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DESKBY 041100Z FEB 83

FROM AMMAN 040930Z FEB 83

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TEL NO 44 OF 04 FEB 83

AND TO INFO ROUTINE MIDDLE EAST POSTS PARIS ,UKMIS NEW YORK  
AND WASHINGTON.

YOUR TELEGRAM NO'S 100 AND 102 TO RABAT :

ARAB LEAGUE DELEGATION.

1. KING HUSSEIN ENQUIRED LAST NIGHT HOW MATTERS STOOD ON THE ARAB LEAGUE DELEGATION'S VISIT TO LONDON. AFTER I HAD GIVEN HIM A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S AND YOUR TALKS WITH BOUCETTA, THE KING SAID HE VERY MUCH HOPED THE VISIT WOULD TAKE PLACE SOON AND URGED THAT WE SHOULD RECEIVE KHALID AL HASSAN IF NECESSARY RATHER THAN ALLOW THE QUESTION OF HIS MEMBERSHIP OF THE DELEGATION TO PREVENT THE VISIT FROM TAKING PLACE. IF WE FAILED TO RECEIVE THE DELEGATION, HE FEARED A FURTHER DETERIORATION IN OUR RELATIONS WITH THE ARABS (ALTHOUGH BOTH THE KING AND HIS FOREIGN MINISTER PLACE A LARGE SHARE OF THE BLAME FOR WHAT HAS HAPPENED ON THE MORACCANS). THE KING ALSO FEARED THAT A REBUFF TO THE PALESTINIAN MODERATES, FOR THIS WAS HOW OUR REFUSAL TO RECEIVE KHALID AL HASSAN WOULD BE INTERPRETED, WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT JORDANS EFFORTS TO PROMOTE A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT. KHALID AL HASSAN WAS ONE OF THE MOST DECENT AND RESPONSIBLE OF THE PALESTINIANS WITH WHOM THE JORDANIANS HAD HAD TO DEAL.

2. ALTHOUGH HE MADE THESE COMMENTS ON A SOCIAL OCCASION (THE KING AND QUEEN WERE DINING PRIVATELY AT OUR HOUSE WITH A FEW FRIENDS), KING HUSSEIN SPOKE WITH GREAT EMPHASIS AND PARTICULARLY ASKED THAT WHAT HE HAD HAD TO SAY SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE PRIME MINISTER AND YOURSELF.

COMMENT

3. ARAFAT IS ABOUT TO START THE LAST ROUND OF TALKS WITH THE JORDANIANS IN AMMAN BEFORE THE MEETING OF THE PALESTINIAN NATIONAL COUNCIL IN ALGIERS, AT WHICH HE IS LIKELY TO SEEK SOME FORM OF MANDATE ENABLING HIM TO ENTER INTO NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE JORDANIANS FOR THE RECOVERY OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. NOT ONLY HAVE SOME OF THE PALESTINIAN ORGANISATIONS COME OUT AGAINST HIM SEMICOLON

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The FCO are well aware that this is not acceptable.

AP 7/2.

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THERE ARE ALSO DIVISIONS WITHIN THE PLO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ITSELF ON WHETHER OR NOT TO GO FORWARD. IN ADDITION ARAFAT IS UNDER OPEN THREAT OF ASSASSINATION FROM THE SAME (NOW DAMASCUS BASED) TERRORIST GROUP WHICH TRIED TO KILL AMBASSADOR ARGOV. HE FACES GREAT DIFFICULTIES IN TRYING TO CONVINCE HIS OWN FOLLOWERS OF THE CREDIBILITY OF US ASSURANCES , IN VIEW OF LACK OF PROGRESS IN SECURING AN ISRAELI WITHDRAWEL FROM LEBANON AND THE APPARENT INABILITY OF THE AMERICANS TO PREVENT THE ISRAELIS FROM CONTINUING TO EXPAND THEIR SETTLEMENTS ON THE WEST BANK. OUR REFUSAL TO RECEIVE ONE OF THE PALESTINIANS KNOWN TO BE MOST STRONGLY IN FAVOUR OF PURSUING A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT WOULD THEREFORE IN THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES BE A SET BACK BOTH FOR ARAFAT AND FOR KING HUSSEIN.

URWICK

MIDDLE EAST

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