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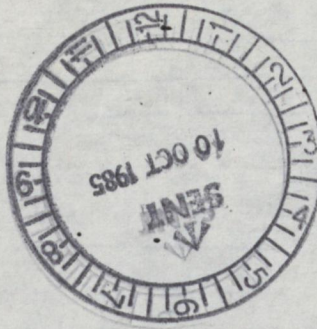
MR EGERTON

HD/NENAD

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NO. 10 DOWNING STREET

CABINET OFFICE DIO



IMMEDIATE

PUSD (2)

NEWS DEPT

CONFIDENTIAL

FM AMMAN

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELNO 543

OF 101155Z OCTOBER 85

INFO PRIORITY TEL AVIV, WASHINGTON, CAIRO, DAMASCUS

INFO PRIORITY JERUSALEM AND MOSCOW

ARAB/ISRAEL

SUMMARY

1. THE AMERICANS ARE WAITING FOR PERES' REACTION TO IDEAS ON THE PEACE PROCESS DEVELOPED DURING KING HUSSEIN'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON. ACCORDING TO THE US AMBASSADOR IN AMMAN PERES MUST EVENTUALLY DECIDE WHETHER THE IDEAS GIVE HIM ENOUGH MATERIAL TO FORCE A BREAK-UP OF THE COALITION AND WIN A GENERAL ELECTION.

DETAIL

2. THE US AMBASSADOR WHO HAS JUST RETURNED TO AMMAN FROM WASHINGTON HAS GIVEN ME IN THE STRICTEST CONFIDENCE AN ACCOUNT OF WHERE THE PEACE PROCESS HAS GOT TO. HE HAS ASKED ME TO ENSURE THAT NONE OF THIS GOES BEYOND UK OFFICIAL CIRCLES.

3. BOEKER, WHO ATTENDED ALL THE DISCUSSIONS DURING HUSSEIN'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON, SAID THAT THE VISIT HAD REALLY GONE VERY WELL. BUT THE AMERICANS WISHED TO KEEP THE RESULTS VERY CLOSE FOR THE TIME BEING.

4. THE AMERICANS AND JORDANIANS HAD REACHED A SUBSTANTIAL MEASURE OF UNDERSTANDING ON THE FORM AND NATURE OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AND ON THE PRELIMINARY STEPS WHICH WOULD BE NEEDED. IT WAS AGREED THAT THE CONFERENCE SHOULD BE CONVENED BY THE UN SECRETARY-GENERAL BUT ONLY WHEN ALL THE PARTIES HAD AGREED TO A PRECISE PLAN WHICH THEY WOULD THEN ASK THE SECRETARY-GENERAL TO IMPLEMENT I.E. THEY WOULD NOT INVITE THE LATTER TO UNDERTAKE AN UNDEFINED INITIATIVE. THE PARTICIPANTS WOULD BE AS PREVIOUSLY ENVISAGED EXCEPT THAT THE JORDANIANS NOW WANTED LEBANON TO ATTEND.

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5. THE CRUCIAL POINT FOR THE UNITED STATES WAS THAT AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE SHOULD BE FOLLOWED BY DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS. THE CONFERENCE ITSELF SHOULD BE SO STRUCTURED THAT IT WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO BLOCK DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS I.E. IT WOULD NOT BE EMPOWERED TO VOTE ON THE ISSUE OR TO ERECT OBSTACLES IN OTHER WAYS. THE JORDANIANS STILL SAW DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS BEING CONDUCTED IN A WORKING GROUP OR GROUPS AFFILIATED TO THE CONFERENCE.

6. BOEKER SAID THAT THE AMERICANS HAD NO REPEAT NO CONDITIONS FOR SOVIET ATTENDANCE BEYOND THOSE WHICH ISRAEL ITSELF WOULD IMPOSE. ESSENTIALLY THAT MEANT PRIOR RESTORATION OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN ISRAEL AND THE SOVIET UNION. THE JORDANIANS UNDERSTOOD THE NEED TO WRK ON THE SOVIET UNION TO THAT END AND WERE, HE SAID, DOING SO.

