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TELNO 391

OF 121142Z JUNE 86

INFO ROUTINE ALGIERS, AMMAN, DAMASCUS, JERUSALEM, TEL AVIV
INFO ROUTINE TUNIS, UKMIS NEW YORK, WASHINGTON

YOUR TELNO 186: DR AL BAZ'S VISIT TO LONDON

SUMMARY

1. PRESIDENT MUBARAK'S POLITICAL ADVISER SAYS HOW MUCH HE VALUED HIS TALKS IN LONDON: HE HAD BEEN STRUCK BY THE CLOSE IDENTITY OF BRITISH AND EGYPTIAN VIEWS. EGYPT HOPED THE EC WOULD PLAY A MORE ACTIVE ROLE IN THE MIDDLE EAST DURING THE BRITISH PRESIDENCY. IT WAS IMPORTANT TO KEEP HOPES OF A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT ALIVE.

DETAIL

2. AL BAZ TOLD ME LAST NIGHT HOW GRATEFUL HE HAD BEEN FOR THE ARRANGEMENTS MADE FOR HIS VISIT AND HOW MUCH HE VALUED HIS TALKS WITH THE PRIME MINISTER, MR RENTON AND YOURSELF. HE LOOKED FORWARD TO SEEING MR RENTON WHEN HE CAME HERE IN SEPTEMBER.

3. HE HAD BEEN STRUCK DURING HIS TALKS IN LONDON BY HOW CLOSE EGYPTIAN VIEWS WERE TO OUR OWN ON MOST OF THE IMPORTANT QUESTIONS NOW AT ISSUE IN THE MIDDLE EAST. HE WONDERED, HOWEVER, WHETHER WE MIGHT NOT PERHAPS SOMETIMES BE A LITTLE OVER-INFLUENCED BY OUR CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH KING HUSSEIN. THE EGYPTIANS HAD THE HIGHEST RESPECT AND ADMIRATION FOR THE KING AND WOULD TAKE THE UTMOST CARE TO KEEP THEIR RELATIONS WITH JORDAN AS CLOSE AND GOOD AS POSSIBLE: HE HOPED THAT THERE MIGHT SOON BE ANOTHER MEETING BETWEEN HUSSEIN AND MUBARAK. BUT THERE COULD BE LITTLE DOUBT THAT THE KING HAD BEEN BADLY ADVISED IN MAKING HIS 19 FEBRUARY SPEECH AND IN FAILING TO ANTICIPATE THE ENTIRELY PREDICTABLE REACTION TO IT ON THE WEST BANK. THE FACT WAS THAT KING HUSSEIN ENJOYED VERY LITTLE SUPPORT AMONG PALESTINIANS IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES: THIS WAS NOT LIKELY TO CHANGE IN THE NEAR FUTURE AS A RESULT OF ANY MEASURES THE JORDANIANS AND THE ISRAELIS MIGHT TAKE TO TRY TO CREATE SUPPORT FOR A NEW PALESTINIAN LEADERSHIP. FOR THESE REASONS EGYPT WOULD CONTINUE TO WORK FOR A RAPPROCHEMENT BETWEEN JORDAN AND THE PLO, AS THEY BELIEVED THIS WAS THE ONLY REALISTIC POLICY IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES, HOWEVER LONG IT MIGHT TAKE TO ACHIEVE. JORDAN AND THE PLO COULD NOT DO WITHOUT EACH OTHER.

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14

4. AL BAZ WENT ON TO SAY THAT EGYPT WISHED THE KING WELL IN HIS EFFORTS TO BRING SYRIA AND IRAQ CLOSER TOGETHER, BUT WERE SCEPTICAL OF HIS CHANCES OF SUCCESS. THERE MIGHT BE SOME TACTICAL ADVANTAGE FOR ASAD IN APPEARING TO MOVE IN THIS DIRECTION, BUT LITTLE CHANCE OF ANY FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE IN SYRIA'S ALIGNMENT.

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5. AL BAZ CLAIMED TO HAVE TOLD THE PRIME MINISTER THAT EGYPT VERY MUCH HOPED THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY DURING THE BRITISH PRESIDENCY WOULD PLAY A MORE ACTIVE ROLE IN MIDDLE EAST AFFAIRS AND WOULD FOLLOW UP PROPOSALS ALREADY UNDER DISCUSSION WITH THE DUTCH FOR A EUROPEAN CONTACT GROUP TO VISIT THE AREA. MR SHULTZ NOW SEEMED UNLIKELY TO COME: HE WAS ONLY WILLING TO VISIT THE MIDDLE EAST IF HE COULD BE ASSURED IN ADVANCE OF SOME SUCCESS AND THERE SEEMED LITTLE CHANCE OF THAT. THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY NEED NOT FEEL ANY SIMILAR INHIBITIONS AND AN ACTIVE EUROPEAN ROLE WOULD HELP TO SUSTAIN HOPE AMONG THE MODERATE COUNTRIES OF THE AREA THAT, IN SPITE OF ALL THE PRESENT DIFFICULTIES, PROGRESS COULD IN DUE COURSE BE RESUMED TOWARDS A SETTLEMENT. AL BAZ LAID GREAT STRESS ON THE IMPORTANCE EGYPT ATTACHED TO KEEPING SUCH HOPES ALIVE IN THE DIFFICULT MONTHS AHEAD.

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MIDDLE EAST

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NAD

SOVIET D

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PS

PS/MR RENTON

PS/PUS

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