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TO IMMEDIATE F C O

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INFO IMMEDIATE UKDEL MELBOURNE AND PARIS.

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UKDEL MELBOURNE TELNO 33 TO FCO: SINAI PEACE-KEEPING FORCE.

1. THIS MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT COMPOUNDS THE DIRTINESS OF THE TRICK, TO USE YOUR DESCRIPTION TO HAIG, OF THE AMERICAN REQUEST FOR OUR PARTICIPATION IN THE SINAI FORCE. MUCH THOUGH WE MIGHT LIKE TO HAVE DELAYED OR AVOIDED AN ANSWER, LEAVING THE MATTER AS IT STOOD AFTER YOUR REMARKS TO HAIG, I DO NOT THINK THAT WE CAN DO SO NOW.

2. THE DIFFICULTIES FOR US IN ACCEPTING ARISE FROM THE ASSOCIATION WITH THE CAMP DAVID PROCESS AND WITH AN AMERICAN REGIME THAT HAS BEEN LOOKING INCREASINGLY PRO-ISRAELI: AND THESE ARE PARTICULARLY WORRISOME WHEN YOU ARE HOPING TO HAVE DEALINGS WITH THE SAUDIS AND TO GET ON TO TERMS WITH ARAFAT. HOWEVER, THE DIFFICULTIES OF RESPONDING NEGATIVELY ARE WORTH ANALYSING, AS INDEED ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF PARTICIPATION, SEEN AT ANY RATE FROM HERE:

(A) THE EFFECT OF A NO ON THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION, CONGRESS ETC WILL BE TO BLAME US IF BY CHANCE THE ISRAELIS DO NOT WITHDRAW, AND IN ANY CASE TO SAY THAT WE ARE MERELY READY TO PAY LIP SERVICE TO SUPPORT CAMP DAVID AND ARE NOT PREPARED TO DO SOMETHING THAT SHOULD ENSURE THE CONTINUED WITHDRAWAL OF ISRAELI TROOPS FROM THE TERRITORY.

(B) IF WE WERE INVOLVED IN THE FORCE WE WOULD BE PLAYING A PRACTICAL ROLE IN THE AREA, AND NOT SIMPLY GIVING ADVICE FROM THE SIDELINES. I THINK PEOPLE ARE BEGINNING TO GET A LITTLE SCEPTICAL ABOUT OUR CONTINUED RELIANCE ON TRADITIONAL LINKS: OUR PAPER TIGER IMAGE IS LOOKING SOMEWHAT DOG-EARRED IF YOU WILL PERMIT THE MIXED METAPHOR.

(C) PRACTICAL INVOLVEMENT IN THIS FORCE SHOULD ENABLE US TO TAKE, WITHOUT INVOKING CRITICISM FROM HERE, A MORE FORWARD LINE WITH ARAFAT WITHOUT BEING ACCUSED OF ONE-SIDEDNESS. WE COULD DEMONSTRATE PARTICIPATION IN THE FORCE AS EVIDENCE OF OUR BALANCED POLICY. WE COULD TURN IT TO ADVANTAGE IN OUR DEALINGS WITH THE ISRAELIS, HOWEVER MUCH WE KNOW IN PRACTICE THAT THEY WOULD HAVE PREFERRED US NOT TO HAVE BEEN IN THE FORCE: AND IF, AS I AM SURE YOU DO NOT, YOU HAVE NO INHIBITION ABOUT WORKING BOTH SIDES OF THE STREET, ISRAELI RELUCTANCE TO HAVE US IN MIGHT BE SUBTLY MADE KNOWN TO THE ARABS, WITH CONSEQUENT ADVANTAGE TO OURSELVES.

(D) PARTICIPATION AT U.S. REQUEST COULD GIVE US LEVERAGE IN WASHINGTON IN GENERAL: IN PARTICULAR IT WOULD HELP US TO PRESS THE AMERICANS TO LEAN ON THE ISRAELIS, ESSENTIAL IF THERE IS TO BE A SETTLEMENT.

