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FM WASHINGTON 092146Z AUG

TO PRIORITY FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 2255 OF 9 AUG 79.

INFORMATION PRIORITY TO AMMAN, BEIRUT, CAIRO, DAMASCUS, KUWAIT, JEDDA, TEL AVIV, UK MIS NEW YORK AND HMCJ JERUSALEM.

AS.

M.I.P.T. : ARAB/ISRAEL : THE NEW SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION.

1. THE UNCERTAINTIES IN THE US POSITION, AND THE NATURE OF THE PRESSURES WHICH WILL FINALLY DECIDE THEM, SUGGEST THAT WE WILL GET LITTLE IF ANY ADVANCE WARNING OF THEIR FINAL POSITION.

2. I SUGGEST THAT WE HAVE TO DRAW TWO CONCLUSIONS FOR OURSELVES:-

(I) THERE IS A SIGNIFICANT BODY OF OPINION IN THE ADMINISTRATION HERE WHICH HAS CONCLUDED THAT THE AMERICANS ARE GOING TO HAVE TO FIND MEANS OF RECOGNISING AND OF DEALING WITH THE PLO IF THEY ARE GOING TO BUILD CAMP DAVID INTO THE SORT OF SUCCESS WHICH WILL HEAL THEIR BREACH WITH SAUDI ARABIA AND AVOID THE RISK OF A RETURN TO DOMESTIC "GAS LINES". IF THIS VIEW PREVAILS, AND THERE MUST BE AT LEAST A SIGNIFICANT CHANCE THAT IT WILL, WE COULD BE FACED QUITE SOON WITHOUT WARNING WITH A US DECISION WHICH WILL INVOLVE READINESS TO DEAL FORMALLY WITH THE PLO. FOR US TO MAKE THE SAME MOVE AFTER THE AMERICANS WILL NOT EARN US CREDIT ANYWHERE. IF ON THE OTHER HAND, BECAUSE OF ISRAELI PRESSURE THIS VIEW DOES NOT PREVAIL IN WASHINGTON AND THE AMERICANS BACK DOWN, EVERY LINE OUT FROM WESTERN COUNTRIES TO THE MODERATE ARABS (INCLUDING MODERATES IN THE PLO) IS GOING TO BE OF VALUE, TO THE AMERICANS AS WELL AS TO US.

(II) GIVEN THAT THE AMERICANS SEEM LIKELY TO HAVE AT LEAST THE SAME DIFFICULTIES AS OURSELVES, AND PROBABLY MORE, WITH ANY TEXT BISHARA PRODUCES, AND SINCE THE AMERICANS SEEM LIKELY TO WANT TO PRODUCE A TEXT OF THEIR OWN (MY TEL NO 2120) WE DO NOT NEED, IN NEW YORK OR ELSEWHERE, TO EXPLAIN OUR OWN DIFFICULTIES WITH THE REVISED BISHARA TEXT.

13. I THINK

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3. I THINK THAT STERNER'S REFERENCE TO ME THIS MORNING TO THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE AMERICANS MIGHT ASK SOMETHING OF US NEXT WEEK IS MORE LIKELY TO INVOLVE A REQUEST TO HELP IN CONTACTS WITH THE PLO THEN TO MEAN THAT THE AMERICANS WILL BE ASKING US TO MAKE THE RUNNING FOR THEM IN SELLING IN NEW YORK THE SORT OF DRAFT SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION THEY MAY EVENTUALLY FEEL ABLE TO SUPPORT.

WHEN I LAST SAW SAUNDERS HE SPOKE AGAIN OBLIQUELY ABOUT THE HELP THE AMERICANS MIGHT HOPE WE COULD PROVIDE IN CONTACTS WITH THE PLO.

(IT IS ONE THING FOR THE AMERICANS TO HAVE THESE CONTACTS THEMSELVES ABOUT MATTERS WHICH THEY CAN DISAVOW: IT WOULD BE ANOTHER IF THEIR NEED IS FOR PLO ASSURANCES TO WHICH THEY COULD REFER PUBLICLY, WHEN THEY ARE BOUND TO THE ISRAELIS NOT TO TALK TO THE PLO IN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES.)

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Prime Minister
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MY TEL NO 2239 (NOT TO ALL)
 ARAB/ISRAEL : THE NEW SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION.

