

MIDDLE EAST: ADVANCE COPIES

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PS
PS/MR HURD
~~PS/PUS~~
SIR J LEAHY
MR EGERTON
SIR J BULLARD
HD/NENAD
HD/MED
HD/UND

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CABINET OFFICE D10

IMMEDIATE
ADVANCE COPY

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TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELNO 567 OF 1 DECEMBER

INFO PRIORITY ALL ME POSTS, RIYADH (ACTIONED), WASHINGTON,
PARIS, UKMIS NEW YORK, MOD (DEF SALES).

RIYADH TELNO 71 (TO FCO ONLY): ARAB LEAGUE DELEGATION TO LONDON

1. LORD CARRINGTON CALLED ON 30 NOVEMBER ON THE SAUDI MINISTER OF COMMERCE TO PRESS THE CASE FOR GEC BEING REMOVED FROM THE ARAB BOYCOTT WARNING LIST ON WHICH THEY WERE PLACED IN JUNE 1982. MY COMMERCIAL COUNSELLOR WAS PRESENT.

2. DR SOLAIM SAID THAT THE SAUDIS WOULD NOT CAUSE PROBLEMS FOR GEC. BUT THE ATMOSPHERE AT THE NEXT MEETING OF THE BOYCOTT COMMITTEE IN DECEMBER WOULD HAVE BEEN SPOILED, SO FAR AS BRITISH COMPANIES WERE CONCERNED, BY THE UNFORTUNATE SITUATION THAT HAD ARISEN OVER THE PLO. IF A BANDWAGON STARTED POLLING IN FAVOUR OF EXPRESSING DISSATISFACTION WITH THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT BY TAKING ACTION AGAINST BRITISH COMPANIES, THE SAUDIS WOULD BE UNABLE TO STOP IT.

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3. ON THE PLO ISSUE DR SOLAIM SUGGESTED TO LORD CARRINGTON THAT A POSSIBLE SOLUTION MIGHT BE FOR US TO AGREE THAT ONE OF THE ELECTED WEST BANK MAYORS WHO HAD BEEN EXPELLED BY THE ISRAELIS, SHOULD FILL THE PALESTINIAN SLOT IN THE DELEGATION. SURELY THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT WISH TO REFUSE A RECEPTION TO SOMEONE WHO HAD BEEN DEMOCRATICALLY ELECTED? LORD CARRINGTON ASKED WHETHER SUCH A PROPOSAL, ASSUMING IT WAS ACCEPTABLE TO THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT, WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE PLO.

4. DR SOLAIM SAID THAT THERE WAS A SUBSTANTIAL BODY OF ARAB OPINION WHICH FELT THAT THE ARABS HAD MISSED A TRICK BY NOT TAKING THE AMERICANS UP ON THEIR OFFER TO RECEIVE ONE OF THE MAYORS. WHEN ASKED WHAT WOULD BE THE BEST WAY OF SELLING THIS IDEA TO THE ARAB SIDE DR SOLAIM SAID THAT WE SHOULD USE THE SAUDIS TO SPEAK TO BOTH KING HASSAN AND THE PLO.

5. LORD CARRINGTON DID NOT OF COURSE MAKE ANY COMMITMENT BEYOND AGREEING TO REPORT WHAT DR SOLAIM HAD SAID TO LONDON. BUT HE DID LATER MENTION THE IDEA TO CROWN PRINCE ABDULLAH AND PRINCE SULTAN, ON WHOM HE CALLED LATER, AND SEPARATELY, ACCOMPANIED BY ME. BOTH SAID THAT IT MIGHT HAVE WORKED EARLIER BUT THAT IT WAS TOO LATE NOW. YOU MAY NEVERTHELESS WISH TO CONSIDER IT, FAINT THOUGH ITS CHANCES ARE. DR SOLAIM HAD SEEN PRINCE SAUD THE PREVIOUS EVENING AND MAY HAVE BEEN AUTHORISED TO FLOAT THE IDEA. IF SO, IT IS POSSIBLE THAT SAUD HAD PREVIOUSLY DISCUSSED IT WITH THE KING BY TELEPHONE, EVEN THOUGH ABDULLAH AND SULTAN HAD APPARENTLY NOT/NOT HEARD OF IT BEFORE.

6. PLEASE SEE M.I.F.T.

CRAIG

BT