

TOP SECRET

Baghdad telegram No. 829 to Foreign Office

- 2 -

- (e) Possible tactics might be to ask General Chehab whether he would accept Presidency himself and if not whether he has a strong and pro-Western candidate to suggest. Unless he has a satisfactory answer to either question he should be pressed as strongly as possible to support Chamoun's re-election.
- (f) Unless alternative and satisfactory candidate becomes available it is better to support Chamoun's re-election and to face civil war and other consequences now and with Chamoun there rather than later.
- (g) It might be better for Lebanon to appeal to the Security Council before Chamoun announced his decision. Appeal might create circumstances which would strengthen Chamoun.

2. The King and the Crown Prince agreed fully with our profound hope that situation could be held without it becoming necessary for Chamoun to appeal to the Americans and ourselves for military intervention. In reply to questioning they gave the definite undertaking already given to us by Nuri that, if American and British military intervention were regrettably necessary in response to appeal from Chamoun and the Lebanese Government, Iraq would support our action both in the Security Council and outside.

3. King Faisal, thinking aloud, wondered whether it would be feasible for Iraq to send forces to help the Lebanon if need arose. If this would enable the Lebanon to hold the position without American and British forces it would of course be a better solution. But he supposed the Americans or ourselves would have to provide transport aircraft.

Foreign Office pass (Immediate to all) Amman, Ankara, Beirut, P.O.M.E.F., Washington and Saving to Paris as my telegrams Nos. 265, 151, 279, 144, 90 and 64 respectively.

[Repeated to Amman, Ankara, Beirut, P.O.M.E.F., Washington, and Saving to Paris] as my telegrams Nos. 265, 151, 279, 144, 90, 64.

HHHHH

TOP SECRET

CONFIDENTIAL

TOP SECRET

FROM WASHINGTON TO FOREIGN OFFICE

111815/50
FLOAT

Cypher/OTP

Sir H. Caccia

No. 1175

D: 1.46 a.m. May 17, 1958

May 16, 1958

R: 2.16 a.m. May 17, 1958

IMMEDIATE

DEDIP

TOP SECRET

FLOAT

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 1175 of May 16
Repeated for information Immediate to Beirut Baghdad Amman

Guard.

Lebanon.

The State Department have told us, for our most secret information, that they have sent instructions to the United States Ambassador in Cairo to speak to the Egyptians about the situation in Lebanon.

2. He is to say that the United States Government have circumstantial information that assistance is being given to those engaged in the present disorders in the Lebanon from U.A.R. territory. The United States Government have recently reassured the Lebanese Government of their intention to assist the Lebanon in maintaining her independence and integrity. In his evaluation of the situation and of his own course of action, Colonel Nasser should have no doubt of the United States intention to live up to this assurance.

3. The Ambassador is to refer to Nasser's statement before he went to Moscow that he did not wish to see bloodshed and communal strife in the Lebanon and to say that the United States Government assume from this that U.A.R. assistance in the present disturbances does not have his approval. He is also to say that the possibility of friendly relations between the United States and the United Arab Republic will be affected by the U.A.R. attitude on this.

Foreign Office pass Immediate to Beirut, Baghdad and Amman as my telegrams Nos. 45, 92 and 49 respectively.

[Repeated to Beirut, Baghdad, Amman.]

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FROM WASHINGTON TO FOREIGN OFFICE

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FOREIGN OFFICE AND WHITEHALL
DISTRIBUTION

En Clair

Sir H. Caccia
No. 1222
May 20, 1958

D: 5.17 p.m. May 20, 1958
R: 6.50 p.m. May 20, 1958

PRIORITY

V. 1015/115
Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 1222 of May 20.
Repeated for information to Baghdad and Beirut.

Following is editorial from New York Times of May 20.

Begins.

Embattled Lebanon.

