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TELNO 654

OF 121140Z DECEMBER 85

INFO IMMEDIATE TEL AVIV (FOR PS TO MINISTER OF STATE)  
INFO PRIORITY DAMASCUS, BAGHDAD, CAIRO, RIYADH, JERUSALEM  
INFO PRIORITY TUNIS , WASHINGTON AND MOSCOW.

MIPT: PEACE PROCESS: SYRIA/JORDAN

1. I ASKED THE CHIEF OF THE ROYAL DIWAN (MARWAN AL QASEM) TODAY TO GIVE ME HIS IMPRESSIONS OF THE SYRIAN PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT.
2. MARWAN AL QASEM, WHO WAS PRESENT THROUGHOUT THE DISCUSSIONS, CONFESSED THAT HIS DISLIKE OF AND DISTRUST FOR THE SYRIANS PROBABLY MADE HIM LESS THAN OBJECTIVE. BUT HIS CLEAR IMPRESSION FROM THE VARIOUS MEETINGS WAS THAT THE SYRIAN AIMS WERE TO:
  - (A) DESTROY ARAFAT AND WITH HIM THE 11 FEBRUARY JORDAN/ PLO AGREEMENT:
  - (B) RE-ISOLATE EGYPT:
  - (C) WEAKEN JORDANIAN LINKS WITH IRAQ.
3. JORDAN STOOD TO LOSE FROM THE ATTAINMENT OF ANY OF THESE SYRIAN OBJECTIVES. THEREFORE, THE JORDANIAN APPROACH HAD TO BE VERY CAUTIOUS. WHETHER IT WAS POSSIBLE TO REACH ANY MEASURE OF SUBSTANTIAL AGREEMENT WITH SYRIA, WHICH DID NOT PREJUDICE JORDANIAN INTERESTS, WOULD ONLY BE CLEAR WHEN KING HUSSEIN HAD MET PRESIDENT ASAD.
4. ON THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, HE SAID THAT THE SYRIANS HAD SHOWN SOME RELUCTANCE TO REFER IN THE COMMUNIQUE TO ATTENDANCE BY PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL APART FROM THE SOVIET UNION AND THE UNITED STATES. BUT THE JORDANIANS HAD ARGUED THAT THEY NEEDED THE OTHER THREE MEMBERS PRESENT "TO EXERCISE LEVERAGE". THE SYRIANS HAD FURTHER ARGUED FOR A JOINT ARAB DELEGATION. THE JORDANIANS, WHILE PREPARED TO CONTEMPLATE "GOING TOGETHER" TO THE CONFERENCE MAINTAINED THEIR INSISTENCE THAT THE CONFERENCE SHOULD SPLIT INTO WORKING GROUPS TO DISCUSS GEOGRAPHICAL ISSUES WITH ONLY THOSE PARTIES WITH A DIRECT INTEREST IN THE ISSUES ATTENDING THE RELEVANT WORKING GROUP.
5. I ASKED AL QASEM WHETHER JORDAN WAS STILL SERIOUSLY WORKING FOR AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OR MERELY

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EMPHASISING, AS A MATTER OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCE, THAT AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE REMAINED ITS AIM. HE ANSWERED THAT JORDAN GENUINELY WANTED A CONFERENCE AND WOULD CONTINUE TO WORK FOR IT. BUT HE AND OTHERS WERE NOW THOROUGHLY DISILLUSIONED WITH THE UNITED STATES AND HE BELIEVED THAT JORDAN WAS EDGING TOWARDS A PROCESS OF "COMPLETE REASSESSMENT" (MORE DETAILS BY LETTER). (HE IS GIVEN TO SUCH LANGUAGE AND THIS SHOULD NOT YET BE INTERPRETED AS AN ACCURATE INDICATION OF THE KING'S VIEW).

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