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DESKBY 091400Z

FM BEIRUT 091250Z FEB 84

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 89 OF 9 FEBRUARY.

INFO IMMEDIATE PARIS, UKMIS NEW YORK.

This is being done.

A. J. C. 10/2

FCO TELNO 57 TO UKMIS NEW YORK: LEBANON.

1. I HAVE BEEN FOLLOWING WITH GREAT INTEREST THE VARIOUS PROPOSALS FOR A UN PRESENCE HERE.

2. WHAT IS NEEDED MORE THAN ANYTHING AT THE PRESENT JUNCTURE, ON HUMANITARIAN IF NO OTHER GROUNDS, IS A CONTROLLED CROSSING OF THE GREEN LINE. COULD THE UN NOT PROVIDE THIS UNDER THE UNIFIL MANDATE - EG BY GETTING PRESIDENT GEMAYEL TO ASK FOR IT (CLEARANCE HAVING BEEN OBTAINED IN ADVANCE FROM BERRI, JUMBLATT AND CO) AND BY QUICK CLEARANCE BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL WITH THE SECURITY COUNCIL AND DESPATCH OF A UNIT TO BEIRUT FROM THE SOUTH? ARMED UN SOLDIERS WOULD THEN GUARD UNARMED MILITIAMEN OR POLICE CONTROLLING THE CROSSING. AND A UN PRESENCE WOULD HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED IN BEIRUT, ON WHICH MUCH MIGHT SUBSEQUENTLY BE BUILT.

I think we are following up this suggestion in security net

3. I HAVE JUST LEARNED THAT THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR IS GOING TO TRY TO CROSS THE GREEN LINE THIS AFTERNOON, AND I HAVE MADE AN APPOINTMENT TO SEE HIM AT 4 PM. HE PLANS TO COME VIA THE FRENCH MNF HQ, THE RESIDENCE DES PINNS (FORMERLY HIS RESIDENCE: IT IS A LARGE COMPOUND ALMOST ASTRIDE THE LINE). IT STRIKES ME THAT IF THE FRENCH COULD TRANSFORM THEMSELVES INTO A UNIFIL OUTFIT IN THIS SECTOR, THEY COULD PERHAPS FILL THE ROLE IN PARA 2.

4. I HAVE DISCUSSED THIS ON A PERSONAL BASIS WITH THE COUNSELLOR OF THE FRENCH EMBASSY, BUT WILL NOT PUSH IT FURTHER UNLESS YOU THINK THERE IS MILEAGE IN IT. LIKE MOST IDEAS FOR LEBANON IT WOULD BE FRAUGHT WITH PROBLEMS TO IMPLEMENT. BUT THERE IS A VIRTUAL POLITICAL IMPASSE HERE AT PRESENT (SEE MY TEPARATE TEL), AND IT IS JUST POSSIBLE THAT A CONSTRUCTIVE PROPOSAL MADE SOON FOR LINKING THE 2 HALVES OF THE CITY MIGHT PROSPER.
MIERS

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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
SIR W HARDING
MR WRIGHT
MR CARTLEDGE
MR MACINNES
MR ADAMS
MR JENKINS
MR EGERTON

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BUCKINGHAM PALACE

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E

PM'S QUESTION TIME

LEBANON

Lebanon
U.N.

UN INVOLVEMENT

Line to Take

For months the British Government have been working for wider UN involvement in peacekeeping in Lebanon. I raised it myself with the Secretary General last September. Since then we have been discussing detailed proposals intensively with MNF partners, UN Secretary General and other interested parties. Our UN representative saw Secretary General and President of Security Council on instruction yesterday (8 February).

(Pakistan)

Obstacles

Need Lebanese request, Security Council approval (Soviet veto) and agreement of troop contributors and of all concerned parties. Cannot be optimistic but look to all for constructive response.

Type of Force

Observers or UN force. Various roles possible: wider mandate for UNIFIL in South Lebanon most promising first option.

