

PS
PS/MR HURD
PS/PUS
SIR J LEAHY
MR MOBERLY
SIR J BULLARD
HD/NENAD
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~~NO~~ 10 DOWNING STREET (2)
CABINET OFFICE D10

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IMMEDIATE

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NEWS D
RESIDENT CLERK

C O N F I D E N T I A L

FM BEIRUT 141755Z JUL 82
TO IMMEDIATE F C O
INFO USUAL POSTS
TELEGRAM NUMBER 411 OF 14 JULY

Handwritten mark

MY TEL. NO. 409: LEBANON

1. SAEB SALAM SENT A MESSAGE ON 14 JULY ASKING ME TO SEE HIM AGAIN URGENTLY IN WEST BEIRUT. WHEN I GOT THERE HE HAD A MESSAGE WHICH HE WANTED DELIVERED AS FAST AS POSSIBLE WMT0 HABIB.

2. HE HAD BEEN VISITED IN THE SMALL HOURS OF THE MORNING OF 14 JULY BY 4 PALESTINIANS IN ARAFAT'S ENTOURAGE WHOM HE TRUSTED. THEY WERE ABU JIHAD, ABU ZAIM, ABUL WALID AND HANI AL HASSAN.

3. THEY SAID THAT THEY WISHED TO AVOID DESTRUCTION AND BLOODSHED IN WEST BEIRUT BUT WERE BEING PUSHED BY EXTREMIST PALESTINIANS AND THE SYRIANS. THEY HAD IN THE EVENT NOT SENT ARAFAT'S LETTER TO ASAD BECAUSE THEY BELIEVED THAT A MESSAGE IN RETURN WOULD BE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE. IT WAS NOT IN ANYONES INTEREST THAT THE PALESTINIANS SHOULD BE A CARD IN SYRIA'S HANDS LATER. THE SYRIANS WERE ALREADY WORKING HARD TO CREATE A LEADERSHIP OF THEIR OWN CHOICE. KHALED FAHOUR'S RECENT SPEECH WAS AN INDICATION

OWN CHOICE. KHALED FAHOUH'S RECENT SPEECH WAS AN INDICATION OF THIS.

4. THEY WERE NOW PREPARED TO QUIT BEIRUT AND GO TO THE BEKA'A AND THROUGH THE BEKA'A TO THE HERMEL AREA. THERE THEY WOULD WAIT ARRANGEMENTS FOR THEIR FURTHER TRAVEL WHICH WOULD NOT THEN BE TOTALLY AC SYRIA'S TERMS EVEN IF THEY EVENTUALLY DID GO TO SYRIA. IF ON THE OTHER HAND THE WASHINGTON MEETING OF SYRIA, SAUDIA ARABIA AND THE UNITED STATES DECIDED THEY SHOULD GO TO SYRIA THEN THEY WOULD WILLINGLY GO THERE STRAIGHTAWAY SINCE THEIR PRESENCE IN SYRIA WOULD HAVE, AS IT WERE, THE SANCTION OF SAUDI ARABIA AND THE UNITED STATES.

5. IF THEY WERE ALLOWED TO STAGE IN THE HERMEL AREA THEY WERE PREPARED TO GIVE WRITTEN GUARANTEES OF GOOD BEHAVIOUR WHILE THEY WERE THERE TO FRANCE, SAUDI ARABIA (AND THE UNITED KINGDOM IF WE WISHED IT), AND TO THE ISLAMIC LEAGUE OF WHICH SAEB SALAM WAS CHAIRMAN.

6. IN SHORT THEY WERE PREPARED TO GO STRAIGHT TO SYRIA UNDER SAUDI AND UNITED STATES PRESSURE. OTHERWISE THEY WANTED TO STAGE AND BARGAIN WITH THE SYRIANS.

7. ACTION ON EITHER OF THESE LINES WOULD SOLVE THE BEIRUT PROBLEM PROVIDED THE AMERICANS GOT THE SYRIANS IN THE BEIRUT AREA OUT AT THE SAME TIME. BY THIS THEY MEANT THE 2000 SYRIANS IN BEIRUT PLUS THE 4000 UNDER SYRIAN COMMAND IN THE BEIRUT AREA.

8. ON THE TIMING OF THE INTERNATIONAL FORCE THEY PROPOSED THAT, IF THEY AGREED NOT TO WAIT FOR THE ENTRY OF THE MARINES BEFORE QUITTING BEIRUT, THE FRENCH OR THE ITALIANS OR A MIXTURE OF OTHER FORCES COULD GO IN FIRST AND THE MARINES COULD FOLLOW.

9. I DID NOT KNOW THE BACKGROUND OF ARAFAT'S LETTER TO ASAD AND DID NOT THEREFORE FULLY UNDERSTAND PARAGRAPH THREE ABOVE. I MADE A CAREFUL WRITTEN NOTE HOWEVER AT THE TIME OF WHAT SAEB SALAM WAS SAYING. INDEED HE ALMOST DICTATED IT TO ME.

10. I UNDERTOOK TO PASS THIS MESSAGE TO HABIB AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND DID SO TODAY.

ROBERTS...