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FM WASHINGTON 182315Z NOV 83

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 3485 OF 18 NOVEMBER

Asc yu
h-c.

YOUR TELEGRAM NUMBER 1949 OF 18 NOVEMBER: POSSIBLE U.S.
RETALIATION FOR BOMB ATTACKS

1. I CALLED ON ADMIRAL POINDEXTER, MCFARLANE'S ASSISTANT, AT THE
WHITE HOUSE THIS AFTERNOON, DELIVERED THE PRIME MINISTER'S
MESSAGE TO THE PRESIDENT AS IN YOUR TELEGRAM NUMBER 1950 AND SPOKE
IN ACCORDANCE WITH PARAGRAPH 3 OF YOUR TELEGRAM NUMBER 1949.

2. POINDEXTER SAID THAT HE REALISED THAT THE PRESIDENT OWED THE
PRIME MINISTER A MESSAGE. HE ADDED THAT THE PRESIDENT
WAS STILL STUDYING THE OPTIONS AND HAD TAKEN NO DECISION.
I SAID THAT PERHAPS AFTER THE ISRAELI AND FRENCH STRIKES THERE
WERE FEWER TARGETS LEFT. POINDEXTER THEN SAID THAT WHAT WAS
WORRYING THE PRESIDENT WAS THIS COMPARATIVELY NEW PHENOMENON OF
STATE-DIRECTED TERRORISM. HOW WAS ONE TO DETER THIS THING? THEY
HAD JUST RECEIVED THE REPORT ABOUT A POSSIBLE ATTACK ON THE US
EMBASSY IN KHARTOUM. THE PRESIDENT CERTAINLY DID NOT SEE
THE OPTIONS OPEN TO HIM AS BEING IN THE NATURE OF RETALIATION, RATHER
AS A POSSIBLE PRE-EMPTIVE STRIKE IN SELF-DEFENCE. BUT HE ADDED
THAT THE PRACTICAL QUESTION OF WHAT TO DO ABOUT STATE-DIRECTED
TERRORISM WAS ONE WHICH SHOULD CONCERN US ALL.

WRIGHT

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HD/NENAD
PS
PS/MR LUCE
PS/PUS
SIR J LEAHY
MR EGERTON

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AP
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1211 - 1

DD WASHINGTON 181800Z

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DESKBY 181800Z

FM FCO 181656Z NOV 83

TO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON

TELEGRAM NUMBER 1949 OF 18 NOVEMBER

PERSONAL FOR AMBASSADOR

OUR TELNO 1913 OF 14 NOVEMBER: POSSIBLE US RETALIATION FOR BOMB ATTACKS

A.S.C. 2/11
h-a

1. MIPT CONTAINS THE TEXT OF A MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO PRESIDENT REAGAN. THE ORIGINAL INTENTION HAD BEEN TO PASS THIS ON THE HOT LINE (IN THE SAME WAY AS THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE TO WHICH IT IS A REPLY), BECAUSE WE HAVE BEEN GIVEN TO UNDERSTAND BY THE AMERICANS THAT KNOWLEDGE OF THE MATTER IS BEING VERY TIGHTLY RESTRICTED IN WASHINGTON. ON THE OTHER HAND, WE ARE VERY CONSCIOUS OF THE NEED FOR CAREFUL HANDLING OF FURTHER REPRESENTATIONS TO THE AMERICANS ON THIS SUBJECT, GIVEN THE US SENSITIVITY ABOUT THE STATE OF OUR RELATIONS, SIGNS OF WHICH WE HAVE PICKED UP ON A NUMBER OF CHANNELS.
2. SUBJECT TO YOUR VIEWS THEREFORE WE THINK IT MAY BE BEST FOR YOU TO DELIVER THE MESSAGE YOURSELF AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND TO MAKE, AT THE SAME TIME, THE POINTS IN PARAGRAPH 3 BELOW. WE WOULD WISH YOU TO TAKE ACTION WITH THE WHITE HOUSE AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL AVAILABLE, THOUGH THE OVER-RIDING CONSIDERATION IS THAT YOU SHOULD DO SO ONLY WITH SOMEONE KNOWN TO BE FULLY IN THE PICTURE.
3. WHEN HANDING OVER THE MESSAGE YOU SHOULD EMPHASISE THAT
 - (A) WE ARE VERY GRATEFUL TO THE AMERICANS FOR THE WARNING THEY PASSED TO US YESTERDAY (17 NOVEMBER) OF POSSIBLE TARGETTING OF THE BRITISH MNF CONTINGENT: WE ARE ALSO GRATEFUL FOR THE HELP OF THE MARINES IN PROVIDING ADDITIONAL SECURITY MEASURES AT OUR EMBASSY.
 - (B) NO DOUBT THE AMERICANS WILL BE AS CONCERNED AS WE WERE

