

MIDDLE EAST: ADVANCE COPIES 16



PS
PS/MR WCE
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SIR J LEAHY
MR SPERTON
SIR J BULLARD
ED/NEWAD
ED/ED
ED/USD

NO 10 DOWNING STREET
CABINET OFFICE D10

ED/.....
ED/CONSULAR DEPT

IMMEDIATE

FUSD (2)
NEWS D
RESIDENT CLERK

ADVANCE COPY

CONFIDENTIAL

DESKBY 010830Z

FM WASHINGTON 010310Z FEB 84

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 353 OF 1 FEBUARY

INFO IMMEDIATE BEIRUT, PARIS, ROME, DAMASCUS, MODUK, KUWAIT(PS/MR HESELTINE), PRIORITY TEL AVIV AND UKMIS NEW YORK

MY TELEGRAM NO 343: SHUWEIFAT GAP

RAPHEL TELEPHONED MINISTER AT 0200Z TO SAY THAT INSTRUCTIONS HAD NOW BEEN SENT TO U.S. AMBASSADOR IN BEIRUT TO ADVISE THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT STRONGLY AGAINST TAKING ACTION TO CLOSE THE GAP. THE PRECISE TIMING OF THE APPROACH WAS BEING LEFT TO BARTHOLEMEW AND RUMSFELD ON THE SPOT, SINCE THE LATEST ASSESSMENT FROM BEIRUT WAS THAT ACTION WAS NOT LIKELY TO BE AS IMMINENT AS EARLIER REPORTS HAD SUGGESTED. BUT HE GAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT HE EXPECT ACTION TO BE TAKEN TOMORROW, IF NOT TONIGHT.

2. RAPHEL SAID THAT THE FRENCH AND ITALIAN GOVERNMENTS HAD NOT REPEAT NOT YET BEEN INFORMED AND HE WOULD THEREFORE BE GRATEFUL IF WE WOULD KEEP THE INFORMATION TO OURSELVES FOR THE TIME BEING. THIS WAS NOT TO KEEP THE OTHERS IN THE DARK BUT BECAUSE NO REPLY HAD YET BEEN RECEIVED TO AN ATTEMPT MADE EARLIER TODAY BY THE U.S. EMBASSY IN PARIS TO ELICIT FRENCH VIEWS ON THE LIKELIHOOD OF IMMINENT LEBANESE ACTION. HE RECOGNISED HOWEVER THAT WE HAD URGED THEM BOTH TO MAKE SIMILAR REPRESENTATIONS AND HE AGREED THAT IT WOULD BE ALL TO THE GOOD IF WE ALL DID SO.

WRIGHT

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