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17 MAY 74/0303Z

Classification

O 170208Z MAY 74 ZFF4  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE 5698  
BT  
UNCLAS STATE 103060

TOSEC 735

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A.), PFOR  
SUBJECT: TRAVELING PRESS REPORTAGE, MAY 16, 1974

FOR ANDERSON FROM HARE

SUMMARY: THURSDAY MORNING PAPERS ASSESS IMPACT OF MA'ALOT INCIDENT, REPORT SERIOUS SETBACK IN HAK PEACE EFFORT THOUGH US OFFICIALS CONVINCED BOTH SIDES STILL WANT ACCORD. AFTER-NOON WIRES EMPHASIZE GREATER UNCERTAINTY OF HAK DISENGAGEMENT EFFORTS DUE TO ISRAELI AIRSTRIKES INTO LEBANON AND A REPORTED ISRAELI PROPOSAL FOR 10-DAY SUSPENSION OF TRUCE TALKS. END SUMMARY.

1. NYT PAGE 1 ARTICLE, PRESUMABLY BY GWERTZMAN, ASSESSES IMPACT OF MA'ALOT INCIDENT UNDER HEAD "SETBACK IS SEEN IN PEACE EFFORTS: MOVES FOR A COMPROMISE ON ISRAELI-SYRIAN TROOPS ARE CALLED IMPAIRED". SAYS HAK TELLS HIS AIDES HE IS DETERMINED NOT TO LET INCIDENT UNDERMINE PROGRESS IN NEGOTIATIONS, BUT ISRAELI AND AMERICAN OFFICIALS FEEL EVENTS HAVE IMPAIRED HIS EFFORTS TO GET LAST-MINUTE COMPROMISE. AMERICAN OFFICIALS SAY MA'ALOT WILL NOT HAVE LONG-TERM SIGNIFICANCE IN DISENGAGEMENT TALKS SINCE HAK CONVINCED BOTH SIDES WANT ACCORD. ISRAELI OFFICIALS REGARD DISENGAGEMENT THIS TRIP OUT OF THE QUESTION BUT AGREE HAK COULD WORK OUT SOLUTION IN FEW WEEKS TIME. HAK MA'ALOT STATEMENT REPRINTED IN ENTIRETY. SECOND GWERTZMAN PIECE PAGE 1 COVERS MEIR SPEECH "MRS. MEIR PLEDGES STEPS TO PROTECT ISRAELI PEOPLE".

2. BERGER STORY PAGE 27 OF POST UNDER HEAD "PEACE MISSION BY KISSINGER DEALT SETBACK" REPORTS MA'ALOT ATTACK STRIKES SERIOUS BLOW AT HAK DISENGAGEMENT EFFORTS. ISRAELI AND AMERICAN OFFICIALS SEEK TO DISSOCIATE ATTACK FROM NEGOTIATIONS, BUT BERGER FEELS ATTACK POSSIBLY DIMINISHES ALREADY FALTERING PROSPECTS FOR AGREEMENT. MCCLOSKEY SAYS EFFECT OF MA'ALOT ON NEGOTIATIONS WOULD BE CLEAR ONLY AFTER HAK MEETS WITH ISRAELIS THURSDAY MORNING.

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ISRAELI SOURCES REPORT CABINET SEEKING WAY TO PRESENT MORE ACCOMMODATING FACE TO SYRIANS, FEAR SITUATION LIKELY TO DETERIORATE IF NEGOTIATIONS SUSPENDED. INDICATIONS -- UNCONFIRMED BY US OFFICIALS -- THAT HAK IN TOUCH WITH ARAB LEADERS IN EFFORT TO HAVE THEM SPEAK OUT AGAINST TERRORISTS. MCCLOSKEY ASKED ABOUT US AFFIRMATIVE VOTE ON UN CONDEMNATION OF ISRAELI REPRISAL RAID, SAYS US ALWAYS ATTEMPTS TO CAST VOTE ON MERITS OF ISSUE. BERGER FEELS MA'ALOT MAKES IT ALL THE MORE NECESSARY FOR HAK TO CONTINUE HIS MISSION.

