

CONFIDENTIAL

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FM ROME

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELNO 691

OF 171110Z DECEMBER 1983

AND TO IMMEDIATE MODUK

INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON, PARIS, BEIRUT

INFO PRIORITY DAMASCUS, TEL AVIV

MY TELNO 688: ITALY/LEBANON

REDUCTION OF ITALIAN CONTINGENT

1. BARTOLUCCI, THE ITALIAN CHIEF OF DEFENCE STAFF, HAS WRITTEN TO SIR EDWIN BRAMALL TO CONFIRM THAT THE ITALIAN MNF CONTINGENT WILL BE REDUCED. TEXT OF LETTER FOLLOWS BY BAG (NOT TO ALL). MY DA HAS REPORTED ITS CONTENTS BY SECURE TELEPHONE TO MODUK.
2. BARTOLUCCI SAYS THAT THE REDUCTION WILL BEGIN IN JANUARY, IN THE MANNER DESCRIBED TO SIR EDWIN BRAMALL IN PARIS. IT WILL NOT AFFECT THE TASKS ALREADY ASSIGNED TO THE ITALIANS, AND THEIR CONTINGENT WILL REMAIN LARGER THAN ENVISAGED IN THE ORIGINAL AGREEMENTS (1100 MEN). THE ITALIAN COMMANDER IN LEBANON WILL DISCUSS THE IMPLICATIONS WITH HIS MNF COLLEAGUES.
3. BARTOLUCCI SAYS THAT THE ITALIAN DECISION MUST BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL UNTIL ANNOUNCED BY HIS GOVERNMENT.

MEETING OF OFFICIALS ON 19/20 DECEMBER

4. WE TOLD FRANCESCHI (MFA) LAST NIGHT THAT NO MEETING COULD BE HELD ON 19 OR 20 DECEMBER. HE COMMENTED THAT HE WOULD GLADLY HAVE ATTENDED: ONLY PARLIAMENTARY COMMITMENTS HAD PREVENTED BOTTAI FROM PARTICIPATING. IN FRANCESCHI'S VIEW THE REFUSAL OF THE U S AMBASSADOR IN SYRIA TO SAY ANYTHING TO HIS MNF COLLEAGUES INCREASED THE ARGUMENT FOR MAINTAINING DIRECT CONTACT WITH THE AMERICAN PROTAGONISTS.

BRIDGES

BT

[COPIES SENT TO NO 10 DOWNING ST]

MULTINATIONAL FORCE IN LEBANON (MNF)

LIMITED

NENAD

MED

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

MR WRIGHT

MR CARTLEDGE

MR MACINNES

MR ADAMS

MR EGERTON

MR JENKINS

COPIES TO:

MOD DS11

MR GOODALL) CABINET
SIR R ARMSTRONG) OFFICESIR P MOORE
BUCKINGHAM PALACE

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