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TOP SECRET

FROM NEW YORK TO FOREIGN OFFICE

(United Kingdom Mission to the United Nations)

VL 1015/331

Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE SECRET AND
WHITEHALL SECRET DISTRIBUTION

Sir P. Dixon

No. 536
June 18, 1958

D. 5.41 a.m. June 19, 1958
R. 6.27 a.m. June 19, 1958

IMMEDIATE
TOP SECRET

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 536 of June 18.
Repeated for information to Beirut Washington
Baghdad Ankara
Amman
and Saving to VL 115/322 Paris P.O.M.E.F.
My telegram No. 525: Lebanon.

Dr. Malik and Dr. Jamali came to see me this evening at their request. Dr. Malik said that he was afraid that a Munich was being prepared for his country. He had received a bad impression from his talk with the Secretary General yesterday. Hammarskjöld evidently had exalted ideas about his rôle as a Scandinavian peace-maker in the Middle East, and Dr. Malik was sure he had been in continuous contact with Cairo. He feared that Hammarskjöld might return from Beirut and Cairo with a scheme for a political settlement involving large concessions to Nasser, which Her Majesty's Government and the United States Government might be persuaded was the right course in the circumstances and would urge Chamoun to accept. Chamoun, like Benes, would have to submit, and Nasser would have scored another victory which would have serious consequences for the West and all its friends. Dr. Jamali supporting Dr. Malik, said that this would have the gravest consequences for Iraq.

2. I asked Dr. Malik if he had precise evidence for his fears. I told him of my talk with the Secretary General yesterday, in which Hammarskjöld had seemed quite robust, in particular about the rôle of the observers. It became clear that Dr. Malik was basing his fears partly on his analysis of the Secretary General's attitude and partly on the divided counsels which he perceived in the United States Administration. He said that he had been satisfied by his talks with Mr. Dulles, but that others, and in particular Mr. Lodge, were thinking on quite other lines. (I have reason to think that Mr. Lodge has let it be known that counsels are divided in Washington).

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UOMIS New York telegram No. 536 to Foreign Office

- 2 -

3. I said that the best way of averting any such danger would obviously be for President Chamoun to take a strong line and with the full support of the Lebanese Army to put down the rebellion with his own resources, and asked if this was possible. Dr. Malik replied that of course cooperation between the President and General Chehab had been far from perfect. But even if Chehab stopped playing Hamlet and cooperated one hundred per cent, the Lebanese Army was inadequate for the sealing of the Syrian frontier. Lebanon had not expected to have to guard this frontier any more than Canada had to guard her frontier with the United States. Dr. Jamali and I both suggested that this was a point which Chamoun might make to the Secretary General, drawing the conclusion that it was the duty of the United Nations to help Lebanon in these circumstances, and that if the present arrangement for observers was inadequate for that purpose, the United Nations should seek other means. Dr. Malik appeared to accept this advice.

4. Dr. Jamali intervened from time to time in our conversation to emphasise Iraq's great concern at the present situation. He thought that a proposal for a United Nations Force should be made at once in the Security Council and if vetoed should be carried to the Assembly. This should be done if necessary without waiting for the return of the Secretary General. He regarded the Secretary General's present plans as quite inadequate. He also made the suggestion, which he attributed to Nuri, that Lebanon should join the Arab Union. Dr. Malik was not enthusiastic about this idea, which was familiar to him evidently.

5. Dr. Malik asked me earnestly to tell you of his fears, and also to inform Sir G. Middleton. Speaking personally, he hoped that we might be able to strengthen President Chamoun's hand by assuring him of our support and getting other friends to do the same. In promising to report at once what he had said, I told him that I was sure we all had the same objective of preserving Lebanon's independence and would be on our guard against facile or deceptive solutions.

6. It would, I think, be helpful if I could be authorised to confirm to Dr. Malik the advice given in paragraph 3 above. Anything that could be said as a result of your conversation with Hammarskjöld on his way through London today would no doubt also

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UKMIS New York telegram No. 536 to Foreign Office

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help to reassure him. His fears of the Secretary General's real intentions are undoubtedly sincere, and indeed find some support from Hammarskjöld's notorious penchant for the Egyptians and the way in which the Secretariat are discreetly disseminating the idea that some political compromise in the Lebanon is the only way out.

