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TELEGRAM NUMBER 27 OF 10 JANUARY
INFO PRIORITY RIYADH, JEDDA, CAIRO, BEIRUT, TEL AVIV, BAGHDAD,
KUWAIT, WASHINGTON, MOSCOW, PARIS, ROME, UKMIS NEW YORK, AMMAN.

MS

FOLLOWING FROM PRIVATE SECRETARY

RIYADH TELEGRAM NO 10: SECRETARY OF STATE'S VISIT TO SAUDI ARABIA

SUMMARY

1. THE SECRETARY OF STATE HAD A MORNING'S TALKS WITH PRINCE SAUD ON 11 JANUARY. ON LEBANON SAUD CONFIRMED THAT AGREEMENT ON THE SECURITY PLAN HAD BEEN REACHED, ALTHOUGH IT MIGHT HAVE TO BE IMPLEMENTED WITHOUT BEING FORMALLY ANNOUNCED. ON ARAB/ISRAEL HE MADE A STRONG PITCH FOR A CHANGE IN US POLICY, BUT WITHOUT PUTTING FORWARD ANY IDEAS ON HOW THIS MIGHT BE ACHIEVED BEYOND THE FAMILIAR PLEA FOR PRESSURE ON THE US. ON IRAN/IRAQ HE SUGGESTED THAT THE BEST WAY TO BRING THE CONFLICT TO AN END WAS TO ASSIST IRAQ IN STANDING FIRM: WITH THE CLEAR IMPLICATION THAT ARMS SUPPLIES TO IRAN WOULD MAKE MATTERS WORSE. ON SUDAN HE WAS MORE INCLINED THAN MUBARAK HAD BEEN TO BELIEVE THAT ISLAMICISATION HAD STAVED OFF EXTREMIST PRESSURE.

LEBANON

2. THE SECRETARY OF STATE NOTED THAT THERE WAS NO NEWS YET ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SECURITY AGREEMENT IN LEBANON. SAUD CONFIRMED THAT AGREEMENT HAD BEEN REACHED. IT MIGHT HAVE TO BE

2. ~~THE SECRETARY OF STATE NOTED THAT THERE WAS NO NEWS YET ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SECURITY AGREEMENT IN LEBANON. SAUD CONFIRMED THAT AGREEMENT HAD BEEN REACHED. IT MIGHT HAVE TO BE IMPLEMENTED BEFORE BEING FORMALLY ANNOUNCED, AS THE LEBANESE ARMY HAD RESERVATIONS ABOUT PROMOTING DRUZE OFFICERS.~~

ARAB/ISRAEL

3. SAUD WELCOMED THE ARAFAT/MUBARAK MEETING AND SAID THAT ARAFAT WAS EXPECTED SOON IN SAUDI ARABIA. ARAFAT'S COMMITMENT TO PEACE WAS NOW CLEAR. THIS HAD REQUIRED COURAGE AND DESERVED ENCOURAGEMENT. IT WAS PARTICULARLY SIGNIFICANT THAT THE PLO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HAD ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE RECALL OF THE JORDANIAN PARLIAMENT WAS AN INTERNAL AFFAIR. THIS TOO SHOWED PLO WILLINGNESS TO TALK SERIOUSLY ABOUT NEGOTIATIONS FOR PEACE. THE PROBLEM WAS LACK OF A SERIOUS APPROACH TO THE ARAB/ISRAEL DISPUTE BY THE UNITED STATES. THE US REJECTED CONTACTS WITH THE PLO AND REFUSED PALESTINIAN SELF-DETERMINATION. ALL OF US SHOULD INFLUENCE THE AMERICANS TO PRODUCE REAL PROGRESS. THE AMERICANS HAD MISSED THE OPPORTUNITY TO PERSUADE THE ISRAELIS TO WITHDRAW FROM LEBANON. WITHOUT THIS NO ONE COULD BELIEVE THAT ISRAEL WOULD WITHDRAW FROM THE WEST BANK AND GAZA STRIP.