3. GLOBE CARRIES JHABVALA ARTICLE PAGE 1, KISSINGER POSTPONES TALKS LEADING WITH ONE DAY DELAY IN TALKS WITH ISRAELIS AND QUOTES FROM HAK MA'ALOT STATEMENT. RELIABLE SOURCE REPORTS HAK IN TOUCH WITH EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT TO GET SADAT CONDEMNATION OF ATTACK. JHABVALA SEES NO ENCOURAGING SIGNS THAT HAK WILL ACHIEVE EAKTHROSGH IN DEADLOCK. ISRAELI OFFICIALS LABEL ATTACK "THE LAST NAIL TO SEAL THE COFFIN" OF DISENGAGEMENT, BUT US APPEARS UNWILLING TO THROW IN TOWEL YET. US OFFICIALS SAY HAK HAS MADE PROGRESS IN NARROWING GAP, PROBABLY WILL HAVE TO SUSPEND NEGOTIATIONS TWO OR THREE WEEKS. HAK TELLS REPORTERS WEDNESDAY HE REMAINS CONVINCED PARTIES "ARE MOVING TOWARDS EACH OTHER, NOT AWAY".

4. SAIKOWSKI GIVES DETAILS OF MA'ALOT ATTACK IN PAGE 1 CSM PIECE "MIDEAST TENSION HEIGHTENED BY TERRORISTS: GUERRILLA ATTACK ON ISRAELI CHILDREN THROWS NEW TANGLE IN FRONT OF KISSINGER MISSION." SAYS US WILL DO UTMOST NOT TO LET TERRORISTS DISRUPT DISENGAGEMENT EFFORTS, ALTHOUGH ATTACK CAST PALL OVER HAK PARTY. SAIKOWSKI REPORTS ATTACK HAS CHANGED THE ATMOSPHERE IN ISRAEL MAKING CONCESSIONS LESS LIKELY. US OFFICIALS ON HAK PLANE TELL NEWSMEN HILLS AROUND KUNEITRA NOT "THE" STICKING POINT BUT ADMIT "ASPECTS" OF THE HILLS A PROBLEM.

5. O'LEARY REPORTS ON MA'ALOT ATTACK IN PAGE 1 STORY "ISRAEL ALERT FOR NEW ATTACKS", HAS NORTHERN ISRAEL ON ALERT AFTER REPORTS OF NEW ARAB INFILTRATIONS. O'LEARY SAYS AN ISRAELI COUNTER STRIKE WILL FURTHER DIMINISH PROSPECTS FOR SUCCESS OF HAK MISSION. COMPANION PIECE PAGE 8 UNDER HEAD "KISSINGER PUSHES FOR GOLAN PEACE DESPITE TRAGEDY" REPORTS HAK GOING THROUGH WITH VISIT TO ASSAD TO PROVE TERRORISTS CANNOT DISRUPT ORDERLY INTERNATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS BY "THIS MINDLESS AND IRRATIONAL ACTION". HAK REPORTED CLOSETED WITH HIS STAFF MOST OF WEDNESDAY, EMERGING TO EXPRESS CONDOLENCES TO MRS. MEIR.

6. UPI TODAY CARRIES FACTUAL ACCOUNTS OF ISRAELI RETALIATORY AIR STRIKES INTO LEBANON. ALSO REPORTS HAK TO RETURN TO JERUSALEM FRIDAY NIGHT WITH MORE SOLID IDEA

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OF OUTCOME OF HIS LONGEST AND MOST COMPLICATED  
MIDDLE EAST PEACE MISSION AND MUST RETURN TO WASHINGTON BY  
SUNDAY NIGHT.

7. EARLY AFTERNOON SCHWEID (AP) ALSO SAYS ISRAELI RAIDS  
ADD NEW ELEMENT OF UNCERTAINTY TO HAK MISSION; LATE P.M.  
ADDS THAT PROPOSED 10-DAY TRUCE TALK SUSPENSION HEIGHTENS  
UNCERTAINTY. SCHWEID REPORTS NEWSMEN ON PLANE TO DAMASCUS  
DID NOT GET CUSTOMARY BRIEFING FROM SENIOR US OFFICIALS;  
THEREFORE IMPOSSIBLE TO DETERMINE IF MEIR INFORMED HAK OF  
ISRAELI ATTACK IN ADVANCE. SAYS HAK MAY STILL TRY TO  
RETURN TO WASHINGTON BY SUNDAY BUT MAY MAKE BRIEF STOPS  
IN EGYPT AND ELSEWHERE.

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