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FM WASHINGTON 082358Z SEP 83

TO IMMEDIATED FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 2519 OF 8 SEPTEMBER

INFO IMMEDIATE MODUK (FOR PS/SOFS, PS/MR STANLEY, PD/DUS(P), AUS(D STAFF))

PRIORITY PARIS, ROME, BEIRUT, BRITFOR LEB, MADRID(FOR BULLARD), DAMASCUS, TEL AVIV, JEDDA, UKMIS NEW YORK, AMMAN, CAIRO.

MIPT: LEBANON: MNF

1. PRESENT US THINKING IS THAT THEY MUST STAY WITH IT IN BEIRUT. THEY HAVE BEEN ENCOURAGED BY THE DISPOSITION OF THE FRENCH AND OTHER CONTRIBUTORS TO DO THE SAME. DISENGAGEMENT WOULD BE CALAMITOUS FOR THE LEBANON. THEY WILL GO ON TRYING TO PATCH UP SOME KIND OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN GEMAYEL AND THE DRUZE.
2. THE AMERICANS APPEAR TO REALISE THAT A CHANGE IN THE ROLE OF THE MNF WOULD BE LIKELY TO EXPOSE THEM TO GREATER RISKS. THEY AGREE THAT THEY MUST NOT ATTEMPT TO TAKE OVER THE ROLE OF THE LEBANESE ARMED FORCES. THEY ARE THINKING IN TERMS OF PROTECTING MORE EFFECTIVELY THEIR EXISTING POSITIONS. THEY SEE THE NAVAL PRESENCE OFF BEIRUT AS A RESTRAINING INFLUENCE ON THE SYRIANS AND A DETERRENT TO ATTACKS ON THE FORCE. ALTHOUGH ADMIRAL HOWE'S APPROACH IN MY TUR WAS A PERSONAL ONE, IT IS LIKELY TO BE FOLLOWED UP. THE AMERICANS WILL BE HOPING THAT WE MAY AGREE IN SOME WAY TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE ENHANCEMENT OF NAVAL FORCES IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN.
3. BEYOND THAT, THE ADMINISTRATION DOES NOT HAVE VERY CLEAR IDEAS. THE EVOLUTION OF US POLICY WILL DEPEND ON EVENTS IN THE LEBANON. SO FAR SUPPORT FOR THE CONTINUANCE OF THE US MILITARY PRESENCE HAS BEEN HOLDINGUP WELL HERE. THIS SITUATION COULD CHANGE IF THE AMERICANS FOUND THEMSELVES OBLIGED TO TAKE CONTINUING CASUALTIES WITHOUT BEING ABLE TO DO MUCH ABOUT IT.
4. IN EXPRESSING IDEAS ABOUT TRYING TO INTIMIDATE THE SYRIANS, MCFARLANE WAS SPEAKING PERSONALLY. WE WOULD EXPECT THE ADMINISTRATION GENERALLY TO BE VERY CAUTIOUS ABOUT ACTIONS GOING BEYOND WHAT COULD PLAUSIBLY BE PRESENTED AS IN DEFENCE OF THEIR OWN FORCES OR OTHER ELEMENTS OF THE MNF.

WRIGHT

MIDDLE EAST

STANDARD

NENAD	MAED
MED	ESSD
NAD	ERD
SAD	ESID
UND	CONS D
EESD	CONS EM UNIT
ECD	MR EGERTON
WED	MR THOMAS
RID	
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