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BRITISH HIGH COMMISSION  
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FROM UKREP BRUSSELS 221630Z NOV 83  
TO IMMEDIATE FCO  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 4067 OF 22 NOVEMBER 1983  
INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON NEW DELHI (FOR SECRETARY OF STATES PARTY)  
INFO ROUTINE BRUSSELS COPENHAGEN THE HAGUE ROME DUBLIN PARTS BONN.  
LUXEMBOURG ATHENS UKMIS NEW YORK UKDEL NATO BEIRUT DAMASCUS CAIRO  
TUNIS AMMAN JEDDA BAGHDAD TEL AVIV MOSCOW  
INFO SAVING LISBON MADRID STRASBOURG OSLO ANKARA OTTAWA WELLINGTON  
MEXICO CITY BAHRAIN DUBAI TRIPOLI ABU DHABI ADEN ALGIERS SANAA  
RABAT KUWAIT DOHA KHARTOUM MUSCAT TEHRAN TOKYO

EUROPEAN POLITICAL COOPERATION: MEETING OF MINISTERS:  
BRUSSELS 22 NOVEMBER

MIDDLE EAST

SUMMARY

1. POSITIVE REACTION FROM MOST PARTNERS TO UK IDEA OF STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES ON LEBANON BY EUROPEAN COUNCIL: ONLY FRENCH LUKE-WARM. GENERAL FEELING THAT ANYTHING SAID ON LEBANON SHOULD BE SET IN WIDER MIDDLE EAST CONTEXT. NO DETAILED DISCUSSION OF TEXT WHICH IS TO BE FINALISED BY POLITICAL DIRECTORS IN MARGINS OF EUROPEAN COUNCIL ON 4-6 DECEMBER.

2. FRENCH SUGGESTION THAT EUROPEAN COUNCIL SHOULD ALSO CALL FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF U.N. SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 540 ON IRAN/IRAQ.

DETAIL

3. HARALAMBOPOULOS (PRESIDENCY) NOTED THAT POSSIBILITIES FOR COMMON ACTION BY THE TEN ON LEBANON WERE VERY LIMITED. ISRAEL WAS NOT INCLINED TO RENEGOTIATE THE 17 MAY AGREEMENT. SYRIA WAS DETERMINED TO BRING THE PALESTINIAN MOVEMENT UNDER HER CONTROL. THE CONFLICT IN TRIPOLI WAS TRAGIC AND THE DISAPPEARANCE OF ARAFAT WOULD HAVE UNFORESEABLE CONSEQUENCES. ONE WAY OUT MIGHT BE TO REVIVE A "GLOBAL" APPROACH TO THE ARAB/ISRAEL DISPUTE BY ATTEMPTING TO COMBINE THE REAGAN AND FEZ INITIATIVES. THIS PRESUPPOSED SUFFICIENT POLITICAL WILL BY THE INSTIGATORS OF BOTH PLANS. THE TEN COULD HELP WITH DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY. AFTER INITIAL CONSIDERATION OF THE IDEAS PUT FORWARD BY THE UK POLITICAL DIRECTORS COULD BE ASKED TO PRODUCE A TEXT OF A POSSIBLE STATEMENT IN THE MARGINS OF THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL.

4. MR RIFKIND (UK) SAID THERE WERE TWO ISSUES FACING THE TEN: THE CURRENT EVENTS IN TRIPOLI, AND THE LONGER TERM QUESTION OF WHAT POSITION THE TEN SHOULD ADOPT ON LEBANON AND THE MIDDLE EAST. THE FIGHTING IN TRIPOLI MIGHT CONCLUDE SHORTLY. THE OVERRIDING OBJECTIVE FOR THE TEN SHOULD BE TO DO WHATEVER WAS POSSIBLE TO ENSURE THAT THE NEED FOR PROTECTION OF PALESTINIAN CIVILIANS WAS PROPERLY RECOGNISED SA AS TO AVOID ANY REPETITION OF THE SABRA AND SHATILA MASSACRES.

