

Mr Miles
NENAD

Cairo: Meeting with Mr Haig

1. Following several abortive attempts to set up a bilateral meeting in the margins of President Sadat's funeral, the Secretary of State was finally cornered by Mr Haig at the funeral itself. They had a discussion of the Sinai Force, at which Mr Colombo, Mr Anthony (Australia) and Mr McGuigan (Canada) were also present.
2. Mr Haig pressed Lord Carrington very hard on the MFO. This was, he said, an issue on which President Reagan felt very strongly, and would ring the Prime Minister unless we gave an early favourable reply. The main thing now was to support Egypt, and if the Americans failed to put together a viable MFO the fault would be ours. He expressed impatience with the "interlocking veto" operated by the various countries who declined to participate unless another country did so first, and spoke of a "parting of the ways" between Europe and the United States on the Middle East.
3. The Secretary of State responded vigorously. We had our own policy in Europe, and did not share the American assessment of the situation in the Middle East. The Americans would find that they needed this distinct European position post-Camp David; they would have to accept for the time being that the British position was tied in with that of its partners in the Ten, whether they liked it or not. When Mr Haig showed signs of umbrage at this stage, the Secretary of State pointed out that the Europeans had never been consulted about Camp David at the time, and could not be expected to accept responsibility for it now.
4. Signor Colombo supported the line taken by Lord Carrington. Mr Anthony and Mr McGuigan merely sounded uncomfortable. The Secretary of State added to their discomfort by making it clear that the constraints which applied to Britain in no way obstructed them from contributing to the MFO; there was no "interlocking veto".



(F.N. Richards)
Private Secretary

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cc: PS Sir A Acland
PS/LPS Sir J Graham
PS/Mr Hurd Mr Moberly
PS/PUS Mr Mallaby (Planning Staff)