President Nasser's attempt to seize Lebanon with the aid of his Communist allies, as he attempted to seize Jordan and did seize Syria, is not going too well, but this has only prompted both Cairo and Moscow to step up their joint campaign against American aid to the embattled Lebanese Government. They support the pro-Nasser rebels in Lebanon with inflammatory propaganda and infiltration of Syrian and Egyptian "volunteers", and threaten the United States with "serious consequences" if American aid continues.

These threats are part of the Moscow-Cairo propaganda designed to intimidate the Arabs, and need not be taken too seriously. They are especially ironic in view of Soviet arms shipments to Egypt, Syria and Indonesia, and the denunciation of non-existing American aid to the Indonesian rebels. But Nasser apparently considers Lebanon to be already so much his own that the director of the United Arab Republic's Information Department finds it in order to denounce the "sinister actions" of Lebanese authorities against "citizens of the Republic".

Fortunately the Lebanese Government appears to be getting the upper hand in the civil war. Meanwhile the United States is committed to support the Lebanese Government. It has sent small arms and riot equipment for the Lebanese police. It is now preparing to ship tanks to the Lebanese army, and both American and British naval forces have shifted their N.A.T.O. manoeuvres from the western to the Eastern Mediterranean. The hope is that these measures will suffice to bring the situation under control and avert the use of American planes or troops, should President Chamoun request their aid to safeguard American lives and property.

Ends. Foreign Office pass to Baghdad and Beirut as my telegrams Nos. 107 and 60 respectively.
[Repeated to Baghdad and Beirut].

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1. Printed
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2. Levant Dept
Encl. Part
19v

103 Hagley Road
Birmingham, I6.

May 16th 1958.

To
The Rt Hon Selwyn Lloyd
Foreign Secretary.

VL1015/117

Sir.

The present unrest and rioting in Lebanon is - as no doubt you are well aware - due to Soviet-backed Nasserism, and unless the Western powers take quick and firm action in support of President Chamoun and his Government, Nasser may succeed in grabbing another Arab State for ^{his} Republic, thereby strengthening his claim for overlordship of all the Arab States, under the suzerainty of Russia.

As the "Daily Telegraph" correspondent on the spot reports -
The West is on its last stand in the Middle East. Should Lebanon succumb to Nasser plans the chief bastion against Egyptian domination disappears, leaving pro-Western Iraq, Kuwait and to a large extent Saudi Arabia, the wealthy oil lands, to the Egyptian dictators mercy. All the rioting originates from Nasser's determination to oust President Chamoun and the Solh Government before it can amend the constitution to enable the President to continue for a second term of office."

If Great Britain is wise she will not wait for either help or approval from America or any other nation, but get in quickly with whatever forces are necessary to save Lebanon from Nasserism and Communist domination. Give Nasser a taste of Sinai; he badly needs it.

Yours faithfully

D. A. Sultan

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ELevant Dept
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24103 Hagley Road
Birmingham, 16.

June 23rd 1958.

To
The Rt Hon Selwyn Lloyd
Foreign Secretary.

VL 1015/179(A)

Sir.

Congratulations on your realistic summary as to the slight prospects of any worth while agreement with Russia on any fundamental issue. That there should ever be any hope of such is, in my opinion, unlikely. Russia's only object in any conference is to see what she can get out of it; she is never prepared to give anything away. I cannot therefore see what good a Summit Conference would do. I should consider it a waste of time with a country like Russia.

With regard to the Lebanon. If the Western powers, especially Great Britain and America, do realise the importance of keeping Lebanon out of the clutches of Nasser and his Arab Republic, they will have to take more active measures than merely sending United Nations observers to investigate the trouble. There is no need for any investigation into what has been quite obvious for some time past, viz; that the present trouble in Lebanon is due to Nasser's attempt to grab that country and incorporate it in his Arab Republic. Apart from Iraq and Jordan - Saudi Arabia continues to sit on the fence - there would then be no opposition to his plan of allowing Russia to establish herself in the Middle East in return for her acknowledgment of himself as head of the Arab States.

If America and Gt Britain cannot see that, then there is every justification for the broad grin worn by Nasser in the photograph appearing

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CONFIDENTIAL

in to-day's paper, where he is shown hob-nobbing with Mr Hammarskjöld, Secretary-General of the United Nations. No doubt he is hoping that the debacle of 1956 will be repeated in his favour.