/AT

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AT THE FRENCH RETALIATORY ACTION ON 17 NOVEMBER WHICH WAS TAKEN WITHOUT CONSULTATION OF MNF PARTNERS (AT LEAST AS FAR AS WE WERE CONCERNED). I SHALL BE MAKING MY CONCERN CLEAR TO M. CHEYSSON IN THE COURSE OF TODAY.

4. COINCIDENTALLY, THE US AMBASSADOR ASKED LEAHY THIS MORNING WHETHER WE WERE BECOMING IMPATIENT FOR A REPLY TO THE PRIME MINISTER'S MESSAGE OF 14 NOVEMBER (TEXT IN TUR). LEAHY SAID THAT SPEAKING PERSONALLY HE THOUGHT THAT, IF ACTION WERE ENVISAGED, IT WOULD BE VERY USEFUL IF A REPLY COULD ARRIVE BEFORE THE PRIME MINISTER'S DEPARTURE ON 21 NOVEMBER.

HOWE

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MR EDGERTON

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SUBJECT PRIME MINISTER'S *US Desk AP 8*
PERSONAL MESSAGE *21*

SERIAL No. *7191 B) 83*

*cc NCRS
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COPY NO.....

DD WASHINGTON 181800Z
GRS 204
TOP SECRET
D E H O C
DESKBY 181800Z
FM FCO 181700Z NOV 83
TO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON
TELEGRAM NUMBER 1950 OF 18 NOVEMBER
PERSONAL FOR AMBASSADOR
M I P T : POSSIBLE US RETALIATION FOR BOMB ATTACKS

A-t.c. 2/11.

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF MESSAGE FROM PRIME MINISTER TO
PRESIDENT REAGAN.

BEGINS:

IN YOUR MESSAGE OF 14 NOVEMBER ABOUT THE LEBANON YOU KINDLY SAID
THAT YOU WOULD BE IN FURTHER TOUCH WITH ME IN ADVANCE OF ANY
ACTION YOU MIGHT DECIDE TO TAKE AGAINST THE TERRORISTS WHO WERE
RESPONSIBLE FOR THE OUTRAGE AGAINST YOUR TROOPS IN THE LEBANON
(YOU WILL HAVE SEEN MY REPLY OF THE SAME DATE).
YOU WILL UNDERSTAND THAT WE ARE KEEPING CONSTANTLY UNDER REVIEW
THE SECURITY OF OUR OWN CONTINGENT IN THE LEBANON. ON MONDAY
21 NOVEMBER I AM DUE TO LEAVE LONDON FOR THE COMMONWEALTH HEADS
OF GOVERNMENT MEETING IN INDIA AND ON PRESENT PLANS WILL NOT
RETURN UNTIL EARLY ON 30 NOVEMBER. I DO NOT WANT TO PRESS YOU IN
ANY WAY BUT IT WOULD GREATLY HELP ME IN CONSIDERING MY OWN PLANS
IF YOU WERE ABLE TO GIVE ME ANY INDICATION OF WHETHER YOU HAVE
DECIDED NOT TO GO AHEAD WITH ACTION OF THE KIND YOU WERE CONSID-
ERING OR WHETHER YOU STILL EXPECT TO GO AHEAD. I WELL APPRECIATE
THE NEED FOR COMPLETE SECURITY AND UNDERSTAND THAT YOU CAN ONLY
RESPOND IN A GENERAL WAY.

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