3. THE ONLY WAY OF SQUARING THIS CIRCLE OF HARM TO OUR RELATIONS WITH THE ARABS BY ACCEPTING OR HARM OR LOSS OF ADVANTAGE WITH THE AMERICANS BY REFUSING WOULD SEEM TO LIE IN RESPONDING POSITIVELY BUT WITH A QUALIFIED SUGGESTION. A LOT OF COURSE DEPENDS UPON WHETHER OR NOT OTHER EUROPEANS, PARTICULARLY THE FRENCH AND ITALIANS, WOULD BE PREPARED TO TAKE PART. WE ARE SURELY ENTITLED TO ASK THE AMERICANS TO HANDLE THIS IN SUCH A WAY AS TO ENSURE THAT THERE IS NO INADVERTENT DAMAGE TO EUROPEAN POLICY IN THE MIDDLE EAST, BASED ON THE VENICE DECLARATION. THEY ARE ASKING US TO DO SOMETHING THAT WE THINK CONFLICTS WITH OUR POLICIES: WE HAVE A RIGHT IN RETURN TO ASK THEM TO MAKE A COUNTERVAILING MOVE.

4. OUR AIM SHOULD BE TO OFFER PARTICIPATION ON TERMS THAT WOULD, IF ACCEPTED BY THE AMERICANS, LIMIT DAMAGE WITH THE ARABS OR, IF REFUSED BY THE AMERICANS, WOULD JUSTIFY OUR FAILURE TO PARTICIPATE. THUS IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO SUGGEST TO THE AMERICANS THAT WE WOULD BE READY TO RESPOND FAVOURABLY IF THE REQUEST WAS PUT TO US ON LINES SOMEWHAT AS FOLLOWS:

''THE UNITED STATES, ANXIOUS TO SECURE EUROPEAN PARTICIPATION IN THE FORCE, HAVE ASKED THE BRITISH (AND OTHER EUROPEAN) GOVERNMENT(S) TO MAKE A CONTRIBUTION. IN DOING SO THEY ACKNOWLEDGE THE NEW WAYS THE EUROPEAN COUNTRIES ARE ADOPTING TO FURTHER PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST (COMMENT: THIS IS IN KEEPING WITH THE LANGUAGE OF THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE TO THE PRIME MINISTER) INVOLVING, AS THESE EFFORTS DO, THE PROMOTION OF THE MUTUAL RECOGNITION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE PEOPLES OF THE AREA''.

5. IT MIGHT EVEN BE POSSIBLE TO GET THE AMERICANS TO ENDORSE THE SUBSTANCE OF ARTICLE IV OF THE VENICE DECLARATION. THIS RELATES TO MUTUAL RECOGNITION OF LEGITIMATE RIGHTS: SOME LANGUAGE MIGHT BE DEVISED THAT IN FACT REFLECTED THE FOLLOWING WORDING OF CAMP DAVID: '' THE SOLUTION FROM THE NEGOTIATIONS MUST ALSO RECOGNISE THE LEGITIMATE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE IN THEIR JUST REQUIREMENTS. IN THIS WAY THE PALESTINIANS WILL PARTICIPATE IN THE DETERMINATION OF THEIR OWN FUTURE....''. BUT IT MUST BE DRESSED UP IN SOME CONTEXT THAT WAS NOT ''CAMP DAVID''. IT HAS GOT TO BE SOMETHING THE ARABS CAN INTERPRET AS A STEP FORWARD. WHEN WE CAME TO EXPLAIN OUR ACTION, WE WOULD BASE OURSELVES ON THE VENICE DECLARATION AND SAY THAT WHAT WE WERE DOING WAS IN KEEPING WITH THAT. WE COULD WELL HINT TO THE ARAB COUNTRIES THAT THE AMERICAN LANGUAGE CONSTITUTED RECOGNITION OF THE SUBSTANCE OF ARTICLE IV OF THE VENICE DECLARATION. OBVIOUSLY ANY RESPONSE ON THESE LINES WILL NEED CONSULTATION WITH OUR EUROPEAN PARTNERS.

6. THERE MAY BE BETTER WAYS THAN THIS OF GETTING SOME QUID PRO QUO FOR OUR PARTICIPATION OR SOME WAY OF DILUTING THE DISADVANTAGES TO US IN THE ARAB CONTEXT. BUT MY MAIN PURPOSE IN TELEGRAPHING IS TO DRAW ATTENTION TO THE SHADOWS INVOLVED IN REFUSAL AND THE GLEAM OF LIGHT THAT PARTICIPATION MIGHT CAST UPON US.

HENDERSON

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