

MIDDLE EAST: ADVANCE COPIES

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PS (6)
PS/MR HURD
PS/PUS
SIR J LEAHY
~~MR E. G. BROWN~~
SIR J BULLARD
HD/NENAD
HD/MED
HD/UND

Mr Goodwin

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TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 517 OF 26 DECEMBER

INFO PRIORITY MIDDLE EAST POSTS, WASHINGTON

INFO PARIS, UKMIS NEW YORK, MOSCOW.

INFO SAVING MADRID, UKDEL NATO.

YOUR TELEGRAM 939: ARAB LEAGUE DELEGATION VISIT TO LONDON

SUMMARY

1. I SAW BOUCETTA THIS MORNING AND SPOKE AS INSTRUCTED. IN PARTICULAR I MADE CLEAR HOW FAR WE COULD GO OVER THE MATTER OF PLO REPRESENTATION. BOUCETTA TOOK SPECIAL NOTE OF OUR UNDERTAKING THAT IF THE ARABS COULD AGREE TO THE QUOTE PROMINENT PALESTINIAN UNQUOTE FORMULA (OPTION ONE, PARAGRAPH FOUR OF YOUR TUR) THEN THE PRIME MINISTER WOULD RECEIVE THE WHOLE DELEGATION. THIS NOW SEEMS THE OPTION MOST LIKELY TO RUN, AND THE MOROCCANS ACCEPT THAT IT IS FOR THEM TO SELL THIS FORMULA TO THE OTHER ARABS. SO ON THIS ASPECT THE BALL IS SQUARELY IN THEIR COURT. BUT THERE ARE STILL DIFFICULTIES OVER THE DATE OF THE VISIT AND THE EXTENT OF THE QUEEN'S INVOLVEMENT. I SHALL NEED FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS (SEE PARAGRAPH 9).

DETAIL

2. I SPENT THREE QUARTERS OF AN HOUR WITH BOUCETTA. IT WAS A FRIENDLY, FRANK SPEAKING, BUSINESS LIKE MEETING. I FELT I HAD GOT OFF TO A GOOD START WITH HIM IN SPITE OF THE AWKWARDNESS OF THE SUBJECT.

3. WE BEGAN WITH THE PLO ASPECT. I ARGUED HARD FOR THE WASHINGTON FORMULA (PARAGRAPH THREE OF YOUR TUR). BOUCETTA SAID

WASHINGTON FORMULA (PARAGRAPH THREE OF YOUR TUR). BOUCETTA SAID STRAIGHT AWAY THAT IT WAS NOT WORTH PURSUING WITH THE KING. IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN A POSSIBILITY EARLIER ON: IF WE HAD SAID QUOTE NO UNQUOTE TO PLO REPRESENTATION AT THE OUTSET, KING HASSAN COULD PERHAPS HAVE PERSUADED THE OTHER ARABS TO ACQUIESCE. BUT IT WAS TOO LATE NOW. AFTER THE TROUBLE OVER YOUR MESSAGE, THE ARAB SIDE, PARTICULARLY THE SAUDIS, WERE DETERMINED THAT THERE SHOULD BE SOME SORT OF PLO REPRESENTATION ON THE DELEGATION.

4. BOUCETTA WAS SO FIRM ON THIS POINT THAT I JUDGED IT RIGHT TO USE THE DISCRETION YOU GAVE ME, AND MOVED ON TO DISCUSS THE OTHER OPTIONS. BOUCETTA TOLD ME THAT AFTER LORD CHALFONT'S VISIT THE KING HAD ASKED HIM TO EXPLORE THE QUOTE PROMINENT PALESTINIAN UNQUOTE IDEA WITH THE PLO. HE EXPECTED A REPLY FROM THEM VERY SOON. HE ASKED IF WE WOULD INSIST ON MOHAMED MILHEM, ADDING THAT THERE WERE THREE OR FOUR OTHERS WHO MIGHT DO AS WELL. I SAID THAT SO LONG AS THE MAN WAS NOT A PLO OFFICIAL, HE WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE.

5. BOUCETTA DID NOT THINK MUCH OF THE IDEA OF A SEPARATE GROUP OF WEST BANK MAYORS: AND RULED OUT ENTIRELY THE SUGGESTION THAT KING HASSAN MIGHT GO ALONE OR ACCOMPANIED SOLELY BY THE LEAGUE SECRETARY-GENERAL. I GOT THE IMPRESSION, HOWEVER, THAT OPTION TWO MIGHT JUST STILL BE A STARTER (IE A PLO REPRESENTATIVE TO COME, BUT ONLY TO SEE MR HURD). BOUCETTA ASKED WHETHER THE PLO MAN MIGHT BE RECEIVED BY YOURSELF. I SAID NO.

