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ACTION NODS-00

EXCISE

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2515
INFO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY
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AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY
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AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY
WHITE HOUSE PRIORITY

DEPARTMENT OF STATE		IM/IPS/CR/IR	Date: 11/3/97
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FOIA Exemptions	<i>B1</i>	TS authority to
PA Exemptions		() CLASSIFY as () S or () C Sec. 1.5.1.2 D
		() DOWNGRADE TS to () S or () C

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DECAPTIONED

FROM HABIB

E.O. 12065: RDS-1,3,4 6/24/91 (HABIB, PHILIP)
TAGS: MILI, MOPS, PEPR, IS, LE, SA, SY, XF
SUBJ: HABIB MISSION: MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER AL-WAZZAN

1. [REDACTED]
2. I CALLED ON PRIME MINISTER AL-WAZZAN ON JUNE 24, ACCOMPANIED BY DAS DRAPER AND DCM BARRETT. WAZZAN HAD HIS OFFICE DIRECTOR PRESENT.
3. I BRIEFED WAZZAN ON MY TALKS IN SYRIA, ISRAEL AND SAUDI ARABIA, LEAVING OUT THE SENSITIVE SUBJECTS
4. WAZZAN CONFIRMED WHAT PRESIDENT SARKIS HAD TOLD ME CONCERNING THE BREAKDOWN OF ARRANGEMENTS FOR A

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SETTLEMENT IN THE ZAHLAH REGION. HE THOUGHT THE MATTER OF CLOSING THE PHALANGE POLITICAL OFFICES WAS A MINOR MATTER FOR HE COULD ORDER ALL POLITICAL OFFICES CLOSED IN HIS CAPACITY AS MINISTER OF INTERIOR. AS TO THE PHALANGE FIGHTERS GIVING UP THEIR HEAVY WEAPONS, HE PERSONALLY THOUGHT THIS WOULD BE AN APPROPRIATE SYMBOLIC GESTURE IN VIEW OF THE LEBANESE DESIRE FOR NATIONAL RECONCILIATION. HE KNEW IT WAS PERHAPS A "MORAL PROBLEM" FOR ARMED MEN TO GIVE UP

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WEAPONS, BUT SAID IT WOULD REMOVE ANY PRETEXT FOR HALTING THE RECONCILIATION PROCESS. HE AGREED WITH ME THAT IT MIGHT MAKE A GREAT DIFFERENCE WHETHER THEY WERE ASKED TO TURN OVER THESE WEAPONS TO THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT FORCES OR THE ADF.

5. WAZZAN WENT ON TO SAY THAT SACRIFICES HAD TO BE MADE TO SOLVE THE LEBANESE PROBLEM AND THAT IT WAS NOW THE TURN OF THE CHRISTIANS TO MAKE THEM. THE MUSLIMS HAD MADE SACRIFICES IN THE PAST BY ACCEPTING SPECIAL PRIVILEGES FOR THE MARONITES, WHILE THE LATTER HAD ALWAYS SOUGHT OUTSIDE SUPPORT FROM FRANCE AND OTHER COUNTRIES. HE, WAZZAN, COULD NOT ASK FORMER PRIME MINISTERS SAEB SALAM OR RACHID KARAME TO MAKE SACRIFICES; THEY HAD NO ARMED FORCES OF THEIR OWN.

6. WE ALSO DISCUSSED THE QUESTION OF GUARANTEES FOR THE PHALANGE ON THE PART OF THE SYRIANS AND THEIR ALLIES. WAZZAN SAID THAT SYRIAN FOREIGN MINISTER KHADDAM HAD SAID SYRIA WAS READY TO GIVE ANY GUARANTEES REQUESTED BY PRESIDENT SARKIS BUT THAT THE ISLAMIC ASSEMBLY, WHICH HAD NO MILITIA, ALSO WANTED GUARANTEES. I REMINDED HIM THAT THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY WAS FEARFUL OF SYRIAN FORCES AND THOSE ELEMENTS ARMED BY

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SYRIANS AND THAT ACCOUNTED FOR DESIRE FOR GUARANTEES. WE AGREED THAT THE QUESTION OF ACCEPTABLE AND MUTUALLY AGREED UPON GUARANTEES WAS AN ESSENTIAL ELEMENT OF ANY SETTLEMENT AND THAT THE SUBJECT SHOULD BE EARNESTLY PURSUED.

7. AT THE END OF THE CONVERSATION WAZZAN STRESSED THAT THE CURRENT QUADRIPARTITE MEETING IN JIDDA, AND THE PERIOD OF TIME LEADING UP TO THE JULY 4 MEETING AT BAYT AD-DIN, WERE LEBANON'S LAST CHANCE FOR PUTTING AN END TO ITS INTOLERABLE DOMESTIC SITUATION. HE AGAIN REFERRED TO THE NEED FOR SACRIFICES AND TO THE CONTRIBUTION WE, THE US, COULD MAKE BY CONVINCING CERTAIN PARTIES OF THIS. I REPLIED THAT AMBASSADOR DILLON WOULD CONTINUE JOHN DEAN'S POLICY OF MAINTAINING CONTACT WITH ALL POLITICAL FACTIONS AND URGING RESTRAINT AND RECONCILIATION AMONG THEM. HE HAD BEEN SPECIFICALLY SELECTED FOR THE JOB, WAS SENSITIVE TO THIS TYPE OF SITUATION, AND WE HOPED HE WOULD HAVE THE COOPERATION AND SUPPORT OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT IN HIS ENDEAVORS HERE. WAZZAN PROMISED HIS FULL COOPERATION. DILLON

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