABLE. THE SAME WOULD APPLY TO A MAJOR BREAKDOWN OF THE CEASEFIRE.
5. PLEASE REPEAT YOUR REPLY TO BONN (FOR SECRETARY OF STATE'S PARTY)

•
HOWE

NNNN
L

SENT 2133Z/08 MBW