

MIDDLE EAST: ADVANCE COPIES 16

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~~SIR J LEAHY~~
MR EGERTON.
~~SIR J BULLARD~~ MR. JAMES.

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FM WASHINGTON 222320Z

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 2719 OF 22 SEPTEMBER 1983

INFO IMMEDIATE BEIRUT, MODUK, UKMIS NEW YORK, PARIS, BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN (FOR PS/MR LUCE), ROME.

PRIORITY DAMASCUS, AMMAN, JEDDA, TEL AVIV, CAIRO.

LEBANON

SUMMARY

1. IN THE US VIEW THE SYRIANS HAVE BEEN INFLEXIBLE IN THE CEASEFIRE NEGOTIATIONS WHILE GEMAYEL HAS CONCEDED A NUMBER OF POINTS OF SUBSTANCE. AGREEMENT HAS BEEN REACHED ON FOUR MAIN POINTS. THE ISSUES STILL IN DISPUTE ARE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATION AT THE NATIONAL RECONCILIATION TALKS AND THE VENUE. THE STATE DEPARTMENT FORESEE NO CHANGE IN THE BASIC MISSION OF THE MNF. THE HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE HAS APPROVED A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CONTINUED PRESENCE OF THE MARINES IN LEBANON FOR 18 MONTHS.

DETAIL

IN LEBANON FOR 18 MONTHS.

DETAIL

2. AT TODAY'S MEETING OF MNF CONTRIBUTORS PELLETREAU SAID THAT EAGLEBURGER HAD GAINED THE IMPRESSION FROM HIS CONVERSATIONS YESTERDAY THAT THE EUROPEANS BELIEVED THAT GEMAYEL WAS BEING INFLEXIBLE AND EVEN NOT NEGOTIATING IN GOOD FAITH. THIS WAS NOT THE AMERICAN IMPRESSION; THEY WERE ENCOURAGING GEMAYEL IN THE DIRECTION OF A GENUINE NATIONAL DIALOGUE AND RECONCILIATION TO WHICH HE REMAINED FULLY COMMITTED. PELLETREAU GAVE US IN CONFIDENCE THE FOLLOWING MORE DETAILED ACCOUNT OF THE CEASEFIRE NEGOTIATIONS.

3. HE ARGUED THAT THE SYRIANS, NOT GEMAYEL, WERE BEING INFLEXIBLE. THE QUOTE CONCESSIONS UNQUOTE THEY HAD MADE HAD BEEN NO MORE THAN BACKING AWAY FROM UNTENABLE INITIAL NEGOTIATING POSITIONS WHICH HAD BEEN EQUALLY UNACCEPTABLE TO THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT, THE SAUDIS AND THE US. THE SYRIANS HAD, FOR EXAMPLE, DROPPED THEIR DEMANDS THAT GEMAYEL SHOULD ATTEND THE NATIONAL DIALOGUE AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE LEBANESE FORCES RATHER THAN AS PRESIDENT; THAT THE LAF SHOULD BE TREATED IN EXACTLY THE SAME WAY AS THE VARIOUS MILITIAS; THAT THE LAF SHOULD WITHDRAW FROM ALL ITS POSITIONS IN WEST BEIRUT, THE ALEY DISTRICT AND THE CHOUF; AND THAT THE LEBANESE/ISRAELI AGREEMENT SHOULD BE OFFICIALLY REPUDIATED.

