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TELEGRAM NUMBER 47 OF 27 JUNE

INFO ROUTINE AMMAN, CAIRO, DAMASCUS, JEDDA, TEL AVIV, UKMIS
NEW YORK, WASHINGTON

EXPULSION OF ARAFAT: REACTION IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

1. THE EXPULSION OF ARAFAT FROM SYRIA HAS PROVOKED A WAVE OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE CONDEMNATION OF SYRIA AND LIBYA AND A BROAD EXPRESSION OF SUPPORT FOR ARAFAT AS LEADER OF THE PLO. MANY SPEECHES AND NEWSPAPER COMMENTS REFER TO HIM AS 'THE SYMBOL OF THE PALESTINIAN REVOLUTION'.
2. THE BIGGEST AND MOST STRIDENT MANIFESTATION OF PUBLIC FEELING CAME AT A MEETING AT THE AL AQSA MOSQUE ON 26 JUNE, CALLED BY THE MUFTI OF JERUSALEM AND ATTENDED BY RELIGIOUS LEADERS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF 'NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS' IN THE TERRITORIES. THESE INCLUDED THE ACTING MAYORS OF HEBRON AND HALHOUL AND THE HEAD OF THE WEST BANK TRADE UNION FEDERATION. THE SPEECHES WERE INFLAMMATORY, NOT LEAST THE MUFTI'S: HE ANNOUNCED THE ISSUE OF A FATWA (KORANIC RULING) PERMITTING ANY MUSLIM TO KILL THE SYRIAN PRESIDENT, WHO HAD 'GIVEN ISRAEL THE GOLAN, KILLED THOUSANDS OF SYRIAN MUSLIMS IN HAMA IN 1981 AND MASSACRED MUSLIMS IN TEL AZ-ZATAR IN 1975. HE IS THEREFORE THE MUSLIMS' WORST ENEMY'. ANOTHER SPEECH REFERRED TO THE SYRIAN REGIME AS 'THE AGENT OF EAST AND WEST AT ONE AND THE SAME TIME'. THE MEETING ISSUED A STATEMENT CALLING ON AL-FATAH FIGHTERS IN THE BEQAA TO CEASE...

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A STATEMENT CALLING ON AL-FATAH FIGHTERS IN THE BEQAA TO CEASE
FIGHTING AMONGST THEMSELVES AND SETTLE THEIR DIFFERENCES BY
TRADITIONAL DEMOCRATIC MEANS. IT ALSO REAFFIRMED THE INDEPENDENCE
OF THE PALESTINIAN DECISION. (TEXTS FOLLOW BY BAG.)~~

5. THE EAST JERUSALEM PRESS HAS BEEN FULL OF ANTI-SYRIAN (AND
ANTI-LIBYAN) EDITORIALS FOR SEVERAL DAYS AND HAS PUBLISHED INTER-
VIEWS WITH MOST LEADING FIGURES IN THE TERRITORIES. ALL HAVE MADE
CLEAR THEIR SUPPORT FOR ARAFAT. MOST HAVE BEEN STRONGLY CRITICAL
OF SYRIA. BUT THE COMMUNISTS, THE BAATHISTS, AND REPRESENTA-
TIVES OF OTHER PLO FACTONS (DFLP, PFPL AND JIBRIL) HAVE MADE NO
DIRECT CRITICISM OF SYRIA. THIS APPLIES TO BASSAM SHAKA'A,
THE PRO-SYRIAN DISMISSED MAYOR OF NABLUS, WHO WAS WRONGLY QUOTED
IN TODAY'S JERUSALEM POST AS HAVING DENOUNCED THE SYRIAN REGIME
IN AN ARTICLE IN THE PRO-PLO DAILY AL-FAJR ON 26 JUNE.

4. ARAFAT'S EXPULSION HAS RESTORED UNITY HERE, FOR THE MOMENT AT
LEAST. MOST PALESTINIANS HERE SAY THAT THEY HOPE FOR RECONCILI-
ATION BETWEEN ARAFAT AND THE SYRIAN GOVERNMENT AND SUPPORT
ALGERIAN AND OTHER MEDIATION EFFORTS. IT IS WIDELY
BELIEVED THAT ARAFAT WILL NOT ACCEPT RECONCILIATION UNLESS HIS
(AND THE PLO'S) FREEDOM TO PURSUE AN INDEPENDENT POLITICAL LINE
IS PRESERVED. MANY ALSO FEEL THAT THE RESPONSE TO THE SYRIAN
ACTION SHOULD NOT BE TOO STRIDENT FOR FEAR ABOUT THE FATE OF THE
AL-FATAH FIGHTERS ENCIRCLED BY THE SYRIAN ARMY IN THE BEQAA.
SOME EVEN SPECULATE THAT IF RECONCILIATION PROVES IMPOSSIBLE,
ARAFAT MIGHT FORM A GOVERNMENT IN EXILE (IN CAIRO?). MANY
WOULD PROBABLY DESERT HIM AND THE PLO IF THEY BECAME "PRISONERS"
OF THE SYRIANS: IN THAT EVENT THE PLO COULD NO LONGER BE SAID
TO BE "THE SOLE LEGITIMATE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PALESTINIANS".

5. ANWAR NUSEIBEH, A LEADING MODERATE AND FORMER JORDANIAN
MINISTER (LPR NO 67) OFFERED AN INTERESTING SIDELIGHT ON THE
ISSUE OF THE FATWA WHEN HE SPOKE TO HIM TODAY. HE SAID THAT THE
DECISION HAD BEEN TAKEN AT A MEETING OF THE WAQF COUNCIL, WHICH
HE HAD NOT ATTENDED. ON LEARNING OF IT, HE HAD STRONGLY ADVISED
THE MUFTI TO LET IT LIE ON THE TABLE BUT HIS ADVICE HAD BEEN
IGNORED. NUSEIBEH CONSIDERED THE ISSUE OF THE FATWA A SERIOUS
MISTAKE BUT THOUGHT THE MUFTI HAD BEEN LONGING FOR AN OPPORTUNITY
TO "PUNISH" ASSAD FOR THE MASSACRE OF MUSLIMS IN HAMA.

FOR PAS'S ANMAN CAIRO, DAMASCUS, JEDDA,
TEL AVIV, UKMS NEW YORK, WASHINGTON

HENDERSON