Please repeat Immediate to Beirut, Baghdad, Ankara and Amman as my telegrams 79, 65, 19, 37 and Saving to Paris and P.O.M.E.F. as my telegrams 183 and 99 respectively.

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

ADVANCE COPIES:

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

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FROM AMMAN TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE SECRET AND
WHITEHALL SECRET DISTRIBUTION

Mr. Mason

No. 692

June 20, 1958

D. 6.52 p.m. June 20, 1958

R. 7.12 p.m. June 20, 1958

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Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 692 of June 20,

Repeated for information to: Baghdad Beirut
Washington P.O.M.E.F.
U.K. Mission New York

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VL1015/331 G

New York telegram No. 536 to you: Mr. Hammarskjöld.

King Hussein told me yesterday evening that he fears that Mr. Hammarskjöld may try to work out a compromise settlement in the Lebanon by making concessions to Nasser.

2. My United States colleague told me this morning that Mr. Hammarskjöld plans to fly to Cairo on June 22 and return to Beirut en route to New York on June 24. He had this information from Mr. Cordier.

Foreign Office pass Baghdad 305, Beirut 202, Washington 143, U.K. Mission New York 42 and P.O.M.E.F. 224.

[Repeated to Baghdad, Beirut, Washington, U.K. Mission New York and P.O.M.E.F.].

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TOP SECRET

FROM WASHINGTON TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE SECRET AND
WHITEHALL SECRET DISTRIBUTION

Sir H. Caccia

No. 1626
June 19, 1958

VL 1045/331
D. 1.54 a.m. June 20, 1958
R. 2.25 a.m. June 20, 1958
"A"

IMMEDIATE
TOP SECRET

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 1626 of June 19
Repeated for information to U.K. Mission New York

- Beirut
- Amman
- Paris
- Baghdad
- P.O.M.E.F.
- Ankara

U.K. Mission New York telegram No. 536; Lebanon.

From what Mr. Dulles said to me this afternoon it is clear that Malik has been speaking to the Americans in much the same vein.

2. Mr. Dulles said that there is this much in Malik's anxieties. The Secretary General not only has penchant for the Egyptians, but a high personal regard for Fawzi. For this and other reasons it would not be out of character for him to be thinking in terms of a political compromise, which he could sell in Cairo.

3. Mr. Dulles observed that any such compromise would only be bought by Nasser if he calculated that it would enable him to achieve his purposes through the replacement of Chamoun by some stooge.

Foreign Office pass Immediate to Beirut, routine to Amman, Paris, Baghdad, P.O.M.E.F. and Ankara as my telegrams Nos. 105, 96, 188, 157, 57 and 55 respectively.

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

ADVANCE COPIES
Private Secretary
Sir F. Hoyer Millar
Sir W. Hayter
Mr. Shuckburgh
Head of Levant Department

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FROM FOREIGN OFFICE TO WASHINGTON

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FOREIGN OFFICE SECRET AND
WHITEHALL SECRET DISTRIBUTION

No. 3959
June 23, 1958

D. 2.05 p.m. June 23, 1958

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Addressed to Washington telegram No. 3959 of June 23,
Repeated for information to Amman Baghdad
Beirut P.O.M.E.F.
UNIS New York

and Saving to Paris No. 1799

Following for Ambassador.

I should like you to talk to Mr. Dulles about telegram No. 697 from Amman. The more one considers it, the greater are the dangers and difficulties inherent in an Anglo/United States intervention. It is not clear that even our N.A.T.O. allies would support us. On the other hand, if Nasser picks up the Lebanon like a ripe plum in three or four months' time, he will have won an even bigger victory than our evacuation from Port Said.

2. With reference to paragraph 3 of Amman telegram No. 697, I do not like Hammarskjöld's doctrine that unity of a state is more important than its independence. Nor do I like his conclusion in paragraph 4 that the present situation is fundamentally one of internal politics. I believe that fundamentally it is a problem of outside intervention, although the Lebanese domestic political situation dominates the tactical position.

3. I have seen the State Department's report of Mr. Dulles's conversation with M. Alphand and I agree completely with what Mr. Dulles said.