Yours faithfully

A. F. Sutton

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SECRET

FROM BEIRUT TO FOREIGN OFFICE

VL 1015/119 (C)

Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE (SECRET) AND
WHITEHALL (SECRET)
DISTRIBUTION

Sir G. Middleton
No. 579
May 22, 1958

D. 10.44 a.m. May 22, 1958
E. 11.22 a.m. May 22, 1958

IMMEDIATE
SECRET

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 579 of May 22
Repeated for information Saving to Washington.
Washington telegram No. 1244 to Foreign Office.

My American colleague has shown me a telegram from United States Ambassador, Cairo reporting his interview with Nasser.

2. Nasser started by saying that the latest events in the Lebanon had occurred while he was in Russia and out of touch with day to day affairs. He had at once telegraphed to General Amrur to do nothing until he, Nasser, returned to Cairo. He then proceeded to criticize both the Chamoun régime and the attitude of the State Department. He asked whether it could seriously be maintained that people like Philip Takla, Bechara Khoury and other Christians were anti-Western; or denied that there was a genuine internal opposition when every single former Prime Minister was openly against Chamoun? It was pure nonsense to imply that the U.A.R. was in any way responsible for the revolution which had spontaneously broken out. It was high time the West realised that Arabs everywhere, whether Christian or Moslem, were tired of being exploited.

After a good deal more in this strain Nasser agreed that an end must be brought to the present disturbances in the Lebanon and a solution found. The U.A.R. had always respected, and would continue to respect, the independence of the Lebanon. Coming down to details, he thought the "Chehab formula" might provide the answer. But there must be a general amnesty and no re-prisals against those who had "courageously fought for their principles" like Saeb Salam.

I think the above is a fairly accurate summary of the telegram. The points that strike me are

- (a) it really does look as though the opposition and their patrons would like a truce, and

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*initialled (b)
Africa Dept as Jackel.* PWW
23/5

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Beirut telegram No. 579 to Foreign Office

- 2 -

(b) the insistence on an amnesty may well indicate that they want to have their hands free to start all over again when the time seems propitious.

Foreign Office please pass Saving to Washington as my telegram No. 45.

[Repeated Saving to Washington].

ADVANCE COPIES:

Private Secretary
Sir F. Hoyer Millar
Sir W. Hayter
Mr. Beeley
Head of Levant Department

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TOP SECRET

FROM WASHINGTON TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE SECRET AND
WHITEHALL SECRET DISTRIBUTION

Sir H. Caccia

No. 1225
May 20, 1958

D. 12.17 a.m. May 21, 1958
R. 1.58 a.m. May 21, 1958

IMMEDIATE
DEDIP
TOP SECRET

REC'D
21 MAY 1958
VL1015/20

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 1225 of May 20. (C)
Repeated for information to Ottawa Canberra
and Saving to U.K. Mission New York

Guard. VL1015/120-G

Your telegram No. 2911: Lebanon.

Yes. But there is a further factor.

2. Several times during the past week Mr. Dulles has agreed with our views against the advice of his Department. Although I have no proof, it is my clear impression that this was also the case with our basic decision to inform Chamoun of our readiness to respond to an appeal. It may help you to have some background to this dichotomy, though it must necessarily be partly based on guess work.

3. Mr. Dulles and his State Department advisers are in complete agreement that military intervention would be a most dangerous course, that Chamoun should be aware of our misgivings on this score; and that he should do everything possible to maintain control without it.