5. AS FOR THE LONGER TERM, THERE WAS A CLEAR EXPECTATION THAT THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL SHOULD SHOW ITS CONCERN ABOUT THE MIDDLE EAST. FOLLOWING THE DISCUSSION AMONG POLITICAL DIRECTORS ON 14/15 NOVEMBER THE UK SAW VALUE IN A STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES. THE OBJECTIVES OF SUCH A STATEMENT WOULD BE:

(A) TO RESPOND TO THE WISH OF MANY ARAB GOVERNMENTS THAT EUROPE BE MORE ACTIVE;

(B) TO DEFINE MORE CLEARLY THE TENS OBJECTIVES ON LEBANON AND ON ITS PLACE IN THE WIDER MIDDLE EAST CONTEXT;

(C) TO PROVIDE THE BASIS FOR A BALANCED PROGRAMME OF DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY IF THIS WAS CONSIDERED DESIRABLE.

THERE WAS NO INTENTION OF CUTTING ACROSS INITIATIVES FROM OTHER SOURCES EG UNITED STATES. BUT THERE WAS NO REASON WHY THE TEN SHOULD NOT PUT FORWARD THEIR OWN IDEAS. MR RIFKIND DESCRIBED THE MAIN ELEMENTS OF THE UK PROPOSAL (TEXT BEING SENT SEPARATELY TO POSTS WHO HAVE NOT YET RECEIVED IT). ONE DIFFICULT AND DELICATE POINT WAS HOW TO ADDRESS THE ISRAEL/LEBANON AGREEMENT OF 17 MAY WHICH WAS OF MAJOR AND CONTROVERSIAL CONCERN TO SOME PARTIES IN THE AREA. THE FORMULA IN PARAGRAPH 2A OF THE PAPER ("WITHDRAWAL OF FORCES.....IN ACCORDANCE WITH TERMS AND CONDITIONS AGREED BETWEEN LEBANON AND ITS NEIGHBOURS") WAS DELIBERATELY CHOSEN TO PROVIDE FLEXIBILITY ON HOW THE 17 MAY AGREEMENT SHOULD BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT. THE UK WOULD WELCOME THE VIEWS OF PARTNERS ON THIS POINT AND ON THE OTHERS COVERED IN THE BRITISH DRAFT. THE TEN WOULD ALSO NEED TO CONSIDER WHETHER THERE SHOULD BE ANY DIPLOMATIC FOLLOW-UP.

6. BARRY (IRELAND) THOUGHT THE UK PAPER VERY USEFUL. IRELAND COULD SUPPORT IT, SUBJECT TO SOME POINTS OF DRAFTING WHICH COULD BE DISCUSSED BY POLITICAL DIRECTORS. THE SITUATION IN TRIPOLI WAS CHANGING QUICKLY BUT IRELAND AGREED ON THE NEED TO ENSURE THE RIGHTS AND SAFETY OF PALESTINIAN CIVILIANS. THE TEN SHOULD KEEP THEIR SIGHTS FIXED ON 2 THINGS: THE WITHDRAWAL OF ALL FOREIGN FORCES AND THE STRENGTHENING OF THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT. IN THE COMING YEAR THE ROLE OF THE TEN COULD BE CRUCIAL AS THE US BECAME INCREASINGLY PREOCUPIED WITH PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS.

7. BOTTAI (ITALY) AND SCHAUER (FRG) BOTH AGREED THAT THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL SHOULD MAKE A STATEMENT ON THE MIDDLE EAST. BOTH WELCOMED THE UK PAPER. BOTH HAD SOME AMENDMENTS TO PROPOSE AND AGREED THAT A FINAL DRAFT SHOULD BE PRODUCED BY POLITICAL DIRECTORS IN THE MARGINS OF THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL.

