

CONFIDENTIAL

GR 450  
CONFIDENTIAL  
FM WASHINGTON 062350Z SEP 83  
TO IMMEDIATE FCO  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 2487 OF 6 SEPTEMBER  
INFO IMMEDIATE BEIRUT, PARIS, ROME, MODUK (DUS (P) AND DS 11),  
UKDEL MADRID (FOR SECRETARY OF STATE'S PARTY)

LEBANON: MNF

1. DURING THE COURSE OF A DISCUSSION TODAY WITH STEWART AND LEGGE (MOD) HOWE AND RAPHEL (POLITICO-MILITARY BUREAU, STATE DEPARTMENT) GAVE AN INDICATION IN CONFIDENCE OF THE WAY THEIR THINKING IS NOW MOVING ON THE FUTURE OF THE IMF. ALTHOUGH THIS WAS NOT YET AN AGREED US POSITION, THEY INDICATED THAT SHULTZ MIGHT WISH TO DISCUSS SOME OF THEIR IDEAS WITH YOU AND THE FRENCH AND ITALIAN FOREIGN MINISTERS IN MADRID.

2. THEY STRESSED THAT THERE WAS STILL WIDESPREAD SUPPORT HERE FOR THE CONTINUATION OF THE MNF IN ITS PRESENT ROLE AND THAT A PULL-OUT OF THE US MARINES WAS NOT UNDER SERIOUS CONSIDERATION. NOR WAS AN INCREASE IN THE US CONTINGENT OR AN EXPANSION OF ITS ROLE CO CONTEMPLATED AT PRESENT. IT MIGHT HOWEVER BE NECESSARY TO SIGNAL, PARTICULARLY TO THE SYRIANS, CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT. THIS MIGHT BE DONE BY:

- 1) A SHOW OF NAVAL FORCE OFF BEIRUT BY ALL THE MNF CONTRIBUTORS. RAPHEL SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED THE UK TASK GROUP CURRENTLY IN THE MEDITERRANEAN IN THIS CONTEXT:
- 11) A CONCERTED ATTEMPT TO TAKE OUT SYRIAN ARTILLERY IN THE EVENT OF DIRECT ATTACKS ON MNF POSITIONS:
- 111) OVERT RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS OVER THE CHOUF.

CONSULTATION WITH THE OTHER MNF CONTRIBUTORS WOULD OF COURSE BE ESSENTIAL. IT EMERGED THAT RAPHEL HAD NOT THOUGHT THROUGH WHAT SHOULD BE DONE IF THESE ACTIONS, PARTICULARLY THE NAVAL ENHANCEMENT, FAILED TO ACHIEVE THE DESIRED RESULTS.

/3. THE

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

3. THE ADMINISTRATION ARE CLEARLY TAKING A FRESH LOOK AT THE ROLE OF THE MNF AND REVIEWING THEIR OPTIONS. THIS RETHINK HAS BEEN PROMPTED BY THE DETERIORATION OF THE SITUATION IN THE CHOUF, GROWING CONGRESSIONAL CONCERN STIMULATED BY THE DEATHS OF THE US MARINES, AND BY THE PLIGHT OF THE GEMAYEL GOVERNMENT IN THE ABSENCE OF A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT. MUCH WILL DEPEND ON PROGRESS IN THE NEGOTIATIONS. THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAVE RECEIVED NO REPORT FROM MCFARLANE IN DAMASCUS BUT BELIEVE THAT PRINCE BANDAR HAS TOLD THE SYRIANS OF GEMAYEL'S AGREEMENT TO THE SAUDI FORMULA (BEIRUT TELNO 474). MEANWHILE THE PREVAILING VIEW HERE IS STILL THAT THERE IS NO PRACTICAL ALTERNATIVE TO MAINTAINING THE MNF IN ITS PRESENT ROLE.

WRIGHT

MULTINATIONAL FORCE IN LEBANON (MNF)

LIMITED

NENAD  
MED  
DEFENCE D  
PUSD  
NEWS D  
UND  
NAD  
WED  
FINANCE D  
SED

PS  
PS/LADY YOUNG  
PS/MR LUCE  
PS/PUS  
SIR J BULLARD  
SIR J LEAHY  
MR WRIGHT  
MR CARTLEDGE  
MR EGERTON  
MR STREETON

COPIES TO

SIR A PARSONS NO 10 DOWNING ST  
MOD DS11