4. Our problem, however, is this: we recognise the dangers inherent in a United States/United Kingdom intervention. We have told Chamoun we do not want him to ask for it. We have modified our existing pledge of support to the extent of saying that the cheque must be negotiated through the Security Council. We are in agreement with the United States Government that intervention is

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Foreign Office telegram No. 3959 to Washington

- 2 -

really impossible unless there has been a debate in the Security Council and some convincing cover has been found for United States/United Kingdom intervention as part of some broader United Nations scheme. I do not think that we should go so far as to say that such intervention is impossible without formal United Nations approval, but I think it would be difficult unless there was a very good vote in the Security Council, in which case we might be able to disregard the Soviet veto and act before going into the United Nations Assembly.

5. That being the position about our intervention, what do we do to prevent Nasser acquiring the Lebanon? I feel we must accept the advice given to us that Chamoun is now out of the reckoning so far as a second term is concerned. We should persuade him that his rôle is that of influence in the background; he and we should agree on the best possible successor and we should back that successor with all the resources available to us. In the meantime we should exercise the maximum influence to get as many United Nations personnel into the Lebanon as possible with a view to making open intervention from Syria and Egypt difficult and procuring a situation in which the insurrection will wither while the Government forces will increase in strength as a result (a) of the material help we can give and (b) of the knowledge that Chamoun and the West are backing a reasonable candidate for the Presidency who will be dedicated to the preservation of Lebanese independence.

6. If Mr. Dulles is in agreement with these thoughts, is the next step to say all this to Chamoun, approaching him or Hammarskjöld or both while Hammarskjöld is still in Beirut, about further strengthening the United Nations operation?

7. You should also tell Mr. Dulles that I am worried about the attitude of our allies. The impression seems to be widespread that we are anxious to have a United States/United Kingdom military intervention in the Lebanon and that it is necessary for them to restrain us. This is so far from the facts that I think advantage would be gained if they were told the course of events

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Foreign Office telegram No. 3959 to Washington

- 3 -

over the past few weeks with complete frankness except, perhaps, the terms of the original pledge to Chamoun. I believe that we would get more support from our allies if they realised our anxiety to settle the matter effectively in some United Nations manner and so preserve the independence of the Lebanon. We must, however, get their acknowledgment of our right to give military assistance, if we think it prudent, to a pro-Western country which appeals for it. In this case we are in complete agreement that it should be absolutely the last resort.

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FROM WASHINGTON TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE SECRET AND
WHITEHALL SECRET DISTRIBUTION

Sir H. Caccia
No. 1673
June 23, 1958

V4015/353
"C"

D. 11.32 p.m. June 23, 1958
R. 12.30 a.m. June 24, 1958

IMMEDIATE
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Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 1673 of June 23.

Repeated for information to: Amman Baghdad
Beirut P.O.M.E.F.
U.K. Mission New York

And Saving to: Paris

V41015/353 G V41015/353 G

Amman telegram No. 697 and my immediately preceding telegram: Lebanon.

We gave State Department the gist of this telegram and asked if they had any reports about Mr. Hammarskjold's views. They gave us the following account of a long conversation he had had with Samir Rifai obtained from the latter by the United States Ambassador in Amman. Samir claims to know Hammarskjold well, and State Department are inclined to regard his version as more reliable than that of Dr. Abhyankar. They commented that Hammarskjold seems to be avoiding contact with United States and United Kingdom representatives and doubt whether they will get a first hand account before his return.

2. Samir reported Hammarskjold's views as follows:-

(a) He was firmly opposed to the use of military force whether United Nations or not.

(b) Though he believed the evidence of U.A.R. involvement, including possibly 5,000 or 6,000 infiltrators, he regarded the problem as largely one of Lebanese internal politics. The position of the United Nations was confined to stopping foreign intervention.

/(c) The United Nations

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Washington telegram No. 1673 to Foreign Office

-2-

(c) The United Nations observers, whom he proposed to increase to 110, would be primarily concerned to obtain and report evidence of foreign interference, and had no authority to attempt to halt imports of arms destined for the rebels. Hammarskjold intended to use this information "to throw the spotlight of world opinion" on U.A.R. intervention.

(d) Contrary to a widespread belief, the purpose of his visit to Cairo was not to seek a political compromise but only to warn Nasser of the serious consequences of further interference.