4. In weighing the ultimate decision, Mr. Dulles' Middle East advisers probably argue that the risks involved in letting Chamoun go under are outweighed by these risks:

(a) even if we succeeded in restoring order and withdrawing after a swift operation, Chamoun would be discredited as a President who had invited foreign intervention and had kept power only with the help of "foreign bayonets". The genuine internal Opposition as well as the U.A.R. and U.S.S.R. would exploit this to destroy his base of political support which is already too narrow;

(b) in a worse case, we might be involved in an open ended military commitment, taking sides in a civil war and sooner /or later

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Washington telegram No. 1225 to Foreign Office

- 2 -

er later facing a choice between indefinite military occupation, or withdrawal and the acknowledgment of defeat;

- (c) our intervention would feed the flames of anti-Western pre-Nasser Arab nationalism elsewhere in the Middle East. Even though Nuri and Hussein might be able to keep their promise of open support, this might bring about their political death. Thus, we might or might not save Lebanon at the cost of losing the Arab Union.

5. Mr. Dulles is, of course, aware of these risks but considers that if anti-Western forces are allowed to take control of the Lebanon by force without our intervention, this will in any case be the prelude to a series of further coups, the political death of Nuri and Hussein, and the final collapse of any Western position in the area.

6. I detect another over-riding consideration in Mr. Dulles' mind quite apart from Middle East considerations. If a legitimate Government, which has received previous public assurances of general support from the United States Government, is attacked by forces supported from outside on account of its pre-Western stand, and if the United States fails to respond to that appeal, then the effect on the position of the United States in the Free World at large would be disastrous.

7. The State Department have to accept the policy decision but in following through, their eyes are fixed too much on the hope that intervention will be avoided and too little on the measures necessary to ensure its success. They want to avoid precipitating a direct clash with Nasser. Even at this stage, they are reluctant to let the situation develop into a direct confrontation of Nasser by the United States. I expect that this thought lies behind:

- (a) their views on an appeal to the Security Council where they would be committed to support strongly a Lebanese accusation against the U.A.R. who would be sure of the strongest Russian support.
- (b) Their reluctance to put any heart into the overt propaganda build-up which is necessary for either Security Council action or intervention.

8. Meanwhile, the leak on Saturday of what Mr. Dulles had said to selected Senators and his own statement at his Press /conference

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Washington telegram No. 1225 to Foreign Office

- 3 -

conference today should make it sufficiently plain that the United States Government are ready to act in certain circumstances. But at the present time, when there are so many crises on hand, even Mr. Dulles cannot personally follow up every aspect and there are some limits beyond which it would be imprudent to appeal to him, if we are to avoid the impression that we are trying to push the Americans into an operation (your telegram No. 2900, not repeated to all).

9. I spoke yesterday to Canadian and Australian Ambassadors and I think that they now have a pretty good idea of what has been going on here. But it would be most unhelpful if the Australian and Canadian Governments started checking back on the basis of our reports, and I have, therefore, marked this telegram 'Guard'.

Foreign Office please pass Canberra as my telegram No. 42.

[Copies sent to Telegraph Section C.R.O. for repetition to Canberra]

ADVANCE COPIES

Private Secretary
Sir P. Hoyer Millar
Sir P. Dean
Mr. Beeley
Head of Levant Department

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22 JULY 1958

Examples of U.A.R. Interference in Lebanon

VL1015/124

The following is a summary of such evidence as there has been of the U.A.R.'s hand in the recent disturbances in Lebanon. The most important manifestations are the sustained hostility of the U.A.R.'s Radio, and the widespread presence of Syrian Agents and arms.

Flags A,
B and C

2. (a) Quoted by the Lebanese Foreign Minister in his statement on May 13:

Flag C.

- (i) Unbroken arms smuggling into Lebanon from across her frontiers for many months passed;
- (ii) the use of Cairo Radio, Damascus Radio and the "Voice of the Arabs" to broadcast unfriendly statements (in fact they amounted to open invitations to insurrection);
- (iii) the Belgian Consul General in Damascus, ~~entering~~ Lebanon from Syria for the second time in 24 hours, is found to have in his car quantities of arms and ammunition and instructions for acts of terrorism;
- (iv) an attack on the Customs post which stopped the Belgian Consul, by a large band of armed men from across the Syrian frontier. Five Customs officials were killed;
- (v) landing of arms and Egyptian money from the Gaza Strip, on at least three occasions, and the presence of other suspicious craft off the Lebanese coast;
- (vi) participation in the riots in Tripoli of members or ex-members of the Syrian Army. At least 24 of the rioters were arrested.

