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FM FCO 041900Z JAN 84
TO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON

TELEGRAM NUMBER 14 OF 4 JANUARY

INFO IMMEDIATE PARIS, ROME, UKMIS NEW YORK, BEIRUT, TEL AVIV,
DAMASCUS, MODUK
INFO PRIORITY MOSCOW, CAIRO, THE HAGUE,

UKMIS NEW YORK TELNOS 003 AND 004: LEBANON

1. THERE HAVE BEEN TWO DEVELOPMENTS HERE TODAY. THE PRIME MINISTER HAS GIVEN AN INTERVIEW TO SIR ALISTAIR BURNET TO BE BROADCAST LATER TODAY IN WHICH SHE ANSWERED QUESTIONS ABOUT OUR MNF ROLE AND THE POSSIBLE INVOLVEMENT OF UN FORCES. A TRANSCRIPT FOLLOWS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. ON MY INSTRUCTIONS LEAHY ALSO HELD A MEETING WITH THE CHARGES D'AFFAIRES OF THE US, FRENCH AND ITALIAN EMBASSIES. HOOPER (US EMBASSY) ALSO ATTENDED. THE PURPOSE WAS (A) TO START A PROCESS OF CONSULTATION AT OFFICIAL LEVEL (ALTHOUGH WE WERE CAREFUL NOT TO BILL IT AS SUCH) AND (B) TO DISCUSS NEXT STEPS ON EXPANDING THE ROLE OF THE UN AND INITIAL REACTIONS TO THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT'S SECURITY PLAN (BEIRUT TELNO 2).

2. LEAHY BEGAN BY OUTLINING THE ITINERARY FOR MY VISIT TO EGYPT, SAUDI ARABIA AND SYRIA NEXT WEEK AND SAYING THAT I HAD ASKED HIM TO DISCUSS WITH OUR MNF PARTNERS RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN AND CONCERNING LEBANON BEFORE I LEFT. IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO HAVE COMMENTS AND IDEAS FROM OUR PARTNERS ON THESE AND OTHER ISSUES WHICH MIGHT COME UP DURING MY TOUR. OVER THE HOLIDAY PERIOD THE ITALIANS HAD ANNOUNCED A REDUCTION IN THE SIZE OF THEIR MNF CONTINGENT AND THE FRENCH HAD ANNOUNCED THAT THEY WOULD BE RETURNING SOME OF THEIR MNF TROOPS TO UNIFIL. PRESIDENT GEMAYEL HAD ON 3 JANUARY REVEALED HIS SECURITY PLAN

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WHICH HAD POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS. IN ADDITION THERE WAS INCREASING POLITICAL PRESSURE ON THE US ADMINISTRATION CONCERNING THE ROLE OF THE US CONTINGENT. ALL THIS IN TURN HAD GENERATED GREATER POLITICAL PRESSURE HERE. ALTHOUGH NO IMMEDIATE DECISIONS WERE BEING TAKEN THERE WAS MOUNTING UNEASE AND ANXIETY. WE SHOULD BE AS ACTIVE AS POSSIBLE IN SEEKING WAYS TO MAKE THE SORT OF PROGRESS WHICH WOULD ENABLE THE MNF CONTINGENTS TO BE WITHDRAWN.

3. IN DISCUSSION OF GEMAYEL'S SECURITY PLAN LEAHY SUGGESTED THAT THE MNF CONTRIBUTORS WOULD WISH TO LOOK CAREFULLY AT THE POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS. THE REQUEST TO THE US CONTINGENT TO DEPLOY AT BAABDA WOULD IDENTIFY THE MNF MORE CLOSELY WITH GEMAYEL. PHASE 2 WOULD REQUIRE AN EXTENSION OF THE TERMS OF THE MANDATE OF THE MNF. EVEN IF PHASE 1 COULD BE REGARDED AS WITHIN THE TERMS OF THE EXISTING MANDATE IT MIGHT BE SEEN AS A DEEPENING OF THE COMMITMENT OF THE MNF CONTRIBUTORS. HOOPER (US) COMMENTED THAT A REASSESSMENT OF LEBANON POLICIES WAS TAKING PLACE IN WASHINGTON AND THE ADMINISTRATION WAS LOOKING FOR CONCRETE PROGRESS. THE INITIAL INDICATIONS WERE THAT THE UNITED STATES WOULD LOOK AT THE SECURITY PROPOSALS IN A POSITIVE SPIRIT.

