

CONFIDENTIAL

47215 - 1

OO PARIS
GRS 894
CONFIDENTIAL

mf

Read in full

FM FCO 101101Z OCTOBER 1980

TO IMMEDIATE PARIS

TELEGRAM NUMBER 401 OF 10 OCTOBER

INFO TO PRIORITY EC POSTS, WASHINGTON, UKMIS NEW YORK, TEL AVIV,
JERUSALEM, CAIRO, AMMAN, DAMASCUS, BEIRUT, JEDDA

LUXEMBOURG TELNO 312: MIDDLE EAST FOLLOW-UP TO THE THORN MISSION

1. WE RETAIN GRAVE DOUBTS ABOUT THE ABILITY OF THE REGULAR POLITICAL CO-OPERATION MACHINERY TO CARRY OUT EFFECTIVELY THE NEW TASKS ENTRUSTED TO IT AND WILL WISH TO PURSUE THIS FURTHER IN THE WORKING GROUP MEETING ON 16-17 OCTOBER. WE CAN ONLY GUESS AT THE REAL REASONS FOR THE FRENCH OPPOSITION TO THE CREATION OF A GROUP TO ASSIST THE PRESIDENCY, PARTICULARLY SINCE THEY ARE LIKELY TO SHARE OUR DOUBTS ABOUT THE DUTCH PRESIDENCY, BUT ASSUME IT SPRINGS FROM THEIR OBJECTION TO ANYTHING THAT SMACKS OF A PERMANENT SECRETARIAT. FOR THE MOMENT, THE FRENCH ARE SHELTERING BEHIND THE ARGUMENT THAT THEY DO NOT WISH TO UPSET THE PRESIDENCY, WHILE THE LUXEMBOURG PRESIDENCY ARE SAYING THAT THEY DO NOT WISH TO UPSET THE FRENCH OR THE DUTCH. THIS IS HARDLY SATISFACTORY.

2. EVEN MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE MACHINERY IS THE SUBSTANCE. WE AND THE FRENCH BOTH WISH THE NINE TO CONTINUE THEIR EFFORTS ACTIVELY AND VISIBLY. BUT THERE MAY ALL THE SAME BE A FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCE. WE BELIEVE THAT EUROPE HAS AN IMPORTANT ROLE TO PLAY AND WISH TO MAKE A CONCRETE CONTRIBUTION TO PEACE EFFORTS IF AT ALL POSSIBLE. BUT WE DO NOT BELIEVE THE NINE CAN GO IT ALONE AND ARE VERY CONSCIOUS OF THE NEED TO PRESERVE THE GOODWILL OF THE CAMP DAVID PARTIES AGAINST LIKELY OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROGRESS IN 1981. TO PLAY ANY ROLE EFFECTIVELY, THE NINE NEED TO WORK WITH, NOT AGAINST, THE US. WE ARE NOT INTERESTED IN DRAWING FURTHER PUBLIC ATTENTION TO OUR DIFFERENCES WITH THE US AND ISRAEL. WE THEREFORE TAKE THE VIEW THAT WHAT IS NEEDED IS A

1

CONFIDENTIAL

/ PERIOD

CONFIDENTIAL

47215 - 1

PERIOD OF SERIOUS BUT LARGELY CONFIDENTIAL WORK DURING WHICH OUR IDEAS WILL BE WORKED OUT AND, IN PARALLEL, TESTED ON THE PARTIES, PARTICULARLY THE ARABS (INCLUDING THE PLO). THIS WOULD MAKE BEST USE OF THE NINE'S ABILITY TO TALK TO ALL THE PARTIES.

3. IT LOOKS AS IF THE FRENCH, ON THE OTHER HAND, MAY WANT A LARGELY PUBLIC EXERCISE, THE OBJECT OF WHICH IS NOT SO MUCH TO MAKE A SERIOUS CONTRIBUTION AS TO DEMONSTRATE THE NINE'S DISTANCE FROM THE US AND TO PUT THE EC IN GOOD STANDING WITH THE ARABS. THEY APPEAR TO WANT THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL, ON 1-2 DECEMBER, TO ADOPT A POSITION WHICH GOES BEYOND THE VENICE DECLARATION TOWARDS THE ARAB SIDE (EG BY ENDORSING THE PALESTINIANS' RIGHT TO A STATE) AND MAY AMOUNT TO A SET OF PROPOSALS. WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT A PUBLIC EXERCISE OF THIS KIND IN DECEMBER WOULD ADVANCE THE CAUSE OF PEACE OR HELP ESTABLISH A LASTING ROLE FOR THE NINE IN PEACE EFFORTS. WHATEVER THE CONTENT OF ANY PROPOSALS, THEY WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY BE REJECTED BY SOME OR ALL OF THE PARTIES ONCE MADE PUBLIC. THE NINE'S EFFORT WOULD THEN BE SPENT. WE WOULD BE SEEN BY THE AMERICANS AND OTHERS AS ENGAGED ONLY IN DIPLOMATIC POSTURING AND ACCORDINGLY DISREGARDED.

