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TO PRIORITY F C O .

TELEGRAM NUMBER 664 OF 23 NOVEMBER 1983

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UKMIS GENEVA, UKMIS NEW YORK, MODUK, CBFC
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cc New Delhi

NY TELNO 643: LEBANON INTERNAL: PRESIDENT GEMAYEL'S INDEPENDENCE
DAY SPEECH

1. PRESIDENT GEMAYEL'S ADDRESS TO THE NATION ON 22 NOVEMBER
WAS NOTABLE FOR ITS LACK OF ANY REFERENCE TO NATIONAL RECONCILIATION.
HE CONCENTRATED INSTEAD ON WHAT HE CALLED 'THE KEY PROBLEM OF THE
OCCUPATION'. HE SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD SET ITSELF 3 AIMS:
ESTABLISHING NATIONAL WILL TO END THE OCCUPATION; WORKING WITH THE
MAJOR POWERS ESPECIALLY THE US FOR THE WITHDRAWAL OF ISRAELI FORCES;
AND ACHIEVING AN UNDERSTANDING WITH SYRIA WHICH WOULD LEAD TO THE
WITHDRAWAL OF ITS FORCES. HENCE THE INTERNATIONAL CONTACTS IN THE
WAKE OF GENEVA 1.

2. THE THRUST OF GEMAYEL'S SPEECH SUPPORTS THE GENERAL VIEW
HERE THAT THE LEBANESE ESTABLISHMENT HAVE TAKEN A STEP BACKWARDS
FROM GRASPING THE NETTLE OF DOMESTIC RECONCILIATION. SEVERAL
INDICATIONS ARE REACHING US THAT INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE ARE SLIPPING
BACK TOWARDS THE 'LIBERATION BEFORE RECONCILIATION' FORMULA - NOT
LEAST BECAUSE THIS AGAIN PUTS OFF THE EVIL DAY WHEN FACTION LEADERS
WILL HAVE TO NERVE THEMSELVES TO MAKE CONCESSIONS. THE PROCESS IS
REFLECTED IN THE REDUCED SENSE OF URGENCY HERE FOR THE CONVENING
OF GENEVA 2.

3. PRESIDENT GEMAYEL'S VISIT TO LONDON (YOUR TELNO 495), WILL
PRESENT A USEFUL OPPORTUNITY TO TRY TO GET RENEWED STEAM BEHIND
THE RECONCILIATION EXERCISE.

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