Will be sweep Dush

UNIFIL " TO confirm withdrawal of Israeli Forces - restore int. peace & security and assist gov't of Lebanon to reestablish its authority in the area (i.e. S. Lebanon)

LEBANON

UN INVOLVEMENT

U.N.

Background

The Prime Minister raised the question of wider UN involvement with the UN Secretary General in New York on 30 September. Following the ceasefire in the Shouf of 26 September, the ceasefire stipulated the deployment of "neutral" observers: the Syrians objected to UN observers. Greece and Italy agreed to provide observers but did not deploy them. On 6 January the Prime Minister sent a message to the UN Secretary General expressing our continuing support for his efforts to secure a wider UN role in Lebanon, following remarks by Senor Perez de Cuellar at a press conference on 21 December and numerous contacts with UN Secretary. On 13 January we circulated to our MNF partners a detailed paper setting out various options for an expanded UN role. There was general agreement that the most promising option was an expansion of the role of UNIFIL, already deployed in South Lebanon.

The French have now tumbled to the merits of our idea. On 7 February, M. Mitterrand said publically that France hoped UN forces might take over rapidly from the MNF. The French subsequently on 8 February contacted the UN Secretary General and the President of the Security Council. The French appear to have no specific ideas to put forward. The UK was involved in parallel discussions on 8 February. On 7 February the Italian Defence Minister said that the departure of MNF contingents should be preceded, accompanied and followed by diplomatic action at the UN.

Evacuation Costs - Standard Practice
 - evacuation in 1979 (Feb) under Lebanon
 gov. of Brit. citizens from Teheran
 Charge of £68



General

ANY REQUESTS FROM LEBANESE GOVERNMENT BEFORE REDEPLOYMENT?

LINE TO TAKE

- Communications between the British Embassy in Beirut and the Lebanese authorities on 7/8 February were very difficult. Telephones out, firing in the streets.
- Late on the night of 7 February, after the decision to redeploy the British contingent had already been taken, the British Ambassador received by indirect means a message from the Lebanese Foreign Minister. This referred to a request to the United States to "refocus the effort of its contingent", and to other MNF contributors to consider adjusting their MNF presence in the light of the current military situation.

(If pressed)

- It was impossible to clarify further the status of the request in the circumstances prevailing particularly as the Foreign Minister left shortly afterwards on a special mission to Saudi Arabia.

*No clear request was received, but informed
Leban gov. of our action in response to an unclear
message*

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REQUEST FROM LEBANESE GOVERNMENT

Background

1. Because of the security situation in Beirut, and with Embassy telephones not functioning, HMA Beirut was unable to make direct contact with the Lebanese Foreign Minister in the Presidential Palace on the night of 7/8 February.

2. Late on 7 February, after Commander BRITFORLEB had been instructed to redeploy the following morning (8 February), and after HMA Beirut had been instructed so to inform the Lebanese Government, the Ambassador received the following message from the Lebanese Foreign Minister, relayed via BRITFORLEB:

' ' In view of the current political and military situation, I have asked the US to refocus the effort of its MNF contingent to provide assistance with coping with the current threat from foreign intervention, specifically artillery fire from Syrian controlled zones, and infiltration of foreign terrorists into Beirut. I also request that the other MNF Governments consider adjusting their MNF presence to conform to the current military situation and the existing threats that we face. ' '

HMA Beirut arranged for the Commander of BRITFORLEB to deliver the following reply to the Foreign Minister at the Palace at 0600Z on 8 February:

' 'In response to your message of 7 February the British MNF contingent is being redeployed from Hadath to a ship borne location as from 8 February until further notice. ' '

3. The US have publicly stated that their redeployment was in response to a request from the Lebanese Government. The Italian Defence Minister in a statement to the Senate on 8 February also referred to the Italian refusal to agree to ' 'President Gemayel's request to broaden our responsibilities to two new areas in Beirut' ' .

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