4. GEMAYEL, ON THE OTHER HAND, HAD ALREADY CONCEDED A GOOD DEAL. HE REMAINED WILLING TO ENTER A POLITICAL DIALOGUE WITH THE AIM OF FORMING A NEW GOVERNMENT TO INCLUDE LEADERS OF THE DIFFERENT COMMUNAL GROUPS OR THEIR REPRESENTATIVES, SPECIFICALLY INCLUDING NABIH BARRI AND JUMBLATT OR HIS REPRESENTATIVE. HE HAD WITHDRAWN HIS DEMAND THAT THE LAF SHOULD BE PERMITTED TO DEPLY IMMEDIATELY INTO THE CHOUF. THOUGH GEMAYEL WAS UNWILLING TO CONCEDE THAT THERE SHOULD BE AREAS COMPLETELY OUTSIDE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT CONTROL, HE HAD AGREED THAT ARRANGEMENTS SHOULD BE MADE FOR QUOTE GOVERNMENT FORCES UNQUOTE TO ENTER THE CHOUF ON THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THESE WOULD BE THE ISF. HE WAS NO LONGER ASKING THAT THE DRUZE SHOULD DISARM. ALTHOUGH THE VENUE FOR THE NATIONAL RECONCILIATION TALKS HAD NOT BEEN AGREED, GEMAYEL WAS NOT NOW INSISTING ON BAABDA. HE HAD AGREED THAT RAYMOND EDDE SHOULD BE INCLUDED AND THAT KAMAL EL ASAAD, WAZZAN, TUEINI AND SKAFF SHOULD NOT. FINALLY, GEMAYEL HAD DROPPED HIS REQUIREMENT FOR AN AGREED PUBLIC STATEMENT TO THE EFFECT THAT NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WOULD SERVE AS A GUARANTEE FOR THE EXTENSION OF THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT'S SOVEREIGNTY OVER ALL LEBANON.

~~AGREED PUBLIC STATEMENT TO THE EFFECT THAT NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WOULD SERVE AS A GUARANTEE FOR THE EXTENSION OF THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT'S SOVEREIGNTY OVER ALL LEBANON.~~

5. PELLETREAU SAID THAT THE LATEST DRAFT AGREEMENT CONTAINED FOUR POINTS WHICH HAD BEEN ACCEPTED BY ALL CONCERNED:-

- I) A CEASEFIRE IN PLACE SUPERVISED BY NEUTRAL OBSERVERS:
- II) THE FORMATION OF A SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE COMPRISING REPRESENTATIVES OF THE LAF, THE LF, THE NATIONAL SALVATION FRONT, AND AMAL.
- III) A CALL BY GEMAYEL FOR NATIONAL UNITY TALKS TO INCLUDE THE NSF (FRANGIEH, KARAME AND JUMBLATT) THE LF (PIERRE GEMAYEL AND CAMILLE CHAMOUN), AMAL (NABIH BARRI), SAEB SALAM AND RAYMOND EDDE.
- IV) SYRIAN AND SAUDI REPRESENTATIVES SHOULD ATTEND THESE TALKS.

6. THIS LEFT 2 POINTS STILL AT ISSUE THE COMPOSITION OF THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT DELEGATION AND THE VENUE. IN THE LAST 24 HOURS GEMAYEL HAD AGREED (PLEASE PROTECT) TO DROP THE SPEAKER AND THE PRIME MINISTER, BUT WAS CONTINUING TO INSIST THAT HE SHOULD BE ACCOMPANIED BY REPRESENTATIVES OF PARLIAMENT AND THE CABINET. MCFARLANE HAD PUT THIS TODAY TO KHADDAM WHO HAD ARGUED THAT THE LEBANESE PARLIAMENT HAD NEITHER A COHERENT VIEW NOR RESPONSIBILITY FOR POLICY MAKING AND THAT THE CABINET HAD NO INDEPENDENT STATUS BUT WAS MERELY THE PRESIDENT'S INSTRUMENT. THE SYRIAN VIEW WAS THAT GEMAYEL, AS PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE, SHOULD CHAIR THE TALKS ALONE. ONE VENUE THE LEBANESE POSITION WAS THAT THE TALKS SHOULD TAKE PLACE IN AN AREA OF LEBANON UNDER GOVERNMENT CONTROL OR IN SAUDI ARABIA. THE SYRIANS WERE PROPOSING ANYWHERE IN LEBANON OUTSIDE GOVERNMENT CONTROL OR TUNIS. AFTER TWO MEETINGS WITH KHADDAM TODAY, MCFARLANE WAS NOW RETURNING TO BEIRUT TO REPORT TO GEMAYEL.

