

M.R.
PRIME MINISTER

The Duty Clerk has spoken to John Coles about the attached who is aware of the situation. He is also sending a copy to the Foreign Office.

Barbara
19 November 1983

mt.
Return to John C.
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- A.T. + Resident Clerk, fro interned at 2300
- ATC also told.
- mistaked to cheques at 2305
- fro sent copy to Washington Amb. 'Top secret + Personal'

AGE
Lebanon

LEBANON : SITREP 1100Z 17 NOVEMBER 1983

1. Death toll in Israeli air raid on Bekaa Valley (15 November) approximately 30 Lebanese Shia and Iranian Revolutionary Guards, with about 80 wounded. Target was two camps used by Iranian-backed Lebanese extremist militia, Islamic Amal, prime suspects for Tyre and Beirut bomb attacks on Israeli, US and French troops.

2. Americans have stressed no US planes involved. State Department spokesman stated (16 November) there had been no consultation or co-ordination between US and Israelis. He refused to comment on whether or not US approved of the Israeli raid. Asked about possible US retaliation, the spokesman quoted Mr Shultz's earlier statement that the Administration would not discuss the matter further in public.

Beirut/Chouf

3. Night of 16/17 November saw heaviest shelling since ceasefire began. Druze militiamen in Chouf apparently shelled Christian East Beirut and airport and clashed with Lebanese army. Reports on 6 dead. Attempts are being made to patch up the ceasefire: the 4-man Ceasefire Security Committee met yesterday (16 November) and will meet again today with BRITFORLEB providing guard as usual.

4. Increased violence underlines need for further progress in reconciliation talks now in recess until late November/early December. Syrian Foreign Minister, Khaddam, currently in Beirut to prepare meeting between President Gemayel and President Assad (postponed due to latter's illness). Next step will be visits by President Gemayel to MNF and Arab capitals. Commission preparing second session of Geneva talks has made encouraging progress: some agreement on difficult subject of constitutional reform. We and other MNF partners keeping up pressure on parties to reconvene talks as soon as possible.

5. PLO/Tripoli. Arafat's PLO loyalists retreated to Tripoli and

redployed heavy weapons in town, following fall of last stronghold, Baddawi refugee camp, on 16 November. Leader of Syrian-backed PLO rebel forces has called on Arafat to surrender but has said that rebel force will not enter Tripoli. Arafat has apparently told his men to cease fighting, but has refused to leave until safety of his troops assured. Ten issued statement (9 November) deploring violence and reiterating commitment to a solution to Arab/Israel problem including the Palestinians' right to self-determination.