Flag D.

(b) Reports in the Press:

- (i) Further arrests are members of the Syrian Armed Forces or Deuxieme Bureau in Souk el Gharb (near Beirut) and Beiteddine (where the President's summer Palace has been attacked recently).

... / (ii) Arrest

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- (ii) Arrest of Soviet citizens in Beirut, in possession of explosives and Syrian identification papers;
- (iii) the arrest of Syrians for inciting shop keepers to strike, and for being in possession of explosives.

May 19, 1958.

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FROM WASHINGTON TO FOREIGN OFFICE

V

FOREIGN OFFICE AND WHITEHALL
DISTRIBUTION

En Clair

Sir H. Cascia
No. 1243
May 21, 1958.

D.6.14 p.m. May 21, 1958.
R.6.10 p.m. May 21, 1958.

PRIORITY

1243/1243

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 1243 of May 21,
Repeated for information to: Beirut (for R.I.O.)
Baghdad.

Today's New York Times has a report from Cairo quoting authoritative Egyptian sources as taking the line that Lebanon would be a liability at this time to the United Arab Republic, and suggesting that, although the crisis was brought on by pro-Nasser politicians in Lebanon, the well-organized Lebanese Communists pitched in for their own purposes.

The Lebanese crisis put Nasser in a most uncomfortable position since, although the President achieved some of his basic aims, sources close to him report considerable disenchantment over his dealing with the Kremlin, and this said to have redoubled his desire for normal relations with the West.

2. Report adds that Cairo and Damascus newspapers continue to demand resignation of Chamoun and S. Solh "traitors to Arab nationalism and to the people of Lebanon". There is no editorial comment.

Foreign Office pass to Beirut and Baghdad as my telegrams Nos. 64 and 112 respectively.

[Repeated to Beirut and Baghdad].

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CONFERENCE

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FROM WASHINGTON TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE (SECRET) AND
WHITEHALL (SECRET) DISTRIBUTION

Sir H. Caccia
No. 1252
May 21, 1958

D: 1.29 a.m. May 22, 1958
R: 2.23 a.m. May 22, 1958

IMMEDIATE
TOP SECRET

VL1015/132 ✓

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 1252 of May 21.

Repeated for information to P.O.M.E.F. Beirut
Baghdad Amman
U.K. Mission New York
and Saving to Ankara Paris

My telegram No. 1244: Lebanon and Nasser. VL1015/119 G

Nasser began by giving Mr. Hare an excited and tendentious version of events in the Lebanon. He had heard only by radio in Moscow of what was happening and had warned Hakim Amir by telephone that the U.A.R. was not to get involved. There might have been some border crossing and some arms running, but the coupling of his name with the Russians as the villains of the piece was an example of the general tendency to exaggerate his capabilities for causing trouble. How could he do so much with only \$1 million a year in his budget for intelligence?

2. He then went on to criticise United States policy in supporting Chamoun, who had brought this on him by his unpopular acts. How could all ex-Prime Ministers in Lebanon, including those of impeccable pro-Western antecedents, be wrong and Chamoun alone right? Why could not the United States [not] learn that people in the Middle East were no longer going to have rulers imposed on them? He, Nasser, might be arbitrary in some of his acts but he could get away with it because everyone knew it was done for the general good.

3. The United States Ambassador said there was no point in engaging in an argument on this subject. What was now going to happen in Lebanon? To his surprise, Nasser's manner changed completely, and he began saying that he did not see why there could not be a reasonable settlement. He had heard that Chehab might become Prime Minister. This seemed to him a good idea. There might be:

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/ (a)

TOP SECRET

Washington telegram No. 1252 to Foreign Office

- 2 -

- (a) An amnesty. The Opposition were unlikely to give up their struggle if there were going to be political trials;
- (b) Chehab as Prime Minister;
- (c) Chamoun could disclaim the intention to change the Constitution, but would serve out his term as President. He saw no reason why the Opposition should insist on Chamoun's resignation - if they were to get an amnesty;
- (d) he himself would try to help by giving advice to Opposition leaders;
- (e) the United States Ambassador in Beirut might get in touch with Saeb Salaam and give him Nasser's views.

