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TELCON BROAD / RESIDENT CLERK: VISIT BY ARAB LEAGUE DELEGATION

1. BOUCETTA SUMMONED ME THIS EVENING TO SAY THAT IN THE LIGHT OF YOUR MESSAGE KING HASSAN HAD DECIDED TO CALL OFF THE ARAB LEAGUE VISIT TO LONDON ON 1/2 DECEMBER. A FORMAL WRITTEN REPLY WOULD BE TRANSMITTED TOMORROW EITHER HERE OR TO THE MOROCCAN AMBASSADOR IN LONDON. THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE DELEGATION HAD BEEN INFORMED. BOUCETTA HAD HIMSELF BEEN TO FEZ TO TALK TO KING FAND.

2. AS HE HAD SAID ON A FIRST READING THIS MORNING, BOUCETTA TOOK ISSUE WITH THE SUBSTANCE AND THE FORM OF THE MESSAGE AND STATEMENT. HE CONSIDERED OUR CONDITIONS FOR RECEIVING THE PLO TO BE UNACCEPTABLE IN CONTENT AND DISCOURTEOUS IN

CONCEPTION. IT WAS PROVOCATIVE TO DEMAND OF THE PLO THAT THEY RENOUNCE TERRORISM. IT WOULD HAVE BEEN REASONABLE TO ASK KING HASSAN TO MAKE A STATEMENT TO HELP WITH BRITISH DOMESTIC OPINION BUT IT WAS UNACCEPTABLE TO REQUIRE ENDORSEMENT OF A LIST OF PRECONDITIONS. IT WAS DISAPPOINTING KING HASSAN HAD NOT BEEN INFORMED FIRST OF THE MESSAGE, HE MIGHT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO FIND A WAY OUT.

3. BOUCETTA GAVE THE IMPRESSION OF BEING GENUINELY PUZZLED AT WHAT HE REGARDED NOT SIMPLY AS AN UNHELPFUL RESPONSE BUT A PROVOCATION AND A DISCOURTESY. HE SAID HE DID NOT UNDERSTAND WHY BRITAIN WHICH UNDERSTOOD THE IMPORTANCE OF PSYCHOLOGY AND FACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST SHOULD HAVE ACTED IN THIS WAY. I ARGUED THAT WE WERE SEEKING TO ADVANCE THE PEACE PROCESS BY ENCOURAGING THE PLO TO MAKE THOSE MOVES THAT CAN BREAK THE LOGJAM BUT HE WAS NOT TO BE MOVED.

BROAD

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