4 ON THE ROLE OF UN FORCES LEAHY SAID THAT THE PRIME MINISTER HAD RAISED THIS WITH THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL IN NEW YORK IN SEPTEMBER. WE HAD BEEN INTERESTED BY PEREZ DE CUELLAR'S REMARKS AT HIS PRESS CONFERENCE ON 21 DECEMBER (UKMIS NEW YORK TELNO 1714).

IT WAS CLEAR THAT NONE OF THE FOUR CONDITIONS FOR UN INVOLVEMENT WHICH HE HAD MENTIONED COULD AT PRESENT BE SATISFIED. BUT ALTHOUGH THE SYRIAN AND SOVIET ATTITUDES APPARENTLY REMAINED NEGATIVE WE SHOULD NOT ASSUME THAT PROGRESS WAS IMPOSSIBLE AND WANTED TO PRESS THEM. WE SAW VALUE IN EXPLORING FURTHER THE POSSIBILITIES. POSSIBLY IN NEW YORK AND WITH PEREZ DE CUELLAR. WE HAD NOT YET FORMULATED DETAILED IDEAS ON THE DIFFERENT OPTIONS: WE SHOULD FIRST DISCUSS THEM AMONG OURSELVES AND EXPLORE THE LEBANESE ATTITUDE.

5. IN DISCUSSION HOOPER COMMENTED THAT OPINIONS WITHIN THE ADMINISTRATION ON UN INVOLVEMENT WERE DIVIDED. ECHOING

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PELLETREAU (WASHINGTON TELNO 3882) HE SAID THAT RUMSFELD DID NOT WISH TO GIVE A SIGNAL TO THE SYRIANS THAT THE US CONTINGENT WAS ON THE WAY OUT BUT THE AMERICANS WERE UNLIKELY TO OBJECT TO EXPLORATION BY OTHERS. THERE WAS GENERAL AGREEMENT WITH THE ITALIAN COMMENT THAT ALTHOUGH THE RUSSIANS WERE UNLIKELY TO BE HELPFUL IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO DRAW THEM IN GRADUALLY. IT WOULD FOR INSTANCE BE DIFFICULT FOR THE SYRIANS AND RUSSIANS TO OBJECT TO A UN FLAG OVER THE SABRA AND CHATILA REFUGEE CAMPS.

EGERTON SUGGESTED THAT THE SAME APPLIED TO THE CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS COMMITTEE. SUMMING UP LEAHY SAID THAT OUR AIM SHOULD BE FIRST TO WIN OVER THE LEBANESE AND THEN TO LOOK FOR WAYS OF PUTTING PRESSURE ON SYRIA AND THE SOVIET UNION SO THAT AT THE VERY LEAST THEY WOULD BE UNCOMFORTABLE IN REJECTING OUR PROPOSALS.

6. LEAHY ASKED FOR REPORTS ON PROGRESS MADE BY GEMAYEL TOWARDS RECONCILIATION. HE STRESSED THAT FOR ALL MNF CONTRIBUTORS PROGRESS WAS ESSENTIAL IF WE WERE TO CONTINUE TO JUSTIFY OUR PARTICIPATION.

VATTANI (ITALY) COMMENTED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN PUTTING PRESSURE ON GEMAYEL. IT WAS AGREED THAT THERE APPEARED TO BE NO GROUNDS FOR OPTIMISM.

7. IN CONCLUSION LEAHY SAID THAT THE NEXT OPPORTUNITY FOR A MEETING AT MINISTERIAL LEVEL WAS LIKELY TO BE AT THE CDE MEETING IN STOCKHOLM (16-18 JANUARY). WE WOULD FAVOUR A FURTHER MEETING. IT WAS AGREED TO HOLD A FURTHER MEETING ON 6 JANUARY TO FOLLOW UP THE PRESENT DISCUSSION IN THE LIGHT OF ANY COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM CAPITALS.

8. THE POSSIBILITY OF FOLLOW UP ACTION IN CAPITALS WILL BE COVERED IN A FURTHER TELEGRAM.

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MULTINATIONAL FORCE IN LEBANON (MNF)

LIMITED
NENAD
MED
DEFENCE DEPT
FUSD
NEWS DEPT
UND
NAD
WED
SED
ECD(E)
FINANCE DEPT
PROTOCOL DEPT
PS

PS/LADY YOUNG
PS/MR LUCE
PS/FUS
SIR J BULLARD
SIR J LEAHY
MR WRIGHT
MR CARTLEDGE
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