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TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 3302 OF 4 NOVEMBER

INFO IMMEDIATE RIYADH JEDDA TEL AVIV CAIRO EC POSTS

MS.

SINAI FORCE

1. WE HAD A MEETING OF THE AMBASSADORS OF THE FOUR THIS EVENING AFTER ALL OF US HAD BEEN CANED BY HAIG. THE FOLLOWING POINTS EMERGED.

- (I) ALL OUR FOUR GOVERNMENTS HAD ISSUED INSTRUCTIONS THAT THE PROGRAMME SHOULD BE HELD UP PENDING FURTHER DECISIONS.
- (II) THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR HAD BEEN GIVEN BY HAIG THE SAME REPORT AS I HAD ABOUT THE READINESS OF THE ARAB COUNTRIES TO ACQUIESCE IN EUROPEAN PARTICIPATION IN THE FORCE.
- (III) AS REGARDS PROCEDURE, WE ALL THOUGHT THAT A HECTIC VISIT BY HAIG TO EUROPE WOULD BE INADVISABLE. IT WOULD ATTRACT A LOT OF PUBLICITY. IT WOULD LOOK AS THOUGH HAIG WAS PRESSURISING THE EUROPEANS, WHICH WOULD NOT DO US GOOD IN ARAB COUNTRIES. IF THE OUTCOME WAS SOME MODIFIED STATEMENT, THIS WOULD EVENTUALLY BE LEAKED IN SOME WAY AS AN INDICATION OF AMERICAN SUCCESS AND EUROPEAN CONCESSIONS. IF IT WAS A QUESTION OF AGREEING ON HOW TO ANNOUNCE PARTICIPATION IN THE FORCE, SURELY THIS WAS SOMETHING THAT COULD BE DONE WITHOUT A FIVE-POWER MINISTERIAL MEETING. THE CONSENSUS WAS THAT YOU SHOULD TAKE THE INITIATIVE. IF IT WAS A QUESTION OF DISCUSSING THE TERMS OF A STATEMENT, THIS COULD BE DONE EVENTUALLY IN LONDON OR WASHINGTON.

2. THERE WAS A CONSIDERABLE SUPPORT FOR THE IDEA THAT A WAY OUT OF THE IMPASSE MIGHT BE TO KEEP THE COMMUNITY STATEMENT OF THE FOUR RATHER SHORT, MORE OR LESS ON THE LINES OF THE AMERICAN PROPOSALS, BUT THEN FOR THIS TO BE FILLED IN BY STATEMENTS OR BRIEFING BY EACH OF THE GOVERNMENTS, WHETHER IN PARLIAMENT OR ELSEWHERE. THE ITALIAN MENTIONED THAT HAIG HAD EXPRESSED TO HIM, AS HE HAD TO ME, NO OBJECTION TO STATEMENTS IN PARLIAMENT ALONG THE LINES OF OUR ORIGINAL TEXT. WE AGREED THAT WHAT HAIG HAD OBJECTED TO WAS THE IDEA OF COMMUNITY ACTION THAT WOULD PUT THE AMERICANS ON THE SPOT.

3. AS REGARDS THE STATEMENT OF THE TEN, HAIG HAD SUGGESTED, A POINT I OMITTED TO REPORT EARLIER, THAT HE WOULD BE CONTENT IF THE STATEMENT OF THE TEN WAS MADE, PROVIDED THAT THIS OCCURRED IN, SAY, TEN DAYS' TIME. NEITHER THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR NOR I COULD UNDERSTAND WHY THIS TIME LAPSE WOULD MAKE THE STATEMENT ACCEPTABLE. BUT I THINK WE ALL AGREED THAT THE STATEMENT OF THE TEN POSES A SUBORDINATE PROBLEM TO THAT OF THE STATEMENT OF THE FOUR. HAIG HAD TOLD ME THAT HE DID NOT THINK IT NECESSARY AT ALL.

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