1. THE AMERICANS ARE RETICENT AND WILL NOT TELL US WHERE THEY NOW STAND ON THE NEW SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION IN ANY DETAIL.
2. VANCE PLANS TO BE AWAY ON HOLIDAY FROM 15 AUGUST TO THE END OF THE MONTH INCLUSIVE. STRAUSS IS ON HOLIDAY, BUT IS BEING CONSULTED BY TELEPHONE AS THINGS DEVELOP, AND MAY NOW GO TO THE MIDDLE EAST RATHER BEFORE 20 AUGUST. SAUNDERS IS ON LEAVE UNTIL 20 AUGUST. BISHARA RETURNS TO NEW YORK ON 20 AUGUST. MONDALE LEAVES FOR CHINA ON 25 AUGUST. BOTH VANCE AND THE ISRAELI AMBASSADOR HERE REFUSED TO DISCLOSE ANY DETAIL ABOUT THE LUNCH WHICH EVRON HAD YESTER DAY WITH CARTER, VANCE AND BRZEZINSKI.
3. I TRIED STERNER (IN CHARGE IN STATE DEPARTMENT IN SAUNDERS' ABSENCE) THIS MORNING. HE SAID FINAL DECISIONS HAD NOT YET BEEN TAKEN BUT THE AMERICAN INTENTION WAS TO BE IN TOUCH WITH BISHARA BETWEEN THE LATER'S RETURN FROM LEAVE AND 23 AUGUST WHEN THE DISCUSSION OF THE NEW SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION WAS DUE TO RESUME. IT SEEMED UNREALISTIC TO SUPPOSE THAT THIS ISSUE COULD BE WRAPPED UP BY 24 AUGUST, AND THE AMERICANS DID NOT WANT TO BE TIED TO "ARTIFICIAL DEADLINES". ON THE OTHER HAND THEY HAD ACCEPTED THAT THEY SHOULD COME TO GIRPS WITH THIS ISSUE AND WERE AWARE OF THE ARAB WISH TO TIE THINGS DOWN BEFORE THE HAVANA NON-ALIGNED SUMMIT. THEY WOULD THEREFORE AIM TO BE PREPARED TO GIVE SOME INDICATION TO THE ARABS AT THAT TIME (I.E. BETWEEN 20 AND 23/4 AUGUST) WHERE THE US STOOD ON SUBSTANCE.
4. STERNER SAID THAT THE US PLAN WAS TO CONSULT WITH US SOME TIME NEXT WEEK, AND IN ANY CASE WELL BEFORE BISHARA'S RETURN TO NEW YORK, BOTH TO EXPLAIN WHAT THE AMERICANS HAD IN MIND AND TO SEEK OUR JUDGEMENT WHICH THEY WOULD VALUE.
 THE AMERICANS "MIGHT ALSO ASK SOMETHING" OF US.

5. IN CONCLUSION STERNER SAID THAT THE AMERICANS WERE COMMITTED TO RESPOND TO THE ARABS WITHIN THE TIME SCALE AGREED WITH BISHARA. BUT HE COULD NOT SAY HOW IN DETAIL THE AMERICAN RESPONSE WOULD GO, BECAUSE (HE CLAIMED) NO FINAL DECISIONS HAD BEEN TAKEN. WHAT HE HAD TOLD ME WAS ONLY AN OFFICIAL-LEVEL VIEW AND THINGS COULD STILL CHANGE.

6. THE NSC MEMBER OF STRAUSS'S TEAM (HUNTER) ALSO MAINTAINS THAT DECISIONS HAVE NOT YET BEEN TAKEN, THAT MEETINGS ARE GOING ON HERE (DESPITE THE ABSENCES NOTED IN PARA 2 ABOVE) AND THAT THINGS COULD STILL CHANGE: BUT THAT THE US ARE TAKING THE WHOLE QUESTION OF A NEW SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION VERY SERIOUSLY, THAT THEIR APPROACH IS BASED ON SC 242 AND 338 AND THE CAMP DAVID TEXTS (ONE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS CATALOGUE COULD BE THAT THESE TEXTS DO NOT MENTION "SELF-DETERMINATION" BUT ONLY PALESTINIAN "PARTICIPATION IN THE DETERMINATION OF THEIR OWN FUTURE": AND THAT THE AMERICANS ARE FULLY CONSCIOUS OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF GETTING INTO THIS OPERATION AND THEN FAILING TO SATISFY THE MODERATE ARABS.

7. THIS LAST POINT IS VERY MUCH IN LINE WITH WHAT SAUNDERS HAS TOLD ME ON TWO RECENT OCCASIONS (MY TEL NOS 1864 AND 2120). INDEED THE PERIOD OF TIME DURING WHICH THE AMERICANS HAVE, BY THEIR OWN ADMISSION, BEEN INVOLVED IN THIS OPERATION (SOME THREE MONTHS) AND THE REALISATION OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF FAILURE FOR US RELATIONS WITH SAUDI ARABIA AND THE OTHER ARABS, OUGHT TO MEAN THAT THE BASIC DECISION HAS BEEN TAKEN HERE TO SEE THE THING THROUGH. THIS WOULD ALSO FIT WITH THE EXPECTATION THAT THE AMERICANS WILL BE IN A POSITION TO CONSULT WITH US NEXT WEEK AND WITH BISHARA AND OTHERS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE FOLLOWING WEEK, DESPITE THE ABSENCES LISTED IN PARA 2 ABOVE. IF SO, EVRON SHOULD HAVE BEEN GIVEN SOME INTIMATION AT HIS MEETING WITH CARTER YESTERDAY. (BUT I HAVE NO EVIDENCE OF THIS.)

8. ON THE OTHER HAND, IT SEEMS EQUALLY POSSIBLE THAT, IN THE DIS-ORGANISED ATMOSPHERE HERE IN THE LAST MONTH, NO FIRM DECISIONS HAVE YET BEEN REACHED BY THE ADMINISTRATION AS A WHOLE, AND THAT THE AMERICANS WILL NEED TO PLEAD FOR TIME BEYOND 24 AUGUST BEFORE THEY

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ARE IN A POSITION TO DEFINE THE BULLET THEY ARE PREPARED TO BITE.
IF SO WE MAY BE IN FOR A PERIOD OF THREE WEEKS OR MORE OF PUBLIC
PRESSURE AND IN-FIGHTING IN WASHINGTON AND NEW YORK WITH THE
POSSIBILITY OF INCREASINGLY DAMAGING RESULTS IF THE AMERICANS ARE
NOT IN THE END ABLE TO FIND LANGUAGE WHICH WILL SATISFY THE MODERATE
ARABS WHO HAVE BROUGHT THE PLO SO FAR.

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