(e) If Nasser was unreasonable, Hammarskjold would take the matter to the Security Council, and, if necessary, the General Assembly, requesting economic sanctions against the U.A.R. as an aggressor.

3. When Samir asked why Hammarskjold objected to the idea of a United Nations force, Hammarskjold replied that though he believed he had the legal authority to raise one, he was convinced that it was not practically feasible for the following reasons:-

- (i) It would have to be composed of contingents from the small nations only.
- (ii) Soundings he had made of these small nations had shown that an adequate force (which Hammarskjold estimated at 7,500 at least) could not be raised quickly if at all.
- (iii) Such a force would have to fight its way across Lebanon to get to the frontier, and might find itself killing Lebanese in the process, a situation which would be aggravated by the fact that the force would probably be largely composed of Christians. He was very much afraid that the introduction of United Nations or other troops might trigger off a larger conflagration.

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Washington telegram No. 1673 to Foreign Office

-3-

(iv) After seeing Chamoun, he had come to the conclusion that neither the Government nor the rebels could hope to exercise complete control. Therefore, once foreign intervention had been eliminated, some kind of compromise could and would be worked out by the Lebanese themselves.

4. Samir pointed out the dangers which a continuance or a worsening of the present situation might involve for other Arab countries exposed to U.A.R. subversion, like Jordan and Iraq. Mr. Hammarskjold agreed but commented that, as far as his position was concerned, it was not a question of preserving them for the West or the East, but of preventing the expansion of a local conflict into a world war.

5. Samir expressed to the United States Ambassador his bitter disappointment with Hammarskjold's position, remarking that if this was all he was prepared to do then Lebanon was doomed and there would shortly be serious repercussions on Jordan and Iraq.

Foreign Office please pass Immediate to Beirut, Routine to Amman, Baghdad, P.O.M.E.F. and Saving to Paris as my telegrams Nos. 113, 101, 162, 62 and 260 respectively.

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

ADVANCE COPIES:

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

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FROM AMMAN TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Cyprian/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE SECRET AND
WHITEHALL SECRET DISTRIBUTION

Mr. Mason
No. 704
June 24, 1958.

D.6.52 p.m. June 24, 1958.
R.7.11 p.m. June 24, 1958.

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Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 704 of June 24.
Repeated for information to Baghdad Washington
P.O.M.E.F. Beirut
U.K. Mission New York

And Saving to Paris

My telegram No. 700 and Washington telegram No. 1673: Lebanon.

Samir gave me this morning an account of his conversation with Mr. Hammarskjöld, which agrees in every particular with what he told my United States colleague although he added, however, that he had told Hammarskjöld that while he understood that as Secretary-General he had to remain neutral he wished him to know that what Hammarskjöld proposed could by no means satisfy the Jordan Government. Both the Jordanians and the Iraqis believed that if Nasser were successful in the Lebanon he would very soon start to make trouble in Jordan. Samir explained to Hammarskjöld that unlike the Lebanon, where the maintenance of a precarious balance between Moslems and Christians was an inhibiting factor, Jordan was a strong and united country. He asked Hammarskjöld to bear in mind that if the Syrians started any trouble it would be open war between the Arab Union and the United Arab Republic. Jordanian and Iraqi troops would immediately march into Syria.

3. [Sic] Dr. Abhyankar gave me an account of his own conversation with Hammarskjöld and not of the latter's with Samir. While it is quite likely that Hammarskjöld would have spoken as reported in my telegram No. 697 to a senior Indian United Nations official, it is highly unlikely that he would have spoken thus to the Jordanian Prime Minister. The two accounts are not contradictory and I remain convinced that Abhyankar's is accurate.

Foreign Office pass priority to Baghdad No. 310, Washington No. 147, P.O.M.E.F. No. 229, Beirut No. 207, U.K. Mission New York No. 48 and Saving to Paris No. 14.

[Repeated to Baghdad, Washington, P.O.M.E.F., Beirut, U.K. Mission New York and Saving to Paris].

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Minutes

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Levant Department.

VL1015/363.

I think we ought to be considering urgently the impact of United Nations Observers in the Lebanon on the possibilities of Bluebat. These implications were perhaps to some extent overlooked in the rush of telegrams which led to our agreeing to United Nations intervention.

