

MIDDLE EAST: ADVANCE COPIES # 21

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TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 2531 OF 9 SEPTEMBER

INFO IMMEDIATE MODUK, BEIRUT, BRITFORLEB, PARIS, ROME, UKMIS NEW YORK, PRIORITY DAMASCUS, TEL AVIV, JEDDA, AMMAN AND CAIRO

LEBANON

SUMMARY

1. MCFARLANE IS MEETING PRINCE BANDAR AND WADIE HADDAD IN LARNACA TO PURSUE THE SAUDI SETTLEMENT PLAN. SEPARATE EFFORTS TO PROMOTE A LIMITED CEASEFIRE IN QABR CHAMOUN AND DEIR EL QAMAR. STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN CALLS FOR A IMMEDIATE CEASE-FIRE.

2. A QUIETER DAY IN BEIRUT. CAUTIOUS LAF ADVANCE IN FOOTHILLS OF THE CHOUF. LF ATTACK ON QABR CHAMOUN. THE DRUZE ARE BESIEGING DEIR EL QAMAR. MORE EVIDENCE OF PALESTINIAN INVOLVEMENT WITH THE DRUZE. ISRAELI RECONNAISSANCE PATROLS NORTH OF THE AWWALI RIVER. NO CHANGE IN ROLE OF U S MARINES.

DETAIL

3. PELLETREAU BRIEFED MNF CONTRIBUTORS THIS AFTERNOON. MCFARLANE WAS STILL WORKING ON THE SAUDI PLAN WHICH HAD FULL U S SUPPORT. HE WAS MEETING HADDAD AND PRINCE BANDAR IN LARNACA TO STUDY THE LATEST SYRIAN AND DRUZE ATTITUDES. PELLETREAU THOUGHT THAT EVEN THE SYRIANS WANTED THIS EFFORT TO SUCCEED THOUGH THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT STILL SUSPECTED THEM OF PLAYING FOR TIME IN THE HOPE THAT THEIR ALLIES WOULD IMPROVE THEIR POSITION IN THE CURRENT FIGHTING.
4. PELLETREAU SAID THAT THE SYRIANS AND DRUZE HAD AGREED IN PRINCIPLE TO THE ENTRY OF THE LAF INTO THE CHOUF BUT THERE WERE STILL PROBLEMS OVER TIMING AND OTHER ARRANGEMENTS. IT WAS NOW ENVISAGED THAT SYRIAN AND SAUDI REPRESENTATIVES SHOULD ATTEND THE MEETING BETWEEN GEMAYEL AND OTHER LEBANESE LEADERS, THUS UNDERLINING THE ARAB NATURE OF THE AGREEMENT. THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT HAD NO OBJECTION AND THE AMERICANS SAW ADVANTAGE IN INVOLVING THE SYRIANS CONSTRUCTIVELY. THE SYRIANS AND DRUZE WERE HOWEVER TRYING TO LIMIT ATTENDANCE ON THE CHRISTIAN SIDE, ARGUING THAT THE GOVERNMENT AND PHALANGE WERE ONE AND THE SAME. VENUE WAS ALSO A PROBLEM: LARNACA OR JEDDA WERE POSSIBILITIES. IN RECENT DISCUSSIONS THE SYRIANS HAD NOT BROUGHT UP THE ISRAEL/LEBANON AGREEMENT: THEY PROBABLY ASSUMED THAT ANY NEW LEBANESE GOVERNMENT WOULD BE UNABLE OR UNWILLING TO IMPLEMENT IT. THE AMERICANS HAD WARNED THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT NOT TO DISCARD IT: IT REPRESENTED THE ONLY ISRAELI COMMITMENT TO LEAVE LEBANON.
5. PELLETREAU UNDERSTOOD THAT THE FRENCH AND ITALIAN GOVERNMENTS WERE INVOLVED IN PARALLEL EFFORTS IN SUPPORT OF MCFARLANE'S. THE ITALIAN SAID THAT JUMBLATT HAD ACCEPTED IN PRINCIPLE CRAXI'S INVITATION TO ROME THIS WEEKEND. THE FRENCHMAN WOULD NOT BE DRAWN: HE HAD NO INFORMATION ABOUT THE REPORTED PRESENCE IN PARIS OF JUMBLATT'S AIDE, MARWAN HAMADE.
6. PELLETREAU SAID THAT THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT WERE EXTREMELY CONCERNED ABOUT THE SITUATION IN DEIR EL QAMAR AND THE POSSIBILITY OF FURTHER MASSACRES. THEY HAD APPEALED FOR AMERICAN HELP. THE STATE DEPARTMENT WERE ISSUING A STATEMENT (TEXT IN MIFT) CALLING FOR AN IMMEDIATE CEASEFIRE. HE SUGGESTED THAT A FURTHER STATEMENT ON THE SAME GENERAL LINES MIGHT BE ISSUED JOINTLY BY MNF CONTRIBUTORS, PREFERABLY IN BEIRUT IN ORDER TO HAVE THE MAXIMUM IMPACT ON THE PARTIES. AMBASSADOR DILLON WOULD BE DISCUSSING THIS SOON WITH HIS COLLEAGUES IN BEIRUT.
7. THE AMERICANS WERE CONVEYING TO JUMBLATT A THREE POINT PROPOSAL

THE AMERICANS WILL BE VERY CAUTIOUS ABOUT ACTIONS GOING BEYOND DEFENCE OF THE MNF. CERTAINLY PELLETREAU GAVE NO HINT TODAY THAT HE SAW A NEED FOR GREATER PRESSURE ON THE SYRIANS ON THE LINES SUGGESTED BY MCFARLANE (BEIRUT TELNO 489). THE FRENCH EMBASSY HAVE TOLD US THAT PARIS IS FIRMLY OPPOSED TO SUCH ACTION.

WRIGHT

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