7. THE CRUCIAL OUTSTANDING ISSUE WAS OF COURSE THAT OF PLO PARTICIPATION, A PROBLEM WHICH HAD BEEN GREATLY EXACERBATED BY RECENT EVENTS. THE US STILL ACCEPTED THAT THE PLO MUST BE A PARTY TO A FINAL SETTLEMENT AND WOULD THEREFORE PROBABLY HAVE TO BE AT THE NEGOTIATING TABLE BEFORE ANY SIGNIFICANT CONCESSIONS WERE MADE. THE PLO WOULD, IN JORDANIAN EYES, HAVE TO BE PRESENT AT THE CONFERENCE BUT THE U.S. BELIEVD IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR ISRAEL TO CONTEMPLATE THAT UNTIL THE PLO HAD FORMALLY AND PUBLICLY COMMITTED THEMSELVES TO 242 AND 338 AND THE ABANDONMENT NOT ONLY OF VIOLENCE IN GENERAL BUT OF THE ARMED STRUGGLE IN PARTICULAR. BOEKER THEN ADDED, BUT CAUTIONED THAT IT WAS A PARTICULARLY DELICATE POINT, THAT THE AMERICANS ENVISAGED THAT DECLARATION BEING FOLLOWED BY A TRIAL PERIOD DURING WHICH THE WORLD COULD ASSESS WHETHER THE PLO WERE LIVING UP TO THE COMMITMENT. DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS WOULD PROBABLY START WITHOUT PLO PARTICIPATION BUT, IF THE TRIAL PERIOD WERE SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED, THEY MIGHT THEN JOIN THE NEGOTIATIONS.

8. BOEKER SAID THAT RIFA'AH'S EARLIER VIEW THAT AGREEMENTS ON AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE MIGHT REMOVE THE NEED FOR THE EARLIER STAGES OF THE JORDANIAN PLAN HAD BEEN OVERRULED BY KING HUSSEIN. THE JORDANIANS WERE AGAIN NOW INSISTING ON THE MURPHY MEETING. FOR THE AMERICANS THIS WAS NOT REALLY AN OBSTACLE (THEY KNEW WHICH FOUR PALESTINIAN NAMES THEY WOULD ACCEPT) PROVIDED THERE WAS CLEAR PRIOR AGREEMENT ON A CONFERENCE AND DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS. THE OTHER PRELIMINARY STEPS (PLO ACCEPTANCE OF 242 ETC AND A US/PLO MEETING) WERE LESS IMPORTANT SINCE THEY WERE SUBSUMED IN THE STATEMENT (PARA 7 ABOVE) THAT THE PLO WOULD HAVE TO MAKE IF THERE WAS TO BE AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE. THIS STATEMENT WOULD IN EFFECT GO FURTHER THAN THE EXISTING US CONDITIONS FOR US/PLO CONTACTS AND US/PLO MEETING COULD EASILY FOLLOW.

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9. BOEKER SAID THAT THE US WERE NOW WAITING FOR PERES' REACTIONS TO THE ABOVE IDEAS (I AM NOT CLEAR PRECISELY WHAT PROPOSITION HAS BEEN PUT TO HIM BUT I HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT IT HAS BEEN PRESENTED VERY PRIVATELY AND THAT OTHER MEMBERS OF THE COALITION MAY AS YET BE UNAWARE OF IT) PERES WOULD NOW HAVE TO DECIDE WHETHER HE COULD AND SHOULD FORCE A BREAK-UP OF THE COALITION ON THE PEACE ISSUE. ESSENTIALLY HE WOULD HAVE TO BANK ON THE PROSPECT OF DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS AS BEING SUFFICIENT TO WIN HIS INTERNAL BATTLES. IT WAS NOT AT ALL CLEAR WHETHER ESPECIALLY IN THE LIGHT OF RECENT EVENTS, PERES WOULD JUDGE THAT HE COULD TAKE THIS RISK. BUT THE US BELIEVED THAT THE DECISION WOULD HAVE TO BE TAKEN SOON. THE PEACE PROCESS COULD NOT CONTINUE FOR LONG ON ITS PRESENT PLATEAU WITHOUT COLLAPSING.

COMMENT

10. WHILE I HAVE LITTLE DOUBT THAT THE ABOVE IS AN ACCURATE ACCOUNT OF THE OUTCOME OF HUSSEIN'S VISIT AS FAR AS THE STATE DEPARTMENT IS CONCERNED I WONDER HOW FAR IT REPRESENTS WHITE HOUSE THINKING AS WELL.

11. OBVIOUSLY THE UPSURGE OF VIOLENCE DURING AND SINCE HUSSEIN'S VISIT GREATLY COMPLICATES THE ABOVE PICTURE AND, IN PARTICULAR, THE SITUATION NOW FACING PERES.

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