

Middle East

CONFIDENTIAL

24960 - 1

OO PARIS

GRS 537

CONFIDENTIAL

FM FCO 261755Z AUG 81

TO IMMEDIATE PARIS

TELEGRAM NUMBER 350 OF 26 AUGUST

INFO BEIRUT, AMMAN, DAMASCUS, JEDDA, TEL AVIV

CHEYSSON'S MIDDLE EAST VISIT

1. WE HAVE NO WISH TO TREAD ON FRENCH SENSITIVITIES, BUT CHEYSSON AND HIS ADVISERS MAY FIND IT USEFUL TO HAVE A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF OUR CURRENT THINKING AS BACKGROUND TO HIS FORTHCOMING TRIP, IN PARTICULAR HIS TALK WITH ARAFAT. YOU SHOULD THEREFORE GIVE THE MFA AT A SUITABLE LEVEL (BOIDEVAIX?) THE FOLLOWING ACCOUNT.
2. WE BELIEVE THAT EUROPEAN FREEDOM OF MANOEUVRE, AS FAR AS SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS IS CONCERNED, IS LIMITED WHILE THE CAMP DAVID PROCESS IS FORMALLY IN BEING AND THE REST OF SINAI HAS NOT YET BEEN RETURNED. WE MUST HOLD ON TO THE PRINCIPLES OF EUROPEAN POLICY AND THE CONCEPT OF A DISTINCTIVE EUROPEAN CONTRIBUTION BUT NOT JEOPARDIZE OUR ABILITY TO PLAY A HELPFUL ROLE AT THE STAGE WHEN SINAI SHOULD HAVE BEEN RETURNED, THE AUTONOMY TALKS (AS IS LIKELY) HAVE FAILED TO MAKE PROGRESS, AND A NEW APPROACH MAY BE NEEDED. IT IS DIFFICULT TO PERSUADE THE ARABS THAT WE HAVE NOT ABANDONED OUR EFFORTS, BUT WE MUST MAKE CLEAR THAT WE HAVE NOT, DESPITE THE ABSENCE OF VISIBLE GESTURES SUCH AS MINISTERIAL TOURS.
3. THE PERIOD BETWEEN NOW AND NEXT APRIL SHOULD BE USED TO PREPARE THE GROUND AS FAR AS POSSIBLE FOR A WIDER AND MORE ACCEPTABLE PEACE PROCESS, TO FOLLOW ON FROM CAMP DAVID, WHILE DROPPING THAT UNACCEPTABLE LABEL (AND THE WORD AUTONOMY). THE KEY TO THIS AND TO PERSUADING THE US THAT SUCH A MOVE IS NECESSARY LIES IN PERSUADING THE ARABS, PARTICULARLY THE PLO, TO MAKE AS CLEAR AS POSSIBLE THEIR SHIFT TO A DIPLOMATIC OPTION AND THE STRENGTHENING OF THEIR POLITICAL WILL TO NEGOTIATE FOR A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT. CROWN PRINCE FAHD'S RECENT INTERVIEW WAS WELCOME BECAUSE IT EXEMPLIFIED THIS TREND, EVEN THOUGH MANY OF HIS POINTS MAY NOT BE READILY NEGOTIABLE.

/GENERAL ARAB

1

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

24960 - 1

GENERAL ARAB ENDORSEMENT OF HIS EIGHT PRINCIPLES WOULD BE A VALUABLE STEP. THE ARABS MUST HAVE A COHERENT AND COLLECTIVE STRATEGY FOR PEACE IF PROGRESS IS TO BE POSSIBLE.

4. WE ARE URGING THE PLO IN PARTICULAR TO MAKE CLEAR THAT, IF THEIR CONDITIONS FOR A SETTLEMENT ARE MET, THEY ARE READY TO SETTLE FOR A WEST BANK/GAZA STATE AND TO LIVE IN PEACE WITH ISRAEL ON THAT BASIS. THE PLO COULD TAKE THIS STEP IN A NUMBER OF POSSIBLE WAYS AND WE BELIEVE THEY ARE CONSIDERING IT SERIOUSLY. BUT IT MUST BE DONE PUBLICLY AND UNAMBIGUOUSLY IF IT IS TO BREAK THE CURRENT IMPASSE OF PEACE EFFORTS AND TO REBUT THE CHARGE THAT THEY ARE COMMITTED TO THE DESTRUCTION OF ISRAEL. THE DIFFICULTIES FOR THE PLO OF MAKING SUCH A MOVE ARE WELL KNOWN, BUT IT IS IMPORTANT TO CONVINCED THEM THAT THEY STAND ONLY TO GAIN BY TAKING THE POLITICAL INITIATIVE AND THAT THEY WILL NOT SIMPLY BE THROWING AWAY THEIR 'ONLY CARD'. THIS IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE 'CONDITIONAL RECOGNITION' APPROACH.

5. A RELATED ISSUE IS THE URGENT NEED TO BUILD ON THE CEASEFIRE IN SOUTH LEBANON. A POLICY OF SMALL MUTUAL CONCESSIONS ON THE MILITARY SIDE BY ISRAEL AND THE PALESTINIANS OFFERS THE BEST HOPE OF PROGRESS, DESPITE THE DIFFICULTIES. YOU ARE AWARE OF RECENT EXCHANGES IN WASHINGTON (TELNO 2498/99) AND NEW YORK (TELNO 756/57) AND CAN DRAW ON FCO TELNO 1255 TO WASHINGTON FOR OUR VIEWS IF THE FRENCH WOULD WELCOME A DISCUSSION IN DETAIL.

CARRINGTON

MIDDLE EAST STANDARD

NENAD	MAED
MED	ES & SD
NAD	ERD
UND	ESID
EESD	CONS D
ECD	CONS EM UNIT
WED	CABINET OFFICE
RID	

ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION

ARAB/ISRAEL DISPUTE