

Arab League
Lester
Schofield
File

RDFOFI 105/11

h.a.

OFFICE
COMMISSIONERS

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TO IMMEDIATE CIVIL COMMISSIONER PORT STANLEY
TELEGRAM NUMBER PERSONAL 3 OF 11 JANUARY
FOLLOWING FROM PRIVATE SECRETARY FOR PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
THE PRIME MINISTER.

MIDDLE EAST ROUND UP
1. THE PRIME MINISTER MIGHT WISH TO HAVE AN ACCOUNT OF MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS ON THE QUESTION OF THE ARAB LEAGUE DELEGATION'S VISIT SINCE HER DEPARTURE.
2. HM AMBASSADOR IN RAJAHAD HAD A USEFUL TALK WITH BOUCETTA ON 8 JANUARY. THE LATTER SAID THAT KING HASSAN WAS PREPARED TO TAKE MAYOR MILHEM AS THE PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATIVE ON THE DELEGATION ASKED WHETHER THE OTHER ARABS HAD AGREED TO THIS HE WAS EVASIVE BUT COMMENTED THAT KINGS HUSSEIN AND FAHD HAD INDICATED THAT THEY WOULD GO ALONG WITH WHATEVER KING HASSAN DECIDED.
BOUCETTA WENT ON TO MAKE TWO REQUESTS.

- 1) THAT THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH SECRETARY SHOULD AFTER ALL BE PREPARED TO RECEIVE RADDUNI.
- 11) THAT THE FULL DELEGATION, INCLUDING MILHEM, SHOULD BE RECEIVED BY THE QUEEN.

AS REGARDS DATES, BOUCETTA SAID THAT THE MOROCCANS COULD ACCEPT 7-8 FEBRUARY AND WERE PRETTY CERTAIN THAT THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE DELEGATION WOULD ALSO AGREE. BOUCETTA ALSO HANDED MR CAMBRIDGE A MESSAGE FROM KING HASSAN TO THE QUEEN EXPRESSING THE HOPE THAT SHE WOULD URGE TO RECEIVE QUOTE THE MEMBERS OF THE DELEGATION ... UNDER THE SAME CONDITIONS AS PREVIOUSLY UNQUOTE.

3. MR CAMBRIDGE IS DUE TO SEE BOUCETTA AGAIN ON 11 JANUARY. HE HAS BEEN INSTRUCTED TO WELCOME MOROCCAN ACCEPTANCE OF THE MILHEM IDEA: TO DRAW ATTENTION AGAIN TO OUR POSITION ON THE LEVEL OF OUR CONTACTS WITH THE PLC; AND TO SAY THAT WE NEED MORE TIME ON THE QUESTION OF THE QUEEN'S INVOLVEMENT, BUT ARE CONSIDERING IT CAREFULLY.

4. KING HUSSEIN DISCUSSED THE ARAB LEAGUE VISIT WITH MR URWICK IN AMMAN ON 9 JANUARY. THE KING CONFIRMED THAT BOUCETTA HAD TOLD HIM THAT A SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM HAD BEEN FOUND ON THE BASIS THAT MILHEM WOULD BE A MEMBER OF THE DELEGATION. HE WAS SENSITIVE THAT THE DATES 7-8 FEBRUARY WOULD BE RATHER LATE, PARTICULARLY IF HIS CURRENT TALKS WITH ARAFAT WENT WELL. THE KING EMPHASISED THAT HE WANTED TO SEE THE DIFFICULTIES OVER THE ARAB LEAGUE VISIT OUT OF THE WAY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE LEST THEY DIVERT ATTENTION FROM PURSUIT OF THE REAGAN INITIATIVE. HE SAID THAT HE WOULD URGE A RAPID SOLUTION ON ARAFAT AND OFFERED TO TRY TO THINK OF AN ALTERNATIVE PROPOSAL IF THERE SEEMED ANY DANGER THAT THE IMPASSE MIGHT CONTINUE. HE ALSO MENTIONED THAT HE MIGHT COME TO LONDON HIMSELF IF THE ARABS COULD NOT SORT THEMSELVES OUT. HE HAS A VISIT TO BELGIUM PLANNED FROM 27-31 JANUARY.

5. THE CHANCELLOR'S VISIT TO RIYADH WENT WELL, AND HE WAS ABLE TO PUT OUR VIEWS TO THE SAUDIS. BUT HIS CONCLUSION WAS THAT THERE IS A SERIOUS RISK OF COMMERCIAL DAMAGE IF AN ACCEPTABLE SOLUTION IS NOT FOUND SOON. WE ARE NOW AWAITING ARAB REACTIONS TO THE MILHEM IDEA PUT TO THEM BY THE MOROCCANS. IF THEY ACCEPT IT, WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO GET AWAY OUT OF CURRENT DIFFICULTIES. BUT THERE IS A CLEAR FEELING AMONG THE MOROCCANS ARE BEING OVER OPTIMISTIC ABOUT WHAT THEY CAN DO WITH THEIR COLLEAGUES.