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FM UKMIS NEW YORK 232000Z DEC 83

*Prime Minister*

TO PRIORITY FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 1722 OF 23 DECEMBER

INFO PRIORITY WASHINGTON, PARIS, ROME

INFO ROUTINE MOSCOW, TEL AVIV, CAIRO, DAMASCUS, BEIRUT, THE HAGUE

MY TELNOS 1717 AND 1718: LEBANON: ROLE OF UN FORCES

*MT*

1. VAN DER STOEL CONFIRMED TO ME THIS MORNING THE ACCOUNT WHICH HIS MISSION HAD GIVEN US ON HIS MEETINGS WITH FATTAL (SYRIA), TROYANOVSKY (USSR) AND FAKHOURY (LEBANON) (MY TELNO 1718). MIFT CONTAINS, AS SUGGESTED, MY OWN ASSESSMENT OF WHERE WE NOW STAND IN THE LIGHT OF HIS SOUNDINGS AND OF THE SECRETARY-GENERALS REMARKS, AND OF THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR BUILDING ON THEM. VAN DER STOELS OWN CONCLUSIONS WERE AS FOLLOWS.
  
2. HE SAID THAT AS PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL HE HAD APPROACHED THE LEBANON PROBLEM WITH THE VIEW THAT IT NEEDED TO BE TACKLED IN TWO STAGES. THE FIRST STAGE WOULD BE TO GET AGREEMENT IN THE COUNCIL ON AN EXPANDED ROLE FOR UN OBSERVERS. THE SECOND STAGE WOULD BE TO MOVE ON TO EXPLORE WAYS OF REPLACING THE MNF BY UN FORCES. DURING HIS PRESIDENCY HE HAD CONCENTRATED ENTIRELY ON THE FIRST STAGE, GETTING UN OBSERVERS, AND ON DISCOVERING WHETHER THE SYRIAN AND SOVIET OBJECTIONS TO THEIR DEPLOYMENT COULD BE OVERCOME.
  
3. HE HAD APPROACHED BOTH FATTAL AND TROYANOVSKY TWICE. ON THE SECOND OCCASION HE HAD TRIED OUT SEPARATELY ON THEM A NUMBER OF DIFFERENT FORMULAS ON THE DEPLOYMENT OF OBSERVERS BOTH WITHIN THE BEIRUT AREA AND/OR ELSEWHERE IN LEBANON. BOTH THE SYRIAN AND THE RUSSIAN RESPONSE HAD BEEN NEGATIVE. THE SYRIANS HAD ENUNCIATED A LARGE NUMBER OF TACTICAL OBJECTIONS. BUT THEIR MAIN POINT AND THAT OF THE RUSSIANS WAS THAT A POLITICAL SOLUTION TO THE LEBANON PROBLEM HAD TO COME FIRST.
  
4. VAN DER STOEL HAD CONCLUDED THAT FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE NO PROGRESS WAS POSSIBLE IN THE COUNCIL ON THE QUESTION OF UN OBSERVERS. THE SECRETARY-GENERAL SHARED THIS CONCLUSION. IF IT WAS PRESSED IN THE COUNCIL THE RUSSIAN TACTICS WERE LIKELY TO BE NOT TO CONFRONT IT HEAD ON BUT TO AMEND ANY DRAFT RESOLUTIONS (EG WITH REFERENCES TO IMMEDIATE ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL ETC) UNTIL IT WAS NO LONGER ACCEPTABLE TO THE WESTERN MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL.

