

GR400

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

FM JEDDAH 181035Z JUL 82

TO PRIORITY FCO

TELNO 306 OF 18 JULY

REPEATED ROUTINE WASHINGTON, UKMIS NEW YORK, TEL AVIV,  
CAIRO, AMMAN, DAMASCUS, TUNIS.

MY TEL NO 297: THE LEBANON.

1. THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS CONFIRMED TO ME YESTERDAY WHAT CHATTI HAD TOLD ME ABOUT SAUDI CONTACTS WITH THE AMERICANS (PARA 6 OF TUR). IN THE CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS THE US AND ISRAEL WERE INSISTING THAT THE PLO PRESENCE IN BEIRUT SHOULD BE A PURELY POLITICAL ONE. BUT IT WAS DIFFICULT TO PERSUADE THE PLO TO ADOPT A PURELY POLITICAL ROLE UNLESS THEY COULD BE CONVINCED THAT SUCH A ROLE WOULD PRODUCE RESULTS. ACCORDINGLY THE SAUDIS WERE TRYING TO PERSUADE THE AMERICANS TO ACCEPT TWO POINTS WHICH WERE ESSENTIAL IF THE PLO WAS TO BE BROUGHT TO AGREE TO AN EVACUATION:

- (A) AMERICAN ACCEPTANCE OF THE PRINCIPLE OF SELF-DETERMINATION,
- (B) AMERICAN RECOGNITION OF THE PLO AS A LEGITIMATE SPOKESMAN

OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE (THE SAUDIS RECOGNISED THAT IT WAS TOO MUCH TO ASK THE AMERICANS TO SAY THE LEGITIMATE SPOKESMAN).

2. MANSOURI WAS VAGUE ON THE AMERICANS' REACTION TO THE SELF-DETERMINATION POINT. ON RECOGNITION OF THE PLO HE SAID SIMPLY THAT THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR HAD ARGUED ON A PERSONAL BASIS THAT IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR THE AMERICANS TO TAKE THIS STEP NOW, THOUGH AFTER A FEW WEEKS OR MONTHS IT MIGHT BECOME EASIER. MANSOURI'S OWN VIEW WAS THAT IT WOULD BE EASIER NOW THAN IN THE FUTURE: THE ISRAELIS MIGHT BE PERSUADED TO SWALLOW AN AMERICAN CHANGE OF POLICY NOW IN RETURN FOR THEIR IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVE OF A PLO EVACUATION.

3. I HAVE SEEN MY AMERICAN COLLEAGUE THIS MORNING. HE CONFIRMS THE GENERAL ACCURACY OF MANSOURI'S AND CHATTI'S ACCOUNTS. HE IS HIMSELF PESSIMISTIC ABOUT THE LIKELIHOOD AND EVEN THE WISDOM OF CONCESSIONS BY THE AMERICANS TO THE PLO UNLESS THE PLO THEMSELVES PLAY THE CARD OF RECOGNITION OF ISRAEL AND RESOLUTION 242. HE ARGUES THAT THE PLO HAVE SAID FOR YEARS THAT THEY WOULD NOT PLAY THIS CARD UNTIL IT WAS CLEAR THAT IT WOULD PRODUCE A SUBSTANTIAL GAIN FOR THEM: NOW, IF EVER, THAT TIME HAS COME.

4. MURPHY ALSO CONFIRMED THAT THE SAUDIS ARE PURSUING A POLICY WITH THE AMERICANS OF "QUIET DIPLOMACY" AND HAVE SET THEIR FACES AGAINST SUMMIT MEETINGS.

CONFIDENTIAL

15. HE

CONFIDENTIAL

5. HE BELIEVES THAT THE SAUDIS ARE STILL MAKING A SUSTAINED EFFORT TO PERSUADE ASAD TO ACCEPT THE PLO FIGHTERS INTO SYRIA (THE AMERICANS ESTIMATE THAT THESE NUMBER 8,000). HE DOUBTS WHETHER ASAD HAS BEEN PAID ANY MONEY YET BUT IS SURE THAT MONEY IS AVAILABLE IF IT WOULD CLINCH A DEAL. MANSOURI HAS MADE IT QUITE CLEAR TO MURPHY THAT THE SAUDIS THEMSELVES WILL NOT ACCEPT THE PLO IN THE KINGDOM.

6. FCO PLEASE PASS TO BEIRUT IF NECESSARY.

CRAIG

STANDARD

NENAD	RID
MED	MAED
NAD	ES & SD
UND	ERD
SECURITY D	ESID
EESD	CONS D
ECD	CONS EM UNIT
WED	CABINET OFFICE

ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION

ARAB/ISRAEL DISPUTE

2

CONFIDENTIAL