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1333 #

MY TELNO 341: EGYPTIAN VIEWS ON ARAB/ISRAEL

1. PRESIDENT MUBARAK'S MESSAGE TO THE PRIME MINISTER EMPHASISES MANY OF THE POINTS PREVIOUSLY MADE BY THE FOREIGN MINISTER (MY TELNO 338) IN THE CONTEXT OF MRS THATCHER'S VISIT TO ISRAEL:
 - (A) THE IMPORTANCE OF RESTORING MOMENTUM TO THE PEACE PROCESS IN ORDER TO CHECK THE RISE OF EXTREMISM;
 - (B) THE DESIRABILITY OF RECONCILING KING HUSSEIN AND ARAFAT;
 - (C) THE NEED FOR THE ISRAELIS TO BE BROUGHT TO RECOGNISE THE RIGHT OF THE PALESTINIANS TO SELF-DETERMINATION WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF A CONFEDERATION WITH JORDAN;
 - (D) THAT THE ISRAELIS SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO REGARD THE PURSUIT OF IDEAS FOR IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR THE INHABITANTS OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES MERELY AS A PRELUDE TO IMPOSING SOME FORM OF AUTONOMY. ANY SUCH MEASURES MUST BE FIRMLY LINKED TO PROGRESS TOWARDS A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT.

2. THE EGYPTIANS EMPHATICALLY REJECT THE ISRAELI CONTENTION, APPARENTLY SHARED BY KING HUSSEIN, THAT WE CAN AFFORD A TIME FOR REFLECTION AND THAT AN OPPORTUNITY NOW EXISTS TO GET RID OF THE PRESENT PALESTINIAN LEADERSHIP AND SUBSTITUTE AN ALTERNATIVE. WHILE MUBARAK HIMSELF HAS LITTLE LOVE FOR ARAFAT, HE SIMPLY DOES NOT BELIEVE IT IS A PRACTICABLE OPTION TO GET RID OF HIM IN THE LIGHT OF THE OVERWHELMING SUPPORT WHICH THE PLO LEADERSHIP ENJOYS IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. AT THE SAME TIME MUBARAK REMAINS DEEPLY SUSPICIOUS OF ASAD (HE HAS NO DOUBT OF HIS INVOLVEMENT IN TERRORISM) AND BELIEVES KING HUSSEIN NURTURES ILLUSIONS ABOUT WHAT HE CAN ACHIEVE THROUGH WORKING WITH SYRIA. UNFORTUNATELY WE HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO SEE MUBARAK PRIOR TO THE PRIME MINISTER'S DEPARTURE (SIMPLY BECAUSE HIS SCHEDULE IS TOO FULL, ACCORDING TO AL BAZ). HOWEVER WE MUST REGRETFULLY COMMENT THAT THE VARIOUS