4. Mr. Hare has suggested that it might be preferable to follow up Nasser's suggestions, rather than go to the Security Council and produce a line-up of the Western Powers behind Lebanon ranged against Nasser, backed by the U.S.S.R. Speculating on the motive for Nasser's apparent desire to be reasonable, Mr. Hare said that it might be his fear of identification with the Russians in the Lebanese situation, a theme to which he had frequently reverted with annoyance during their conversation.

5. We understand that the State Department are not in favour of McClintock passing Nasser's views to Saeb Salaam.

Foreign Office please pass Immediate to P.O.M.E.F. and Beirut, Routine to Amman and Baghdad and Saving to Ankara and Paris as my telegrams Nos. 32, 66, 66, 113, 63 and 203 respectively.

[Repeated to P.O.M.E.F., Beirut, Amman, Baghdad and Saving to Ankara and Paris].

ADVANCE COPIES

Private Secretary
Sir F. Hoyer Millar
Sir P. Dean
Sir W. Hayter
Mr. Beeley
Head of Levant Department

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FROM NEW YORK TO FOREIGN OFFICE
(United Kingdom Mission to the United Nations)

VZ1015

Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE (SECRET)
AND WHITEHALL (SECRET)
DISTRIBUTION

Sir P. Dixon

No. 393
May 21, 1958

D. 3.13 a.m. May 22, 1958
R. 4.05 a.m. May 22, 1958

PRIORITY
TOP SECRET

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 393 of May 21.
Repeated for information to Beirut

Washington
and Saving to Amman
Baghdad
Paris P.O.M.E.F.

VZ1015/120G
My telegram No. 389: Lebanon.

I had a brief conversation with Mr. Ledge today, before members of our two missions met to go over the ground.

VZ1015/826
2. It was clear to me that Mr. Ledge was still doubtful about the strength of the case the Lebanese could make out (Washington telegram No. 1201). I had the impression that his approach to the whole problem was coloured by dislike of the prospect that might open up in front of us.

3. From the subsequent discussion it emerged that the uneasiness of the United States mission was not due to any doubt about the return of U.A.R. activities. It sprang from two considerations: the fear that the Lebanese would not be able to make out a convincing case of official intervention from outside, and anxiety over the impression that might be created by the argument that the troubles in the Lebanon were due to local dissatisfaction with the Government; the Egyptians here were no doubt already doing their best to spread this impression.

4. It was pointed out to the Americans that Nasser's record e.g. in Jordan, created a presumption of guilt, and that if the evidence produced was not such as to convince the more naive members of the Council that they would be justified in supporting a resolution directed at the U A R by name, this need not prevent them from coming out against "any" interference from outside which threatened the Lebanon. In any case it was surely essential, whatever was

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(UKMIS) New York telegram No. 393 to Foreign Office

- 2 -

said to the Lebanese, not to give other missions any ground for doubting the strength of the Lebanese case. They agreed. They said that when they had expressed to Mr. Askoul their misgivings about the strength of the case he had outlined to them, they had nevertheless told him that the Lebanese must, of course, come to the Security Council if the Government felt it was in danger of being overthrown.

Foreign Office please repeat Priority to Beirut as my telegram No. 13 and Saving to Amman, Baghdad, Paris and P.O.M.E.F. as my telegrams Nos. 27, 36, 117 and 45 respectively.

[Repeated to Beirut and Saving to Amman, Baghdad, Paris and P.O.M.E.F.].

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Duta Green
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Inward Telegram to Commonwealth Relations Office

FROM: U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN INDIA
 RPTD: U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN PAKISTAN (ACTING)
 D: Delhi 18.00 hours 17th May, 1958
 R: 20.30 hours 17th May, 1958

Mr. H. G. ...

