

CONFIDENTIAL

GRS 630

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FM WASHINGTON 041818Z NOV 83

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELNO 3653 OF 4 DEC 83

AND TO CABINET OFFICE (FOR ASSESSMENTS STAFF)

INFO PRIORITY TEL AVIV AMMAN BEIRUT CAIRO

MY TELNOS 3579 AND 3608 AND TELECON RENWICK/LONG :

US/ISRAELI STRATEGIC COOPERATION.

1. EAGLEBURGER SAID ON ABC TV ON 4 DECEMBER THAT THE US AIM HAD NOT BEEN TO SEEK A QUID PRO QUO FROM THE ISRAELIS BUT TO DEVELOP INSTITUTIONAL UNDERPINNING FOR THE RELATIONSHIP AND CREATE A FRAMEWORK FOR REGULAR DISCUSSION OF POLITICO/MILITARY ISSUES. THE OBJECTIVE WAS TO INCREASE ISRAEL'S ABILITY TO HELP STABILISE THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST. HE HAD EXPECTED MODERATE ARABS TO COMPLAIN AND CAREFUL NOTE SHOULD BE TAKEN OF WHAT THEY SAID. BUT THERE WAS A DOUBLE STANDARD: THEY MAINTAINED RELATIONS WITH OTHER ARAB STATES WHICH WERE HOSTILE TO THE US. HE REMAINED CONVINCED THAT CLOSE US/ISRAELI RELATIONS WERE IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE US AND OF PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

2. IN PRIVATE EAGLEBURGER ARGUES THAT A STRONG US/ISRAELI RELATIONSHIP IS NECESSARY TO GIVE THE US LEVERAGE IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND THAT PAST EXPERIENCE SHOWS THAT SUCH A RELATIONSHIP IS NOT AN OBSTACLE TO US DEALINGS WITH THE ARABS.

3. SOME US OFFICIALS ARE SUGGESTING THAT THERE WILL BE MORE FORM THAN CONTENT IN STRATEGIC COOPERATION. WEINBERGER ACQUIESCED ONLY RELUCTANTLY IN THE DECISION TO MEET ISRAELI REQUESTS WITHOUT SEEKING A QUID PRO QUO, AND THERE HAVE BEEN SUGGESTIONS THAT THE PENTAGON WANT TO MOVE SLOWLY ON PRACTICAL COOPERATION WITH THE ISRAELI'S. THERE WILL BE DIFFICULT NEGOTIATIONS TO DEVISE A SATISFACTORY USAGE AGREEMENT TO PERMIT RESUMPTION OF THE SUPPLY OF CLUSTER MUNITIONS. BUT WE WOULD EXPECT THESE TO BE MADE AVAILABLE IN THE END.

4. SOME ADDITIONAL DETAILS EMERGED DURING A BRIEFING OF WESTERN DIPLOMATS LAST WEEK BY PENDLETON (STATE DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR FOR ISRAELI AFFAIRS). THE AMERICANS ALSO AGREED THAT UP TO 15% OF FMS FUNDS SPENT ON COMMERCIAL PURCHASES MAY BE SPENT IN ISRAEL. A DECISION ON THE TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY FOR PHASE III OF THE LAVI PROJECT (ASSEMBLY IN ISRAEL OF WINGS AND TAIL SECTION) HAD BEEN DEFERRED. PENDLETON EXPECTED THIS TO BE AGREED IN DUE COURSE : HE NOTED THAT 30 LICENCES FOR WORK ON THE LAVI PROJECT HAD BEEN APPROVED SINCE JULY. THE AMERICANS SEE HELP WITH THIS PROJECT AS OFFERING A MEANS OF INFLUENCING ARENS WHOM THEY CONSIDER THE MOST SYMPATHETIC OF THE ISRAELI LEADERSHIP.

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/ 5. PENDLETON

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5. PENDLETON SAID THAT THE US DELEGATION TO THE JOINT POLITICO/MILITARY COMMITTEE WOULD BE LED BY ADMIRAL HOWE (DIRECTOR FOR POLITICO/MILITARY AFFAIRS IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT) AND INCLUDE REPRESENTATIVES FROM DOD, JCS AND THE NSC STAFF. LITTLE PREPARATORY WORK FOR THE DISCUSSIONS HAD YET BEEN DONE: POSSIBLE JOINT EXERCISES AND PREPOSITIONING WOULD BE ON THE AGENDA. THERE WOULD BE NO DISCUSSION OF JOINT OPERATIONS AND NO NEW MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING: ELEMENTS OF THE NOVEMBER 1981 MOU WOULD BE DISCUSSED. PENDLETON ACKNOWLEDGED, IN REPLY TO QUESTIONS ABOUT THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THESE ARRANGEMENTS AND THE 1981 MOU, THAT THE US WERE NOW FOCUSING MORE CLOSELY ON SYRIA AND THE SOVIET ROLE THERE.