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5. VAN DER STOEL THOUGHT THAT THE SYRIAN AND RUSSIAN POSITIONS WERE NOT NECESSARILY IDENTICAL. THEY HAD BOTH MADE CLEAR TO HIM THAT THEY WERE NOT TAKING THE SAME VIEW, THOUGH THE RUSSIANS HAD SAID THAT THE SYRIAN POSITION WAS AN IMPORTANT FACTOR FOR THEM. HE HAD BEEN PARTICULARLY STRUCK BY TROYANOVSKY SAYING TWICE TO HIM THAT THE RUSSIANS WERE NOT GOING TO DO ANYTHING WHICH MIGHT HELP THE AMERICANS. VAN DER STOEL HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT THIS WAS CENTRAL TO THEIR POSITION. HE THOUGHT, PERSONALLY, THAT THE RUSSIANS MIGHT BE SEEING THE SITUATION IN TERMS OF TWO ALTERNATIVE SCENARIOS BOTH FAVOURABLE TO THEMSELVES. THE FIRST WAS THAT THE MNF WOULD REMAIN IN LEBANON, AND THAT THE US FORCES WOULD PAY A HEAVY PRICE FOR THIS WITH DAMAGING REPERCUSSIONS FOR PRESIDENT REAGAN'S RE-ELECTION CAMPAIGN: THE POSSIBILITY OF HAVING THE PRESIDENT LOSE THE ELECTION WOULD BE VERY IMPORTANT TO THEM. THE SECOND WAS THAT PRESIDENT REAGAN WOULD FEEL OBLIGED TO WITHDRAW US FORCES FROM LEBANON THEREBY PRESENTING THE SOVIET UNION WITH A VICTORY. VAN DER STOEL HAD HOPED THAT THE RUSSIANS MIGHT BE SUFFICIENTLY WORRIED ABOUT THE RISKS OF AN ESCALATION IN LEBANON LEADING TO SUPER POWER CONFRONTATION THAT THEY WOULD BE PREPARED TO RECONSIDER THEIR POSITION. BUT THERE WAS NO EVIDENCE OF THIS. HE CONCLUDED THAT THERE WOULD BE NO CHANGE IN RUSSIAN OPPOSITION TO EXPANDED UN INVOLVEMENT UNTIL EITHER A SUFFICIENTLY FRIGHTENING ESCALATION TOOK PLACE OR THE US WAS PREPARED TO BRING THE RUSSIANS INTO NEGOTIATIONS ON THE MIDDLE EAST.

6. SEE MIFT

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MULTINATIONAL FORCE IN LEBANON (MNF)

LIMITED

NEWAD

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) OFFICE

SIR P MOORE  
BUCKINGHAM PALACE

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FM UKMIS NEW YORK 230122Z DEC 83

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TEL NO 1718 OF 22 DECEMBER 1983

INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON PARIS ROME

INFO PRIORITY MOSCOW TEL AVIV CAIRO DAMASCUS BEIRUT

THE HAGUE

MIPT: LEBANON: ROLE OF UN FORCES

1. THE DUTCH MISSION HAVE GIVEN US THE FOLLOWING ACCOUNT OF THE MEETINGS WHICH VAN DER STOEL HAD YESTERDAY AND TODAY, IN HIS CAPACITY AS PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL, WITH THE SYRIAN, LEBANESE AND RUSSIAN AMBASSADORS. THE MEETINGS FOLLOWED EARLIER INFORMAL SOUNDINGS WHICH HE HAD MADE WITH THE SYRIANS AND RUSSIANS NEARER THE BEGINNING OF THE DUTCH PRESIDENCY THIS MONTH ABOUT THEIR ATTITUDE TO UN OBSERVERS IN LEBANON (MY TELNO 1529, NOT TO ALL).

2. VAN DER STOEL SAW FATTAL (SYRIA) ON 21 DECEMBER. THIS TIME HE, APPARENTLY, PUT MORE SPECIFIC IDEAS TO HIM ABOUT INCREASING THE PRESENCE OF UN OBSERVERS IN THE BEIRUT AREA. THEY DISCUSSED THE MATTER FOR ABOUT AN HOUR. FATTAL HAD ASKED A LOT OF QUESTIONS. HE HAD NOT REPEATED THE SYRIAN POSITION THAT IT WAS PURELY AN INTERNAL LEBANESE MATTER. HE HAD SHOWN SOME INTEREST IN WHAT VAN DER STOEL SAID AND HAD PROMISED TO CONVEY THE DUTCH IDEAS TO DAMASCUS. BUT HE HAD INDICATED THAT HE DID NOT EXPECT A CHANGE IN THE SYRIAN POSITION.

3. VAN DER STOEL NEXT SAW FAKHOURY (LEBANON) TODAY (22 DECEMBER) WHO CONFIRMED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WAS IN FAVOUR OF INCREASING THE NUMBER OF UN OBSERVERS. WHEN VAN DER STOEL ASKED FOR HIS REACTION TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL'S REMARKS ON REPLACING THE MNF BY UN FORCES (MY TELNO 1714), FAKHOURY WAS HESITANT, BUT SAID THAT HE WOULD ASK FOR INSTRUCTIONS FROM BEIRUT ON THIS POINT.

