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FM BEIRUT 281210Z NOV 83

TO PRIORITY F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 681 OF 28 NOVEMBER 1983

INFO ROUTINE WASHINGTON, ROME, PARIS, DAMASCUS, TEL AVIV, NEW DELHI

YOUR TELNO 507: PRESIDENT GEMAYEL'S VISIT

1. THE PRESIDENT AND FOREIGN MINISTER ARE NOW IN ROME ON THEIR WAY TO WASHINGTON. THEY ARE UNLIKELY TO RETURN BEFORE THE END OF THIS WEEK. I HAVE ACCORDINGLY TOLD THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE THAT OUR MINISTERS ARE LIKELY TO BE AVAILABLE IN THE WEEK BEGINNING 12 DECEMBER, BUT NOT IN THAT BEGINNING 19 DEC: AND ASKED HIM TO TELEGRAPH THIS TO THE PRESIDENT SO THAT WE CAN GET ON WITH FIXING DEFINITE DATES.

2. I BELIEVE IT WOULD HELP CLINCH THE VISIT IF WE COULD OFFER A DEFINITE TIME OR TIMES WHEN THE PM COULD RECEIVE THE PRESIDENT.

3. I THINK GEMAYEL'S WISH ON REFLECTION TO MAKE A MORE LEISURELY VISIT IS REAL. HE DID NOT REFUSE TO COME ON 30 NOV OUT OF PIQUE. HE MAY HAVE BEEN ADVISED THAT HE WOULD DO WELL TO SEEK THE SYMPATHY OF THE BRITISH PUBLIC AND PRESS AS WELL AS OF OUR MINISTERS (HE MAY HAVE NOTICE THAT THIS IS WHAT JUMBLATT IS PLANNING).

4. ON THE PROGRAMME, I AM NOT SURE WHETHER OR NOT HE WILL NOW EXPECT TO SEE THE QUEEN. HE SOUGHT REASSURANCE FROM ME WHEN I PRESENTED CREDENTIALS THAT THE WORKING VISIT HE THEN ENVISAGED WOULD NOT (REPEAT NOT) INVOLVE THE QUEEN. BUT HE MAY HAVE BEEN EMPHASISING THAT HE WAS NOT SUGGESTING A STATE VISIT: AND AT THAT TIME HE WAS THINKING OF A 24 HOUR STOPOVER ONLY. THE POSSIBILITY OF HE SEEING THE QUEEN HAS NOW BEEN AIRED IN THE PRESS HERE, ALONG WITH OTHER SPECULATIONS ABOUT HIS VISIT. I SUGGEST THAT I BE INSTRUCTED, WHEN WE HAVE DATES TO PUT TO HIM, TO SOUND HIM OUT INDIRECTLY AND WITHOUT COMMITMENT ON WHETHER HE WOULD LIKE TO BE INVITED TO CALL BRIEFLY ON THE QUEEN IF SHE WAS AVAILABLE.

5. FOR THE REST OF THE PROGRAMME HE IS NOT EXPECTING TO SEE THE PM FOR MORE THAN AN HOUR OR SO, THOUGH I AM SURE HE WOULD BE DELIGHTED IF SHE COULD OFFER HIM A MEAL. HE WILL ALSO PROBABLY EXPECT AN HOUR EACH WITH THE F AND C SECRETARY AND THE DEFENCE SECRETARY, THOUGH THESE MEETINGS COULD BE RUN TOGETHER IF NECESSARY. I RECOMMEND THAT HMG OFFER HIM A LUNCH: IF THE PM CANNOT HOST THIS HERSELF IT WOULD HELP IF WE OFFERED A SUITABLE EXCUSE EG HER NEED TO PREPARE FOR PM'S QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE. THE REST OF THE

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/PROGRAMME

~~John~~ We could possibly do lunch on
14 Dec if the PM so wished, though
she has a very busy morning.
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PROGRAMME COULD PERHAPS BE PADDED OUT WITH THINGS LIKE RECEPTIONS BY MIDDLE EAST MPS AT THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT (COULD LORDS DENMAN AND SELSDON STEP IN IF IPU CANNOT HELP?), A PRESS CONFERENCE, INTERVIEWS WITH JOURNALISTS, AND PERHAPS SOME INVOLVEMT WITH INDUSTRY/THE CITY (LUNCH AT THE CBI/BANK OF ENGLAND?) - THOUGH THERE IS NO POINT IN BEATING THE EXPORT DRUM FOR LEBANON AT THE PRESENT JUNCTURE.

6. THE FOREIGN MINISTER TOLD ME LAST WEEK THAT GEMAYEL WAS NOT (REPEAT NOT) LINKING HIS PROPOSED JOURNEY TO LONDON WITH THE NEXT SESSION OF THE GENEVA TALKS, THE DATE FOR WHICH WAS VERY UNCERTAIN.

MIERS

MULTINATIONAL FORCE IN LEBANON (MNF)
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DEFENCE DEPT
FUSD
NEWS DEPT
UND
NAD
WED
SED
ECD(E)
FINANCE DEPT
PROTOCOL DEPT
PS

PS/LADY YOUNG
PS/MR LUCE
PS/FUS
SIR J BULLARD
SIR J LEAHY
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2
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