4. PRINCE SAUD COMMENTED THAT THE PLO WAS NOW CLEARLY SPLIT INTO THOSE WHO SHARED ARAFAT'S IN WILLINGNESS TO ADOPT THE FEZ APPROACH, AND THOSE COMMITTED TO THE ARMED STRUGGLE. THE GREAT MASS OF PALESTINIANS BACKED ARAFAT AND IN THE WEST BANK HIS SUPPORT WAS COMPLETE. SAUD SAID THAT THERE WERE DANGERS IN CALLING AN EARLY MEETING OF THE PNC LEST A RIVAL MEETING BE CALLED IN DAMASCUS. THIS WOULD PUT HAWATHEH AND HABASH IN A PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT POSITION. IN ADDITION ISRAELI REFUSAL IN THE PAST TO ALLOW PALESTINIAN LEADERS FROM THE WEST BANK TO ATTEND THE PNC HAD BEEN UNHELPFUL, AS THOSE CONCERNED WERE MODERATES. A MEETING OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE MIGHT BE A MORE STRAIGHTFORWARD NEXT STEP.

5. SAUD CONTINUED THAT IT WAS ASKING A GREAT DEAL TO PRESS ARAFAT FOR FURTHER SIGNALS OF HIS WILLINGNESS TO NEGOTIATE. ARAFAT WAS ALREADY PUBLICLY COMMITTED TO NEGOTIATING PEACE FOR TERRITORY ON THE LINES OF THE FEZ PACKAGE, YET ISRAEL HAD GIVEN NO SIGN OF FLEXIBILITY IN RETURN. THE CREDIBILITY OF AMERICAN POLICY HAD MEANWHILE SUFFERED. REAGAN'S POLICY ON SETTLEMENTS MADE MATTERS WORSE. MEANWHILE THERE WAS AN URGENT NEED TO STOP THE DETERIORATION OF THE SITUATION ON THE GROUND. THE AMERICANS COULD HELP BY LIMITING THEIR AID TO ISRAEL, OR AT LEAST BY PREVENTING IT BEING USED TO SUPPORT SETTLEMENT ACTIVITY. UNLESS THE AMERICANS MADE THEIR POSITION CLEARER, SUPPORT FOR ARAFAT'S APPROACH (FOR WHICH ARAFAT HAD JUST FOUGHT A WAR) WOULD BE ERODED.

6. SAUD WAS STRONGLY CRITICAL OF THE US/ISRAEL STRATEGIC ALLIANCE (FOR WHICH THE US HAD OBTAINED "NOTHING IN RETURN. HE ARGUED THAT IN ORDER TO INFLUENCE AMERICAN POLICY, THE ARAB COUNTRIES AND THE EUROPEAN COUNTRIES SHOULD WORK IN PARALLEL TO ESTABLISH A DEGREE OF COMMON 'RESONANCE'. THE ARAB SUMMIT DUE

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7. ASKED WHETHER THE SAUDIS THEMSELVES WOULD BE WILLING TO PUT REAL PRESSURE ON THE AMERICANS, PRINCE SAUD SAID THAT PERSUASION SHOULD BE ENOUGH. IF FRIENDLY ARGUMENT AND RATIONAL PERSUASION WAS NOT ENOUGH, THIS WOULD IMPLY A LACK OF AMERICAN GOODWILL TOWARDS THEIR FRIENDS AND ALLIES. THIS WAS NOT THE ASSUMPTION ON WHICH THE SAUDIS WERE WORKING. HE ALSO COMMENTED THAT THE REAGAN PLAN WAS THE BEST PROSPECT FOR PROGRESS. THE SECRETARY OF STATE POINTED OUT THAT IT WAS THE AMERICANS WHO HAD THE LEVERAGE IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND AGREED THAT IT WAS ^{IMPORTANT} ~~UNWARRANTED~~ TO PERSUADE THEM. EGERTON SUGGESTED THAT PRESIDENT REAGAN WAS A DETERMINED LEADER WITH BASICALLY SOUND REACTIONS ON THE ARAB/ISRAEL DISPUTE, AS EVIDENCED BY HIS INITIATIVE OF SEPTEMBER 1982 AND RECENT AMERICAN REACTIONS TO THE ARAFAT/MUDARAK MEETING. BUT AMERICAN POLICY HAD BEEN DISTRACTED BY THE LEBANESE IMBROGLIO AND BY CONSTANT CHANGES IN AMERICAN NEGOTIATORS DEALING WITH THE MIDDLE EAST. SAUD AGREED. HE RECOGNISED PRESIDENT REAGAN'S DETERMINATION AND GOODWILL. THE SECRETARY OF STATE ADDED THAT, AS THE MAIN ACTORS IN THE DISPUTE, THE ARABS WERE PARTICULARLY WELL PLACED TO CONVINCING THE AMERICANS. IN CONCLUSION PRINCE SAUD WELCOMED THE NEWS THAT ENBOTOGE MIGHT COME TO SAUDI ARABIA. HE MIGHT HIMSELF MEANWHILE VISIT THE UK AND SOME OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES.