On the face of it it seems almost impossible for us to carry out Bluebat when United Nations Observers are actually in the country, unless the latter certify to us that there is massive foreign intervention and that the Lebanese forces are unable to deal with it. ~~On the face of it~~ A clear-cut recommendation of this kind seems highly improbable. Even if it were made, the proper course would presumably be for the Security Council to arrange for the intervention, rather than for the Americans and ourselves to act on our own.

The practical implications of all this may be considerable. Should the Bluebat forces be stood down? If so, would that not encourage the opposition and make Nasser less inclined to the sort of compromise political solution he is at present supposed to favour? On the other hand may not Nasser realise that by agreeing to United Nations intervention we have in fact made our own intervention impossible?

I should be glad if you could discuss all this with the United Nations Department and the Legal Adviser. We might then have a submission put up some time tomorrow. We shall have to consider whether we should consult the Americans about all this.



June 12, 1958.

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The Lebanon

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As instructed by Sir William Hayter we have considered in consultation with the Deputy Legal Adviser and U.N. Department the impact of U.N. observers in the Lebanon on the possibilities of an Anglo-American intervention (Operation "Bluebat").

2. The position would seem to be as follows: When the crisis first started, and we examined the possibility of giving Chamoun an assurance that we would give Lebanon military assistance, we could, from the point of view of international law, have held that this could be done without reference to the U.N., on the ground that external assistance, in suppressing a revolt, can be justified if the revolt is also receiving external help. For political reasons, Ministers decided that it was essential to have some sort of U.N. cover for any such assistance and our assurance to Chamoun was therefore governed by a proviso that the Lebanese should in advance have taken a complaint to the Security Council. The Secretary of State's undertaking to Parliament that "no action will be taken contrary to the Charter or the established rules of international law" also reflected this Ministerial decision.

FLAG A

3. The Security Council decision to send observers to the Lebanon does not impose any obligation or need to suspend our own preparations i.e. to stand down "Bluebat" forces. Indeed it can be argued that with U.N. involvement in the question of arms smuggling and infiltration it is more possible than before that we might receive a request from the U.N. to help out in certain circumstances. We are therefore justified in maintaining a state of preparedness. From a political point of view to stand down "Bluebat" forces would be undesirable because it might encourage the U.A.R. to step up their activities. It may be that Nasser thinks that the presence of U.N. observers has inhibited Anglo-American freedom of action. We should not wish to encourage him in this belief. Finally it would be difficult to take any action with regard to "Bluebat" forces which would become known to the Lebanese and indicate a diminution in our preparedness just after we have reiterated to President Chamoun our assurances that we shall adhere scrupulously to prior commitments.

FLAG B

4. The U.N. Resolution does, however, have certain implications with regard to the circumstances in which we could justifiably send assistance to the Lebanon. It appoints an Observation Group which is to keep the Security Council currently informed through the Secretary General. But the Group's activities are not limited to reporting to the Security Council whether infiltration is taking place. Indeed the Group is "to ensure that there is no illegal infiltration...". This would imply that before we could intervene, it might be necessary for the Group not only to find that infiltration was happening but to report its own inability to cope with the situation. It is difficult to prejudge the circumstances in which a Lebanese appeal for help might be made or the precise situation from a U.N. point of view which could be held to justify our answering such an appeal: this must depend on the nature of the Group's reports and the way in which the situation develops.

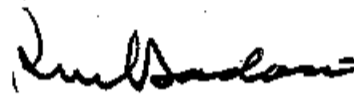
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5. To sum up: there has been no change in the situation which makes it necessary for us to suspend our preparations to send assistance to the Lebanese but there has been a change in the circumstances in which we should be able to justify sending assistance to the Lebanon.

6. In these circumstances, it seems desirable that we should point out to the Lebanese that Security Council action has now altered the situation to the extent that they could not count on an automatic response to an appeal to us to intervene. It would be very advisable for them not only to convince the Observation Group of the outside interference which has been and is taking place but they should press the Group to stop this interference and to report immediately to the Security Council if they are unable to do so.

7. Before saying anything to the Lebanese we must clearly consult the Americans and Sir P. Dixon, and I attach a draft telegram to Washington and New York accordingly, which have been cleared with Mr. Vallat, U.N. Department and P.U.S.D.



for (E.M. Rose)
June 14, 1958.