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FLASH F C O  
FM BEIRUT 040750Z DEC 83  
TO FLASH F C O  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 693 OF 4 DECEMBER 1983  
INFO IMMEDIATE ATHENS (FOR SECRETARY OF STATES PARTY), MODUK,  
WASHINGTON AND BRITFORLEB  
INFO PRIORITY TEL AVIV, DAMASCUS

LEBANON

1. COMD BRITFORLEB (AS HE HAS REPORTED TO MOD) WAS TOLD EARLY THIS MORNING BY THE AMERICANS THAT THEY WOULD BE ATTACKING POSITIONS IN THE BEKAA AT 0730 LOCAL TIME.
2. THIS WILL INEVITABLY BE SEEN HERE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CLOSER COOPERATION AGREED BETWEEN THE ISRAELIS AND THE U.S. DURING SHAMIR'S WASHINGTON VISIT. IT MAY ALSO BE SEEN AS A FIRST MOVE BY THE AMERICANS TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM OF SYRIAN WITHDRAWAL QUOTE WITHIN ONE MONTH UNQUOTE TO WHICH ALLUSION WAS APPARENTLY MADE DURING GEMAYELS VISIT TO WASHINGTON.
3. THE LOCAL MEDIA IS REPORTING THAT ISRAELI AIRCRAFT HAVE ALSO MADE STRIKES THIS MORNING IN THE MOUNTAINS ABOVE BEIRUT, LOSING TWO AIRCRAFT. IF THIS IS TRUE (AND NOT A MISTAKEN ACCOUNT OF THE U.S. RAID) THIS WILL REINFORCE THE IDEA THAT THE US ATTACK HAS BEEN MADE IN COLLUSION WITH THE ISRAELIS (WHO CERTAINLY DID MAKE ATTACKS OF THIS KIND YESTERDAY).
4. I RECOMMEND THAT WE SHOULD DISSOCIATE THE UK AS FIRMLY AS POSSIBLE FRLH THIS US ACTION, IN TERMS AT LEAST AS CRITICAL AS THOSE WE USED ABOUT THE FRENCH ATTACK. THE US ATTACK SEEMS DIRECTLY CONTRARY TO WHAT WEINBERGER TOLD US IN WASHINGTON. AND IF IT IS INDEED PART OF A STRATEGY TO PUT DIRECT U.S. MILITARY PRESSURE ON SYRIA THIS MUST SURELY RAISE A QUESTION MARK OVER THE

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TERMS ON WHICH WE CAN CONTINUE TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH THE U.S. IN THE MNF. (ONLY THIS MORNING FOR INSTANCE BRITFORLEB HAVE BEEN ASKED TO GUARD AN EMERGENCY MEETING OF THE CEASEFIRE COMMITTEE TO DISCUSS REOPENING OF THE AIRPORT: THIS MUST NOW BE JEOPARDISED.)

MIERS  
BT

MULTINATIONAL FORCE IN LEBANON (MNF)  
LIMITED  
NENAD  
MED  
DEFENCE DEPT  
PUSD  
NEWS DEPT  
UND  
NAD  
WED  
SED  
ECD(E)  
FINANCE DEPT  
PROTOCOL DEPT  
PS

PS/LADY YOUNG  
PS/MR LUCE  
PS/PUS  
SIR J BULLARD  
SIR J LEAHY  
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MR MACINNES  
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