COMMENT

6. WHAT THE AMERICANS ENVISAGE SEEMS TO BE IN ESSENCE THE SORT OF POLITICO-MILITARY TALKS WITH THE ISRAELIS WHICH THEY ALREADY HOLD WITH US AND OTHER ALLIES. PRACTICAL COOPERATION WITH THE ISRAELIS IN THE MILITARY FIELD WILL NOT, IF THE PENTAGON HAVE THEIR WAY, INCREASE TO ANY VERY MARKED EXTENT. BUT THE AMERICANS ATTACH MORE IMPORTANCE TO THE SIGNAL THAT THE STRENGTHENED US/ISRAELI RELATIONSHIP WILL SEND TO THE ARABS, ESPECIALLY THE SYRIANS. FURTHER COMMENT ON THIS WILL FOLLOW.

7. FCO PLEASE ADVANCE TO SIR A DUFF (CABINET OFFICE).

WRIGHT

(ADVANCED AS REQUESTED)

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FROM WASHINGTON 041700Z DEC 83.
TO IMMEDIATE F C O
TELEGRAM NUMBER 3652 OF 4 DECENBER
INFO IMMEDIATE ATHENS (FOR SECRETARY OF STATE'S PARTY) BEIRUT,
DAMASCUS, TEL AVIV, MODUK, UKMIS NEW YORK.

YOUR TELNO 557 TO ATHENS: LEBANON.

1. ADMIRAL HOWE (DIRECTOR OF POLITICO/MILITARY AFFAIRS IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT) TELEPHONED TO EMPHASIZE THAT THIS ACTION FOLLOWED THE U.S. DEMARCHE TO THE SYRIANS ABOUT THE EARLIER INCIDENTS IN WHICH US RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHT WERE FIRED ON. THE SYRIANS WERE TOLD THAT THE AMERICANS WOULD CONTINUE TO CARRY OUT RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS WITH THE AGREEMENT OF THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT AND THAT THEY WOULD RESPOND IF THEY WERE FIRED ON.

2. YESTERDAY A ROUTINE SMALL SCALE F14 RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHT WAS FIRED ON FROM SYRIAN POSITIONS NEAR HAMMANA WITH MISSILES AND ANTI-AIRCRAFT ROUNDS. THE SYRIANS KNEW THEY WERE FIRING ON US AIRCRAFT.

3. THE U.S. ACTION HAD BEEN DECIDED OVERNIGHT. HOWE KNEW THAT

3. THE U.S. ACTION HAD BEEN DECIDED OVERNIGHT. HOWE KNEW THAT WE HAD BEEN FOREWARNED ON THE MILITARY NET. HE REGRETTED THE VERY SHORT WARNING TIME. THE US COUNTER-STRIKE ON THE SYRIAN ANTI-AIRCRAFT POSITIONS AND BARRACKS FROM WHICH THE FIRING HAD COME APPEARED TO HAVE BEEN FAIRLY EFFECTIVE. 40 SA7 AND SA9 MISSILES AND A LOT OF ANTI-AIRCRAFT FIRE HAD BEEN DIRECTED AT THE US AIRCRAFT. TWO AIRCRAFT HAD BEEN SHOT DOWN. ONE PILOT WAS IN SYRIAN HANDS AND ONE MISSING.

4. HOWE SAID THAT THE US ACTION WAS RELATED TO THE ATTACK ON THE RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS. IT WAS NOT UNDERTAKEN WITH WIDER OBJECTIVES IN MIND, THOUGH HE REALISED IT MIGHT BE INTERPRETED THAT WAY. (THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT HOWEVER, THAT THE AMERICANS ALSO SEE THIS AS A SIGNAL TO THE SYRIANS IN THE WIDER CONTEXT.) NOR HAD IT ANYTHING TO DO WITH "STRATEGIC COOPERATION" WITH ISRAEL.

5. THE AMERICANS WERE NOW TELLING THE SYRIANS THAT THEY WOULD BE CONTINUING THEIR RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS. THEY WOULD CONTINUE TO TAKE ACTION TO DEFEND THEM: AND THEY WANTED THEIR PILOT BACK.

6. WE TOLD HOWE OF THE PUBLIC LINE YOU ARE TAKING (ATHENS TELNO. 724 TO YOU). HE WAS GRATEFUL FOR THIS. WE EMPHASISED STRONGLY, HOWEVER, THAT US ACTIONS HAD IMPLICATIONS FOR THE SECURITY OF OUR MNF CONTINGENT AND EMBASSY PERSONNEL. WE HOPED THAT THOUGHT WOULD BE GIVEN TO THE AVOIDANCE OF ANY FURTHER TWIST TO THE SPIRAL. HOWE SAID THAT ALL THIS WOULD BE DISCUSSED AT THE MNF CONTRIBUTORS MEETING IN BRUSSELS. WE ASKED ABOUT US INTENTIONS IN THE MEANTIME. HOWE SAID THAT IF FURTHER US RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS WERE FIRED ON. THE AMERICANS WOULD RESPOND. THEY HOPED, HOWEVER, THAT THIS WOULD NOT HAPPEN.

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