4. VAN DER STOEL SUBSEQUENTLY TALKED TO TROYANOVSKY (USSR). WHEN HE BROACHED THE QUESTION OF UN OBSERVERS, TROYANOVSKY REPLIED THAT IT WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT TO ENVISAGE SUCH AN EXPANDED UN ROLE SINCE IT COULD ONLY BE LIMITED TO THE INTERNATIONAL ASPECTS OF THE LEBANESE SITUATION WHICH WERE VERY DIFFICULT TO SEPARATE FROM THE INTERNAL ASPECTS. (IT IS PERHAPS SIGNIFICANT THAT TROYANOVSKY, LIKE FATTAL, DID NOT TRY TO SUGGEST THAT THE SITUATION IN LEBANON WAS A PURELY INTERNAL MATTER). HE SAID THAT HE WOULD NOT OBJECT IN PRINCIPLE TO A UN ROLE TO STRENGTHEN THE CEASEFIRE AND HELP THE RECONCILIATION PROCESS BUT HE SAW ALL KINDS OF PRACTICAL DIFFICULTIES IN ACHIEVING THIS. MORE OMINOUSLY, HE SAID THAT QUITE FRANKLY THE SOVIET UNION WAS NOT GOING TO HELP THE AMERICANS (BY IMPLICATION TO GET OUT OF LEBANON). HE WAS NEGATIVE ABOUT THE SECRETARY GENERAL'S COMMENTS ON A ROLE FOR UN FORCES, SAYING THAT THE SOVIET OBJECTIONS AGAINST UN OBSERVERS WOULD BE EVEN STRONGER IN RELATION TO UN FORCES.

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5. THE DUTCH MISSION THOUGHT THAT TROYANOVSKYS POSITION HAD HARDENED SOMEWHAT SINCE THEY LAST SPOKE TO HIM EARLIER THIS MONTH. HE HAD TAKEN THE LINE THEN THAT HE WOULD BE PREPARED TO CONSIDER ANY PROPOSAL PUT TO HIM. THE DUTCH HAD NOT BEEN SURE AT THE TIME WHETHER THIS MERELY REFLECTED TROYANOVSKYS MORE CONCILIATORY MANNER OR SOMETHING MORE.

6. THE DUTCH HAVE ALSO SPOKEN TO THE AMERICANS HERE. AFTER TAKING SOME TIME TO RESPOND, THE AMERICANS WERE APPARENTLY NON-COMMITTAL BUT SUPPORTED VAN DE STOELS EFFORTS TO SOUND OUT THE RUSSIANS AND SYRIANS. IN CONVERSATION WITH ME L'ICHENSTEIN (US) SAID THAT HE WAS NOT CLEAR ABOUT WHAT PROPOSITIONS WERE UNDER DISCUSSION AND IN WHAT SETTING. HE SPOKE CALMLY ABOUT THE IDEA OF SOVIET OBSERVERS IN THE LEBANON (PARA 5 OF MY IPT AND SEEMED TO THINK (PROBABLY CORRECTLY) THAT IT HAD ARISEN IN CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE SECRETARY GENERAL AND MY NETHERLANDS COLLEAGUE.

7. MY ITALIAN COLLEAGUE SAYS THAT WHEN ANDREOTTI IS HERE FOR A COUPLE OF SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS IN MID-JANUARY HE WILL VISIT WASHINGTON PRINCIPALLY IN ORDER TO DISCUSS THE LEBANON.

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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

MR WRIGHT

MR CARTLEDGE

MR MACINNES

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FM UKMIS NEW YORK 230120Z DEC 83

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 1717 OF 22 DECEMBER 1983

INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON, PARIS, ROME

PRIORITY MOSCOW, TEL AVIV, CAIRO, DAMASCUS, BEIRUT, THE HAGUE.

