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TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 143 OF 21 FEBRUARY 1984

INFO IMMEDIATE UKMIS NEW YORK, WASHINGTON, PARIS

INFO PRIORITY ROME, DAMASCUS, TEL AVIV, JEDDA, MOSCOW, MODUK,
CBFC AND BRITFORLEB

UN FORCE FOR LEBANON

1. TODAY'S MEETING OF THE MNF COORDINATION COMMITTEE (FOR WHICH A MOST WELCOME BRITFORLEB REPRESENTATIVE ARRIVED IN GOOD TIME) WAS CHAIRED BY GHASSAN TUENI, FORMERLY LEBANESE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE AT THE UN AND ADVISER TO THE PRESIDENT.
2. HE SAID THAT THE PRESIDENT WISHED MNF GOVERNMENTS TO KNOW LEBANON'S POSITION ON THE CURRENT PROPOSALS BEFORE THE SECURITY COUNCIL. WHILE WELCOMING THE FRENCH INITIATIVE LEBANON HAD CERTAIN RESERVATIONS
 - A) ANY UN PRESENCE IN BEIRUT MUST NOT (NOT) BE AT THE EXPENSE OF UNIFIL, WHOSE WORK IN THE SOUTH MUST CONTINUE, PREFERABLY WITH A STRENGTHENED MANDATE.
 - B) LEBANON REQUIRED ANY MANDATE FOR BEIRUT TO BE VERY CAUTIOUSLY DRAFTED. THEY DID NOT WANT A UN PRESENCE ON THE GREEN LINE THAT WOULD LEAD TO PERMANENT PARTITION. THE CYPRUS PRECEDENT WAS NOT HEALTHY.
 - C) THE UN FORCE SHOULD HAVE A MANDATE TO COVER ALL LEBANON AND NOT JUST BEIRUT, SINCE LEBANON'S CHIEF REQUIREMENT OF THE UN WAS TO HAVE "CONFIRMATION" OF LEBANON'S BORDERS. THEY ENVISAGED THE UN EVENTUALLY PATROLLING UP TO THE FRONTIERS AND WOULD THEREFORE PREFER A MOBILE NOT A STATIC MANDATE.
3. LEBANON HOPED THE SECURITY COUNCIL WOULD ADOPT A RESOLUTION BY CONSENSUS AS IN 1978. LEBANON WAS AWARE OF THE BRITISH PROPOSAL FOR EXPANDING THE UN OBSERVER ROLE, WHICH THEY NOW UNDERSTOOD HAD BEEN INCORPORATED IN THE FRENCH DRAFT. THEY COULD ALREADY ENVISAGE, EVEN TODAY, A NUMBER OF EXTREMELY USEFUL TASKS FOR THE OBSERVERS, PERHAPS IN AGREEMENT WITH SYRIA (THIS WAS A REFERENCE, IT EMERGED, TO THE POSSIBILITY OF UN OBSERVATION OF THE CEASEFIRE IN THE HARBIN COUNTERPROPOSALS NOW BEING DISCUSSED IN DAMASCUS).
4. HE SAID THAT OUR PROPOSALS WERE INTENDED TO BE COMPLEMENTARY, OR SUPPLEMENTARY, TO THE FRENCH PROPOSALS WHICH WE FULLY SUPPORTED, AND NOT AN ALTERNATIVE TO THEM.

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5. BARTHOLOMEW HAS TOLD ME PRIVATELY THAT HE IS HAVING DIFFICULTY IN GETTING AGREEMENT OVER WHO US MARINES SHOULD HAND OVER THE AIRPORT TO. HE NOW HAS DOUBTS ABOUT AMAL. THE PSP AND AMAL COULD NOT AGREE. I SUGGESTED (ONCE AGAIN) THAT THIS WAS AN IDEAL TASK FOR THE UN. EVERYONE (THE AMAL THE GOVERNMENT, PERHAPS ALSO THE PSP, CERTAINLY THE MNF CONTRIBUTORS) ALL WANTED THE UN INTO BEIRUT. BUT THERE WAS NO PRECISION, AND THEREFORE MUCH POTENTIAL ARGUMENT, ABOUT THE TERMS. THE BRITISH VIEW WAS THAT THE UN COULD BEST HELP OVER A SPECIFIC TASK, WHERE THE NEED WAS OBVIOUS. THE AIRPORT SEEMED TO FIT THIS BILL. WHY NOT GET THE LEBANESE PARTIES TO ASK THE UN TO DO THIS JOB? IF THE RUSSIANS OBJECTED, THEN THE ONUS OF OBSTRUCTION WOULD BE ON THEM, FOR FRUSTRATING AN OBVIOUSLY SOUND PROPOSAL, INSTEAD OF ON THE US FOR NOT REMOVING THEIR FLEET. BARTHOLOMEW AT FIRST SAID THAT INVOLVING THE UN WOULD INTERFERE WITH THE US TIMETABLE FOR WITHDRAWAL. BUT AFTER SOME DISCUSSION HE SEEMED TO THINK THE IDEA WORTH PUTTING TO WASHINGTON.

MERS

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MULTINATIONAL FORCE IN LEBANON (MNF)
LIMITED
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MED
DEFENCE DEPT
PUSD
NEWS DEPT
UND
NAD
WED
SED
ECD(E)
FINANCE DEPT
PROTOCOL DEPT
PLANNING STAFF
NED

PS
PS/LADY YOUNG
PS/MR LUCE
PS/PUS
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