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FM UKMIS NEW YORK 250134Z FEB 84

TO PRIORITY FCO

TEL NO 202 OF 24 FEBRUARY 1984

INFO PRIORITY BEIRUT TEL AVIV DAMASCUS WASHINGTON

MIPT: LEBANON: UN OPTIONS

1. UNDER SECRETARY GENERAL URQUHART TOLD MY HEAD OF CHANCERY IN STRICT CONFIDENCE (WHICH MUST BE RESPECTED) THAT HE HAD RECEIVED A CABLE TODAY FROM THE COMMANDER OF UNIFIL SAYING THAT THE ISRAELIS WERE INTERESTED IN THE POSSIBILITY OF UNIFIL TAKING UP A POSITION BETWEEN THE SYRIAN AND ISRAELI FORCES IN THE BEKAA. THIS MESSAGE WAS CONVEYED TO GENERAL CALLAGHAN BY GENERAL ORR OF THE ISRAELI NORTHERN COMMAND WHO HAD ADDED THAT THE ISRAELI CHIEF OF STAFF WOULD LIKE TO SEE CALLAGHAN ON 27 FEBRUARY TO DISCUSS THE MATTER FURTHER.

2. URQUHART, WHO HAS FOR SOME TIME BEEN OF THE VIEW THAT THERE WAS A DANGER THAT EVENTS IN BEIRUT WOULD DIVERT ATTENTION FOR THE SOUTH, IS MUCH ENCOURAGED BY THIS DEVELOPMENT WHICH IMPLIES A MORE SUBSTANTIAL DEGREE OF ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL THAN HAD SEEMED LIKELY. ODDLY ENOUGH WE KNOW FROM THE US MISSION (AND HAVE TOLD URQUHART) THAT AT HER MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL ON 22 FEBRUARY MRS KIRKPATRICK RAISED THE POSSIBILITY OF INTERPOSING UNIFIL BETWEEN ISRAELI AND SYRIAN FORCES IN THE BEKAA AND SUGGESTED THAT THE SECRETARIAT SHOULD BE ASKED TO PREPARE A CONTINGENCY PLAN. SHE DID NOT (NOT) REPORT THIS TO WASHINGTON.

THOMSON

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