4. HOWEVER, WE MAY BE DOING THE FRENCH AN INJUSTICE. IT WOULD IN ANY CASE BE HELPFUL TO ESTABLISH THEIR VIEWS A LITTLE MORE CLEARLY IN ADVANCE OF THE WORKING GROUP MEETING. WITH THE ABOVE AS BACKGROUND, PLEASE APPROACH THE QUAI AT THE HIGHEST APPROPRIATE LEVEL IN ORDER TO MAKE THE FOLLOWING BASIC POINTS AND TO EXPLORE FRENCH THINKING ON TIMING AND SUBSTANCE IN AS MUCH DETAIL AS POSSIBLE:

(I) WE AGREE WITH THE FRENCH THAT WE SHOULD DO MORE THAN ATTEMPT TO 'FILL THE VACUUM' CREATED BY THE US ELECTIONS. WE NEED TO MOVE INTO A PHASE WHEN EUROPE COMES UP WITH ITS OWN IDEAS. WE NEED, THEREFORE, TO CLEAR OUR MINDS ON SUBSTANCE. BU IN PRACTICE, WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO MAKE ANY PROGRESS ON SUBSTANCE WITHOUT TRYING OUT OUR IDEAS ON THE PARTIES CONCERNED.

(II) WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT WITHOUT SOME CONTINUOUS ACTIVITY IN A GROUP WORKING TO THE PRESIDENCY AND THE POLITICAL DIRECTORS OF A SIZE CAPABLE OF PRODUCING IDEAS, DRAFTING, AND MAINTAINING CONTACTS WITH THE PARTIES (INCLUDING THE US) AS

CONFIDENTIAL

47215 - 1

APPROPRIATE (IE A SMALL GROUP),
EFFORTS TO REFINE THE NINE'S THINKING WILL
PROVE UNDULY LABORIOUS AND THE NINE'S EFFORTS WILL REMAIN
LARGELY ACADEMIC. WE HAVE SOME CONCRETE IDEAS OF THE LINES THE
NINE SHOULD NOW PURSUE (FOR YOUR INFORMATION WE HOPE TO
CIRCULATE OUR CONTRIBUTION BEFORE NEXT WEEK'S WORKING GROUP
MEETING BUT ARE NOT YET IN A POSITION TO DO SO).

(III) THE BEST OPPORTUNITY FOR PROGRESS IS IN PRACTICE LIKELY TO
ARISE IN 1981, AFTER ISRAELI ELECTIONS. THE NINE MUST CONTINUE
TO BE DEMONSTRABLY ACTIVE, BUT TO COME OUT PREMATURELY WITH FAR-
REACHING IDEAS DOOMED TO REJECTION WOULD BE DAMAGING.

(IV) IN OUR VIEW, WHAT IS NEEDED IS A PERIOD OF SERIOUS WORK,
CONDUCTED LARGELY CONFIDENTIALLY. WE SEE CONSIDERABLE DIS-
ADVANTAGES OF BOTH TIMING AND PRESENTATION IN AIMING FOR A MAJOR
PUBLIC (REPEAT PUBLIC) MOVE AT THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL IN DECEMBER,
ALTHOUGH THE COUNCIL WILL CLEARLY NEED TO DEMONSTRATE CONTINUING
CONCERN AND ACTIVITY. WHAT EXACTLY DO THE FRENCH HAVE IN MIND?
DO THEY ENVISAGE A NEW STATEMENT OR A EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT PLAN?
HOW DO THEY SEE THE EUROPEAN ROLE AFTER DECEMBER? HOW DO THEY
ENVISAGE CONSULTATION TAKING PLACE WITH THE UNITED STATES?

(V) WE SHOULD WELCOME AN OPPORTUNITY TO COMPARE NOTEC WITH
THE FRENCH AT EXPERT LEVEL BEFORE THE WORKING GROUP MEETS, EG IN
LUXEMBOURG ON THE EVENING OF 15 OCTOBER IF THE SUGGESTED STARTING
TIME OF 0900 FOR THE WORKING GROUP'S MEETING IS ADHERED TO.

CARRINGTON

MIDDLE EAST STANDARD

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

ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION

ARAB/ISRAEL DISPUTE

- 3 -

CONFIDENTIAL