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ATTACHMENT 2

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

September 12, 1956

MEMORANDUM FOR Mr. R. E. Button, Chairman,
OCB Committee on Broadcasting & Television

FROM: S. B. Jacques
Department of State Representative

SUBJECT: Lebanese TV

In line with a COBAT request at the July 31 meeting, the following question was put to appropriate officials in the Department of State (this being a clarified re-phrasing of the question recorded in the COBAT minutes):

"Do current policy considerations with respect to Lebanon warrant ICA intensifying its efforts -- and, if necessary, increasing its offer of financial assistance -- to establish together with the Lebanon Government and the Ford Foundation an educational TV station in Beirut?"

The response to this question was: Current policy considerations with respect to Lebanon warrant continuation of efforts to assist the Lebanese government in establishment of educational television; our primary objective, however, is to assist in programming rather than in the actual provision of equipment; we are, therefore, not prepared to recommend an increase in ICA's offer of financial assistance.

In connection with references which had been made to "attractive French offers or other foreign competition" which "might adversely hamper U.S. opportunities for supplying technical and programming assistance" it was noted that they seemed to imply that influence in programming will accrue to the nation which actually supplies the television equipment. It was felt that this is demonstratively not the case in Iraq, and the Department has been proceeding on the assumption that it is not necessarily the case in Lebanon.

(As a parenthetical observation, it is not apparent to me what relevancy the question posed in COBAT has to the Beirut TV case as so far presented to COBAT. To the contrary, it seems somewhat academic in that framework. At the last previous discussion of the case (July 5), the issue considered was the "U.S. commercial interest" and the standards issue which had been tied in with the former. This discussion led to two messages to Beirut (DEPTEL 198 July 17; A-10 July 20), stating agreed positions on the issues, essentially reiterating positions previously communicated to Beirut (DEPTELS 2365 June 22, 11 July 2). So far as I know, no further developments or reactions have been reported from Beirut since the July messages went out.)

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