6. WE THEN TALKED ABOUT DATES. BOUCETTA SAID THERE WAS A NEW DIFFICULTY. PRESIDENT MITTERRAND NOW WANTED TO STAY ON PRIVATELY FOR THREE DAYS IN MOROCCO AFTER HIS OFFICIAL VISIT AT THE END OF JANUARY. THIS WOULD MEAN HE WOULD BE HERE UNTIL 1 FEBRUARY, AND KING HASSAN FELT THAT IT WOULD BE DISCOURTEOUS TO LEAVE MOROCCO BEFORE THEN. COULD WE MANAGE DATES LATER IN FEBRUARY, 7/8 OR 3/5 AT A PINCH? I SAID I DOUBTED IT GIVEN THE QUEEN'S IMPENDING TRAVELS, BUT I WOULD INQUIRE. BOUCETTA SAID THAT ANOTHER ALTERNATIVE MIGHT BE 14/16 JANUARY. (THE JERUSALEM COMMITTEE MEETS HERE ON 21 JANUARY AND THE KING WANTS THE ARAB LEAGUE COMMITTEE OF SEVEN TO MAKE A PROGRESS REPORT TO IT).

7. WE DISCUSSED THE QUEEN'S INVOLVEMENT. BOUCETTA SAID THAT KING HASSAN STILL EXPECTS TO PRESENT THE MEMBERS OF HIS DELEGATION TO THE QUEEN.

*Passage deleted and closed,
40 years, under FOI Exemption.*

Wayland. 29 May 2013

HE WOULD LOSE FACE IF HE WERE NOW TO TELL THEM THAT AFTER ALL THEY WOULD NOT BE MEETING HER MAJESTY. IT WOULD BE FAR BETTER TO RESCHEDULE THE VISIT FOR WHEN THE QUEEN GOT BACK TO THE UK IN MID-MARCH. I SAID THIS SEEMED A PITY, BUT I SAW NO ALTERNATIVE IF KING HASSAN ATTACHED SUCH IMPORTANCE TO HAVING THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE DELEGATION CALL ON HER MAJESTY.

COMMENT

8. DISPROPORTIONATE AS IT MAY SEEM TO US, I THINK THIS LAST POINT REALLY IS A SINE QUA NON FOR THE KING. I HAVE

ALREADY REPORTED HOW HE MADE PARTICULAR MENTION, WHEN I PRESENTED CREDENTIALS , OF THE QUEEN'S QUOTE GESTURE UNQUOTE IN AGREEING TO RECEIVE THE ARAB MINISTERS, AND THIS HAS SINCE HAD MUCH PUBLICITY HERE. SO, IF THE VISIT IS TO TAKE PLACE (AND IT MUST, I THINK) WE SHALL NEED TO MEET HASSAN ON THIS POINT. THE MITTERRAND COMPLICATION IS TIRESOME, BUT GIVEN ARAB NOTIONS OF HOSPITALITY I THINK IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO PERSUADE THE KING TO ACCEPT OUR PRESENT DATES. SO IT LOOKS AS IF A DEFERRMENT TO MARCH MAY BE THE ONLY WAY OUT. AS LWNEN FROM HERE, PROVIDED WE AGREE A NEW DATE QUICKLY, NO HARM WILL BE DONE EVEN IF IT IS SOME MONTHS AHEAD - AND WE MIGHT EVEN BE ABLE TO MAKE MORE OF THE VISIT OURSELVES IF IT COMES LATER RATHER THAN EARLIER.

9. BOUCETTA WILL NOW REPORT OUR CONVERSATION TO THE KING AND WILL BE IN TOUCH WITH ME AGAIN WHEN HE HAS THE KING'S VIEWS AND ALSO THE REPLY FROM THE PLO ABOUT REPRESENTATION. HE THOUGHT IT POSSIBLE THAT THE KING MAY WISH TO SEE ME HIMSELF . AS A SUMMONS COULD ARRIVE AT ANY TIME, I SHOULD BE GRATEFUL TO KNOW AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

- A) WHETHER THE NEW DATES MENTIONED BY BOUCETTA ARE ANY GOOD TO US.
- B) WHETHER THERE IS ANY POSSIBILITY OF HER MAJESTY RECEIVING THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE DELEGATION AT SANDRINGHAM.
- C) IF NOT, WHETHER WE CAN MAKE A FIRM OFFER OF DATES IN MARCH.

10. FCO PLEASE PASS SAVING ADDRESSEES.

CAMBRIDGE

NNNN

SENT/RECD AT 27/1203Z SDC/ET