

MIDDLE EAST: ADVANCE COPIES

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SIR J LEAHY  
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SIR J BULLARD  
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Prime Minister

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CONFIDENTIAL

FM RABAT 261615Z NOV 82

TO IMMEDIATE FCO DESKBY 261800Z

TELEGRAM NUMBER 466 OF 26 NOVEMBER

INFO IMMEDIATE JEDDA DESKBY 261800Z

IMMEDIATE ALL OTHER MIDDLE EAST POSTS, WASHINGTON, UKMIS NEW YORK, PARIS

YOUR TELNO 851: VISIT BY ARAB LEAGUE DELEGATION

1. BOUCETTA PULLED A LONG FACE WHEN HE READ THE MESSAGE AND PROPOSED STATEMENT (YOUR TELNOS 852 AND 853) WHICH I HANDED TO HIM THIS MORNING FOR TRANSMISSION TO KING HASSAN. HIS PRELIMINARY REACTION WAS THAT WHAT WE PROPOSE IS NOT ON. HE WOULD BE DISCUSSING YOUR MESSAGE WITH THE KING LATER TODAY AND SEND A FORMAL REPLY SHORTLY.

2. THOUGH STUDIOUSLY POLITE HE WAS DEJECTED AT THE COMPLICATIONS HE ENVISAGES OUR REPLY CREATING FOR THE ARAB SIDE. HE MADE THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

(I) KING HASSAN WOULD BE READY TO MAKE A GENERAL STATEMENT EITHER BEFORE OR AFTER SEEING MRS THATCHER, CONFIRMING THAT ALL MEMBERS OF THE ARAB LEAGUE DELEGATION STAND BY THE FEZ DECLARATION WITH ALL IT IMPLIES, BUT TO ASK FOR FORMAL AGREEMENT TO THE SPECIFIC WORDING IN OUR STATEMENT WAS NOT ACCEPTABLE EITHER IN FORM OR SUBSTANCE.

(II) IT WAS AWKWARD THAT THE MESSAGE HAD ALREADY BEEN SENT



(II) IT WAS AWKWARD THAT THE MESSAGE HAD ALREADY BEEN SENT TO OTHER MEMBERS OF THE DELEGATION. IT WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER IF IT HAD GONE FIRST TO KING HASSAN ALONE, AS THE DELEGATION HEAD, SO THAT HE COULD DISCUSS ITS CONTENTS IN HIS OWN WAY WITH THE OTHERS.

(III) IN THE PROGRAMME AS SO FAR DISCUSSED, NO SPECIAL MEETING HAD BEEN PROPOSED WITH YOU. IT WOULD BE AWKWARD FOR THE PLO TO SEE YOU BUT BE ABSENT WHEN THE DELEGATION SEES THE PRIME MINISTER.

(IV) THE SUBSTANCE OF OUR REPLY WAS PUZZLING. THE US ADMINISTRATION WOULD LIKE TO HAVE US FURTHER OUT FRONT. MOROCCO HAD PERSUADED THE SAUDIS AND OTHERS NOT TO BOW OUT OF THE VISIT TO LONDON ON THE GROUNDS THAT WE WOULD BE OPEN TO ARGUMENT ON FULL PLO PARTICIPATION.

3. I ENDEAVOURED TO PERSUADE MAITRE BOUCETTA THAT WHAT WE PROPOSE IS A SERIOUS ATTEMPT TO MEET THE ARAB SIDE'S CONCERN BUT I FEAR I MADE LITTLE HEADWAY.

4. KING FAHD IS STILL IN FEZ AND I HAVE TRANSMITTED THE MESSAGE TO HIM THROUGH THE SAUDI EMBASSY (THE SAUDI AMBASSADOR IS ALSO IN FEZ). FOR LANGUAGE REASONS, AMONG OTHERS, I DID NOT DISCUSS THE CONTENTS OF THE MESSAGE OR MAKE THE POINTS IN YOUR TUR WITH THE SAUDI COUNSELLOR.

5. EMISSARY. IF THE ELEMENTS OF A PACKAGE DEAL LOOK LIKE EMERGING, I HAVE NO DOUBT, GIVEN KING HASSAN'S LIKING FOR THIS STYLE OF DIPLOMACY, THAT A SUITABLE EMISSARY COULD TIP THE BALANCE BUT IT MAY BE BEST TO HOLD THIS IN RESERVE UNTIL WE HAVE A CLEAR IDEA OF KING HASSAN'S REACTION. IF HE CHOSSES TO NURSE A GRUDGE, AN EMISSARY MIGHT ALSO HAVE A USEFUL PLACATORY ROLE.

6. KING HASSAN'S PROGRAMME. GENERAL MOULAY HAFID ASKED TO SEE ME THIS MORNING TO URGE THAT THE TIMING OF THE TETE A TETE WITH THE PRIME MINISTER BE CHANGED FROM 1800 ON WEDNESDAY 1 DECEMBER TO THE MORNING, PREFERABLY 11.30. THE KING WISHED TO AVOID A FREE MORNING AND TO HAVE A MEETING OF THE DELEGATION IN THE AFTERNOON. I SHOULD LIKE TO BE ABLE TO GET BACK TO GENERAL MOULAY HAFID, WHO AS YOU KNOW IS TRICKY AND IRASCIBLE, AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE, EVEN IF THE ANSWER IS THAT NO CHANGE IS POSSIBLE. IF THE PRIME MINISTER CAN AGREE A CHANGE, I WOULD TRY TO USE IT AS A QUID PRO QUO FOR MEETING US ON AIRPORTS/AIRCRAFT ARRANGEMENTS.

BROAD