CYPHER
PRIORITY

No. 618 TOP SECRET

VLI015/135 (A)

Addressed to Commonwealth Relations Office No. 618, repeated to U.K. High Commissioner in Karachi No. 222.

LEBANON

My telegram No. 605.

Joint Secretary in Ministry of External Affairs told member of my staff this morning that Indian Government had had a report (he did not say where from) that the United Kingdom Government were considering possibility of intervening in the Lebanon under the Tripartite Declaration of 1950 together with United States and French Governments. He also said that the Indian Government's information was that there was a serious possibility that the two northern provinces of Lebanon round Tripoli might attempt to secede from Lebanon and join United Arab Republic. He said that if this were so the Lebanese Government would doubtless resist and there would then be a situation in which the three Western Powers might intervene to uphold the integrity of Lebanese territory under the tripartite declaration.

2. Joint Secretary added that Indian Government were greatly concerned about prospect of the trouble spreading; if there was Western intervention there would undoubtedly be some counter move and situation would then deteriorate.

3. Joint Secretary was told that we had no information about the tripartite declaration being involved; the latest reports seemed to indicate that the internal situation was more under control. His attention was also drawn to a report in the Indian Press this morning that a Foreign Office spokesman had said that it was "still true" that the Lebanese Government had made no request to Britain for intervention. Joint Secretary said that Indian Government would appreciate the fullest exchange of information with us on the situation.

4. It would be helpful if we could have an up to date assessment of the situation for passing on to the Indians as soon as possible with particular reference to the likelihood of movement for secession. I also think it is not impossible that Indian Government might be willing to urge caution on Nasser. I assume you would wish me to encourage this.

5. Information in paragraphs 1-4 of your telegram W. No. 340 has been passed to Ministry of External Affairs.

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Outward Telegram from Commonwealth Relations Office

RECEIVED IN
ARCHIVES
-4 JUN 1958
VL1015/35/G

TO: U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN INDIA
(Sent 03.25 hours 21st May, 1958)

CYPHER
PRIORITY

No. 938 TOP SECRET

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Your telegram No. 618. *Yt 1075/1354*

LEBANON

My telegram W. No. 363 contains a report on the situation in the Lebanon for transmission to Indian authorities.

2. In speaking to Indian authorities you should say that we are profoundly concerned by the rioting in the Lebanon and feel that the situation has gone beyond the question of President Chamoun's re-election and may reach a point when the integrity and independence of the Lebanon are in danger. The Lebanese security force and army, however, seem to be substantially in control of the situation and public security seems to have improved. You could say that you understand that the Lebanese Government have under consideration the possibility of raising in the Security Council the question of the support given by the U.A.R. to the dissidents but that it does not look as if they would do so in the immediate future. The United Kingdom Government for their part have re-assured President Chamoun of their continued interest in the integrity and independence of the Lebanon.

3. As regards specific points raised by the Indians, on present available information we do not consider that there is any corporate movement for secession in Northern Provinces as such. Both Government and Opposition have support in all areas. Opposition bands are, however, perhaps more active in north, which is predominantly Muslim, and among their leaders there may be some who may think that they would see advantage to themselves in secession. Such feeling may increase if steps taken by Government to control situation become more effective elsewhere in Lebanon. It would, however, we consider be misleading to describe such views of number of leaders of rebel bands who happened to be centred in Northern Provinces as movement on part of Provinces for secession.

4. As regards suggestion of possible Indian action referred to in your paragraph 4, we would not of course wish to discourage Indians from taking any action which they may have in mind to urge caution on Nasser. But we should not wish impression to get abroad that we had instigated Indians to make such an approach. In any case we doubt whether it would be likely to influence Nasser. You should not, therefore, take any initiative in conversation with Indians to refer to possibility of an approach by them to Nasser, but should they put forward the suggestion themselves you may say that we should naturally be glad of any action they might be able to take with Nasser which might assist in bringing about an early end to U.A.R. interference in Lebanese affairs.

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