7. ON NEUTRAL OBSERVERS, PELLETREAU SAID THAT THE PLAN WAS TO USE THE 50 UNTSO OBSERVERS NOW IN BEIRUT, SUPPLEMENTED BY A FURTHER 50 FROM UNTSO ELSEWHERE IN MIDDLE EAST. HE CLAIMED THAT THE UN SECRETARIAT AND GENERAL ERSKINE CONSIDERED THAT THEY HAD THE AUTHORITY TO USE OBSERVERS FOR THIS PURPOSE, THOUGH NOT TO EXPAND THEIR NUMBER. HE KNEW THAT THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT WERE EXAMINING OTHER OPTIONS AS WELL.

(COMMENT: PELLETREAU SEEMED TO BE UNAWARE OF URQUHART'S VIEWS

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8. IN REPLY TO QUESTIONS PELLETRAU SAID THAT FORMING A MORE BROADLY BASED GOVERNMENT WOULD BE THE MAIN ITEM ON THE AGENDA FOR THE NATIONAL UNITY TALKS. THE BASIS FOR A REVISION OF THE QUOTE NATIONAL CONVENANT UNQUOTE MIGHT ALSO BE DISCUSSED BUT SO FAR-REACHING A MOVE WOULD OBVIOUSLY REQUIRE WIDER CONSULTATIONS. MCFARLANE HAD NOT BEEN IN RECENT CONTACT WITH KATA'IB LEADERS. BUT THE AMERICAN IMPRESSION WAS THAT, FOLLOWING THE MAULING OF THE LF AT BHAMDOUN, THE KATA'IB WERE FEELING QUITE VULNERABLE AND WORRIED ABOUT THE PROSPECT OF ANOTHER FRONT BEING OPENED IN THE MOUNTAINS AGAINST THEM. THEY MIGHT THEREFORE BE IN A SLIGHTLY MORE ACCOMMODATING MOOD.

9. ASKED ABOUT US OPTIONS IF THE CEASEFIRE NEGOTIATIONS COULD NOT BE BROUGHT TO AN EARLY CONCLUSION, PELLETRAU SAW NO ALTERNATIVE TO CONTINUING IN ROUGHLY THE CURRENT MODE. THERE WOULD BE NO CHANGE IN THE BASIC MISSION OF THE MNF. IT HAD BEEN NECESSARY TO ADD THE SELF DEFENCE ELEMENT BUT IN HIS PERSONAL VIEW, THIS HAD BEEN STRETCHED AS FAR AS IT COULD AND SHOULD BE. IT HAD BEEN REASONABLE TO INCLUDE SOUQ EL GHARB IN THE QUOTE SELF-DEFENCE POSTURE UNQUOTE BUT THIS DID NOT AMOUNT TO DEFENDING THE LAF WHEREVER IT FOUND ITSELF. THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT UNDERSTOOD THAT US WILLINGNESS TO SUPPORT THE LAF WAS LIMITED TO A VERY SPECIFIC AREA.

MILITARY SITUATION

10. PELLETRAU SAID THAT A FURTHER MINOR ATTACK ON THE LAF AT SOUQ EL GHARB TODAY HAD BEEN REPULSED. LAF MORALE REMAINED HIGH. SEVEN FRENCH SOLDIERS HAD BEEN INJURED IN TWO INCIDENTS IN BEIRUT AND IN RETALIATION FRENCH AIRCRAFT HAD ATTACKED ARTILLERY POSITIONS IN THE HILLS. FOUR TRUCKS LOADED WITH AMMUNITION IN THE ITALIAN CONTINGENT'S MOTOR POOL HAD EXPLODED IN A SEPARATE ATTACK. NO CASUALTIES HAD BEEN REPORTED. THERE HAD BEEN SOME FIRING TO DAY IN THE SHIAH AREA OF WEST BEIRUT.