8. THE SECRETARY OF STATE SAID THAT NO-ONE TO WHOM HE HAD SPOKEN SAW AN EARLY END TO THE WAR, MUCH AS WE WOULD WISH IT. MEANWHILE, WE WERE MAINTAINING A POSITION OF NEUTRALITY. SAUD SAID THAT THE WAR WAS NOW CONTINUING ONLY BECAUSE IRAN WANTED THIS. EUROPEAN NEUTRALITY WOULD NOT INFLUENCE IRAN, WHO WOULD STOP FIGHTING ONLY IF THEY SAW NO PROSPECT FOR SUCCESS. THEY WERE GETTING SUBSTANTIAL SUPPLIES OF WEAPONS FROM BOTH EAST AND WEST. THOSE OPPOSED TO THE WAR IN IRAN NEEDED ENCOURAGEMENT. THE IRANIAN POLICY OF ATTRITION DEPENDED ON LARGE CONTINUING ARMS SUPPLIES. HELPING IRAQ TO STAND FIRM WAS THE BEST WAY OF BRINGING THE CONFLICT TO AN END. THEY SAW LITTLE POINT IN RATIONAL APPROACHES TO IRAN, WHOSE ATTITUDE WAS CONFRONTATIONAL, AND WHO RESORTED TO TERRORISM LIKE THE RECENT KUWAIT BOMBINGS. IF THE WEST CHANGED THEIR NEUTRAL STANCE, IRAN WOULD RECOGNISE THAT THE WAR COULD NOT BE WON. IF IRAN MADE FURTHER MILITARY PROGRESS IT WOULD THEN

~~ON A NEUTRAL STANCE, IRAN WOULD RECOGNISE THAT THE WAR COULD NOT BE WON. IF IRAN MADE FURTHER MILITARY PROGRESS IT WOULD THEN BE EXTREMELY COSTLY TO STOP THEM.~~

9. THE SECRETARY OF STATE RECALLED THE VISIT OF THE IRAQI PRIME MINISTER TO LONDON IN SEPTEMBER AND OUR CREDIT AGREEMENT WITH IRAQ. HE ASKED ABOUT THE DANGERS TO SHIPPING IN THE GULF. PRINCE SAUD SAID THAT IF ATTACKED FURTHER, THE IRAQIS WOULD BE BOUND TO RESPOND. BUT FURTHER IRAQI ACTION WOULD ONLY BE IN RESPONSE TO IRANIAN ATTACKS.

SUDAN

10. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE, SAUD SUGGESTED THAT PRESIDENT NIMEIRI'S INTRODUCTION OF SHARIA LAW MIGHT HAVE SERVED THE CAUSE OF STABILITY BY HEADING OFF EXTREMIST PRESSURE. ITS EFFECT ON THE SOUTH SHOULD BE SEEN IN THE CONTEXT OF AN AUTONOMOUS POLICY WHICH NIMEIRI HIMSELF HAD INTRODUCED: IT SHOULD NOT HAVE TOO MUCH IMPACT IN THE SOUTH. THE TROUBLES IN THE SOUTH WERE NOT A CHRISTIAN/MUSLIM CONFLICT, BUT A TRIBAL AFFAIR, AGGRAVATED BY THE LACK OF ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE AND THE THREAT OF ETHIOPIAN INVOLVEMENT IN SUPPORT OF EXTREMISTS. NIMEIRI'S RECENT POLICIES MIGHT HAVE CAUSED PROBLEMS, BUT HAD PERHAPS FORESTALLED WORSE PROBLEMS. HE HAD COMPLAINED TO THE SAUDIS ABOUT HIS HEADACHES OVER SADIQ AL-MAHDI WHOSE WIFE WAS "VERY ACTIVE" IN LONDON LOBBYING FOR HIS RELEASE. THE SECRETARY OF STATE NOTED THAT PRESIDENT NIMEIRI SEEMED NOW TO BE ADOPTING A MORE CAUTIOUS APPROACH WHICH WAS WELCOME.

BILATERAL

11. THE DISCUSSION CONCLUDED WITH A BRIEF EXCHANGE ON BILATERAL ISSUES WHICH WAS IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWED BY A JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE, REPORTED SEPARATELY.

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