

*Minister*

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TO IMMEDIATE BONN

TELEGRAM NUMBER 560 OF 8 NOVEMBER

FOR SECRETARY OF STATE'S PARTY

FCO TELS NO 1870 AND 563 TO WASHINGTON AND TO PARIS RESPECTIVELY:  
LEBANON

1. WHEN REPLIES TO THESE TELEGRAMS COME IN, AND IN CASE THE US SHOULD TAKE ACTION IN LEBANON, IT MAY BE HELPFUL TO HAVE SOME SUGGESTIONS ABOUT THE PRESS LINE WHICH MIGHT BE TAKEN IN CASE OF RETALIATION, AND ABOUT OTHER OPTIONS OPEN TO US.
2. FOLLOWING ARE SUGGESTED ELEMENTS FOR A PRESS LINE DEPENDING VERY MUCH OF COURSE ON THE CIRCUMSTANCES: WE HAVE DISCUSSED LEBANON EXHAUSTIVELY WITH THE AMERICANS SINCE THE ATTACK ON THE MARINES ON 23 OCTOBER. WE HAVE MADE IT CLEAR THAT, WITH ALL OUR SYMPATHY FOR THEM IN THE BARBAROUS ATTACK WHICH THEY SUFFERED, WE MUST NEVERTHELESS OPPOSE ANY MILITARY ACTION WHICH WOULD FURTHER RAISE TENSION AND WHICH CANNOT BE JUSTIFIED IN TERMS OF SELF DEFENCE. WE WERE NOT ASKED TO APPROVE THE PARTICULAR ACTION THEY HAVE NOW TAKEN.
3. (IF US ACTION SPILLS OVER AND CAUSES CASUALTIES, COMPLICATIONS WITH OTHER PARTIES) WE GREATLY REGRET THE BLOODSHED CAUSED AND CALL URGENTLY ON (THE OTHER PARTIES) TO SHOW RESTRAINT. THE POSITION IN LEBANON IS EXCEPTIONALLY DANGEROUS, AND THE WHOLE EFFORT TO BRING PEACE TO LEBANON AND MAKE RECONCILIATION AND RECONSTRUCTION POSSIBLE WILL BE AT RISK IF THE ESCALATION OF VIOLENCE CONTINUES. THE CYCLE MUST BE BROKEN.
4. (IF ISRAEL INVOLVED) WE ARE DETERMINED TO AVOID BEING DRAWN INTO COLLABORATION WITH ANY OF THE OCCUPYING FORCES IN LEBANON, AND REPEAT OUR VIEW THAT A NECESSARY CONDITION FOR LEBANESE RECONCILIATION IS THE WITHDRAWAL OF ALL FOREIGN FORCES FROM THE COUNTRY.
5. THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS COULD BE CONSIDERED, WITH OR WITHOUT PREVIOUS DISCUSSION WITH THE AMERICANS:
  - A) WITHDRAWAL FROM THE MNF ON THE GROUNDS THAT THE RECONCILIATION PROCESS HAS BEEN BLOCKED AND THE TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE FORCE ARE NO LONGER REALISTIC.
  - B) (AS A MODIFICATION) WITHDRAWAL OF BRITFORLEB TO CYPRUS, WITH A STATEMENT THAT WE COULD BE READY TO RETURN IF CERTAIN CONDITIONS ARE FULFILLED.
  - C) A REQUEST TO THE AMERICANS TO VACATE THE BRITISH EMBASSY ON THE GROUNDS OF THE SECURITY OF OUR STAFF: THIS WOULD SERIOUSLY EMBARRASS THE AMERICANS, WHO WOULD NOT HAVE ADEQUATE ACCOMMODATION IN THE AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE WHICH AT PRESENT HOUSES SOME OF THEIR FACILITIES.
6. THERE ARE OBVIOUS OBJECTIONS IN TERMS OF OUR RELATIONS WITH THE LEBANESE, THE ARABS AND THE AMERICANS TO ANY OF THE ABOVE OPTIONS, AND CAREFUL THOUGHT NEEDS TO BE GIVEN TO THEM. IN PARTICULAR (C) LOOKS RATHER PETTY ALTHOUGH THE SECURITY RISK IS OF COURSE A VERY REAL ONE.

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