11. PELLETRAU NOTED INDICATIONS THAT SOME DRUZE WERE BEGINNING TO RESENT SYRIAN AND PALESTINIAN INTRANSIGENCE IN CONTINUING TO FIGHT AT THEIR EXPENSE, THOUGH IT WAS TOO SOON TO DESCRIBE THIS AS A TREND. OTHER INTELLIGENCE REPORTS SUGGESTED THAT SOME PALESTINIANS WANTED TO CONTINUE THE FIGHT IN ORDER TO OPEN THE WAY TO WEST BEIRUT AND TO REESTABLISH THEIR FORMER ALLIANCE WITH LEBANESE LEFTISTS. THESE PALESTINIANS HOPED THAT THEIR

WAY TO WEST BEIRUT AND TO REESTABLISH THEIR FORMER ALLIANCE WITH LEBANESE LEFTISTS. THESE PALESTINIANS HOPED THAT THEIR LEBANESE ALLIES WOULD PRESS FOR THE LEGITIMISATION OF THE PALESTINIAN PRESENCE IN LEBANON.

WAR POWERS ACT

12. BOTH HOUSES OF CONGRESS STARTED HEARINGS ON 21 SEPTEMBER ON THE COMPROMISE RESOLUTION TO AUTHORISE DEPLOYMENT OF US MARINES IN LEBANON FOR A FURTHER 18 MONTHS WITHOUT FORMAL INVOCATION OF THE WAR POWERS ACT (MY TELNO 2687). AS EXPECTED SOME DEMOCRATS ARE SEEKING TO AMEND OR DELAY THIS RESOLUTION. THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE YESTERDAY VOTED BY 10 TO 16 TO CUT OFF FUNDING FOR THE MARINES IN LEBANON ON 1 DECEMBER UNLESS THE PRESIDENT CERTIFIES BY THEN THAT THEIR DEPLOYMENT IS GOVERNED BY THE WAR POWERS ACT. THIS PLOY HAS ANGERED THE DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP IN THE HOUSE, PARTICULARLY CONGRESSMAN ZABLOCKI WHO REGARDS THE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE ACTION AS AN INTRUSION INTO THE AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY OF HIS OWN FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE. THAT COMMITTEE APPROVED THE COMPROMISE RESOLUTION TODAY BY 30 VOTES TO 6. THE STATE DEPARTMENT ARE MUCH ENCOURAGED BY THIS VOTE AND REMAIN OPTIMISTIC THAT THE RESOLUTION WILL PASS BOTH HOUSES IN THE COURSE OF NEXT WEEK.

WRIGHT

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PUS

cc: Mr Coles
Private Secretary (without
enclosure)

LEBANON

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1. I attach a copy of the instructions on which Mr Thomas took action with Eagleburger on 21 September. He read out the three points to be made to the Americans and described the demarches we proposed to make to others.
 2. The security arrangements committee met this morning in Khalde. It comprises representatives of the Lebanese Army (a colonel), the Lebanese Forces, PSP and Amal. This committee does not include Syria, Saudi or US representatives. We do not yet have a report of its discussion. The UK contingent in the MNF provided a guard for the building in which the meeting was held and have been asked to do likewise for the next meeting tomorrow morning (29 September). PSP and Amal have threatened to stay away if this is not done.
 3. Invitations to the national reconciliation talks have not yet been issued. The agenda and venue remain to be agreed. The participants will be President Gemayel, accompanied by one of his ministers and the Deputy Speaker of the Parliament, the National Salvation Front (Karame, Frangieh and Jumblatt), the Lebanese Front (Pierre Gemayel and Camille Chamoun), Amal (Berri) and three independent Lebanese politicians - Saeb Salam (Sunni), Osseiran (Shiite) and Raymond Edde (Maronite). Saudi and Syrian representatives will also attend.

A F Goulty

28 September 1983

A F Goulty