8. ANDREANI (FRANCE) THOUGHT THAT THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL MIGHT NOT BE IN A POSITION TO DEAL WITH IMMEDIATE EVENTS IN TRIPOLI, WHICH MIGHT WELL BE OVER BY THEN. BUT IT WAS UNTHINKABLE THAT THE COUNCIL SHOULD MEET WITHOUT SAYING SOMETHING ON THE MIDDLE EAST. THE QUESTION WAS WHETHER THE TEN SHOULD CONFINE THEMSELVES TO ANOTHER GENERAL STATEMENT, WHICH WOULD PROBABLY BE IGNORED, OR GO FURTHER IN MAKING SPECIFIC PROPOSALS, WHICH WOULD RISK BEING REJECTED BY THE PARTIES IF THEY DID NOT DOVETAIL WITH THE REALITIES ON THE GROUND. HE FOUND THE BRITISH IDEAS "INTERESTING" AND A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. TIME WAS NEEDED FOR REFLECTION. THERE WERE A NUMBER OF POINTS ON WHICH THE TEN DIFFERED FROM THE UNITED STATES. THE TEN WERE, FOR EXAMPLE, A PARTY TO THE ISRAEL/LEBANON AGREEMENT ON WHICH MUCH OF THE PRESENT CONTROVERSY HINGED: THEY WERE THEREFORE IN A POSITION TO PROPOSE A FORMULA FOR GETTING ROUND THAT PROBLEM. THE TEN COULD NOT SPEAK ABOUT LEBANON WITHOUT MENTIONING THE REST OF THE MIDDLE EAST, INCLUDING THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM. SOONER OR LATER THE TEN WOULD HAVE TO COME TO GRIPS WITH THE REAGAN AND FEZ PLANS. THEY SHOULD CONSIDER TAKING UP SOME OF THE IDEAS IN THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL STATEMENT OF 29 JUNE 1982. THE IDEAS CONTAINED IN THE FRANCO/EGYPTIAN INITIATIVE IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL MIGHT ALSO BE REVIVED.

NOT

9. ANDREANI ALSO SUGGESTED, RN CHEYSSON'S INSTRUCTIONS, THAT A EUROPEAN COUNCIL STATEMENT SHOULD MAKE SOME REFERENCE TO IRAN/IRAQ. FRANCE HAD BEEN ACTIVE IN GETTING A U.N. SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION ADOPTED WHICH WAS BALANCED AND TOOK ACCOUNT OF THE VIEWS OF BOTH SIDES. IRAN HAD NOT (NOT) DEFINITELY REJECTED IT. THE FRENCH WERE URGING THE U.N. SECRETARY-GENERAL TO PURSUE HIS EFFORTS. THE TEN SHOULD LIKEWISE USE THEIR INFLUENCE TO GET THE RESOLUTION APPLIED.

10. TINDEMANS (BELGIUM) WELCOMED UK IDEAS ON LEBANON. THIS WAS A GOOD FORMULA FOR ADDRESSING THE IMMEDIATE PROBLEM WITHOUT IGNORING THE WIDER ISSUES. IT WOULD ALSO BREAK WITH THE "PLATONIC RITUAL" OF EMPTY STATEMENTS BY THE TEN. THERE WAS A RISK OF REJECTION BY THE PARTIES CONCERNED. THE TEN NEEDED TO CONSIDER WHETHER DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY WAS NEEDED BEFORE OR AT THE SAME TIME AS THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL STATEMENT: HE WAS SURE THE UK HAD SOME IDEAS ON THIS AS WELL.

11. SUMMING UP, HARALAMBOPOULOS SAID THAT IT WAS AGREED THAT THE UK DRAFT SHOULD BE STUDIED FURTHER. MEMBER STATES WOULD HAVE AMENDMENTS TO SUGGEST. ANY STATEMENT SHOULD REFER NOT ONLY TO LEBANON BUT ALSO TO THE WIDER MIDDLE EAST ISSUES. THE TEXT WOULD BE FINALISED BY POLITICAL DIRECTORS IN THE MARGINS OF THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL. THE TEN SHOULD NOT CONFINE THEMSELVES TO A STATEMENT BUT MAKE CONCRETE PROPOSALS WHICH MIGHT THEN BE FOLLOWED UP, AS THE TEN'S CONTRIBUTION TO RESTORING PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

FCO ADVANCE TO:-

FCO - PS/MR LUCE MR EGERTON MR LONG (NENAD)

FCO PASS SAVING TO LISBON MADRID STRASBOURG ANKARA OSLO TOKYO  
OTTAWA WELLINGTON MEXICO CITY BAHRAIN DUBAI TRIPOLI ABU DHABI  
ADEN ALGIERS SANAA RABAT KUWAIT DOHA KHARTOUM MUSCAT TEHRAN

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