YOUR TELNO 923 (NOT TO THE HAGUE): LEBANON: ROLE OF UN FORCES

1. THE SECRETARY-GENERAL IS ENORMOUSLY BUSY (WITH THE EGYPTIAN FOREIGN MINISTER AMONGST OTHERS) BUT AT MY URGENT REQUEST HE GAVE ME 20 MINUTES THIS EVENING (22 DECEMBER).
2. I TOLD HIM THAT I HAD INSTRUCTIONS FROM MY MINISTERS TO PROBE THE THINKING BEHIND HIS REMARKS TO THE PRESS YESTERDAY (THE TEXT OF WHICH I SENT TO YOU EARLIER TODAY AS MY TELNO 1714).
3. PEREZ DE CUELLAR SAID THAT HE HAD HEARD NOTHING OFFICIAL OR CONCRETE FROM ANY OF THE MNF CONTRIBUTORS ON THEIR INTEREST IN UN INVOLVEMENT ADDITIONAL TO THE OBSERVER GROUP IN BEIRUT. HE HAD READ OF ITALIAN INTENTIONS IN THE NEWSPAPERS AND HAD HAD AN INFORMAL APPROACH FROM MY FRENCH COLLEAGUE. BUT THESE WERE NO SUBSTITUTE FOR A FORMAL REQUEST FROM THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT AND THE APPROVAL OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL, THE TROOP CONTRIBUTORS AND THE PARTIES. HE STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SYRIANS.
4. I ASKED WHETHER HE HAD HEARD ANYTHING MORE POSITIVE RECENTLY FROM THE RUSSIANS AND THE SYRIANS. HE SAID NOT. THE ONLY HOPEFUL SIGN WAS THAT, ACCORDING TO MY LIBYAN COLLEAGUE (WHOM HE ALSO SAW THIS AFTERNOON ON ANOTHER MATTER) GEMAYAL HAD HAD A GOOD MEETING WITH QADDAFI WHICH MIGHT IMPROVE THINGS WITH THE SYRIANS.
5. I SAID THAT IN THAT CASE THE SITUATION SEEMED VERY SIMILAR TO WHEN THE PRIME MINISTER SAW HIM ON 30 SEPTEMBER AND EXPLAINED OUR POSITION (MY TELNO 982, NOT TO ALL). TO DRAW HIM OUT I SAID THAT MY PERSONAL VIEW WAS THAT A GREATER UN INVOLVEMENT IN PEACEKEEPING IN LEBANON WOULD HAVE TO FORM PART OF A PACKAGE. IT WAS NOT OVERLY IMPORTANT WHETHER THE INCREASED UN INVOLVEMENT TOOK THE FORM OF MORE OBSERVERS OR UNIFIL UNDER A DIFFERENT MANDATE. IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO MIX THE TWO. PEREZ DE CUELLAR REPLIED THAT FROM THE UN POINT OF VIEW OBSERVERS WOULD BE ADEQUATE BUT HE WAS FLEXIBLE AND WOULD BE READY TO HELP WITH ANY FORMULA WHICH WAS ACCEPTABLE TO ALL THE PARTIES CONCERNED. HE NOTED THAT FORMALLY SPEAKING THERE WERE SOME SOVIET OFFICERS IN THE U.N. OBSERVER GROUP FOR THE LEBANON BUT IN PRACTICE THEY WERE ALL IN CAIRO OR DAMASCUS. THE LEBANESE DID NOT WANT THEM IN LEBANON BUT HE WONDERED WHETHER THIS ATTITUDE MIGHT BE CHANGING AND IF SO WHETHER IT WOULD HELP. IN TURN I WONDERED WHETHER THE PRESENCE OF A FEW SEOVIET OFFICERS WOULD MAKE A SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE TO THE SYRIANS. AS I LEFT, PEREZ DE CUELLAR APOLOGISED FOR NOT HAVING BEEN MORE INFORMATIVE AND REMARKED THAT THE REAL PROBLEM WAS WHETHER THE RUSSIANS WOULD BE PREPARED TO HELP THE AMERICANS OUT OF LEBANON IN THE PRESENT SUPERPOWER CLIMATE. HE DID NOT THINK THEY WOULD.

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6. THE QUESTION OF LEBANON IS VERY MUCH IN PEOPLE'S MINDS HERE. I HAVE HAD FRAGMENTARY DISCUSSIONS ABOUT IT WITH MY ITALIAN COLLEAGUE AND AMBASSADOR LICHENSTEIN (US) AND AM DUE TO SEE MY NETHERLANDS COLLEAGUE TOMORROW MORNING (23 DECEMBER) IN HIS CAPACITY AS PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL. HE HAS SEEN MY SYRIAN, LEBANESE AND RUSSIAN COLLEAGUES: AN ACCOUNT OF HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH THEM IS IN MIFT. I SHALL REPORT FURTHER WHEN I HAVE SEEN HIM BUT HE HAS ALREADY WARNED ME THAT HIS CONCLUSION FROM HIS SOUNDINGS IS THAT THERE IS NO REASON TO BE OPTIMISTIC ABOUT A POSSIBLE BREAKTHROUGH ON THE QUESTION OF UN INVOLVEMENT AND THAT HE DOES NOT INTEND TO TAKE THE MATTER ANY FURTHER DURING THE REMAINDER OF HIS PRESIDENCY.

7. I DO NOT HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THE SECRETARY GENERAL IS ENGAGED IN SOME SECRET NEGOTIATION ON THE LEBANON AS HE HAS BEEN ON CYPRUS. HE IS OPEN TO SUGGESTIONS AND WOULD LIKE TO BE HELPFUL. BUT HE REMAINS VERY CONSCIOUS OF THE NEED FOR A SECURITY COUNCIL MANDATE AND OF THE DIFFICULTY OF SECURING ONE. AFTER SPEAKING WITH THE NETHERLANDS AMBASSADOR I WILL ATTEMPT AN ASSESSMENT OF HOW WE MIGHT BUILD ON THE SECRETARY-GENERAL'S REMARKS.

8. SEE MIFT.

THOMSON

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  
MR WRIGHT  
MR CARTLEDGE  
MR MACINNES  
MR ADAMS  
MR EGERTON  
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