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DESKBY 111800Z  
FM RABAT 111600Z JAN 83  
TO IMMEDIATE FCO DESKBY 111800Z JAN 83  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 16 OF 11 JANUARY  
INFO IMMEDIATE JEDDA, AMMAN  
INFO PRIORITY OTHER ME POSTS, WASHINGTON  
INFO ROUTINE PARIS, UKMIS NEW YORK, MOSCOW  
INFO SAVING MADRID, UKDEL NATO

YOUR TEL 24: ARAB LEAGUE DELEGATION VISIT TO LONDON

1. I SAW BOUCETTA THIS MORNING. I SAID YOU WERE PLEASED WITH THE PROGRESS WE WERE MAKING AND HOPED WE COULD BRING MATTERS TO A SPEEDY CONCLUSION. HE SAID THAT WE WERE NOW AGREED ON DATES AND ON MILHEM SEMICOLON THAT ALL THE OTHER ARABS AND THE PLO HAD BEEN INFORMED OF THIS SEMICOLON THAT HE WOULD LIKE ME TO COME DOWN TO MARRAKESH TOMORROW (NOT THURSDAY) TO DISCUSS DETAILED ARRANGEMENTS WITH HIM AND MDULAY HAFID, AND THAT IMMEDIATELY THEREAFTER THE MOROCCANS WOULD WISH TO MAKE AN ANNOUNCEMENT TO THE PRESS ABOUT THE VISIT. BOUCETTA REMINDED ME THAT, RIGHT FROM THE START (IE IN TALKING TO LORD CHALFONT) KING HASSAN HAD ATTACHED IMPORTANCE TO ANNOUNCING OUR AGREEMENT ON THE VISIT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

2. I SAID ALL THIS SEEMED ADMIRABLE. BUT I DID NOT WANT THINGS TO GO WRONG. I WOULD SPEAK VERY FRANKLY. ALTHOUGH WE RECOGNISED ALL ALONG THAT IT WAS FOR KING HASSAN TO CARRY THE OTHER ARABS WITH HIM, THE FACT REMAINED THAT WE HAD HAD INDICATIONS FROM CERTAIN QUARTERS THAT THE MILHEM IDEA HAD NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY ALL. BOUCETTA WAS INSISTENT THAT THIS WAS ENTIRELY A RESPONSIBILITY FOR KING HASSAN. WHEN I QUESTIONED HIM SPECIFICALLY ABOUT SAUDI REACTIONS AND ABOUT AHMED BENSOUDA'S VISIT TO SAUDI ARABIA ON 9 JANUARY, BOUCETTA ASSURED ME THAT HE HIMSELF HAD SETTLED THE WHOLE MATTER WITH KING FAHD. HE REPEATED WHAT HE HAD TOLD ME ON 8 JANUARY (PARAGRAPH 2 OF MY TEL 09): KING FAHD HAD SAID THAT IF WHAT WAS PROPOSED WAS ALL RIGHT WITH KING HASSAN, THEN IT WAS ALL RIGHT WITH HIM. I PRESSED BOUCETTA TO TELL ME MORE OF THE REACTIONS OF THE OTHER ARABS AND THE PLO (HE HAD SEEN ABU MARWAN, THE LOCAL PLO REPRESENTATIVE, IMMEDIATELY AFTER SEEING ME ON 8 JANUARY). BOUCETTA MERELY SAID THEY HAD BEEN TOLD THAT KING HASSAN WOULD BE TAKING MILHEM, AND THAT WAS THAT.

3. I SAID I WOULD LIKE TO CONSULT YOU BEFORE BOUCETTA MADE HIS STATEMENT TO THE PRESS: IT WAS OBVIOUSLY BETTER THAT WE SHOULD BOTH PROCEED IN STEP OVER THIS. HE AGREED NOT TO MAKE THE STATEMENT UNTIL WE WERE READY. I ASKED HIM WHAT HE WOULD

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SAY. HE SAID THAT IT COULD BE SOMETHING FAIRLY SHORT, TO THE EFFECT THAT KING HASSAN WOULD BE LEADING THE ARAB LEAGUE DELEGATION, WITH QUOTE ITS ENTIRE MEMBERSHIP UNQUOTE TO VISIT LONDON ON 7 AND 8 FEBRUARY. I SAID THERE WERE BOUND TO BE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE REPRESENTATION OF THE PALESTINIANS. HE SAID HE WOULD TAKE EXACTLY THE SAME LINE AS HE HAD IN RIYADH I.E. THAT THE PALESTINIANS (QUOTE NOT THE PLO UNQUOTE HE EMPHASISED TO ME) WOULD BE REPRESENTED.

4. BOUCETTA DID NOT REVERT AT ALL TO HIS HOPES THAT WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO RECEIVE QADDUMI - SO I DID NOT USE POINT (B) IN YOUR INSTRUCTIONS. I DID HOWEVER WARN HIM THAT WE HAD NOT YET HAD TIME TO REACH CONCLUSIONS ABOUT MILHEM AND HIS RECEPTION BY THE QUEEN. I SAID WE WERE DOING OUR BEST TO MEET THE KING'S WISHES ON THIS AND WOULD LET THE MOROCCANS HAVE A REPLY AS SOON AS WE COULD. BOUCETTA AGAIN ARGUED HOW ESSENTIAL IT WAS THAT MILHEM SHOULD BE TREATED EXACTLY LIKE ALL THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE DELEGATION. I REPEATED THE IMPORTANCE WE HAD TO ATTACH TO NOT (NOT) INVOLVING THE QUEEN IN ANY MATTER WHICH COULD BE REGARDED AS CONTROVERSIAL.

5. COMMENT. ALL THIS IS NOW BEGINNING TO MOVE RATHER FAST - POSSIBLY FASTER THAN YOU MIGHT WISH, IN THAT THERE ARE STILL DETAILS TO BE AGREED. HOWEVER, I CAN SEE THAT THE MOROCCANS NEED TO MAKE AN EARLY ANNOUNCEMENT IN ORDER TO KEEP THE OTHER ARABS IN LINE, AND THIS IS IN OUR INTERESTS TOO. I AM NOT CERTAIN THAT I CAN HOLD THE MOROCCANS IN CHECK FOR VERY LONG OVER MAKING AN ANNOUNCEMENT - THE MORE SO SINCE OUR AGREEMENT ON THE DATES AND THE MILHEM FORMULA WERE CONVEYED BY BOUCETTA TO THE ARAB AMBASSADORS AT YESTERDAY'S MEETING IN RABAT. THE REUTERS MAN HERE HAS ALREADY HAD AN ACCOUNT OF THIS MEETING.

6. I REALISE YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO SEND ME MUCH BEFORE I LEAVE FOR MARRAKESH AT 0730 TOMORROW MORNING. BUT ANY INSTRUCTIONS ON THE FOLLOWING POINTS WOULD HELP:

- (I) AGREEMENT THAT MILHEM WILL BE RECEIVED AT THE PALACE. FAILING THAT, AN INDICATION AS TO WHEN I MIGHT HAVE YOUR REPLY ON THIS POINT.
- (II) ANY VIEWS ABOUT THE TIMING AND CONTENT OF THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE VISIT.
- (III) ANY PRELIMINARY INDICATIONS TO HELP ME DRAW UP A PROGRAMME WITH MOULAY HAFID. IN PARTICULAR, WHEN WOULD THE QUEEN RECEIVE THE DELEGATION, AND WHAT HOSPITALITY WOULD SHE BE ABLE TO OFFER KING HASSAN?

7. FCO PLEASE PASS SAVING MADRID AND UKDEL NATO.  
CAMBRIDGE

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